**The Corporation of Newham Sixth Form College**

**Governance & Search Committee**

**Unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 June 2021**

**Members**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Martin Rosner (Chair) | Independent Member  | Present  |
| Joanne Dean  | Independent Member  | Present  |
| Mandeep Gill  | Principal & Chief Executive  | Present  |
| Julia Shelton | Independent Member  | Present  |

**Non-Members in attendance**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Robin Jones | Clerk to the Corporation  | Present  |

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Committee NOTED that all Members were present on this occasion.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

The Members and the Clerk confirmed that there were no declarations of interest to be recorded on this occasion.

**3** **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNANCE & SEARCH COMMITTEE HELD ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2020**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Governance & Search Committee held on 30 September 2020 were AGREED to be a correct record.

The Committee recalled that the Minutes had been presented to the Corporation on 7 October 2020 for information and to address the highlighted issues.

**4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNANCE & SEARCH COMMITTEE HELD ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2020**

The Committee agreed that there were no matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting of the Governance & Search Committee held on 30 September 2020.

**5 MEMBERSHIP OF THE CORPORATION – RE-APPOINTMENT OF JULIA SHELTON AS AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER**

The Committee NOTED that, with the written approval of the Members of the Governance & Search Committee other than Julia Shelton, the Corporation had approved the recommendation that Julia Shelton be re-appointed for a further four year period ending in January 2025.

**6 MEMBERSHIP OF THE CORPORATION – EXTENSION OF THE TERM OF OFFICE OF MIKLOS SAROSI AS THE PARENT MEMBER**

The Committee NOTED that, with the written approval of the Members of the Governance & Search Committee, the Corporation had approved the recommendation that the term of office of Miklos Sarosi be extended to 31 July 2021.

The intention was to invite nominations from the parents of students enrolled in September 2021 to fill the vacancy for the Parent Member for a period of two years. If two or more names were put forward a ballot would be arranged.

**7 AoC CODE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE**

The Committee NOTED that the updated AoC Code of Good Governance would be published within about the next month or so although it was known from the consultation that there were additional sections to be included on environmental sustainability and Equality & Diversity.

It was explained that Colleges such as NewVIc that had adopted the Code would report against the existing version and not the new one because this was in place for the period covered by the Annual Financial Statements for 2020/21.

The new Code from the AoC would be circulated to Members of the Committee as soon as it was available so that consideration may be given to the approach for considering the document and recommending adoption to the Corporation.

**8 GOVERNANCE SELF-ASSESSMENT**

The Committee received and discussed a draft Governance Self-Assessment template.

Members were of the view that:

* The current draft was too long and too focussed on the Inspection Framework used by Ofsted
* The Corporation Members who had been appointed in 2020 would not be a position to comment on the involvement of the Corporation in the development of the College Strategic Plan
* There would be benefits for Members if prompts could be added to the template on current NewVIc specific governance practice
* It was appropriate to have due regard to the current AoC Code of Good Governance as that had previously been adopted by the NewVIc Corporation and was central to reporting via the Annual Financial Statements although there would be value in including environmental sustainability and Equality & Diversity as these were to be added to the new Code.

During the review a Member asked about the approaches of other Corporations and if the Internal Auditors could assist. The Clerk advised that he had compared notes with a number of contacts across the FE sector but would do so again in case there were any recent developments that may assist the Corporation to conduct the Governance Self-Assessment.

It was suggested that Members may find of interest [www.governance4fe.co.uk](http://www.governance4fe.co.uk) website where various approaches to governance related issues could be found.

It was recognised that the FE White Paper (Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth) promotes an external review of governance and current estimates are that this could cost up to £15k every three years.

The Committee AGREED:

1. To provide the Clerk with feedback by Monday 21 June 2021 on the questions and themes that could be removed from or amended in the current draft of the Governance Self-Assessment
2. The Clerk would provide the Members of the Committee with an updated draft Governance Self-Assessment incorporating prompts and signposts on NewVIc governance practice for comment and approval
3. The agreed version of the Governance Self-Assessment based on Survey Monkey or similar system if possible to aid completion and analysis be circulated to all Members of the Corporation so that the outcomes were available by early September 2021.

**9 MEMBERSHIP OF THE CORPORATION – EQUALITY & DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS**

The Committee received the summary of the responses provided by Members to the questionnaire prepared by the Clerk to gather personal information in terms of their age, ethnicity etc.

The summary prompted a wide ranging discussion on the extent that data on the composition of the NewVIc Corporation should be published. For example, should all aspects be made available or just, for example, age, gender and ethnicity?

It was noted that the current summary data did not include the two Student Members but this could be addressed.

The Committee agreed:

1. to RECOMMEND to the Corporation that summary data covering all of the protected characteristics relating to the Members of the NewVIc Corporation be published in an anonymous format in the Annual Financial Statements and on the governance section of the College website
2. that the Clerk make contact with the current Student Members so that their characteristics may be included
3. that the summary data would be updated on an annual basis and it was reasonable to anticipate that for most Members they would simply report “no change” other than age at some points and, possibly, disability considerations
4. that the equality and diversity considerations be taken into account when considering making any new appointments for people to join the Corporation given the wish to be “an inclusive College”.

