



MidKent College

GOVERNING BODY

SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Search & Governance Committee held on Thursday 30 January 2025 at 1700hrs via Teams.

Present: Mrs A Woodhouse Chair
Mr S Cook
Ms A Currie
Mr C Reynolds

In attendance: Ms C Burkin Clerk to the Governing Body

1 Declaration of Interests

None declared.

2 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 September 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2024, Paper GBS&G24/567, were accepted as a true record by the Committee.

4 Matters Arising - Paper GBS&G24/568

- AOC Code – A Woodhouse informed members that she was meeting Hazel Forman DPO to discuss next steps. She will then share the plans with Chris Reynolds and Nick Baveystock for comment.
 - **Action: A Woodhouse**
- 2025/26 meeting schedule – bring forward next meeting.

All other matters have been completed.

5 Search Issues

- 5.1 Safeguarding Governor Recruitment Update - Paper GBS&G24/569 – members reviewed the latest report from Peridot Partners which showed four people have shown an interest with at least two likely to apply at this point. Peridot have approached over 200 relevant people and continue to grow the pipeline through their research.

The shortlisting is being held on 10 February 2025 with interviews scheduled for 4 March 2025. The Panel will consist of A Woodhouse, P Fleming, A Cole, S Cook, Peridot Partners & C Hart as an advisor.

Members agreed to contact Peridot Partners to discuss whether extending the closing date would increase the pool of candidates.

Action: Clerk

They also discussed the wider Board ownership of safeguarding matters, and the contingency plan if an appointment is not made.

- 5.2 Membership of Committees - Paper GBS&G24/570 – members discussed the current vacancies on Committees. They consulted the skills matrix and current list of members and agreed:

- Angela Woodhouse to join QTL Committee
- Stuart Hardie to be invited to join F&R Committee as he has shown an interest and observed some meetings. His sustainability experience will enhance the membership.

Action: A Currie to contact S Hardie

Members discussed the employment/legal expertise skills gap on the Board and agreed S Cook and C Hare will explore this with their networks for future consideration.

Action: S Cook/C Hare

It was noted that in October 2028 the two accountants on F&R Committee will both come to the end of their second term. This will be taken into account when considering new governors in the future.

C Reynolds reminded members that the June 2025 S&G Committee will be his last meeting leaving a vacancy.

Action: Noted for May S&G

- 5.3 Link Governor Proposal - Paper GBS&G24/571 – members reviewed the proposal noting that new members of the Board may welcome the opportunity to become Link Governors.

They noted that Link Governors were not required for all areas of the College, and it was agreed that this would be revisited following the outcome of the Strategic Away Day once the Board were agreed on the priorities.

Action: AW/PF to propose areas after 14/2/25 and share with S&G

Members agreed that once the area for link Governors were confirmed, the expectation and purpose of the role will need to be reviewed to ensure clarity. They also discussed semi-formalising the Governor informal visits (GIV) to give Governors more confidence to participate.

Action: S&G May 2025

6 Governance Issues

- 6.1 Handbook Update - Paper GBS&G24/572 – members reviewed the updated text. Some amendments were shared, and it was agreed the text would be updated and final checks made by the Committee Chair.

Action: Clerk/A Woodhouse

The draft will then be sent to Marketing for MKC branding and available from April 2025.

Action: Clerk

- 6.2 Chair & SPH Appraisal - Paper GBS&G24/573 – members were made aware of the proposed appraisal process from the FE Commissioner and they discussed the current position with Remuneration Committee and SPHs.

It was agreed that the appraisal of the Governing Body Chair would be conducted by a 360-degree method with feedback given by a Panel of Committee Chairs. A Woodhouse and the Clerk will formulate the questionnaire.

Action: A Woodhouse/Clerk

A Woodhouse reported back on her discussion with the Director of People where it was agreed the current process conducted by the Remuneration Committee regarding SPHs, was fit for purpose and will be strengthened by sharing appraisal documents for all SPHs with the Remuneration Committee.

It was noted that following the Strategic Away Day clearer objectives can be set for SPHs with more direction from the Board.

Members were agreed that the current set of objectives for the CEO/Principal do not require any amendment.

- 6.3 Amendment to I&As – Vice Chairs - Paper GBS&G24/574 - following a discussion at the Chairs meeting on 9 January 2025, it was agreed the S&G Committee would recommend that the Board revert to having one Vice Chair and that would be Angela Woodhouse.

The amended I&As were reviewed and it was agreed the Committee would recommend this to the Governing Body in March 2025.

Action: A Woodhouse

Members noted that the Standing Orders refer to Vice Chair(s) and therefore do not need any amendment.

7 External Review Action Plan – monitoring update - Paper GBS&G24/575

Members reviewed the updated action plan with many actions addressed during the meeting. The following outstanding actions were discussed:

3.2 - Consideration of making the Chair of Risk and Audit an external independent role. Members agreed that the level of MidKent College knowledge required for this role meant the Committee Chair should be a full member of the Board and not an independent member. They further discussed whether an independent member of GR&A Committee was required and agreed to revisit after the new Chair has settled onto the Committee.

Action: 2025/26

3.4 - Ensuring that meetings operate at a strategic level - Members noted that 2024/25 Board meetings have evidenced improved levels of questioning and increased participation. They further discussed the need for the wider Board to be aware of Safeguarding issues with deeper scrutiny and questioning and that further training may be considered.

8 Review of the meeting

Members agreed it had been a productive meeting with several decision and proposals made. Feedback was welcomed outside the meeting.

9 Any Other Business

Stakeholder Engagement – the Clerk reported that at a recent event the participation and feedback from Staff and Student Governors was highlighted as important stakeholder feedback and asked S&G members to consider how the Board can further encourage this at meetings. They agreed the recent increased participation would build a space where all Governors can speak at meetings. The Governing Body Chair agreed to encourage this further by inviting Staff and Students to speak. The Principal offered to consider a more formalised feedback report for future consideration.

Action: S Cook

10 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 8 May 2025 at 5pm.

The meeting closed at 18.15hrs.