



**MEETING OF THE SEARCH AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022**  
**6.00pm**  
**Room 422 – Croydon Campus**

---

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Catherine Boyd-Maunsell (Chair)  
Tony Stevenson  
Caireen Mitchell (Principal & CEO)  
Nasim Jivani Hemani  
Frederick Law

**Clerk:** Clare Mitchell, Director of Governance

**Minutes:** Nichole Sansome, Executive Office – Business Manager

No.	Item
1.	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p>No apologies received.</p>
2.	<p><b>Declaration of Interest</b></p> <p>No declarations received.</p>
3.	<p><b>Minutes of the Meetings held on 22 February 2022.</b></p> <p>The minutes of this meeting were agreed as an accurate record.</p>
4.	<p><b>Matters arising from the Minutes not on the Agenda</b></p> <p>The ongoing actions were briefly discussed by the committee:</p> <p>Action #2 – the Chair would share strategies to encourage Governors to undertake online training with the DoG. This action was now complete.</p> <p>Action #4 – the DoG explained discussions regarding the responsibilities of student governors under the age of 18 remained ongoing. Any progress would be reported at future meetings.</p> <p>The Committee <b>noted</b> the remainder of the updated action list.</p>
5.	<p><b>Governance Policies and Procedures</b></p> <p>i. <u>Compliance with AoC Code of Governance – updated September 2021</u></p> <p>The report provided by the DoG outlined the college’s areas of partial compliance to the AoC Code of Governance, alongside proposed remedial action(s) to achieve full</p>



compliance. The DoG noted that the full review of compliance to all 10 principles was available to committee members on request.

The DoG noted Principle 5.6 “Colleges should publicise to the communities they serve and other stakeholders, the coverage and timing of its reporting, and should offer opportunities to engage with the college on reports or other areas of concern” was an area yet to be assessed. The DoG would be speaking to governance colleagues regarding their own compliance process against this principle to get greater clarity on the requirement.

The Chair of the Board suggested this could be achieved through engagement with local employers. The P&CEO suggested the College could host an annual stakeholder’s event with Governors and employers as an opportunity to feedback and obtain in put on the College’s activities . The Committee **agreed** that this would be useful.

**Action: DoG to investigate holding an annual stakeholders event with Governors and employers**

The DoG confirmed there were clear actions in place for other areas of partial compliance.

The Committee briefly discussed Principle 9 “Equality, Diversity & Inclusion” noting the following:

- An action plan to achieve an award in Investors in Diversity was now in place. The DoG explained that both student and staff engagement was required. The next survey to establish progress towards the award would follow in the second half of the Autumn term.
- Providing Governor EDI information to the DfE had been made compulsory for the first time in 2022/23 and would be brought to the committee at the next meeting.
- An internal audit linked to HR was due in 2022/23, which could be used to measure compliance against this Principle.

The Committee **noted** the areas where the College was not yet fully compliant against the Code, and the proposed actions to be taken.

**Action: DoG to provide feedback on Principle 5.6 requirements at the next meeting.**

**Action: DoG to include Governor EDI data on agenda for the next meeting.**

ii. External Governance Review

The DoG presented the report and sought comment on the outlined proposals, noting the scope of the review, which was due in 2022/23, would need to be clearly defined so that it was manageable. The Committee discussed looking at themes from the self-assessment returns for ideas on scope and also suggested succession planning, and the Board’s role in strategy development.

The Chair of the Board noted the outcomes of the review would be a good developmental tool for the Board.

The DoG noted the brief for the review would be finalised at the February 2023 S&G Committee meeting, following which a reviewer would need to be quickly appointed to complete the process in June/July 2023 for reporting in the following Autumn term.



The DoG would speak to other Colleges about their plans, though noted feedback would be limited.

The Committee discussed the process for the review. FL suggested using the types of internal and external assurance that were already available e.g. internal audit reports , in order to demonstrate where the College already had assurance and to identify where the review might be most helpful.

The Committee discussed overall Governor engagement, noting a small number of the same Governors regularly engage in College activities. NJH suggested reiterating the time commitment required to be an effective Governor. The Committee went on to discuss routes to reset expectations. One suggestion was a specialisms approach, where governors would be linked to schools relevant to their own experience and skills. The DoG would look further at this.

The Committee **recommended** the proposals for the Board to approve.

**Action – The DoG to speak to other colleagues regarding their approach to external governance reviews.**

**Action – The DoG to consider the types of internal and external assurance that were already available in order to demonstrates where the College already had assurance and to identify where the external review might be most helpful.**

**Action – The DoG to consider Governor specialisms/skills and link those to areas with the College for discussion at the next meeting**

iii. Governance Self-Assessment

The College undertook an internal governance self-assessment annually in the autumn term for the previous year. The DoG presented the report and sought comments on the proposed amendments to the governance self-assessment process for 2021/22.

The report proposed that the 2021/22 self-assessment be more closely aligned to the College SAR, resulting in an Ofsted grading for Governance.

The Committee discussed potential issues with the self-assessment process, potentially including lack of engagement. The Chair of the Board provided assurance that Governors were reminded of their commitment to attend and engage in committees and Board meetings. The DoG confirmed that the questionnaire issued to Governors would encourage comment on committee effectiveness and behaviours.

