

**MINUTES OF THE SEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING**

**HELD ON TUESDAY, 4<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2025**

Meeting Commenced : 5.00 p.m.  
Meeting Closed : 5.26 p.m.

**Present:**

|               |                            |
|---------------|----------------------------|
| Liaqat Ali    | Independent Member         |
| Charlie Deane | Principal                  |
| Chris Trees   | Independent Member - Chair |

**In Attendance:**

|                     |                                    |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Peter Ryan          | Clerk to the Corporation           |
| William McGillivray | Clerk to the Corporation Designate |

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| <b>SC24/25.01</b> | <b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (ITEM 1)</u></b>   |
|                   | Apologies for absence were received from Naomi Sharples and Angela Davies.   |
| <b>SC24/25.02</b> | <b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (ITEM 2)</u></b>  |
|                   | Chris Trees declared an interest in item 5d – Corporation Membership.  |
| <b>SC24/25.03</b> | <b><u>MINUTES (ITEM 3)</u></b>   |
|                   | The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 <sup>th</sup> March 2024 were approved and signed as a true and correct record.   |
| <b>SC24/25.04</b> | <b><u>MATTERS ARISING (ITEM 4)</u></b>   |
|                   | The Clerk presented the report and confirmed that all actions had been implemented.  |
|                   | It was <b>Resolved</b> that the contents of the report should be noted.  |
| <b>SC24/25.05</b> | <b><u>GOVERNANCE (ITEM 5)</u></b>  |
|                   | <b><i>(a) External Review of Governance</i></b>  |
|                   | The Clerk confirmed that the report provided an update on the implementation of the External Review Action Plan as of March 2025. Key updates included:  |
|                   | <b>Recommendation 1vi</b> - Consider developing a strategic MAT risk register (especially focussing on reputational factors) for monitoring by the Audit Committee.  |
|                   | <b>Current position</b><br>At the Corporation meeting on 4th February 2025, it was agreed that Bury College will withdraw from its role as Sponsor of The Keep Learning Trust. With a target date of 31st August 2025.   |
|                   | <b>Recommendation 5iii</b> - Consider introducing a maximum term of office, along with clear criterion for the circumstances in which exceptions will be applied.  |
|                   | <b>Current Position</b><br>AoC FE Code of Governance which was adopted by Bury College Corporation on 17th October 2023 for implementation from 1st August 2024 states that Governors should not normally serve for more than two terms (or a maximum of eight years). There is increasing pressure from DfE and the FE Commissioner to adhere to this. In a letter to Colleges the FE Commissioner mentioned an absolute maximum of 20 years. |
|                   | The Current Policy is not to have an overall maximum term of office but to reappoint based upon the contribution that each Governor makes to the development of the College.   |

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|  | <p>Members reviewed the College Governors length of service position in comparison to the AoC Survey 2022/23 and noted that the College had less governors in the 5-8 years band and more in the over 12 years band.</p> <p>Members noted the current position and agreed to meet again in the Autumn term 2025 to further review the position.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 5iv</b> - Consider expanding the process to be followed for staff student governor appointments/ reappointments.</p> <p><b>Current Position within Standing Orders</b>, with proposed amendments highlighted in italics, is:</p> <p>2.3.7. Two Staff Members are elected and nominated following separate elections involving the Academic Staff (1 Member) and the Business Support staff (1 Member).</p> <p>2.3.8. The Student Members are elected and nominated by the Bury College Student Representative Group <i>or via a nomination/election process.</i></p> <p><i>ix The election process for staff and student Governors will be as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>a) The Vacancy(s) will be advertised by the Clerk to relevant staff/students and nominations sought;</i></li> <li><i>b) The Clerk will ensure that all nominations received are valid;</i></li> <li><i>c) If there are the same number of valid nominations as vacancies they will be submitted to the Corporation for appointment;</i></li> <li><i>d) If there are more valid nominations than vacancies the Clerk will provide a more detailed overview of the requirements associated with being a Staff/Student Governor, emphasising the attendance requirements and ask the Nominees if they wish to proceed to the election process;</i></li> <li><i>e) If more valid Nominees wish to continue than vacancies then an election process will be organised by the Clerk;</i></li> <li><i>f) Each Nominee will be asked to draft a supporting statement outlining what they would bring to the role;</i></li> <li><i>g) The Nominees supporting statement will be advertised and relevant staff/students invited to vote.</i></li> <li><i>h) The Nominee(s) with the highest number of votes will be submitted to the Corporation for approval.</i></li> </ul> |
|  | <p>It was <b>Resolved</b> that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i. The contents of the report should be noted;</b></li> <li><b>ii. A meeting of the Committee be arranged in the Autumn term to further review Governors Terms of Office; and</b></li> <li><b>iii. The proposed changes to the Standing Orders in respect of staff and student nominations elections be submitted to the Corporation for approval.</b></li> </ul>   |
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|  | <b><i>(b) Performance Review - Attendance Data 2023/24 and part year 2024/25</i></b>  |
|  | <p>The Clerk presented the data as follows:</p> <p><b>Attendance Data 2023/24</b></p> <p>The Corporation had an attendance target of 75% and the percentage attendance at Board meetings in 2023/24 was 88% (85% in 2022/23). Overall attendance at the Corporation and Committees was 88% (87% in 2022/23). Attendance at Committee meetings was: Resources 88%, Audit 93%, Curriculum and Quality 84%, Search 80% and Remuneration 100%.</p> <p>From survey of 82 (101 in 2022/23) General FE Colleges in 2023/24 the mean average attendance rate was 82.19% (82.68% in 2022/23) with a range of attendance rates from the lowest at 67% (69% in 2022/23) to the highest at 97% (94% in 2022/23).</p> <p><b>Part Year 2024/25</b></p> <p>Current Year 2024/25 Corporation and Committee attendance was 90% (part year 2023/25 91%).</p>  |
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|  | It was <b>Resolved</b> that the contents of the report should be noted.   |
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|  | <b><i>(c) Skills Audit 2024 and Governor Membership Profile/Characteristics</i></b>   |
|  | The Clerk presented the report as follows:  |

