

Minutes

SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Date:	13 October 2025	Time:	16.00 Hours
Chairperson:	Sally Osmond (SO)	Location:	The Hart Room, Newbury College, Monks Lane, Newbury

Members	Name	Present	Role
	Louise Muijen	*	External Member
	Sally Osmond (SO)	*	External Member & Chair
	Russell Shackleton (RS)	*	External Member & Chair of Audit Committee
	Chris Wilson (CWi)	*	External Member & Chair of Curriculum and Quality
Apologies	Lee Probert (LP)		Principal & Chief Executive (PCE)
	Trevor Gabriele (TG)		External Member & Chair of Finance & Resources Committee
In Attendance:	Jo Houghton (JH) (GP)	*	Executive Director, Governance, Standards and Projects Administrator
	Nicola Danbury (ND)	*	Governance, Standards and Projects Administrator
Quorum:	3 required		Meeting Quorate

Item No.	Item	Reports
	<p>WELCOME</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Matt Jones (MJ) was introduced as the newly elected Staff Member (Curriculum) and was informed he would be on the Curriculum and Quality Committee and could potentially join others. He was also informed that Lesley Black can provide assistance, if needed, to support his dual roles of Board Member and member of staff. MJ did not attend the rest of the meeting.</p>	
1.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted for Lee Probert and Trevor Gabriele.</p>	Verbal
2.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest made in any of the agenda items or any conflicts of interests recorded.</p>	Verbal

3.	<p>Election of Vice Chair of Search and Governance Committee Russell Shackleton was unanimously elected as Vice Chair of the Search and Governance Committee.</p>	Verbal
4.	<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd June 2025. The minutes were unanimously approved by the Committee.</p>	Paper – p3
5.	<p>Actions from the previous meeting</p> <p>The Chair noted that actions from the previous meeting were either included in this meeting or had been completed.</p> <p>The Chair also updated the Committee on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That this Committee can also incorporate other aspects that are relevant under the realm of ‘governance’. • Questions relating to the SPA Steering Committee will be discussed at the Corporation Board and Strategy meeting next week. The SPA process is led by the FEC – they are dictating the pace and roles, and timelines are very tight. • It was noted that Governance documentation from 2022-23 is in folders and complete, yet there are missing items from 2023-24. It was discussed that there were IT issues that year, however, it was noticed in preparation for the FEC intervention that some things were out of date. <p>It was also noted that previous minutes were sometimes difficult to understand and not always accurate.</p> <p>Preparedness for Ofsted from a governance perspective was discussed. The Chair has met with the Chair from BCoT (Basingstoke College of Technology) to discuss the pilot Ofsted they recently experienced and confirmed that BCoT are happy to share their experience with Newbury College. It was noted that during the pilot Ofsted minutes were scrutinised, with notes from meetings being asked for.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee asked if recordings from meetings were still available after they had been reviewed? They were informed that they were not. 	
6.	Member Updates	
6.1	<p>Election of new staff governor, Matt Jones The GP informed the Committee that Matt Jones had been elected via proper processes. Members expressed they were looking forward to him joining the Board.</p>	Paper – page 6
6.2	<p>Removal of Board Member The Chair noted that this was their first experience of having to remove a Board Member and informed the Committee that the process for removal was set out in the Articles. The BM had only attended two meetings early on in their role and had not replied to contact made by the Chair, the previous GP and ND. Peridot had not been able to reach them either.</p> <p>The Chair asked the Committee for their support in contacting the BM to remove him from the Board. The Committee unanimously agreed.</p>	Verbal

