

SPARSHOLT COLLEGE HAMPSHIRE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SEARCH COMMITTEE
held on 21 June 2018 at 2.30 pm

¹**PRESENT** M Coombes (E); N Hopkins (E); T Jackson (P).

In attendance: S Willson (Clerk to the Corporation)

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

28 There were no interests to declare.

MINUTES

29 **Resolved** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Senior Post Holders (Min 23/18)

30 Following discussion of succession planning for Senior Post Holders at the March meeting of the Committee, the Clerk to the Corporation and HR Manager had circulated to the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Principal for comment a planning document for recruitment of a Principal at whatever point in the future a vacancy arose.

31 Committee Members discussed whether to plan to involve external consultants in any future recruitment and/or selection process, balancing awareness about the need to avoid unnecessary costs with the potential benefits, including increasing the size and range of the field of applicants and supporting the Selection Panel by providing expertise in relation to land-based knowledge. The Principal also offered to support the recruitment process at all stages and to suggest individuals who might be willing to act as advisors to the Panel if required.

32 The Committee agreed that, in the event of a vacancy arising, it would be in the best interests of the College to finalise the recruitment process without undue delay and that this might include the need to scope the remit of and commission consultants. It would be for a Selection Panel, appointed by the Board, to decide the selection arrangements and to interview applicants.

33 **Resolved** – that the Board be recommended to delegate to the Chairman the authority to select and appoint external consultants to assist with a future recruitment process for the of Principal, at such point that this was required.

34 The Committee noted that it might be necessary for the Board to delegate to the Selection Panel the final decision on the salary of any successful candidate, within a range set by the Board.

¹ (E) = External; (P) = Principal; (S) = Staff; (St) = Student; (C) = Co-opted Committee Member

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

External Governors

- 35 The Members of the Committee who had formed the Selection Panel for the recent recruitment of two new Board Members to fill vacancies arising in August and December 2018 discussed their assessment of the six shortlisted candidates, following their interviews.
- 36 The Committee agreed that all of the shortlisted the applicants were of a high calibre and could be considered appointable. Four of the six shortlisted applicants were female and the Committee noted that one of the aims of the recruitment campaign had been to improve the gender representation on the Board to more closely reflect the wider College community.
- 37 After careful consideration, the Committee agreed that the skills and experience of two of the applicants most closely met the requirements of the Board at this time, one candidate being a qualified accountant and current finance director with experience as an FE college governor and the other having an extensive career with strategic leadership and risk management experience, including current non-executive roles focusing on audit and governance matters. Both applicants had also demonstrated an empathy and commitment to education and training.
- 38 The Committee agreed that the College had been fortunate to have a number of candidates with excellent skills and experience apply and that it was unfortunate to have to turn down the other applicants. The Committee noted that there might be future opportunities for the other applicants, either if further vacancies to the Board arose or as co-opted members of a committee.
- 39 **Resolved** – that the Board of Governors be recommended to appoint Debbie Beaven and Marian Lauder as governors for a term of office of four years.
- 40 The Principal and Clerk undertook to communicate the outcomes of the selection process to the six applicants and to discuss with the successful applicants their preferences for start dates.

Student Governor

- 41 The Clerk reported that members of the Andover College Student Council had been invited to nominate a new Student Governor when Charlotte Duffy completed her enrolment at the College this term. One student had put herself forward and, after meeting with the Clerk, had confirmed she would like to be appointed. As no other nominations had been received, a vote by Student Council members was not required.
- 42 The Clerk advised that the Office for Students regulatory framework governance principles required that the Board ensure HE students have opportunities to engage with the governance of the College/University Centre Sparsholt. While the Sparsholt College Student Governor was currently an HE student, there was not a formal requirement in the Board's policies to have an HE Student Governor. The Committee agreed that options be considered ahead of the end of the term of office of the current Sparsholt College Student Governor, with one possibility being introducing an HE student observer to meetings.
- 43 **Resolved** – that the Board be recommended to appoint Emma Hunter as Student Governor from 1 September 2018 for the period of her enrolment at the College.

COMMITTEES

- 44 The Committee had received the report of the Clerk to the Corporation on the membership and chairing of committees in 2018-19 in light of the change of Chairman and Vice Chairman from August, current committee vacancies and the new appointments to the Board.
- 45 Noting that Susan Shaw was due to complete her term of office as a co-opted member of the Resources Committee in July, the Chairman recorded his thanks, on behalf of the Board, for her support of the College over many years and proposed that she be invited as a guest to the January Governors' Seminar dinner, having been unable to attend the Seminar dinner in May.
- 46 The Vice Chairman supported the continuing practice of the Chairman of the Board also chairing the Resources Committee (ex-officio) as, while not the standard practice in the sector, the arrangement had proved effective at the College in supporting strong financial governance. Given that his responsibilities would also include chairing the Search Committee and membership of the Remuneration Committee, the Vice Chairman decided to step down as a member of the Quality & Standards Committee at the end of 2017-18 but offered to attend future meetings in a guest capacity for key items of business, such as the College's Self-Assessment Report.
- 47 The Vice Chairman confirmed that he would welcome the Chairman, Michael Coombes, joining Resources Committee as a co-opted member once he had stepped down from the Board in order that the Committee continue to benefit from his knowledge. Michael Coombes agreed to reflect and respond in due course.
- 48 The Committee discussed the vacancies on other committees and asked the Clerk to follow up with individual governors in order to confirm recommendations to the Board in July.
- 49 The meeting closed at 3.45 pm.