



Strategy, Governance & Search Committee

Minutes of the first meeting of the Brockenhurst College Strategy, Governance and Search Committee held on Thursday, 16 November 2023 Via MS Teams.

Present:

Mrs C Cooke	Chair
Ms H Odhams	Principal and CEO
Mr S Williams	
Mr J Hiley-Jones	
Prof A Neill	

Meetings attended

(1 out of 1)
 (1 out of 1)
 (1 out of 1)
 (1 out of 1)
 (1 out of 1)

In attendance:

Mr L Feingold	Vice Principal, Finance
Mr S Lovegrove	Vice Principal, Curriculum and Quality
Mr G Francis	Assistant Principal, A-Levels
Mrs J Munro	Assistant Principal, Learning and Quality
Mrs L Payne	Clerk to Corporation

(1 out of 1)

Meeting commenced at 4.30pm

Note: Where Members and Governors are referred to, they are the same.

Minute number	Paper title	Action
1.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies and no member declared any conflict of interest with the agenda.	
1.1.1	Election of Chair and Vice Chair 2023-2024 Members were asked to elect a Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee for the next academic year. All Members were agreed that Caroline Cooke be Chair and Alex Neill be Vice-Chair of the Committee.	
1.2	COMMITTEE BUSINESS	
1.2.1	Minutes of the meeting held on 22, June 2023 The minutes of the meeting held on 22, June 2023, having been previously circulated to members, were agreed as a true record and would be signed electronically by the Chair. All Members were agreed.	
1.2.2	Matters arising from the meeting held on 22, June 2023 It was noted that matters arising had been actioned or would be on the agenda.	
1.2.3	Terms of Reference Members noted the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the newly formed Strategy, Governance and Search Committee. It was noted that these had already been to the Board on 6, September 2023, however, had received a further update. It was agreed to recommend the ToR to the Board for approval. All Members were agreed.	Refer to Corporation
1.3.	STRATEGIC MATTERS	
1.3.1	College Strategic Plan 2023-24 This item was presented by the Principal. Members were asked to comment on the planned strategic direction of the College for the 2023-2024 academic year in the current educational political and local context. The Principal reminded members that it was more usual for a College to develop a longer term three-	



	<p>year Strategic Plan, but due to the particular leadership challenges at the College over the past year, it had been agreed by the Board that the 2023-2024 Strategic Plan should be developed for just one further year. It had been agreed this would enable the new Principal, who had been in place since June 2023, to take time to better understand the context of the College. The Principal could then collaborate with all stakeholders in a meaningful way and develop a well thought through and highly strategic way forward for the following three years.</p> <p>The report referred to the short term one-year plan, with four strategic themes that had been developed reflecting the immediate needs of the college. This plan was reflective of the College's needs, as well as the wider political and educational landscape.</p> <p>The themes were;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Curriculum and Study programmes 2) Quality and outstanding outcomes 3) Strategy, growth and reform 4) People, community and culture <p>The Principal confirmed the objectives for each theme, to be achieved by the end of the Strategic Plan period, how they been developed and how they would be achieved. They would be reflected in the College Quality Improvement Plan and/or the Accountability Agreement. The risks around the themes would then be considered as part of the overall College risk register.</p> <p>Members were asked to consider whether the Strategic themes were reflective of the current needs of the College and whether the one-year objectives met the Strategic themes stated.</p> <p>The Chair of the committee felt the Strategic Plan was very clear. Members agreed the plan was clear and strong, but wondered whether financial sustainability had been sufficiently considered, or whether it needed stronger finances going forward. It was noted that as the College finances were strong at this time so agreed it was not a priority in this year in its own right. Aspects of College finances were however picked up under objectives in strategy, growth and reform and people, community and culture.</p> <p>Members supported the plan and hoped it would be well received by Ofsted and all agreed that extending the strategic plan for a year was the right move.</p> <p>The Chair of the Board agreed it was a strong clear document for a year with appropriate key strategic themes. The Vice Principal Finance advised members that the financial planning would be in the 3-year Strategic Plan, that would be developed for 2024.</p> <p>Overall members were pleased with the proposed Strategic Plan to July 2024 and agreed to recommend it to the Board for approval. All Members were agreed.</p>	<p>Refer to Corporation</p>
<p>1.3.2</p>	<p>College Self-Assessment Report 2022-2023 and QIDP</p> <p>The Vice Principal explained that the College and SAR and QIDP was being presented in a different format to what had been received previously. The SAR was written in a more concise format focusing on the four key judgements areas. This, it felt, would make it a lot clearer to identify strengths and areas for improvement quickly and clearly. It was also explained that the QIDP was produced in a way that allowed easier tracking and monitoring throughout the academic year. Each item is referenced and linked to the strategic plan as well as being linked to the teaching and learning plan to allow cross reference.</p> <p>Members agreed the Quality Improvement Plan and agreed to recommend it to the Board for approval.</p> <p>All Members were agreed.</p>	<p>Refer to Corporation</p>
<p>1.3.3</p>	<p>Homestay Provision SAR</p>	



