



HARTPURY

Minutes of the Meetings of Hartpury University and Hartpury College Boards 10am Tuesday 18th May 2022 Teams and Gwynne Holford

Members

Mr Edward Keene
 Ms Jenny Arroud
 Ms Alison Blackburn
 Mr Patrick Brooke
 Ms Barbara Buck -
 Ms Alice Bridges
 Mr Alastair Grizzell
 Ms Mary Heslop
 Mr Henry Hodgkins
 Mr Sean Lynn
 Mr Russell Marchant
 Mr William Marshall
 Mr Chris Moody
 Mr Kam Nandra
 Vacancy HE Board
 Prof. Ian Robinson
 Dr John Selby
 Mr David Seymour
 Mr Gareth Smith
 Vacancy HE Board
 Ms Helen Wilkinson

In Attendance

Ms Lynn Forrester-Walker
 Mrs Rosie Scott-Ward
 Ms Gillian Steels
 Ms Claire Whitworth
 Ms Lesley Worsfold

University Board

Present (Chair)
 Present (Staff Governor)
 Apologies (Co-opted Governor)
 -
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 -
 -
 Present
 -
 Present (Vice-Chancellor)
 Present
 Present
 -
 Present
 Present
 Present
 Apologies (HE Student Governor)
 -
 -
 Present (Chief Operating Officer)
 Present (Pro-Vice-Chancellor)
 Present (Clerk to the Board)
 -
 Present (Vice-Principal Resources)

College Board

Present (Chair)
 -
 -
 Apologies
 Present (Vice-Chair)
 Apologies (FE Student Governor)
 Present
 Present
 -
 Present (FE Staff Governor)
 Present (Principal)
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 Present
 Present
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 Apologies
 Present (Chief Operating Officer)
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 Present (Clerk to the Board)
 Present (Vice-Principal Further Education)
 Present (Vice-Principal Resources)

	ACTION & ACTION DATE
<p>Continuous Improvement Briefing Session</p> <p>Dr Nikki Potter, Director Continuous Improvement (CI) provided a briefing session on Continuous Improvement at Hartpury (slides on governance site). This covered the team, what continuous improvement is, the CI vision at Hartpury, opportunities to identify project or actions for improvements (strategic projects, staff suggestions, “just do it” ideas), reporting process – monthly to the Executive (part of the Chief Operating Officer’s Team), the framework, examples of projects achieved and next steps.</p> <p>A governor queried whether students were involved and if they could propose projects. She was advised that at this stage students couldn’t submit proposals – there was a need to manage resources, but they were fully involved in</p>	

