

# Waltham Forest College



## THE CORPORATION OF WALTHAM FOREST COLLEGE

### SEARCH, GOVERNANCE AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

#### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 NOVEMBER 2021

#### **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

Youness Abidou (Chair)	<i>Apologies</i>
Alison Morris	present
Paul Butler	present
Renatta Nzomo	<i>Apologies</i>
Gary Davies	present
Michael Eichhorn	present

#### **CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE**

Naomi Shoffman	present	Director of Governance
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#### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Janet Gardner	present	Principal & Chief Executive
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#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Ms Morris agreed to Chair the meeting in Mr Abidou's absence as he had sent apologies due to work commitments. There were no other apologies.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the newly merged committee.

#### **2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Members of the Committee confirmed that there were no other items on the agenda for the meeting in which they had a personal interest.

#### **3. MINUTES OF THE SEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28 June 2021**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2021 were approved by the Committee as a true record.

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING:**

Minute 559 - Matters Arising:

- The Director of Governance will check whether New Governors were provided with an opportunity to meet with the Senior staff responsible for Safeguarding, Finance and Health & Safety particularly.

The Principal advised that all new governors had visited the college and met with her and the senior team and had a tour around the college. She also suggested that the senior team would present on these topics to all new Governors and as a refresher for existing governors in the new year, as they had done last year.

#### **5. CORPORATION MEMBERSHIP – UPDATE**

I. The Director of Governance spoke to the report and highlighted the following:



- the appointment dates, length of term of office and dates membership will cease for all Corporation members.
- The current determination of Corporation membership numbers is up to 20 with there currently being 18 Governors including the Principal, 2 Staff Governors and 2 Student Governors.
- The Corporation has agreed that there should be an appropriate balance amongst its membership in terms of gender and ethnic origin in particular.
- The Corporation further believes that the diversity of its membership is important in helping the College meet the needs of a diverse student population within a multicultural society.
- In line with identified skills gap and succession planning the Corporation urgently requires people with accountancy qualifications and finance expertise for both the Finance & Resources Committee and the Audit & Risk Committee. Efforts to recruit suitable candidates via Inspiring Governance in FE, professional bodies and other media are ongoing. The Corporation is also able to co-opt independent members to the Committee if appropriate.

A discussion ensued around equality, diversity and inclusion. The Committee agreed that whilst the membership of the board is diverse there is an aspiration to achieve all the protected characteristics targets but to balance this with the need for certain skills sets and a knowledge of the local community.

II. GOVERNOR RE-APPOINTMENT - Youness Abidou's current term of office end in January 2022. The Committee considered and agreed that Mr Abidou's participation and contribution to the Corporation is invaluable. The Committee unanimously agreed to recommend that Mr Abidou is reappointed for a second term of office.

### III. GOVERNOR INDUCTION AND TRAINING

- All independent members of the Corporation, bar 2, and staff Governors have completed the mandatory online training on Safeguarding, Prevent Awareness and Challenging Unconscious Bias
- Three of the four new Independent members have completed part 1 of the AoC Induction programme.
- The two student members were booked to attend the online student governor inductions, delivered through a collaboration with the Association of Colleges and Unloc,
- The two staff member were booked on to the ETF Staff Governor Conference
- The current champions are:
  - Paul Butler - Safeguarding Champion
  - Alison Morris - Careers Champion
  - Andrew Hall – Sustainability Champion
- Following the departure of Mr T Strong there is a vacancy for a Health & Safety Champion which the Committee agreed is a very broad role and should be discussed by all Board members

#### The Committee agreed to

- **Recommend to the Corporation that Mr Abidou is reappointed for a second term of office. of 4 years**
- **Note the list of Induction and Training events attended by Governors since the last report**
- **Ask the Board to consider suitable members who have the skills sets to take on the role of health and safety champion.**

## 6. GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The Director of Governance spoke to the report and highlighted the following:

- The College adopted the AoC's English Colleges' Code of Governance and this has recently been subject to review and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.
- The main changes are to The Principal Responsibilities of Good Governance. Responsibility 3 has been revised with a focus on safeguarding; responsibility 8 is a new responsibility, responsibility 9 has the word inclusion added, responsibility 10 has merged the previous responsibilities 9 and 10. The

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remaining changes are around tidying up and streamlining the document to make it more user friendly.

- The Code uses the normal “must and should” convention for governance codes. A “must” is an area of activity which is covered by statute and/or is the minimum expected by the principal regulators and funding agencies. Activities which exceed these basic requirements and represent good or enhanced governance practice are described as ‘should’.
- Assuming this code is adopted, it is proposed to use ‘must’ and ‘should’ statements as a checklist for compliance which can then be the basis for the Board’s Self-Assessment going forward.
- Progress against the actions in the Board review action plan is in line with deadlines

## **The Committee Agreed**

- **To recommend to the Board that it adopts the Revised AoC Code of Good Governance**
- **To note the Good progress being made with the Board Review Action Plan**

**These minutes have been approved by the Committee and signed by the Chair as a correct record.**