	<p>This item was presented by the Assistant Principal, Learning and Quality. Members were asked to evaluate the Colleges Homestay Provision against Ofsted Social Care Common Inspection Framework. The Assistant Principal advised members that the College was graded as ‘good’ in this area and there were some areas that could take the College to ‘Outstanding’.</p> <p>Members referred to the report on the International Programme indicating there was a lack of Homestay provision. Members discussed the growth of the International Business and options for addressing issues raised. Ideally the International Manager at the College would seek to have students in buildings on the Campus and the Principal said the matter would be brought up in the strategic planning going forward. Members asked about the link with Safeguarding and that the recommendations could lead to ‘outstanding’.</p> <p>Members noted the report and agreed to recommend the Homestay Provision SAR to the Board for approval.</p> <p>All Members were agreed.</p>	<p>Refer to Corporation</p>
<p>1.3.4</p>	<p>International Strategy 2023-2026</p> <p>Members were asked to consider and recommend for approval the 2023-2026 International Strategy. The Vice Principal Finance outlined the minor changes and members agreed to recommend this to the Board for approval, at this stage with a view to it being considered as part of the ongoing work and the future strategic direction of the college.</p> <p>All Members were agreed.</p>	<p>Refer to Corporation</p>
<p>1.3.5</p>	<p>Admissions and Recruitment Analysis 2023-2024</p> <p>This item was presented by Assistant Principal A-Levels. Members were asked to consider the report on Sixth Form Learner Recruitment trends over the past several years that identified issues and patterns that could inform future recruitment strategy. They were advised that admissions and recruitment were mission critical activities for the College as the College operated in a highly competitive market competing for learners across a large geographic area. There was with a broad range of Sixth Form provision and it was noted as essential that rigorous analysis of market trends and conditions, to inform future recruitment strategy, took place.</p> <p>Members noted the report analysing recent recruitment by level and type of study programme, geographic area, feeder schools and compared A-Levels to other types of provision.</p> <p>The themes that emerged from the analysis were;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That the College appeared to be losing market in its core market share in areas of the New Forest and Waterside, students from those areas were more likely to be vocational learners than A-Level learners compared to other areas. - Recruitment growth had been strong in areas to the West of the College such as Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) which meant the College was recruiting learners from further afield. - There was strong recruitment in the BCP area meaning the College would be at risk from losing learners should there be an expansion of sixth-form in that area. - There was growth in the number of school leavers in the New Forest and other areas expected to increase through to 2027-2028. <p>Finally, beyond 2027 it was noted that the number of school leavers would start to decline in the New Forest and, by 2028 the number of 16-year-olds would have peaked across most of the wider recruitment areas.</p> <p>Members discussed the emerging issues and the competition. It was felt that the College’s results had been good but College PR may not be good enough locally. There would be a need to have a strong strategy including significant</p>	