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	<p>consultations when improvements were being considered and investigated. Governors recognised the importance of staff being engaged by the process to ensure projects and changes were successful and queried the response to CI at Hartpury. Dr Potter advised that staff were usually supportive as the approach was to help a team identify required improvements and approaches, not to impose solutions – they were part of the project team. Staff considered that they were empowered to make change so it was generally seen as a positive process.</p> <p>A governor asked whether CI had been used to improve academic governance and was advised it had not so far. Decisions on the prioritisation of projects came from the Executive. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor advised that the development of a data dashboard would be a potential area. It was noted that the aim of projects was to gain staff capacity and make best use of staff time. A governor suggested that Covid had helped developed mindsets to explore new technology and refine processes and that momentum would need to be maintained. It was confirmed that this had been recognised. The changes to HE enrolment, to move it online, were highlighted as a change driven by Covid which was continuing and had benefitted students and staff. It was noted that FE returners were also being processed remotely.</p> <p>The Director of CI advised that only 2-3 projects were progressed at a time, given it was a relatively small team, therefore prioritisation was key. It was noted that currently the focus was on timetabling, this was very complex as an FE and HE institution.</p> <p>Governors thanked Dr Potter for her presentation and Dr Potter and her team for what they were achieving.</p>	
01/05/22	<p>Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies as detailed above.</p> <p>It was confirmed the meetings of the University Board and the College Board were quorate.</p>	
02/05/22	<p>Declaration of Interest The Clerk advised that members' interests would be taken as those disclosed in the Register of Members Interests.</p> <p>The following standing declarations were noted: The Chair, Vice-Chancellor/Principal and Chris Moody were members of both University and College Boards. Interests noted for governor(s) standing for Vice-Chair University Board</p>	
03/05/22	<p>Minutes of the meetings The Minutes of the University Board and the College Board meetings held on the 1st March 2022 were agreed by the respective Boards to be true and accurate records.</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	Electronic Approval – May 2022 - noted	
04/05/22	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>An action log had been provided updating on issues raised at previous meetings.</p> <p>Charitable Trust – it was noted it could not make loans to Hartpury, but could make a grant if it deemed it in terms with the Trust’s remit.</p> <p>The update was NOTED.</p>	
	Part 1 Priority Agenda Items	
05/05/22	<p>Vice-Chancellor & Principal’s Update Given the recent Board Strategic Days there were no significant Items to highlight at this time.</p> <p>Strategic Days Outputs These would be reflected on by the SMT and Boards and consideration given to developing practice to reflect discussions.</p> <p><i>The following outputs were highlighted:</i></p> <p>Capital Priorities – Agri-Skills Project – priority noted and confirmed that the architects had been asked to consider a workshop only version.</p> <p>Induction for Governors to be revised.</p> <p>Corporate KPI Suite – to be agreed.</p> <p>Summary Sheets- revised version to be trialled.</p> <p>Advance-HE Effectiveness Review The initial draft has been reviewed by the Steering Group. The final report will be considered by the Search and Governance Committee and then an action plan developed which will be brought to the Boards in July.</p> <p>Section 28 The formal feedback from this process was awaited, informal feedback had been positive and not raised any substantive issues.</p> <p>What-Uni Awards Hartpury University had been nominated in 5 categories – it was recognised it was an achievement just to be nominated, and was based on student nominations. The Award Ceremony was on 24th May. It was confirmed governors would be kept updated. (Hartpury was delighted to win the Lecturers and Teaching Quality category, fending off competition from 94 other institutions).</p> <p>LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) It was noted that Gfirst had achieved significantly for Gloucestershire, but that there was uncertainty about their role now. It was expected that under the</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>Levelling Up white paper the role of LEPs would reduce; where devolution was in place this would happen more quickly. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund would go to District Councils and would be an investment of c£1-1.4m over three years, and would be subject to an investment case. Funding for Growth hubs was uncertain. It was agreed that the Vice-Chancellor and Principal would keep the Board updated with developments.</p> <p>Sustainability- a governor requested when the Sustainability Update which had been delayed at the Strategy Days would be scheduled. It was confirmed this would be arranged. It was noted an energy strategy was also required.</p> <p>The following appendices had also been provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus Services • Sports Academy • Equine • Farm. • Marketing and Communications 	<p>Clerk Nov 2022</p>
	<p>The University Board and the College Board NOTED the Report.</p>	
<p>06/05/22</p>	<p>Finance Report – March Management Accounts</p> <p>Key points of the report were considered. The Management Accounts were for the 8-month period to end of March 2022. For this period there was a surplus of £3.11m compared to a budgeted surplus of £1,906m. The favourable variance was largely unchanged from previous months and was a result of lower pay costs due to vacancies and budgeted ‘other income’ mainly due to additional unplanned funding received in this financial year to support in year and prior year Covid costs and stronger than budget performance in Catering and Equine commercial areas.</p> <p>The reforecast had been reviewed in March and having taken account of the financial impact of the impairment of the current Graze building (£500k) when it will be demolished in July 2022 the forecast out-turn was a surplus of £1.8m compared to a budget of £1.9m.</p> <p>It was noted the management accounts presented the ‘Group’ position and incorporated all subsidiary activity.</p> <p>Governors reflected on savings due to vacancies and queried if the budget was based on full staff levels. This was confirmed. Governors questioned whether it was routine turnover or whether there were staff recruitment issues. The Chief Operating Officer advised the issue was mainly usual turnover but that there were some staff recruitment hot spots. Currently there were seven vacancies in catering. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal advised that staffing shortages were a common issue in discussions with industry. The Vice-Principal Resources advised that the issue was being considered creatively. It was planned to increase opportunities for students. The Graze building operation was being considered to ensure it used lean processes and operated with maximum efficiencies. A governor stressed the importance of having this right for when students started as this was when patterns were established. The Vice-Principal Resources advised that a Commercial Services Manager had recently been taken on and had a 50% role to support Graze.</p>	

