RNN GROUP

Meeting/Committee	Search & Governance
Date of meeting	5th June 2023 at 4.30pm

1 Appointment of the meeting Chair

Committee agreed to appoint Jenny Worsdale as the Chair for this meeting.

2 Declarations of interest and eligibility

The meeting Chair reminded everyone present to declare any interests they may have on any matters to be discussed. There were no declarations made and standing declarations were noted.

3 Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence

Attendees:

Jenny Worsdale	Meeting Chair
Stephen Bulley	
Janet Pryke	
Jason Austin	

In attendance:

Maxine Bagshaw   Director of Governance

Apologies for absence:

There were no apologies for absence with all members of the committee present.

4 Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd February 2023

The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions.

AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd February 2023.

There were no matters arising.

5 Action Progress Report

Committee noted that there was just one action outstanding which relates to the annual committee report, with the next version due in December 2023.

6 Senior Post Holder Items

It was agreed that discussions in relation to these items would be recorded on a separate basis.

7   External Governance Review

The Director of Governance drew committees' attention to her detailed report on this and reminded of the context and steps taken so far, including:
- Board considered review options in January 2023, specifically to determine whether a standard or bespoke option should be pursued,
- Governors were asked to individually identify aspects that they would hope to see included in a review,
- Survey responses were shared with this committee, and
- Reviewers were asked to:
a) Confirm whether their review would include all aspects identified by governors in the survey, and
b) Any additional costs associated with covering any non-standard aspects.

She drew committees' attention to the feedback comments provided by all and also the summary of costs associated with each proposed review. Director of Governance advised that one reviewer who was approached had indicated that unfortunately he was unable to make a commitment because of capacity challenges which therefore leaves the options as:
- AOC
- Ian Ashman
- Governance4FE

Committee considered the options in detail and noted that the AOC has a panel of reviews consisting of 19 individuals and that each has different skills and expertise. Director of Governance indicated that, having spoken to AOC, the identity of the reviewer to be commissioned does have a number of influencing factors, including geographical location, however the most important consideration was likely to be individual availability and capacity. Committee considered the proposal and CV for Ian Ashman and noted his experience and also positive feedback provided by West Nottinghamshire College where he has completed a first review and is now commissioned to undertake a 3 year re-review. Committee all agreed that his proposal was very much based upon a collaborative approach which they felt would be really helpful to the organisation. Committee when considering the proposal received from Governance4FE felt that it was a little more 'one size fits all' which may explain why it is the lowest cost. Committee acknowledged that the price variations between the individual/organisations was not significant and therefore this shouldn't be the deciding factor. Following good debate on the options available, committee agreed to recommend that the board appoint Ian Ashman as the reviewer to support the board through its external governance review in the next academic year.

AGREED: to recommend that the board appoint Ian Ashman to conduct an external governance review.

8   Board arrangements

The Director of Governance introduced her detailed written report and a number of aspects were considered, including:

1) Current membership/tenures

Director of Governance drew committees' attention to the schedule circulated and it was noted that:
- There are no governors, save for student governors, who conclude their terms of office this year (up to 31st August 2023)
- There are 3 governors who conclude their terms of office on the 18th December 2023. These are Janet Pryke, Veronica De Bruce McCoy and Steven Bulley.

Confidential note

Janet Pryke indicated that she would be prepared to consider continuing as a governor until the conclusion of her appointment period as Chair, which is July 2024 but that there would need to be active steps taken to succession plan for the role of Chair. She explained that she is having capacity challenges, given professional commitments, and therefore doesn't feel able to give the role the additional time that is required, particularly if it is the case that the group goes in to FEC intervention again. She confirmed that she was happy to continue to support the group as a governor but that the demands on her time for additional meetings with other stakeholders cannot be accommodated.

Jenny Worsdale indicated that she would not be in a position, despite being the Vice Chair, to move into the role of Chair. She explained that this was entirely for practical reasons i.e. the distance she lives from the college. She expressed the view that the Chair needs to be someone far more local than she is.

Steven Bulley indicated that he would be happy to continue to support the group and have a period of reappointment but that, because of his own professional and personal commitments, he would wish to see succession planning for the role that he currently undertakes as the Audit and Risk committee Chair. Director of Governance confirmed that she has approached Sharron Blackburn with a request to consider this and plans to have a further follow up conversation at the end of the month. This would coincide with her changing jobs and potentially having more time to commit to the organisation.

Janet Pryke indicated that, in the shorter term, it would be helpful if another member of the Finance and Resources committee could take on the role of committee chair and it was agreed to discuss this at the next scheduled meeting.

2) Vacancies and Recruitment

Committee were reminded that there are currently no vacancies for independent/external governors, and it was confirmed that student governor recruitment will take place in the new academic year.

3) Committee Membership 2023/24

A copy of the schedule was considered, and it was noted that Carol Stanfield has highlighted a desire to step down from the Structures and Savings Task and Finish Group because of capacity challenges. Committee felt that it was a responsible approach and acknowledged that she continues to support the Quality and Standards committee and the Apprenticeship Task and Finish Group. In relation to Search and Governance committee membership it was acknowledged that, as this is made up of committee Chairs that, if there is a change in chairmanship for Finance and Resources and Audit and Risk committee then this would have a knock on impact specifically for this committee.

View of the committee was to continue with membership 'as is' to build upon the good work that already takes place, with the exception of:
- Carol Stanfield no longer being a member of the Structures and Savings Task and Finish Group, and

- Membership of the Search and Governance committee to be informed by ongoing discussion with Sharron Blackburn and F&R committee.

4) Training and Development 2022/23

Committee were happy to note the content of the information provided and all agreed that there was a good spread of commitment and uptake by governors.

5) Governor Engagement Log for 2022/23

Committee were happy to note the content of the schedule provided.

6) Governor links 2022/23

Link schedule was considered, and committee agreed that arrangements should continue into next academic year 'as is'. This is to allow relationships developed to continue. Committee noted that there were no links in place for Estates and Health and Safety and they therefore reflected upon governor skills and experience, and it was agreed that these should be considered as a focus for new governor recruitment and/or committee co-optees given the need for greater governor scrutiny and oversight in these areas.

7) 2022/23 Governor Self-Assessment

Committee discussed options in relation to this and all agreed to replicate the process which took place last year i.e. issuing a questionnaire to governors over the summer which is then followed up by one to ones with the chair in the autumn term. It was acknowledged that feedback on this process had been positive last year and that it had helped to tease out a number of issues and/or improvement recommendations.

8) Governor E&D Data Return for 2023

Committee were reminded that it is now mandatory to report on governor E&D data as part of the wider HR return required by the DfE. The census date is 31st July each year. A questionnaire will shortly be issued to governors to complete online.

9) Governor Attendance

Director of Governance highlighted low attendance for Veronica De Bruce McCoy, which was discussed earlier in the meeting and also for Monika Rodzos. It was agreed that the Director of Governance would make contact with her to try and better understand any barriers to attendance and seek to support improvements if possible.

AGREED: to note the content of the report provided.

9   Committee Annual Review

Director of Governance introduced this item and explained that it was an opportunity to reflect back on the academic year and to forward plan for next year, in terms of frequency of meetings, terms of reference etc. Subject to earlier discussions regarding membership, committee agreed to roll forward on the basis of the same meeting frequency and unchanged terms of reference.

AGREED: to note the content of the report provided.

8   AOB

There were no items of additional business.

9   Date and time of next meeting

Director of Governance confirmed that the calendar is currently being prepared and would be provided as soon as finalised.

Meeting closed at 5.20pm.

Signed _____ Chair

Date _____