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|                   | <p><b>a) Skills Audit 2024 (Appendix A)</b><br/>Governors completed a skills audit in September 2024. It was clear that there was a good overall balance of skills to enable Members to fulfil their responsibilities. In addition, as previously agreed, the skills of the Board have strengthened by the recruitment of a Member with Financial Skills.</p> <p>The Corporation had agreed a Governor Development Policy in October 2024 which included mandatory training and a revised Governor Induction process which was being implemented.</p> <p><b>b) Governor Membership Profile/Characteristics 2024 (Appendix B)</b><br/>The Further Education Workforce (including Governance) Survey for the Academic year 2022/23 was published on 5th November 2024. This survey collected data about governors from General Further Education Colleges (including tertiary colleges) and sixth form colleges, including designated institutions. The report provided comparisons between the national position and the College position in respect of Governors key characteristics in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constitution of the Corporation</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Governors Length of Service</li> <li>• Ethnicity</li> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Declaration of Disability Status</li> </ul> <p>Members noted the College position against the national profiles.</p>  |  |             |  |  |  |  |                                   |                   |   |   |
|                   | It was <b>Resolved</b> that the contents of the reports should be noted.  |  |             |  |  |  |  |                                   |                   |   |   |
|                   | <b>(d) Review of Corporation Membership</b>   |  |             |  |  |  |  |                                   |                   |   |   |
|                   | <p>The Clerk introduced the report which detailed Members terms of office that would end in 2024. When considering the terms of office of Governors Members were mindful of the current Code of Good Governance for English Colleges and considered that the effective contribution of Members was a more essential factor than length of service. It was noted the Committee had agreed to meet in the Autumn term to further review Governors Terms of Office.</p> <p>Members considered the attendance and contribution that each Member had made to the Corporation and its Committees and agreed that the following recommendations be made to the Corporation:</p> <p>Chris Trees withdrew from the meeting.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Chris Trees</td><td>Chair of the Corporation<br/>Chair of Search<br/>Member of C&amp;Q and Remuneration Committees</td><td> <p>Independent Member<br/>First Appointed 06/07/2006<br/>Subsequent Reappoints to 31/08/2025<br/>Chris is one of the longest serving Members of the Corporation and is currently the Chair of the Corporation<br/>He is the former Head Teacher of Philips High School (21 years) and has 40 plus years in teaching. He is the Lead Governor for Teaching and Learning and Apprenticeship Provision</p> <p>Chris had 100% attendance in 2023/24 and has 100% attendance in the current year.</p> <p>Recommendation to reappointment to 31/08/2029.</p> </td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td>Chris Trees rejoined the meeting.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Dr Naomi Sharples</td><td>Vice Chair of the Corporation<br/>Chair of C&amp;Q<br/>Member of Search and Remuneration Committees</td><td> <p>Independent Member<br/>First Appointed 04/05/2021 to 31/08/2025<br/>Naomi is a dual qualified Nurse and Nurse Educator and her nursing took her into a wide variety of roles and experiences including promoting access to education opportunities for people who face disadvantages in their lives.</p> <p>She has worked in Higher and Further Education in senior positions for the past 24 years and worked locally and globally on supporting educational</p> </td></tr> </table> |  | Chris Trees | Chair of the Corporation<br>Chair of Search<br>Member of C&Q and Remuneration Committees | <p>Independent Member<br/>First Appointed 06/07/2006<br/>Subsequent Reappoints to 31/08/2025<br/>Chris is one of the longest serving Members of the Corporation and is currently the Chair of the Corporation<br/>He is the former Head Teacher of Philips High School (21 years) and has 40 plus years in teaching. He is the Lead Governor for Teaching and Learning and Apprenticeship Provision</p> <p>Chris had 100% attendance in 2023/24 and has 100% attendance in the current year.</p> <p>Recommendation to reappointment to 31/08/2029.</p> |  |  | Chris Trees rejoined the meeting. | Dr Naomi Sharples | Vice Chair of the Corporation<br>Chair of C&Q<br>Member of Search and Remuneration Committees | <p>Independent Member<br/>First Appointed 04/05/2021 to 31/08/2025<br/>Naomi is a dual qualified Nurse and Nurse Educator and her nursing took her into a wide variety of roles and experiences including promoting access to education opportunities for people who face disadvantages in their lives.</p> <p>She has worked in Higher and Further Education in senior positions for the past 24 years and worked locally and globally on supporting educational</p> |
| Chris Trees       | Chair of the Corporation<br>Chair of Search<br>Member of C&Q and Remuneration Committees  | <p>Independent Member<br/>First Appointed 06/07/2006<br/>Subsequent Reappoints to 31/08/2025<br/>Chris is one of the longest serving Members of the Corporation and is currently the Chair of the Corporation<br/>He is the former Head Teacher of Philips High School (21 years) and has 40 plus years in teaching. He is the Lead Governor for Teaching and Learning and Apprenticeship Provision</p> <p>Chris had 100% attendance in 2023/24 and has 100% attendance in the current year.</p> <p>Recommendation to reappointment to 31/08/2029.</p> |             |  |  |  |  |                                   |                   |   |   |
|                   |   | Chris Trees rejoined the meeting.  |             |  |  |  |  |                                   |                   |   |   |
| Dr Naomi Sharples | Vice Chair of the Corporation<br>Chair of C&Q<br>Member of Search and Remuneration Committees   | <p>Independent Member<br/>First Appointed 04/05/2021 to 31/08/2025<br/>Naomi is a dual qualified Nurse and Nurse Educator and her nursing took her into a wide variety of roles and experiences including promoting access to education opportunities for people who face disadvantages in their lives.</p> <p>She has worked in Higher and Further Education in senior positions for the past 24 years and worked locally and globally on supporting educational</p>  |             |  |  |  |  |                                   |                   |   |   |

