

SPARSHOLT COLLEGE HAMPSHIRE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SEARCH COMMITTEE
held on 7 July 2021 at 14:15

¹PRESENT N Hopkins (E, Chair); J Milburn (P); N Moody (E)

In attendance: S Willson (Clerk to the Corporation)

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

52 The committee noted that, prior to the shortlisting and interviews, N Moody had declared that he knew one of the applicants socially, but not closely, and that this would not affect his ability to assess the applicant at shortlisting or, if relevant, interview stage. The applicant had also noted their acquaintance with N Moody when applying. The Chair of Governors and Principal were assured by the transparency of the declaration and confirmed that they were content for N Moody to remain on the selection panel.

MATTERS ARISING

53 Following the review of board membership undertaken by the committee at its meeting on 11 May, the committee further discussed the terms of office of members which were due to expire during 2021/22 taking into account the need to carefully balance the benefit of refreshing board membership with retaining and development appropriate knowledge on the board.

54 The committee noted that A Neal was due to complete his first term of office on 13 December 2021 and that he had confirmed to the Clerk that he would be available to be reappointed if this was the recommendation of the committee. The committee agreed that, in line with the Board's appointment policy, a reappointment survey should be undertaken and, subject to the outcome of that, A Neil be recommended for reappointment.

55 **Resolved** – that a reappointment survey be undertaken for A Neil and a recommendation made at the October 2021 meeting of the Board of Governors.

56 The committee noted that R Palmer was due to complete his second term of office on 2 April 2022 and that C Wilson was due to complete his second term of office (which had been extended by a further year in line to enable him to complete four years at Vice Chair) on 10 July 2022.

57 The committee discussed both governors' membership of the board, recognising the outstanding contribution that each of them continued to make, particularly in relation to educational and academic standards aspects of the Board's activities. After careful consideration and with some reluctance expressed because of the quality of the individuals, the committee decided that it was in the long-term best interests of the college to keep to the policy for refreshing and renewing membership after governors have served

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

two terms of office and to look to succession planning to address the knowledge gap in the future.

- 58 The committee decided therefore that, when assessing the outcomes of the interviews, consideration could be given to recommending to the Board making one appointment from 1 September 2021 and one appointment from 3 April 2022. If there were other appointable applicants, it would be kept under review during 2021/22 whether their skills and knowledge were the best fit for future vacancies subject to any further relevant developments during the year.

GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS

- 59 The shortlisting and interviewing panel had been made up of the members of the Search Committee. The members discussed their assessment of the six shortlisted applicants interviewed on 7 July.
- 60 The committee was pleased that the recruitment campaign had attracted a range of high calibre candidates and, as a result, had decided to interview all seven of the applications received, four of which were from women.
- 61 One of the shortlisted applicants had not been available interview and it was hoped that a subsequent interview could be arranged to confirm if the applicant was appointable for future vacancies.
- 62 The committee also noted, with sincere thanks, the assistance of the College President in promoting the role.
- 63 Members agreed that the applicants interviewed all offered areas of strength and a range of applicable/transferable skills and members were impressed by all the individuals' high levels of success in their respective careers.
- 64 After careful consideration of the applicants and assessing the interview criteria, the committee agreed that the skills and experience of two of the applicants (4 and 5) most closely met the requirements of the Board at this time. One of the selected applicants had extensive experience as a board member and trustee in the not-for-profit and public sectors, combined with a private sector background with relevant areas of expertise. The other selected applicant had an outstanding professional background as an HR director and commercial board member, including experience in organisational transformation, and an ongoing involvement in people related consultancy and voluntary roles, which was a good fit with the renewed focus on people in review of the College Group's strategic plan.
- 65 The committee discussed the timing of the appointments and asked the Clerk to seek the agreement of the two preferred applicants to the start dates and to offer the opportunity for the appointee starting in April 2022 to join a committee as a co-opted member or to attend some meetings as a guest in the meantime.
- 66 **Resolved** – that, subject to the agreement of the individuals, the Board of Governors be recommended to appoint:
- a) Gareth Davies as a governor from 1 September 2021, subject to references and checks.
 - b) Paula Jordan as a governor from 3 April 2022, subject to references and checks.

- 67 The committee agreed that two of the other applicants interviewed (1 and 2) also met the criteria to be appointable and requested that the Clerk contact them to explain the outcome and seek their agreement to be considered for possible future vacancies.
- 68 The committee agreed that the final two applicants (3 and 6), while evidently successful in their own fields and with the potential to bring relevant skills to the Board, did not as closely meet the membership needs of the Board at this time as the other applicants in what was a very strong field.
- 69 The committee was very grateful to all the applicants for their interest and time in applying.
- 70 The committee discussed the diversity of the applications received, noting that, in terms of gender mix, the number of female applicants was a significant improvement on the previous recruitment round. All applicants were from a white ethnic background and, all but one, around 60 plus years, and it was agreed to continue to aim to further diversify the Board when future opportunities arose.
- 71 In terms of skills mix, the committee noted that FE/HE education and accountancy were two key areas to consider for future recruitment.
- 72 The meeting closed at 15:15.