

Search & Governance Committee

Agreed

22 May 2025

Members Adrien Ong (Chair); Rachael Fisher; Phillip Kerle; Karen Redhead

Attendees Richard Ward (Director of Governance)

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Robin Ghurbhurun.

2 Declarations of interest

Phillip Kerle declared that he was a governor of Orbital South Colleges.

3 Minutes

Resolved, That the minutes of the meetings held on 21 November 2024 and 4 February 2025 be approved as correct records.

4 Matters arising

The Director of Governance reported that the decisions taken by the Committee on redacted minutes from 2023/24 had been completed shortly after the November meeting. Following the previous meeting, the mid-year appraisals for the senior post holders had not yet taken place. The actions relating to the Chair of the Corporation campaign had been completed.

The Chair asked whether the SPH objective setting and appraisal processes were timed correctly. The CEO and Principal noted that some data returns were not confirmed until several months after the end of the academic year, which introduced a lag into the annual reporting process.

The CEO and Principal commented that the re-establishment of a standalone Remuneration Committee provided an opportunity to revisit this subject. The Director of Governance informed the Committee that the next meeting of the Remuneration Committee was set for 6 November.

5 Membership update

The Director of Governance presented an update on the membership of the Corporation, noting that Jonathan Roe had resigned approximately six months

ahead of the end of his term of office. Robin Ghurbhurun and Ian Comfort would leave the Corporation at the end of their terms at the end of the academic year on 31 July 2025. Shawez Mir had indicated that he was willing to put himself forward for reappointment as a governor and member of the Audit Committee. The Director of Governance informed the Committee that despite having missed a couple of Corporation meetings in the current academic year, Shawez met the criteria for reappointment.

The Director of Governance informed the Committee that the College's account with Reach Volunteering had been reactivated and resulted in three good applications coming through. He had arranged informal conversations and would bring applications through to the Committee as soon as they were available. He added that all three candidates could be appointed to a range of committees.

The Committee discussed the need to maintain sufficient expertise on major projects and construction on the Board, in light of the resignation of Jonathan Roe and the end of Christopher Taylor's term in December.

Following the appointment of Carole Kitching as Chair of the Corporation, the Director of Governance proposed that a decision on a permanent successor for Robin Ghurbhurun as Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee be postponed. The Committee agreed to the suggestion that Carole Kitching be asked to take the Chair on a temporary basis at the beginning of the new academic year.

Resolved, That Shawez Mir be recommended for reappointment for a further term of office beginning on 17 October 2025 and ending on 16 October 2027.

6 Annual governance self-assessment

The Director of Governance presented the findings of the Board's latest governance self-assessment. He noted that this was the first self-assessment for two years as the Board had undergone an external governance review in 2023/24. The questions in the survey had been drawn from the Association of Colleges' Further Education Code of Good Governance.

The Committee discussed the survey which had not received universally positive responses. The Chair asked what an appropriate course of action would be to address the negative responses. The Director of Governance noted that the Committee had been invited to report the paper to the Board at its next meeting in June. He added that a longer term option would be to focus on the relevant areas in the College's next external governance review, which could be brought forward to the next academic year. The Committee agreed to raise the matter at the next Board meeting.

7 Governance improvement action plan

The Director of Governance presented the governance improvement action plan, which had been streamlined following earlier discussion with the Chair. The Committee welcomed the shortened list and suggested that the practice adopted in the internal audit tracker for tracking closed recommendations in an appendix be adopted.

8 Next meeting

6.00 pm on Thursday 6 November 2025.