	<p>PR moving forward. Members felt it was essential to have a larger conversation on this and noted that it would come to the Board in December. There would be a look at the demographic growth with a to get significant market share. The Chair of the Board was pleased to note the Principal had seen this as a priority and had been focussing on developing and consolidating relationships in the area. Members agreed to recommend this to the Board for approval. All Members were agreed.</p>	<p>Refer to Corporation</p> <p>Refer to Corporation</p>
<p>1.4.</p>	<p>BOARD AND COMMITTEES</p>	
<p>1.4.1/2/3</p>	<p>Governance SAR 2022-2023 / Governors Quality Improvement Development Plan The Principal spoke about how the Governance SAR and QIP had been produced in the past and hoped that moving forward Governors might have greater involvement in the development of the Governance Self-Assessment report and Quality Improvement Plan. For the current year with the Principal still new in post, it had been agreed to push back the approval of the Governance SAR and QIP until the Board meeting in December, to allow for more time to put this together. In the future, whilst the SAR and QIP would be drawn up by the Principal together with governors, so gathering wider insights and evaluations from them. Members agreed this would be useful and looked forward to the reports to the Board in December. All Members were agreed.</p>	<p>Refer to Corporation</p>
<p>1.4.4</p>	<p>Membership of the Board and Committees Members had received the Clerk’s report on Committee and Board membership. There was currently one term of office ending in December 2023, Davina Hawkins who had been a Governor for eight years. Members acknowledged the contribution she had made to many committees and the Board during her time as a Governor. The two new student governors had now been appointed, one student had already been appointed by the Board, Dante Dunbabin, and there was one student elect, Archie Ledger whose appointment would be ratified by the Board in December. Both students had already received some induction and been to the AoC conference. The Principal was keen to ensure that the students had as full a role as possible on the Board and they would receive induction prior to Board meetings. The Clerk informed members that the current Instrument and Articles relating to termination of Governor membership at Clause 10, could be modified to provide for the Board being able to remove a member from office together with the provision already in clauses 3 a) and b), which were that a member who was unfit or unable to discharge the functions as a member or had been absent for meetings of the Corporation for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months without the permission of the Corporation, could be removed from the Board. Members considered the proposal and the Chair of the Board indicated he felt this would be a helpful addition. All Members were agreed. The actual change would be to include in the Instrument and Articles at Clause 10 the following: <i>If at any time the Corporation is satisfied that it would be in the best interest of the Corporation for a member’s appointment to the Corporation to be terminated or that any member –</i> <i>(a) Is unfit or unable to discharge the functions of a member, or</i></p>	<p>Refer to Corporation</p>



	<p><i>(b) Has been absent for meetings of the Corporation for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months without the permission of the Corporation, the Corporation may by notice in writing to that member, remove the member from office and the office shall then be vacant.</i></p> <p><u>Chair of the Board</u> The Chair of the Board opened a discussion with members regarding a future Chair of the Board. He confirmed he would be required to stand down in July 2024 and his observation was that Brockenhurst College currently had a strong Board with quite a few new members who at this time were perhaps too new to be considering the role of the Chair. There were a number of experienced members, who had regular commitments and the the role of the Chair was quite significant and he indicated took up more time than might be anticipated. The Chair advised members there was much to learn about the role of being Chair and having a Chair for one or two years was very far from ideal. In order to support the Principal in her role the College, there was a need for a Chair for more than a year and it might be that, like some other Colleges there was a need to look externally for someone. The role would start in July 2024. Members were advised of proposals from four external agencies who had provided proposals and costings on how, if appointed, they would approach this 'search'. The costings for an external consultant to assist with recruiting a Chair ranged from £9k to £16k. The Chair of the Board spoke about Peridot who had recent strong experience in finding new members for the Board, they knew the College well and had done an excellent job. Members noted the other potential providers and their costs. The Chair strongly suggested to members that this was a good move for the College Board going forward and both Vice-Chairs present, JH-J and CC supported the proposals from the Chair of the Board. JH-J agreed that Peridot were excellent and would be able support the College well in this appointment. As there was one member leaving the Board in December this would enable the appointment of another member in the role of Chair in waiting. Members unanimously agreed to recommend to the Board the support of an external consultant preferably Peridot to commence this process early in the new year.</p> <p><u>New Applications</u> In relation to the current applications for Governor, no recommendations were made. The Principal would report back to the committee at its next meeting on an aspect of one application.</p> <p>Members noted the Governors Skills Audit 2023-2024 and in particular where skills in the governor body would change with members leaving as there might be no current vacancy save for a prospective Chair of the Board at this time it was agreed to look at this in more detail at the next meeting. All Members were agreed.</p>	<p>Refer to Corporation</p> <p>Principal</p>
<p>1.4.5</p>	<p>Recruitment/new Governor applications/Governors at end of appointment term Members noted the report on new applications for the office of Governor. No recommendations were made at this time.</p>	
<p>1.4.6</p>	<p>Governing body equality & diversity Members noted the Governing body equality and diversity information. Members noted the equality and diversity make-up of the Board. At the end of</p>	



