

Ruskin College

Minutes of a meeting of the Search Committee held by telephone conference on Thursday 4 March 2009 at 11.00am

Consulted: David Norman (Chair), Audrey Mullender, John Fray, Ruth Hunt

Also involved: Chris Wilkes (General Secretary), Rebecca Cox (Clerk)

1. **Apologies for absence** **Action**
Apologies were received from Carole Orgell-Rosen and Liz Mathews.
2. **Minutes of last meeting**
The minutes of the last meeting held by telephone conference on 2 June 2008 were approved as an accurate record.
3. **Matters arising**
 - 3.1. **Crisis – invitation to join Council**
Noted: that Chris Clements, New Developments Manager, had joined.
 - 3.2. **Vacancy for domestic staff representative on Governing Executive**
Noted: that Carol Newbury, Warden, had joined.
 - 3.3. **Replacement for Ed Sweeney on Governing Executive**
Noted: that Chris Baugh, Assistant General Secretary of PCS, had joined.
 - 3.4. **Membership of Finance Committee**
Noted: that Jane Dixon was now a member.
 - 3.5. **Membership of Capital Project Steering Group**
Noted: that Jane Dixon, John Fray and Pearl Ryall were now members.
 - 3.6. **Membership of Council – Oxfordshire County Council**
Noted: that Richard Munro, Head of Community Services, was now a member. Tan Lea, Youth Offending Team Manager, had been approached on 29 January, but had not yet responded. It was agreed that she would be a valuable member, and her involvement would be particularly welcomed by some members of the teaching staff. The Clerk was asked to pursue this matter. Clerk
 - 3.7. **Membership of Council**
Noted: that, following suggestions put forward at the last meeting, there were three new members of Council –
 - Tim Baster, Executive Director of COIN
 - Patrick Tolani, Director of Oxfordshire Racial Equality Council
 - Professor John Raftery, Pro Vice Chancellor (External Affairs), Oxford Brookes University

[Post-meeting note: the agenda wrongly cites these as co-opted members]
4. **Membership of Council**
 - 4.1. **Nomination of John Prescott as a co-opted member of Council**
Noted: that John Prescott had indicated that he would be willing to become a member of Council. He was currently extremely busy with the 'Go Fourth' campaign, but would be an influential person to have on Council. He had recently re-established his links with Ruskin and been in contact.
Agreed: that the Principal should take this forward AM
 - 4.2. **Nomination of Greg Dyke as a co-opted member of Council**
Noted: that Greg Dyke had recently been on the College's radar in connection with a programme made with one of Ruskin's History tutors. He had not yet been approached.

Ruskin College

Agreed: that, whilst he might be a valuable member, it was unlikely that he would commit to membership and that this should not be pursued at this stage.

Noted: the Principal's assertion that Ruskin did not currently use Council to secure the involvement of people of influence and affluence in College affairs. There were currently three vacancies for co-opted members on Council and further nominations were therefore sought. It was suggested that people able to support the College's development work would be desirable, along with those who reflected the social inclusion element of Ruskin's ideals - preferably from left-wing organisations influential in policy-making, such as the Joseph Rowntree Foundation or IPPR (Institute for Public Policy Research). The post of Director of the IPPR was currently held by two women who job-shared, and the organisation was recognised to be extremely effective in raising funds. The Chair of the Search Committee declared an interest at this point, as he had been a Trustee of the IPPR when it began.

Agreed: that either of the Directors of IPPR should be contacted. AM

Noted: the suggestion that Michael Callaghan would be a good potential member, as he had financial skills and a link with Ruskin through the proposed library.

Agreed: that the Principal should approach Michael Callaghan. AM

5. Membership of Governing Executive

5.1. Replacement for Gordon Beesley on Governing Executive

Noted: that it was possible that Gordon Beesley's personal circumstances might shortly change, which could potentially allow him to return as a member of the Governing Executive, though it was recognised that he might be unwilling to commit to attending meetings in Oxford.

Agreed: that, as his expertise had previously been so valuable to the College, the Chair would meet with Gordon Beesley to determine whether he would consider re-joining the Governing Executive. DN

Noted: that if Gordon Beesley were not able to become a member, it would be vital to identify a replacement with similar financial expertise.

5.2. Replacement for Mike McCartney on Governing Executive

Noted: that Fiona Sloman, who had recently joined Council representing the Citizens' Advice Bureau, would be an ideal candidate. She had previously worked for Prospect and lived locally, which would allow her to attend meetings easily. Her previous experience would mean that she had a good understanding of the strategic role of the Governing Executive.

Agreed: that Fiona Sloman should be invited to join the Governing Executive. Clerk

6. Membership of Finance Committee

6.1. Replacement for Gordon Beesley on Finance Committee

Agreed: that, if Gordon Beesley was willing to be a member of the Governing Executive once again, the Chair should also ask whether he would consider resuming his position on the Finance Committee. DN

6.2. New member to fill general vacancy on Finance Committee

Agreed: that, if she accepted the invitation to join Governing Executive, Fiona Sloman would be a valuable member of Finance Committee. She had previously been a budget-holder at work, would have the time to attend meetings and had indicated that she was keen to become more involved with Ruskin. It was noted that volunteers had been sought from existing Governing Executive members previously and no responses had

Ruskin College

been received. It was agreed that Fiona Sloman should be approached. Clerk

7. Membership of Audit Committee

7.1. Replacement for Mike McCartney on Audit Committee

7.2. New member to fill general vacancy

Agreed: that, as Audit Committee now met in London, it could suit those Governing Executive members who were based in London and were unable to become involved in any of Ruskin's other committees. The Clerk was asked to email the Governing Executive requesting volunteers, explaining exactly what would be involved and emphasising the London venue.

Clerk

8. Any other business

8.1. Council membership

Noted: that Louise Richards, who currently represented Computer Aid International and had previously represented War on Want, was leaving the organisation and was therefore no longer eligible to sit on Council.

Noted: that Liz Mathews was unable to attend today's meeting but had asked that Search Committee consider inviting the General Secretary of the Fire Brigades Union to become a member of Council. The Principal confirmed that this organisation had recently become more involved with the College through planned short courses for its members.

Agreed: that this should be taken forward.

Clerk

8.2. Governing Executive membership

Noted: that should Gordon Beesley be unwilling to return, John Fray could suggest an alternative who was an Independent Financial Advisor and who carried out a lot of work with trade unions. This would be considered at the next meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.35am.