

Ruskin College

Minutes of a meeting of the Search Committee held by telephone conference on Friday 22 September 2010 at 11.30am

Consulted: David Norman (Chair), Audrey Mullender, Carole Orgell-Rosen

Also involved: Chris Wilkes, Rebecca Cox (Clerk)

1. **Apologies for absence** **Action**
Apologies for absence were received from Liz Mathews.
2. **Minutes of last meeting**
The minutes of the last meeting of the Search Committee held by telephone conference on 11 September 2009 were approved as an accurate record.
3. **Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda**
 - 3.1. **Membership of Council**
Noted: that Tan Lea and Paul Hackett were now members.
Noted: that Antonia Bance would need to communicate her interest in joining Ruskin's Council direct to the Council's Membership Secretary.
Agreed: that the Clerk would check whether Antonia Bance was a City or County Councillor, as a vacancy had just arisen for a representative from Oxfordshire County Council. Clerk
Noted: that there had been no update on a possible representative from the Fire Brigades Union.
Agreed: that the Clerk would chase this outside the meeting. Clerk
Noted: that the Principal had made many attempts to set up a meeting with Dame Ruth Silver before she retired and moved to LSIS, but this had never transpired.
Agreed: that Dame Ruth Silver's membership of Council should not be pursued, as she would be unlikely to have the time to attend Ruskin meetings in the light of her new role.
 - 3.2. **Replacement for Gordon Beesley on Governing Executive and Finance Committee**
Noted: that Anne Hock had now taken Gordon Beesley's place on both Governing Executive and Finance Committee.
Noted: that Gordon Beesley was now attending Audit Committee as a consultant, pending a vacancy
 - 3.3. **Attendance by committee members in 2008**
Noted: that Chris Baugh had wished to remain a member of Governing Executive and the College valued his continued involvement.
 - 3.4. **Update on Governing Executive training**
Noted: that the training session on protocol discussed at the last meeting had been held on 27 November 2009.
Agreed: that a further training session should be arranged this year. It was agreed that the theme should be governance in the current context, with particular focus on inspection/audit/review, and that it should be held at Council on 3 December in order to involve as many people as possible. Clerk
4. **Council membership**
 - 4.1. **Received:** the following updates on current Council members:
 - **Noted:** that Dianne Hayter, now Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town, had contacted the Principal indicating that she would like to remain a Council member despite the fact that constraints on her

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time would be greater now that she was a member of the House of Lords.

Agreed: that Dianne had been a valuable and loyal member whom the College would like to retain on Council.

- **Noted:** that Brian Caton had retired as General Secretary of the Prison Officers' Association.

Agreed: that his successor, Steve Gillan, should be invited to become a member in his place and a meeting set up if possible.

Clerk

- **Noted:** that Richard Munro had retired as a member of Council nominated by Oxfordshire County Council.

Agreed: that he had been an erudite and sympathetic member, who would have time to attend meetings, and therefore the County Council should be approached to see whether he could remain as one of their nominees.

Clerk

- **Noted:** that Lord Young had contacted the Clerk to resign his place on Council.

- **Noted:** that Brian Orrell had retired as General Secretary of Nautilus International.

Agreed: that his successor, Mark Dickinson – who had indicated that he would like to continue the involvement with Ruskin's Council – should become a member.

Clerk

- **Noted:** that, shortly after agreeing to be a member of Ruskin's Governing Executive and Finance Committee, Fiona Sloman had left Oxford and lost contact with the College.

Agreed: that her continued membership should not be pursued, and the two resulting vacancies would be considered under item 6.

4.2. Potential new members of Council

Noted: that Chris Clements, formerly nominated to Ruskin's Council by Crisis, had left his role. A large Crisis Starlight project was about to be set up in Oxford and there would be someone appointed shortly to head this up.

Agreed: that, following their appointment, this person should be approached to become a member of Council.

Principal

Noted: the Principal's recommendation that Firoze Manji, the Director of Fahamu, should become a member of Ruskin's Council. The following was noted by Search Committee members:

Firoze Manji, a Kenyan, has more than thirty years of experience in international development, health, and human rights. Amongst other things he has been the Africa programme director at the International Secretariat of Amnesty International.

In 1997 he founded and is the Director of Fahamu.

Fahamu is a not-for-profit organisation committed to serving the needs of organisations and social movements that inspire progressive social change and promote and protect human rights. Fahamu has offices in Oxford, South Africa, Senegal and Kenya.

Firoze is also the Editor of Pambazuka News, the award-winning Pan African electronic weekly newsletter and platform for social justice in Africa providing contemporary commentary and in-depth analysis on politics and current affairs development, human rights,

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refugees, gender issues and culture in Africa and has a readership of 500,000.

Firoze is a widely known and globally respected activist and writer.

It was also noted that Firoze had given an inspiring and very well-received speech at Ruskin's awards ceremony this year.

Agreed: that Firoze Manji would be a welcome addition to Council and should be approached to see whether he would like to become a member, nominated by Fahamu.

Principal

Noted: the Principal's recommendation that Wendy Dawson, Director of The Ley, be considered as a possible member of Council. Ruskin currently provided literacy and numeracy courses for The Ley, a residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre in Oxfordshire, and Wendy Dawson had previously worked at Ruskin in Youth and Community Work and was highly successful in generating PR.