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	<p>A governor noted that inflation was currently 9% and queried how confident governors could be about the budget being achieved. The Chief Operating Officer advised the reforecast meant it should be reflecting current circumstances. She noted that increases in energy would hit later in the year. Governors were advised that price lists had already been issued for livery, accommodation etc. so there would need to be ongoing careful cost management.</p> <p>The University Board and the College Board NOTED the March Management Accounts.</p>	
07/05/22	FE Report	
	<p>This was the fourth report of the academic year 2021-2022 for Hartpur College. Headlines included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BTEC Exams: January 2022 was the first time that we had implemented formal exams for our new BTEC qualifications. Out of the 2278 exams sat, students achieved 1944 pass, merit or distinction grades; 222 near passes (students can still achieve their overall grade depending on other assessment results), 46 unclassified results and 66 yet to take an exam due to illness. Resits will be held during the summer term. It was noted that Animal Management had done particularly well. Work was ongoing to see how Year 2 might be impacted where students had performed less well. • CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT: We continue to make progress against our Quality Improvement Plan actions in addition to ascertaining further in-year development needs. Our recently introduced 'Deep Dive' process has been implemented by middle managers, the outcome of which has been extremely beneficial to shape our focus on staff and student development this term and into next year. • POLICY / EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT: There are currently consultations in progress in relation to rationalising Level 2 provision and the content of the T-Level Transition Programme, both outcomes of which will impact our College offer and recruitment pattern in future years. The T-Level external landscape has continued to evolve and we are involved with all external forums possible in addition to liaising with other colleges who have been delivering T-Levels in other subject areas to gain as much information as we can to inform our decisions and T-Level roll out. <p>The Vice-Principal Further Education highlighted that it would now be possible to commence T'level delivery in 2024/25 and this approach was being considered. She advised that Directors of landbased organisations had the opportunity to feed in about content. Areas of concern had been highlighted to Landex for joint lobbying.</p> <p>It was planned to start Animal and Equine in 2024/25 as the current qualification make up meant the qualification would not equip a student to progress to university, which currently a high proportion of Hartpur students did.</p>	

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It was confirmed that Hartpury was involved in the relevant forums and groups to contribute, input and to develop understanding. The need to ensure staff were geared up for the delivery of T'levels was recognised. Hartpury was in contact with other colleges which were already delivering T'levels to benefit from their experience.

The outcome of the defunding of some qualifications was awaited. Landbased qualifications were expected to be defunded once T'levels were running.

In relation to A'levels it was noted results were in line with 2018/19 which demonstrated the robust processes were maintaining impact.

Apprenticeships – it was noted Hartpury only had a small number. The revised Agricultural Apprenticeship was being reviewed given the reduction in funding. A governor asked if there were other better funded schemes which could be used. The Vice-Principal Further Education confirmed options were being explored. She advised that the option of widening the portfolio would be discussed at the next FE Board.

The Vice-Chancellor and Principal stressed the need to ensure that Agricultural Apprenticeships and T'levels equipped students to succeed and progress, he expressed concern that the content was less challenging and less broad than current qualifications. It was noted this in part reflected the difficulty of engaging with a disparate sector. The importance of ensuring students were equipped for the future, not just today, was stressed. It was noted that Hartpury continued to work with City and Guilds to support the qualification development. Concern was expressed that the current proposed T'level qualifications did not include science. A governor commented that this was a strategic issue given the aim to grow agriculture. The importance of developing students who were equipped to meet the needs of industry was key. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal commented that it was important to campaign to ensure the qualifications would meet student and industry needs. He commented that Hartpury would also use the Hartpury Certificate to ensure this was achieved. He commented that the funding rate for T'levels had not yet been published.