<p>6.3</p>	<p>Recommendation of Steve Dixon (SD) as Board Member and SEND link governor</p> <p>The Committee discussed the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of having an experienced SEND link governor • That SD has previously applied to be a Board Member and is experienced in both SEND and college mergers. <p>The Chair proposed recommending SD as a new Board Member, which was unanimously supported by the Committee.</p> <p>Action</p> <p>ND to check that SD has been invited to the Corporation Board and Strategy meeting on 20th October 2025.</p>	<p>Verbal</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Recommendation of Governance Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing Orders (Governor Code of Conduct) • Search and Governance Committee TOR • Remuneration Committee TOR • Finance and Resources Committee TOR • Curriculum and Quality Committee TOR • Audit Committee TOR • Strategic Development Committee TOR • Instrument of Government • Articles of Government • Governor Induction Booklet • Governance KPIs • Governance Policy <p>The GP presented the governance documentation and highlighted to the Committee changes that had been made. The Committee suggested some minor changes to wording.</p> <p>The following items were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of the term ‘clerk’ or ‘governance professional’. It was noted that in some other documents it was not always clear. • A question was asked about ‘Matrix Standard’. The Committee were informed that it was a process the College went through in summer 2025. • The Governor Induction Booklet – the Committee expressed that they were pleased with this document and were informed that the document was an iterative process that should improve with experience. It was noted that the role of the governor involves a significant time commitment. It was noted that the practical side of governor induction, such as a tour of the building, was helpful. • There was discussion of the difference between ‘attendance’ and ‘participation’. • It was discussed that ‘actions’ should only be closed by Committees, and that governors questioning actions provides challenge for the College. 	<p>Paper – page 18</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FEC have asked for progress on the KPI dashboard and have asked to see updated Board papers and minutes to prove this. • Board members' visits to the College were discussed, as was the potential use of a 'Governor's Scorecard'. • The Chair will talk about governor requirements at the Corporation Board meeting. • It was also suggested that governor visit reports could be more in depth. <p>Action: GP to ensure that there are robust governance KPIs.</p> <p>All documentation was approved, with the suggested changes made. It was noted that they need to be uploaded on to the College website, correctly dated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee noted that some of the information on the College website is out of date. The GP informed the Committee of the process for putting policies and other items on the website. • The Committee asked what is the expectation in terms of how long this process takes? They were informed that there is no awareness of this being an issue and that the aim is to have some items uploaded this week. • It was noted that policies on the website should have roles and not names of people on them. The exception to this rule is the Safeguarding Policy. 	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Recommendation of Scheme of Delegation The GP presented the Scheme of Delegation, informing the Committee that the document had been cross-referenced. A minor change was needed; it is hoped that a copy will be shared at the Corporation Board meeting on 20th October.</p> <p>The GP informed the Committee that the SPA committee will have a Terms of Reference drafted by the FEC. The Committee acknowledged the amount of work that had been put into collating the Scheme of Delegation and thanked the GP for her work on this.</p>	<p>Paper – page 108</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Governance preparation for Ofsted inspection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principal and chair of BCoT have made contact regarding the pilot Ofsted – GP will arrange for Chairs and Governors who may be involved in inspection to meet BCoTs Chair for feedback. • BCoT inspection consisted of 14 inspectors. • There is a suggestion that inspections that occur in the first half term will be moderated due to the new system. <p>Action: External Members are to be asked if there are any periods of time, between now and the end of the year, when they are not available to meet with Ofsted inspectors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board need to consider which Members would be Ofsted facing and who would act in reserve. 	<p>Verbal</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee requested that the College remember what, over the last two years, the College has done well or achieved. • The Chair will state at the Corporation Board meeting on 20th October that everything that can be controlled needs to be up to date – such as minutes, training etc. <p>Action: Governors asked the GP to consider what help would be needed for all the things that need to be completed in a short space of time. Suggestions included redeploying people or employing outside help, as the FEC have stated that emergency funding is there to be used.</p>	
10.	<p>Any other business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A question was asked about whether there are enough external governors. • It was discussed that the Board is underrepresented in terms of equality and diversity and that the skills audit shows we need more influence in the community. Other colleges have ex-MPs and council members on their boards. • The need to strengthen the Board was noted. • The Committee asked if there was any progress on the recruitment of student governors? GP informed the Committee that they will be elected after half-term and will come to the December Corporation Board meeting. 	
	<p>Date and time of next meeting Monday 26th January at 4.00pm Meeting Closed at 5.35pm</p>	

Signed: *Sally Osmond*

(Chair) Date: 29 Jan 2026

Sally Osmond (Jan 29, 2026, 4:43pm)



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