Agreed: that this would strengthen a positive partnership for Ruskin and that Wendy Dawson should be approached.

Principal

5. Recommendations from Audit Committee

Received: the internal auditor's report of March 2010 on 'Governance and Risk Management', and a copy of page 4 of Ruskin's 'Articles of Government'.

- 5.1. **Noted:** that the College's Articles specified that representatives should be nominated from both The Co-operative Union and The Club and Institute Union. As neither of these organisations had been represented for a long time, and other unions were not specified individually in the Articles, the Auditors had recommended that these references be removed.

Recommended: to the Governing Executive and the Council AGM the auditors' recommendation that these references be removed from the Articles.

Gov
Exec/
AGM

- 5.2. **Noted:** that the auditors had recommended that Search Committee give periodic consideration to the possibility of limiting the terms of office of Governing Executive members.

Agreed: that this would be considered from time to time, but that currently Search Committee members were satisfied that there were sufficient new members coming through regularly and that turnover was good.

6. Vacancies on committees

6.1. Replacement for Fiona Sloman on Governing Executive

Noted: that any replacement would need to be local and able to make a positive contribution to meetings. It was suggested that John Raftery would be an ideal candidate: he always spoke up at Council meetings, was knowledgeable about both the HE and FE sectors and, as second tier at Oxford Brookes, could bring invaluable experience with regard to managing the cuts in funding that the College would be facing.

Agreed: that the Principal should approach John Raftery to determine whether he would be willing to become a member of Governing Executive and to determine whether he would have time to attend meetings regularly.

Principal

6.2. Replacement for Fiona Sloman on Finance Committee

Noted: that again the key issue would be to identify someone who could attend meetings regularly.

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Agreed: that, as Finance Committee meetings were held on the same day as Project Board, it would be sensible to approach someone who already sat on Project Board. It was agreed that John Fray should be approached due to his long-standing association with Ruskin and the time available for him to be able to attend meetings. Pearl Ryall was to be approached if John were not able to commit, as she always made very positive contributions to meetings and had an excellent attendance record – although may not have the time available to attend additional meetings. Should either of these not be willing, it was agreed that Jo Morris should be approached. She had a solid attendance record, had been very supportive of Ruskin and contributed well at meetings. She had retired from the TUC last year and lived quite locally and so may be able to attend regularly.

Principal

7. Attendance by committee members in 2009/10

Received: report on attendance by members of the Governing Executive, Audit Committee, Finance Committee, Search Committee and Project Board in 2009/10.

Governing Executive

Noted: some concern about the attendance of two ordinary members.

Chair/

Agreed: that the Principal and the Chair should be authorised to talk to those members whose attendance was problematic.

Principal

Audit Committee

Noted: that attendance by three members in 2009/10 had been very poor.

Agreed: that Jan Etienne should be replaced by Gordon Beesley, who would be able to attend regularly.

Chair

Agreed: that Ray Collins should remain as a member. He had had a great deal to contend with this year in his other role as General Secretary of the Labour Party, but usually made a very positive contribution during the process of appointing auditors.

Agreed: that the Clerk should contact the TSSA to determine whether Andy Bain was still the President.

Clerk

Agreed: that the resulting vacancies on the Audit Committee could be filled by Council members. A letter should be sent out with the Council papers asking for volunteers, explaining what the commitment would involve – including that meetings were held in London.

Clerk

Finance Committee

Agreed: that attendance on Finance Committee had been good and no changes were required.

Search Committee

Agreed: that involvement in Search Committee telephone conferences had been satisfactory and no changes were required.

Project Board

Agreed: that attendance at Project Board had been good and that it was operating as an effective committee.

8. Paper for AGM

Received: report on Council and Governing Executive membership.

Recommended: to the AGM the re-election of Professor Jane Aldgate as Academic Adviser.

AGM

Recommended: to the AGM the re-election of Jan Etienne, Carey Oppenheim, John Prescott, Andrew Smith and Ed Sweeney as co-opted members of Council for 2010/11.

AGM

Noted: that Carole Orgell-Rosen wished to put herself forward as a co-

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opted member of Council now that she was not to be nominated by the Ruskin Fellowship.

Agreed: that Search Committee members wished Carole to remain on Council. She was a valued member, who also made significant contributions in her roles as Vice Chair of Governing Executive and Chair of Audit Committee.

Recommended: to the AGM that Carole Orgell-Rosen be elected as a co-opted member of Council for 2010/11.

AGM

Noted: that a number of ordinary members of Governing Executive were due to be elected for a further term of office. There were no objections to their re-election.

Recommended: to the AGM the re-election of Mike Bradley, Jane Dixon, Ruth Hunt, Pam Johnson, Jo Morris and Doug Nicholls as ordinary members of the Governing Executive for 2010/11.

AGM

Noted: that Mike Bradley had indicated his intention to retire as General Secretary of the GFTU.

Agreed: that it would be important to ensure that the GFTU nominate his successor to Ruskin's Council when the time came.

9. **Date of next meeting**

Noted: that the next meeting of the Search Committee would be convened when required.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12.20pm.