The Vice-Principal Further Education highlighted the ongoing employer refresh work which was being taken forward with the ICE Manager.

Governors noted that of the KPIs there was one red. It was confirmed that this and the amber KPIs continued to receive attention. A governor queried why the Access to HE Retention rate was red. The Vice-Principal Further Education advised that they were small numbers and were a diverse group, and that last year Covid had increased retention. She advised it continued to be monitored. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal advised that most of the students were mature students who were juggling work and family and study.

**FE Board
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	<p>It was noted that delivery was now two days on line and one day in person to help support the balancing of demands for these students.</p> <p>A governor commented favourably on the 85% Btec exam achievement. The Vice-Principal Further Education thanked the exams team for the work they had done to ensure the smooth running of the exams. A governor queried if there were any areas of concern. The Vice-Principal Further Education advised that work was ongoing to improve retention in agriculture.</p> <p>A governor asked whether the Ofsted training for managers had raised any issues. The Vice-Principal Further Education advised that the recent Landex Peer Review had indicated there was good understanding on intent and impact but that further work was required in relation to implementation. She advised that the observation process had indicated strengths and areas for development and that department action plans were in place. It was noted that College Governors would be involved in Ofsted training later that day.</p>	
	<p>The FE Report was NOTED.</p> <p>The Vice-Principal FE and her team were thanked for their work.</p>	
08/05/22	HE Report	
	<p>The Board considered the HE Report.</p> <p>Key performance indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications were up on the same point last year (3% for home first years). However, we were working hard to increase the conversion of these to a higher rate in order to hit our ambitious growth targets (9%). Sport, Equine and Veterinary Nursing were holding their own, but there was work to be done on Animal and Agriculture. On a positive, there were a number of applicants in the pipeline still – they were making the decision to ‘firm’ later (which does align with sector reports). • Retention was lower than the same point last year, with reasons increasingly focusing on financial / employment opportunities. While we were confident we were working hard to mitigate these areas, we had launched a task group to investigate patterns in the student behavior leading to withdrawal in more detail. It was noted that individuals were indicating they were leaving for employment opportunities. Groups particularly being affected were BME, males, disabled. Mature students and those on lowest income – POLAR1. A governor asked if the retention was linked to a particular department. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor advised Sport Business Management had been a particular issue. She advised that the biggest risk was low income males <p>Office for Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been significant consultations launched by the OfS, with headlines likely to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ TEF autumn 2022 ○ Reduction in fee's for Foundation years 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some form of constraints on entry criteria / number capping ○ Review of REF likely to result in changes ahead of the 2028 exercise <p>It was confirmed that Hartpury was monitoring the consultation outcomes and modelling some of the proposals within the consultations to assess impact.</p> <p>Research Excellence Framework results are in and we should be pleased at our first submission. Governors commented positively on the success of our first submission and congratulated the Team on their achievement.</p> <p>The Inclusivity agenda continues to evolve in line with changes of staffing and priorities at the OfS. The APP (access and Participation Plan) needed to be reviewed and resubmitted. It would need to be signed off by the Vice-Chancellor but Academic Board and QuEst would be kept updated. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor advised that the proposals should align to our strengths of work with schools. It was confirmed we would align this to our curriculum. It was expected to focus on sport.</p> <p>The Pro-Vice-Chancellor advised that the NSS Student Satisfaction Survey had just closed. The Hartpury completion rate was 78.5% which was below the previous 80% which was achieved last year which was disappointing. It was noted that student engagement with surveys was a national issue. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor advised that staff changes and the impact of Covid during the students first year of study might impact on the results.</p> <p>A governor queried the consequences of International Post Graduate students not engaging and starting a course and was advised this was a licensing condition and therefore Hartpury conducted vigorous checks to ensure students were committed to their course, this included meeting an English language level requirement and paying a proportion of their fee.</p>	
	<p>The HE Report was NOTED.</p> <p>The Pro-Vice-Chancellor and her team were thanked for their work.</p>	
09/05/22	<p>Student & Staff Voice</p> <p>Student Governors Both student governors were engaged with their studies and unable to attend. It was noted timing of appointments was to be considered.</p> <p>Staff Governors The University Staff Governor – commented that staff were pleased that Graze was on track. She queried if there were issues re staff recruitment. The Vice-Principal Resources advised actions were ongoing.</p> <p>The College Staff Governor commented on the successful logistics for the exams. He queried if there were issues over invigilators. The Chief Operating Officer advised that there was a limited pool but that staff had also been used. The Vice-Principal Resources advised there was a national shortage of invigilators. The option of using HE staff or players was also being looked at.</p>	

