



“To promote lifelong learning for individuals and industry through the understanding and enjoyment of flowers, trees, plants and animals for career, business, educational and leisure purposes.”

**MINUTES OF THE SEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT 4.30PM ON THE 25TH NOVEMBER 2009**

Members:

Roger Abraham
Irene Byard
Steven Dowbiggin OBE
Huw Jones Owen (Chairman)
Malcolm Parkinson
Lady Salisbury

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 9TH JULY 2009

RECEIVED paper 2, minutes of the Search Committee meeting held on the 9th July 2009

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 9TH JULY 2009

There were no matters arising from the Search Committee meeting held on the 9th July 2009 not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

4. VACANCIES ON THE GOVERNING BODY

RECEIVED paper 4, report of the Chief Executive Officer for decision.

TABLED letter from David Gwyther, Director General of the HTA expressing and interest in becoming a governor.

NOTED that:

- i. following the resignation of Ken Crowther at the Special Governing Body meeting held on the 19th May 2009 and Sam Bell at the Governing Body meeting on the 22nd July 2009, there are two vacancies on the Governing Body;
- ii. at the Governing Body meeting held on the 22nd July 2009, governors identified the need to reinforce governor representation on the Audit and Health and Safety committees. Governors asked the Search Committee to include this as part of the selection criteria when giving consideration to filling the two governor vacancies;
- iii. at the Search Committee meeting held on the 9th July 2009, members felt that none of those who had currently expressed an interest in becoming a governor could fill the gap in skills left by Ken Crowther;
- iv. at the Search Committee meeting of the 9th July 2009 members identified the need to give priority to focusing on appointing a governor who would strengthen links with the horticultural and garden design industries and the garden media.
- v. at the Search Committee meeting of the 9th July 2009 members asked the Chief Executive Officer to talk to David Gwyther, Director General of the HTA, and seek his advice on who to approach;
- vi. the CEO had explored a number of possibilities with David Gwyther. The outcome of the discussion was that David Gwyther himself expressed an interest in joining the Governing Body;
- vii. approval for David Gwyther to formally express an interest in joining the Governing Body had been received from the Horticultural Trades Association on the 11th November 2009;
- viii. David Gwyther was currently involved with the Old Manor House Garden project at the college and domestic garden features close to the Olympic Park;
- ix. the discussions with David Gwyther had identified that it would be difficult to find a candidate to join the Governing Body who could:
 - a. increase trade support and sponsorship for the college and gardens through links with industry as the college approaches a financially testing period

and
 - b. raise the profile of the gardens and the college's activities in the media;
- x. the CEO subsequently received a telephone enquiry from Matthew Wilson, who had decided to leave the RHS to further his design and media career. Matthew Wilson was a long standing supporter of the college and has emailed asking for his name to be put forward for consideration for election as a Governor. He had also provided his biography and CV;

- xi. Members recognised the high calibre of the two expressions of interest received and the skills they could both bring to the Governing Body;
- xii. Members discussed the vacancies on the Health and Safety Committee and Audit Committee. Roger Abraham, Chairman of Audit felt that it might be an appropriate time to review the number of governors on the Audit Committee. Members felt that membership of the H&S committee could be explored at interview;
- xiii. Members also recognised the need to re-establish links with local ethnic minority communities and address the gender balance on the Governing Body;
- xiv. Members considered the skills that David Gwyther and Matthew Wilson could bring to the Governing Body and the contribution they could make was a high priority at the present time. Members felt the Governing Body was very fortunate to have received two such high calibre expressions of interest.

RESOLVED to invite David Gwyther and Matthew Wilson for interview.

5. UPDATE ON THE ELECTION OF TWO STUDENT GOVERNORS

RECEIVED paper 5, report of the Clerk for information

NOTED that:

- i. the student election process had been undertaken in compliance with the Instrument and Articles of Government. The appointment of the student governors for the 2009/10 academic year would be ratified at the governing body meeting on the 16th December 2009;
- ii. nominations had been received from two students and therefore no election process was required;
- iii. both students were eligible to serve as governors;
- iv. Members were disappointed that no students studying at the centres had been nominated. The Clerk advised that nominations had been requested from all centres as well as the Enfield site as part of the election process;
- iv. both student governors attended the Curriculum and Quality meeting prior to the Search Committee meeting. The Chairman of Governors reported that he felt two very able student governors had been elected.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 18th March 2010 at 4.30pm