The Committee **recommended** the proposed amendments to the self-assessment process to the Board for approval.

iv. Updated FE Governance Guide

The DoG presented the report and DfE guide summarising the legal and regulatory requirements that apply to FE college and sixth-form college corporations. The June 2022 update included strengthened guidance on EDI, and good recruitment practice for Governor and senior leadership appointments. The only area that the DoG had identified to date where further work might be needed was the recruitment of senior post holders.



	<p>This would be reviewed with the Head of HR at the point that there was a senior post holder vacancy.</p> <p>The Committee <b>noted</b> the updated DfE Governance Guide.</p>
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Themes from Individual Governor Reviews 2021-22</b></p> <p>The Chair of the Board summarised the emerging themes shown in Appendix A.</p> <p>The need for Board involvement in strategy development was noted. The College was coming up to a review of strategy in which the Board would be engaged.</p> <p>The Chair of the Board outlined progress following a recent meeting with the University of Roehampton, and ongoing plans to grow the relationship.</p> <p>The Committee went on to discuss the emerging issue of poor achievement rates at the Coulsdon sixth-form campus, contributing factors included a lack of consistent use of College systems to record student progress, weaknesses in management, and a change in qualification framework with poor implementation. The P&amp;CEO outlined the steps taken and planned actions for improvement including the introduction of dedicated Quality Manager, with other dedicated posts following for MIS &amp; Exams.</p> <p>The Chair asked what metrics were used to monitor progress and spot warning signs. The P&amp;CEO assured that early warning systems were in place, and that Coulsdon staff had been trained to use them. Previously used systems that did not feed into College data had been removed entirely.</p> <p>The P&amp;CEO reported that the frequency of Coulsdon LQC meetings would increase to half-termly during 2022/23 to closely monitor progress, and the membership of the committee would change so that there were fewer staff members in attendance, reflecting the comments made in the Governor reviews.</p> <p><b>Action: DoG – increase frequency of Coulsdon LQC meetings and amend membership</b></p> <p>The Chair of the Board summarised that the issues were known, mitigating actions were in place, but there was concern over the likely Ofsted outcome depending on when inspection took place.</p> <p>The Chair suggested arranging time for the Chairs of various committees to meet, discuss key issues, and share/challenge information. Rather than ask for further time commitment the DoG suggested that this was piloted with the LQC Chairs and that they were asked to give a report on their meetings at the December Board.</p> <p>The DoG noted the Coulsdon Principal’s report would be included in the October Board papers.</p> <p>The Committee <b>noted</b> the remaining emerging themes from individual Governor reviews.</p> <p><b>Action – DoG to arrange for LQC Chairs to give a report at the December Board meeting.</b></p>



7.	<p><b>Summary of Chair Review Discussion &amp; Outcomes</b></p> <p>The Committee <b>noted</b> the report.</p>
8.	<p><b>Board Development Programme 2021/22 Summer Term Update</b></p> <p>The DoG presented the report and outlined two key areas not completed as shown in Appendix A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement with students and teachers; there was no lesson engagement during Summer due to exams. The P&amp;CEO suggested arranging lesson engagement during Autumn and Spring to avoid exam season.</li> <li>• Engagement with external stakeholders; this would be achieved through hosting an annual event as suggested by the P&amp;CEO earlier during the meeting.</li> </ul> <p>The committee <b>noted</b> progress against the Board Development Plan for 2021/22.</p>
9.	<p><b>Review of Committee Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>The DoG presented the report and asked the Committee to recommend the proposed amendments to the Board for approval.</p> <p>The Chair emphasised Point 9 related to Clerk recruitment, noting the S&amp;G committee would have involvement in any recruitment, with the Clerk ultimately appointed by the Board.</p> <p>The Committee <b>recommended</b> the proposed amendments to the Board for approval.</p>
10.	<p><b>Areas for discussion</b></p> <p>i. <u>Committee membership and succession planning 2022/23</u></p> <p>The DoG presented the report and sought comment on the proposed committee membership for 2022/23, which would be presented to the Board for approval.</p> <p>The Committee discussed Student Governor elections. The Chair of the Board confirmed Student Governors would be invited to attend the AoC's Student Governor event.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the other changes to membership noted in the report and whether it presented an opportunity to encourage applications from potential Governors to meet gaps including employer engagement, digital skills and construction. The Chair noted that the last round of recruitment of Governors was successful, the process did not require adjustment.</p>



<b>11.</b>	<p><b>Post meeting evaluation</b></p> <p>The Committee <b>agreed</b> the session was well run, and the discussion around the emerging issues at Coulsdon had been useful.</p>
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>Dates of future meetings</b></p> <p>Wednesday 23 November 2022 (in person)  Wednesday 22 February 2023 (virtual)  Wednesday 5 July 2023 (in person)</p>
<b>13.</b>	<p><b>Other business</b></p> <p>None</p>

*Approved as an accurate record by the Search and Governance Committee at its meeting on 23 November 2022*

*Clare Mitchell  
Director of Governance*