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	<p>Governor Link Feedback Since March the following Link Governor Visits had been reported to the Clerk: Safeguarding and Welfare and Learning Support - Mary Heslop A Levels and Access to HE - John Selby Estates - Chris Moody</p> <p>The visits provided helpful triangulation of reports to the Boards on cross organisation strategic issues and staff perceptions and approaches. Confirmation was provided on staff morale.</p> <p>Confirmation was provided on staff morale. John Selby commented that "I got the sense of a thoughtful management team working well together and managing a complex situation very well."</p> <p>Strategic Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - • Increase in number of referrals to well being • Increase in numbers reporting suicidal thoughts/attempts and support being offered • Increase in numbers reporting sexual harassment (and demonstrating greater awareness and confidence in reporting) • Expectations from OfS of governor role, policy, communications and annual report for sexual harassment and misconduct and Prevent report. <p>Estates - Challenges associated with recruitment/retention of support staff.</p> <p>Other governors have confirmed dates for Link visits or are in the process of obtaining dates.</p> <p>Governors reflected on the increased agenda and demands from students relating to the safeguarding agenda. It was confirmed that a wide support was in place for students who needed it. It was noted that NHS delays in relation to counselling were an issue. A governor advised that students had confirmed to him that they considered there was good support in place.</p> <p>Governors considered the cost of living challenge for existing staff and the impact on recruitment. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal reminded the Boards of work done to move to the living wage, but recognised that these were challenging times. A governor queried if there was a hardship fund for staff (see further discussion in June SFR minutes). The need for staff to be aware of the benefits they could potentially access was noted.</p> <p>The Updates were NOTED.</p> <p>The Chair thanked governors for their feedback which helped to triangulate the information provided at the meetings.</p>	
	<p>Part 2 Approve Recommendations and Accept Minutes from Corporation Committees.</p>	
<p>10/05/22</p>	<p>Strategy, Finance and Resources Committee</p>	
	<p>Strategy, Finance and Resources Committee Minutes 3rd May 2022 - noted</p> <p>It was highlighted that the meetings had discussed the EDI Report in details and received assurance in relation to compliance with statutory duties in</p>	

