

**Minutes of the
Search & Governance Committee
Thursday 31 January 2019
Tresham Kettering Board Room**

Present: Alasdair Simmons (AS) (Chair)
Roger Marriott (RM)
Sol Miah (SM)
Allan Schofield (Asch)
Sheila Selwood (SS)

In attendance: Ian Pryce (CBE), Principal and Chief Executive
Rachel Nicol, Director of Governance and Clerk to the Corporation

Action

SG/1/19 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence

SG/2/19 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest relevant to the matters on the agenda.

SG/3/19 Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

It was raised that following the retirement of Avril Bartley-Smith there was a vacancy on the committee for a non chair member. ***It was agreed that RN will email the board for nominations.***

Minutes of the previous meeting on 8 November 2018 were considered.

The Committee discussed the reference in the minutes to 7 years and confirmed it related to a discussion on the appropriate gap in service before a member can be re-appointed to a board. It was reiterated that there is no specific guidance for colleges but that the stated period relates to guidance on non-executive director roles generally. It was agreed that the priority for the College is to be able to demonstrate independence in judgement and manage conflicts of interest and that this can be considered on a case by case basis.

RN will seek to clarify in the minutes.

SG/4/19 Contingency planning – Loss of Principal

IP presented the paper on contingency planning under the current executive structure. IP has spoken to all members of the Executive. The proposal is that the Accounting Officer role is covered by the Director of Finance as an interim measure in the event of unplanned absence of the Principal.

Allan Schofield joins the meeting.

A member of the Committee raised whether an HR perspective should be sought to ensure that nothing is seen as a foregone conclusion and there is no expectation that individuals covering the interim role are required to do anything other than hold the status quo.

The Committee discussed;

- The potential to select individuals for particular tasks.
- Succession planning within the Finance Team if the Director of Finance is required to assume the role of the Accounting Officer.
- Flexibility in the plan to adapt if the profile of the Executive changes.
- The nature of the resolution to ensure sufficient flexibility in the event of personnel changes.

It was agreed;

The principles of the proposal were endorsed subject to the Board retaining the control and flexibility to determine to appoint an Interim Principal or Principal if in the circumstance it is deemed appropriate.

SG/5/19 Board Composition and recruitment

The paper was presented setting out the rationale and methodology proposed for governor recruitment.

The Committee discussed;

- Their agreed priority to recruit to the Bedford College Board due to the current number of vacancies.
- Use of a direct letter to companies to ask for direct “nominations” It was considered by the Committee that a personal letter at the right level may have more success. The Committee discussed the most appropriate individuals within organisations to receive letters. It was agreed that the letter should be no longer than one side and addressed to Chief Executives, Chairs and / or those responsible for training.
- The focus required on what individuals joining the Board will gain in terms of experience and career progression.
- The benefits of a personalised approach to particular employers. It was agreed that board positions cannot be held open for particular employers but that there may be some benefit in asking companies to propose people who might be appropriate. All appointments will continue to be subject to an application, interview and formal approval. It was agreed that expectations of candidates would need to be managed accordingly.
- The requirement of generic material to promote recruitment accessible to different audiences with consideration for a tailored letter.
- Different interest groups – education, employers and community groups, potential barriers to recruitment and need for open dialogue with a range of organisations.
- Personal conversations with the Chair to be offered.
- The different requirements for the Corporation, the subsidiaries and the multi academy trust.
- Geographical spread of recruitment and need for wider community engagement.
- Liaison with educational links and the Business Development team to promote roles.

It was agreed that the recruitment process should be maintained but that steps should be taken to simplify the application form and provide for attachment of a CV to access a wider pool of candidates.

Send role description as part of the pack.

Actions agreed;

RM to draft cover letter

RN to simplify the leaflet to promote the Corporation and incorporate the role description but to work with Marketing to produce the final version.

SG/6/19

Recruitment of Director of HR

IP reiterated that job descriptions are not considered contractual at Bedford College. The Committee discussed the job description presented and raised a number of points including;

- The need to expand the responsibilities around Equality and Diversity.
- Responsibility for the dashboard to be clarified as the HR dashboard.
- The requirement to act as a duty manager which was explained by the Principal.
- The requirement for a review of paragraph 19 in respect to the generic requirements with regard to Safeguarding and Equality & Diversity
- The need for the Recruitment Manager to provide advice on and to draft the advert.

The Committee discussed the composition of the panel. SM, SS, RM and Asch confirmed they would participate as required. It was also considered that the Vice Principal currently responsible for HR should be asked to participate.

It was agreed that the recruitment process would follow the format of a panel interview and scenario based questions with an additional exercise and opportunity for a presentation.

The recruitment plan and timetable were approved.

SG/7/19

Next meeting

Due to the additional meeting it was agreed that the next full meeting would be scheduled in May / June but that the Committee will monitor the recruitment process and meet as necessary during the process to recruit the Director of HR.

Meeting closed.