	<p>the year, in December, when the new student member joined the Board there would be 8 male and 9 female members in the determined membership of 17. Members noted the age range and disability statistics. The report was noted.</p>	
1.4.7	<p>Standing Orders Members noted the changes to the Standing Orders that had included gender neutral references and the changes to the recent committee structure. These were agreed and it was agreed to recommend the standing orders to the Board for approval. All Members were agreed.</p>	Refer to Corporation
1.4.8	<p>Code of Conduct 18th edition Members noted the updated Code of Conduct from Eversheds and the changes that had been made. It was agreed to recommend to the Board that the new Code of Conduct be adopted by the College. All Members were agreed.</p>	Refer to Corporation
1.4.9	<p>Code of Good Governance The Clerk introduced the new Code of Good Governance that had been anticipated all year. The revisions to the existing Code of Good Governance reflected commitment to advancing Governance practices in Colleges across the sector to ensure they aligned seamlessly with the unique challenges and opportunities faced by Further Education Institutions. Members noted the six governance principles around which the code was centred. Members agreed to recommend to the Board that the Code of Good Governance be adopted effective from July 2024. All Members were agreed.</p>	Refer to Corporation
1.5.	GOVERNOR PERFORMANCE	
1.5.1	<p>Governor attendance and performance indicators 2022-2023 Members noted the report on the year end, annual Governor attendance. The current target set by Board, for its attendance was 75%. This year including extraordinary meetings there was a 69% attendance with 75% attendance excluding the extraordinary meetings. As there were a large number of extraordinary meetings and Written Resolution meetings this year, 69% was acceptable, but the Chair reminded members it was his intention not to have extraordinary meetings in this academic year where possible. The report was noted.</p>	
1.5.2	<p>Summary of Evaluations 2022-2023 Members were pleased to note the Summary of Evaluations for 2022-2023 and would continue to collate 'added value' and 'appropriate challenge' made from members in evaluations at each committee meeting. The report was noted.</p>	
1.5.3	<p>AoC Governance Briefings Members noted the AoC briefings and there were no questions. The report was noted.</p>	
1.5.4	<p>E Governance and Virtual Platform Members were reminded that e.Brock had been relaunched and there was an area on MS Teams where Governors were able to access the agenda and papers for meetings. No paper copies for meetings were issued to members at this time and password protected PDF copies of papers were available for meetings. The report was noted.</p>	



1.5.5	<p>Training and Development Programme 2023-2024 and Training Opportunities Members were asked to review the arrangements for the Training and Support of members for the 2023-2024 year. This was discussed and agreed.</p>	
1.5.6	<p>3-year External review of the Board The Clerk advised members that the external review of the Board would take next year, with a scoping session sent for January. Members would be asked by the reviewer to fully participate in the review. The reviewer would be present at two or three meetings via Teams and would be present in person at the March Board meeting. There would be a further report on progress with the review at the next meeting. The report was noted.</p>	
1.6.	<p>Evaluation of Meeting Members were happy with the papers that they contained information to fully support decision making. There was helpful challenge and good added value from Governors interactively on many items in particular sections 3 and 4.</p>	
1.7.	<p>Any other business No other business was raised.</p>	
1.8.	<p>Date of next meeting Tuesday, 6 February 2024 at 4.00pm</p>	

Meeting ended at 5.30pm