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	<p>relation to gender pay and disability and race requirements and also confirmation of work to ensure good practice was further developed. The Committees had considered the Management Accounts discussed on the agenda and looked at the draft budget and financial strategy which highlighted the challenges for the coming year. The Insurance Annual Report had provided assurance on the cover in place.</p> <p>A governor queried the actions in place to mitigate the gender pay gap indicated. The Vice-Principal Resources advised that the work on the HE pay scales might impact on this. She flagged that casual staff salaries could skew the outcome, noting that because of the events Hartpury ran it had a significant number of casual staff. A governor queried the ethnicity data comparators used noting that Hartpury recruits nationally but had used the Gloucestershire data. It was suggested that in future it would be best practice to use the national comparator. The Vice-Principal Resources advised she would look at this. It was noted it would be interesting to see what the University of Gloucestershire did. A governor suggested exploring inviting the Black Leadership Group to meet the Board</p> <p>The Capital Projects had been considered, with no issues of concern raised. It had been confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graze was on time and on budget • The Water Treadmill project was progressing • Carpark – ongoing • Blackfriars – running slightly late but contingency in place funded by CityHeart. • Agri-Skills – progressing through planning but not to tender stage. Workshop option to be explored • Power discussion – as raised with Board electronically. • ULH Milestone Project discussed and recommended. £12m Cost – above Milestone 2 stage due to increased material costs and increased pedagogical costs <p>Following the Recommendation of the College & University SFR Committees the University and College Boards APPROVED the</p> <p>(i) EDI Annual Report</p> <p>(ii) Site Wide Power Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Covered through electronic approval - (see 3.2 above) <p>Following the Recommendation of the University SFR Committee</p> <p>(i) The University Board APPROVED the ULH Milestone 3 Report and APPROVED proceeding with the identified preferred contractor to commence construction.</p> <p>The University and College Boards NOTED that the following had been Approved on Behalf of the Boards</p> <p>Data Protection Policy</p>	

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	<p>The Boards NOTED the following position re the Agri Skills Project – “It was agreed it would be helpful to proceed to full planning on the current design, subject to confirmation of costs not exceeding those already agreed, which could then be varied, and that an option relating to the Workshops alone being explored with the architects.”</p>	
	<p>Capital Projects Assurance Working Group Minutes of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24/3/22 - noted • 31/3/22 - noted • 27/04/22 - noted <p>Terms of Reference – APPROVED</p>	
11/05/22	<p>Audit and Risk Management Committee 31st March 2022 – Minutes</p>	
	<p>The Vice-Chair of the HE A&RM Committee updated on the work of the Committees. It was noted that the Chair had not been able to attend and that David Seymour had been Co-opted to the Committee. The need to ensure the Committee was resilient was flagged. It was noted that the Committees had received Internal Audit Reports on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Management • Student Accommodation • MIS • Digital <p>The Reports had provided helpful assurance. There had been no significant recommendations. All recommendation made had been accepted and were being progressed. The Internal Auditors had been asked to provide benchmark data where available to enable Hartpurv to benchmark its performance.</p>	
	<p>The Minutes were NOTED.</p> <p>Top Risks - Noted Risk Policy – Approved (No significant changes) Annual IT and Cyber Report – NOTED this had been approved on behalf of the Boards Annual H&S Report - – NOTED this had been approved on behalf of the Boards Annual VFM Report - – NOTED this had been approved on behalf of the Boards</p>	
13/05/22	<p>Appointment University Vice-Chair Chris Moody left the meeting</p> <p>The Chair advised that following Charlie Whitehouse’s resignation as advised an appointment process had been undertaken/</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>He advised that following circulation relating to the position there was one confirmed candidate – Chris Moody.</p> <p>It was confirmed that no other University governor wished to stand.</p> <p>It was agreed that Chris’s experience in HE and FE made him an excellent candidate.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Search and Governance Committee would need to consider whether it would remain appropriate for Chris to be an HE and FE governor if he was elected.</p> <p>The University Board appointed Chris Moody for a two-year term of office as University Board Vice-Chair from 19th May to 18th May 2024.</p> <p>Chris Moody re-joined the meeting</p>	S&G
13/05/22	<p>Application of Hartpury Seal*</p> <p>Noted the Seal had been used for the Contract relating to the Carpark with Freemans.</p>	
14/05/22	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>It was confirmed the Search and Governance Committee was undertaking a recruitment campaign – recognising there were two existing vacancies due to resignations and one vacancy relating to end of term in September. There had been a recent Potential Governor Open Evening. Search and Governance Committee would consider the applicants.</p> <p>The Chair formally recorded the Boards’ thanks to Charlie Whitehouse for his tremendous contributions to both Boards and Hartpury as a whole.</p> <p>The Chair thanked all governors for their work.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 12.25pm</p>	