

Governance Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 14 February 2020 at 10:00am in OP118, Openshaw

Present: Jenifer Burden MBE (Chair) (by conference call), Barry Lynch ,
Jennifer Foote MBE (Company Secretary & General Counsel)

Apology: Cllr Sue Murphy CBE

In Attendance: Kate Mackenzie (Deputy Company Secretary and Solicitor) and
John Thornhill CEO.

Part A

01/20	<p>Minutes of Meeting 2 October 2019</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2019 were approved as an accurate record, subject to the word 'should', used on two occasions at paragraph 5 of Minute No 11/19, being substituted on each occasion for the word 'must'.</p>
02/20	<p>Governor Appraisals</p> <p>Following the direction of the Committee at the last meeting (Minute No. 13/19 refers), the revised appraisal process for governors was submitted for consideration. The simplified process allowed for a greater ease of undertaking and engagement. An additional question of 'whether members have identified any training needs that would link to their improvement' was suggested. Assurance was sought in respect of the privacy notice around the resultant data collected.</p> <p>Reference was made to the ability to complete the process in the timescale allowed due to the recent ill-health of the Group Chair. This would be monitored and if necessary reviewed. In the meantime the appraisals of co-optees by Divisional Board Chairs would be arranged.</p>
03/20	<p>Draft Meeting Schedule – Impact of Changes to the Financial Reporting Cycle</p> <p>The Committee considered the analysis of the impact of the ESFA's new Integrated Financial Model for Colleges (IFMC) on the meeting schedule for 2020/21. It was explained that for the current year, the submission would be largely based on financial modeling undertaken for the investment requirements of the estate's strategy and therefore the actual submission would be approved by a written resolution of the Board. The Committee considered two options for future years which allowed for different approaches for the sign-off stages for the submission. These allowed for the process to be subsumed within the current approach to the scheduling of meetings and the other modelled new meeting dates to align with the submission dates. It was agreed that this could be reviewed for 2021/22.</p> <p>In response to a query it was confirmed that it was understood that the majority of Corporation Boards intended to retain the current schedule of meetings with an additional sign-off point specifically for the submission approval.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the draft meeting schedule be recommended to LTE Group Board for approval and adoption.</p>

<p>04/20</p>	<p>Governance Review – Bid Project Oversight</p> <p>The Committee received the report of the CEO outlining a proposal for the Board to receive a further layer of independent assurance as part of the bid project oversight for the Group.</p> <p>The committee noted the proposal for a light touch arrangement with a governor or co-opted member taking a ‘lead’ role to work with the Bid Team in the testing of strategy, rationale and process for bids before they were submitted for formal consideration.</p> <p>The terms of reference for this role were considered and it was agreed that a role specification and expected time commitment should be included. It was also agreed that the quantum and scope of the type of bid which would fall within the remit of the oversight should be articulated.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Board be recommended to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. establish the role of Bid Project Oversight Lead, with a revised Terms of Reference as detailed above; 2. appoint Peter Winter to the role.
<p>05/20</p>	<p>Quality Improvement Plan - Governance</p> <p>With reference to Minute No. 12/19, the Committee considered the report in respect of areas identified as requiring improvement in the governor self-assessment process and the customer satisfaction survey for 2018/19 and remedial action taken to date.</p> <p>The Committee focused on the issue of the need to demonstrate sufficient challenge. It was agreed that further work should be undertaken to test whether this was an issue of perception or reality. With challenge being fundamental to good governance the Committee sought to assure itself that reasons behind the issues were fully understood before further remedial action was taken. The Committee reflected that this could be explored with individuals as part of the appraisal process before being considered by a focus group.</p> <p>In relation to the issue stakeholder engagement and communication, the Committee reflected on the opportunities already in place to engage with learners throughout the Group and reflected that the list of stakeholder engagement events during the year should be circulated at the time of the self-assessment questionnaire as a reminder. The Committee expressed concern that despite several requests to receive an improved communication plan non had yet been forthcoming. It was agreed that the newly appointed Managing Director Group Operations should be asked to consider how this could be improved, with a substantive report submitted to the next meeting.</p> <p>The Committee noted the action taken to reduce the length of Board papers and manage the information given more effectively. It was further noted that the work on the Vision 2025 Strategy had given focus the development of the strategic direction of the Group.</p> <p>Discussion took place on the introduction of the new Education Inspection Framework and the need to review the current methodology of governor self-assessment to ensure that this remained consistent with the expectations of the framework. The Governance Team would work with the Group Quality Team to review the SAQ prior to its issue in July 2020.</p>

	<p>RESOLVED that a report on a governor communication strategy be submitted to the next meeting.</p>
	<p>----- Chair</p> <p>----- Date</p>

The meeting closed at 11:15am