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|                   |   | <p>opportunities for health and care workforce solutions. Her focus is on wellbeing, inclusive education, creative education, and working for the people of Bury.</p> <p>Naomi had 82% attendance in 2023/24 and has 83% attendance in the current year and takes the Lead role for HE.</p> <p>Recommendation to reappointment to 31/08/2029.</p> |
|                   | <p>Members noted that Angela Davies had indicated that she would step down as a Governor from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025 and a potential new Governor was being sought.</p> <p>Members also noted that Max Gallagher's initial 1 year term of office would end on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2025 and agreed that he should be offered an appointment for the full 4-year term to 15<sup>th</sup> October 2028.</p>   |   |
|                   | <p>It was <b>Resolved</b> that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <b>The contents of the report should be noted; and</b></li> <li>ii. <b>A recommendation be made to the Corporation on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025 that Chris Trees and Naomi Sharples be reappointed to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2029.</b></li> <li>iii. <b>A recommendation be made to the Corporation on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025 that Max Gallagher's term of office should be extended to 15<sup>th</sup> October 2028.</b></li> </ul> |   |
|                   |   |   |
|                   | <b>(e) Search Committee Annual Statement and Policy 2024/25</b>   |   |
|                   | Members reviewed the draft Search Committee Annual Statement and Policy 2024/25 and noted that there were no proposed changes to the Committee's Terms of Reference.  |   |
|                   |   |   |
|                   | <p>It was <b>Resolved</b> that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <b>The contents of the report should be noted; and</b></li> <li>ii. <b>The Search Committee Annual Statement and Policy 2024/25 is approved for submission to the Corporation.</b></li> </ul>   |   |
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| <b>SC24/25.06</b> | <b>DATE AND TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS (ITEM 6)</b>  |   |
|                   | To be confirmed.  |   |

There being no further discussion the meeting closed at 5.26 p.m.

Signed and approved as an accurate record of the meeting

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

| Summary of Actions - Search Committee<br>4 <sup>th</sup> March 2025   |  |                    |   |
|---|--|--------------------|---|
| Item  | Action   | Person Responsible | Timescale                               |
| SC24/25.05<br>a) External Review of Governance                        | A meeting of the Committee be arranged in the Autumn term to further review Governors Terms of Office; and   | Clerk              | Autumn term 2025                        |
|   | The proposed changes to the Standing Orders in respect of staff and student nominations elections be submitted to the Corporation for approval.  | Clerk              | Corporation 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2025 |
| SC24/25.05<br>c) Review of Corporation Membership                     | <p>1 A recommendation be made to the Corporation on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025 that Chris Trees and Naomi Sharples be reappointed to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2029.</p> <p>2 A recommendation be made to the Corporation on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025 that Max Gallagher's term of office should be extended to 15<sup>th</sup> October 2028.</p> | Clerk              | Corporation 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2025 |
| SC24/25.05<br>e) Search Committee Annual Statement and Policy 2024/25 | The Search Committee Annual Statement and Policy 2024/25 is approved for submission to the Corporation.  | Clerk              | Corporation 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2025 |