**10 MEMBERSHIP OF THE CORPORATION – UPDATE**

The Committee received the up-to-date summary of the Corporation membership and noted in particular:

* That Independent Member Jay Nair would stand down from membership of the Corporation on 31 July 2021 which was a little before the end of the completion of 8 years – this was to enable an appointment to be made close to the beginning of the new year if this proved to be possible
* Although there had been contact with the London Borough of Newham as yet a nomination had not been put forward for consideration for possible appointment as an Independent Member
* Nominations for a new Parent Member would be invited in September 2021 and if more than one eligible person was put forward a ballot would be arranged
* The 2020/21 Student Members would be competing their term of office shortly although one (Yvonne Osai) had been proposed for membership for a second year

The Committee AGREED after discussion:

1. To note the current position with regard to membership of the Corporation including known and anticipated vacancies
2. That any new appointments need to have due regard to the equality and diversity considerations of the composition of the Corporation as well as the skills and experience of Members
3. That, when considering future appointments, it would be useful to have Members with direct contacts with the local Newham community and also someone with experience and knowledge of (1) environmental sustainability and (2) technology including cyber security
4. That the Clerk should make contact with the London Borough of Newham to ask if a nomination is to be put forward for someone (such as the Councillor with the education portfolio) to serve on the Corporation whilst stressing that application and interview are part of the appointment process

**11 CORPORATION STANDING ORDERS**

The Committee NOTED that the Clerk continued to progress the update to the Corporation Standing Orders and once the forthcoming updates to the AoC Code of Good Governance and the Eversheds Code of Conduct were available this would be completed and presented to the Committee for review and forwarding to the Corporation for approval.

**12 E GOVERNANCE**

The Committee received the report prepared by the Clerk to the Corporation which set out the background to the research of e governance systems in use across the FE college sector and the basis for the recommendation that Google Docs be used in 2021/22 to support the NewVIc Corporation.

The Principal & Chief Executive confirmed that NewVIc made widespread use of Google Docs although he stressed that to adopt for e governance purposes there would be a need for training and support to be made available by the College and there would be benefits in operation if all Members made use of a College email address.

The benefit of the use of Google Docs was that there were no additional costs involved for the College whereas to use one of the specialist e governance systems would involve the payment of a monthly or quarterly license fee.

The Committee AGREED following discussion:

1. To note the report of the Clerk with regard to e governance systems
2. To approve the recommendation that Google Docs be used in 2021/22 to support the business of the Corporation subject to ongoing review and a formal assessment of the arrangements in May 2022 in preparation for 2022/23
3. To advise the Corporation via these Minutes of the approach to e governance and to provide Members with an assurance that support would be available so that the most can be made of the facilities and there would be an ongoing review of the operation so that adaptations could be made in-year in the light of experience

**13 CORPORATION MEETING CALENDAR – 2021/22**

The Committee received and discussed the proposed Corporation meeting calendar for 2021/22.

The proposal was that Committee meetings would take place during College hours as far as possible:

* Curriculum, Quality & Engagement at 9am
* Finance & Resources at 4pm
* Governance & Search at 4pm
* Remuneration at 4pm

The start times for the Audit & Risk Committee would be determined in consultation with Members once the new Chair was appointed. Currently, online meetings have started at 5.30pm given the availability of Members.

The Committee AGREED following discussion:

* To RECOMMEND to the Corporation on 14 July 2021 the approval of the Meeting Calendar for 2021/22 as presented
* To acknowledge that it was for individual Committees to decide if any additional meetings needed to be arranged during the year
* To note that the Members of the Audit & Risk Committee would be invited to make known the preferred start times for meetings given their own availability and the intention that meetings take place in normal College hours where possible
* To place on record the view that, subject to all factors including the pandemic, the aim was for meetings of the Corporation to take place in College and for individual Committees to decide if meetings were to be online or in person in College.

**14 MEETING OF THE CORPORATION SCHEDULED FOR 14 JULY 2021**

The Committee recalled that it had been proposed, following feedback from Members, for the meeting of the Corporation scheduled to take place on 14 July 2021 to take place on a hybrid basis with most attending in person at the College and certain Members joining via Google Meet (or similar). However, given the anticipated deferment of the lifting of Covid related restrictions, it seemed wise for the meeting to take place online.

The Committee AGREED to support the approach whereby, for safety reasons, the meeting of the Corporation on 14 July 2021 take place online and not in person at the College.

**15 REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2020/21**

The Committee AGREED that, based on the experience of the past year, there were no immediate changes to be put forward in terms of the role, responsibilities and operation of the Governance & Search Committee in 2021/22.

**16 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The Committee AGREED to meet on Wednesday 10 November 2021 at 4pm.

An earlier meeting would be arranged in consultation with Members to determine their availability

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_