



# HARTPURY

## MEETINGS OF HARTPURY UNIVERSITY & HARTPURY COLLEGE

### SEARCH and GOVERNANCE COMMITTEES

11am Thursday 27th February 2025

Hartpury House

#### Members

Edward Keene  
Robert Brooks  
Henry Hodgkins  
Alison Blackburn  
Andy Collop (Professor)  
Barbara Buck -  
Chris Moody  
Mary Heslop  
Kam Nandra

#### In Attendance

Gillian Steels Clerk to the Board

#### University S&G Committee

Present (Chair)  
Apologies  
Present  
Present  
Present (Vice-Chancellor)  
-  
Present  
-  
Apologies  
Present

#### College S&G Committee

Present (Chair)  
-  
-  
-  
Present (Principal)  
Apologies  
Present  
Present  
Apologies  
Present

		ACTION & AGREED DATE
<b>S&amp;G01/02/25</b>	<b>Apologies</b> As above.	
<b>S&amp;G02/02/25</b>	<b>Confirmation of Quoracy</b> It was confirmed the meetings of the University Search and Governance Committee and the College Search and Governance Committee were quorate.	
<b>S&amp;G03/02/25</b>	<b>Declaration of Interest.</b> The Clerk advised that members' interests would be taken as those disclosed in the Register of Members' Interests. Declarations of members' interests noted as follows: Chair, Vice Chancellor and Principal and Chris Moody were members of the University and College Boards. It was noted that where committee membership was discussed that all members had an interest. A specific interest was noted for Edward Keene, Henry Hodgkins and Chris Moody in relation to terms of office discussions.	
<b>S&amp;G04/02/25</b>	<b>Minutes of the Last Meetings – 31<sup>st</sup> October 24</b> The Minutes of the University and College Search and Governance Committee meetings held on the 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2024 were reviewed and	

	approved as true records.	
<b>S&amp;G05/02/25</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
	<p>The Committees had been provided with an action log which confirmed how actions were being progressed.</p> <p>It was noted Robert Brooks would attend Audit Committee training in March.</p> <p><b>The update was NOTED.</b></p>	
<b>S&amp;G06/02/25</b>	<b>External Governance Effectiveness Review</b>	
	<p>The Committees considered the feedback from the recent External Effectiveness Review. It was noted that it had been a light touch process, which had taken the forms of surveys of governors and senior management. It was recognised that as the sample size was small that one individual might have a higher impact than might be statistically significant. The survey feedback was compared with other boards, and with Hartpury's previous feedback. It was agreed that the overall message was positive, but the Committees were keen to ensure that the Boards did not become complacent and continued to focus on continuous improvement. A number of areas had been identified in the covering report for further action in response to the survey outcomes and individual comments in relation to board diversity, risk management, strategy monitoring, performance monitoring, induction, training for financial accounts and clarity on delegated authority. It was agreed the Clerk would further review these with the Chair and develop a broader action plan. This would be considered by the Committees in June and taken to the July Boards.</p> <p>It was also agreed that there would be a discussion on the best processes for monitoring the 2030 strategies at the Away Days.</p>	<b>Clerk/S&amp;G June 25</b>
	<b>The Committees NOTED the External Governance Effectiveness Review Feedback and next steps planned.</b>	
<b>S&amp;G07/02/25</b>	<b>Board and Committee Membership</b>	
	<p>The following documents had been provided to aid discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Terms of Office</li> <li>- Committee Membership and Workload</li> <li>- Skills Audit – Uni College Revised form</li> <li>- CVs of potential appointees</li> </ul>	
	<p>The current <b>Skills Audit</b> summaries were considered. It was agreed that the Boards have a broad range of skills. Farming/agriculture knowledge/experience continued to be highlighted for succession planning.</p> <p>The revised <b>skills audit form</b> was reviewed and agreed. It was also suggested that an alternative summary page would be useful when the results were looked at as a composite. The Clerk agreed to consider this.</p>	<b>Clerk/S&amp;G July 25</b>

The **Terms of Office** were considered, in particular individuals with terms of office expiring in 2025 future term. It was confirmed that as agreed by the Committees the Chair and Clerk had discussed the position with governors whose term ended in August 2025 and had considered the good practice guidance in relation to overall length of office.

The Committees reflected on proposed re-appointments and recognised the need to support smooth transition and avoid a loss of a number of key governors at the same time, balance the need for continuity and renewal, and ensure governors remained “independent” and able to offer independent challenge. The need to balance local and travelling governors was also recognised. It was confirmed this was part of the assessment within the skills audit. It was agreed this was an important element for both the university and the college boards composition.

Individuals being proposed for re-appointment were thoroughly considered and re-appointments subject to challenge.

1. **Alastair Grizzell** – 1<sup>st</sup> Term – (since 2021) – attendance good – active link governor, additional support for Hartpury activities relating to business & stakeholder engagement, agriculture, international

**The College Search and Governance AGREED to propose Alastair Grizzell for re-appointment for a 4-year Term of office, 1st September 2025 – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2029, recognising his strong attendance, active link activity within and outside Hartpury in the business community, and his understanding of agriculture and locally based.**

2. **Patrick Brooke** – 2<sup>nd</sup> term (since 2018) – willing to serve further term - attendance good, active link governor, locally based, additional support for Hartpury activities relating to fundraising & stakeholder engagement – Chair College A&RMC. Governors noted that whilst he was retired he remained connected within the finance and audit industry

**The College Search and Governance AGREED to propose Patrick Brooke for re-appointment for a two-year term of office, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025- 31<sup>st</sup> August 2027, recognising his strong attendance, active link activity within and outside Hartpury in relation to business, stakeholders, fundraising and his audit and finance experience and Gloucestershire based.**

**The College Search and Governance Committee AGREED a proposal to take forward a process to identify an individual with appropriate skills to Chair the Audit & Risk Management Committee by Feb 2027, to enable a smooth transition in September 2027.**

3. Henry Hodgkins left the meeting

**Henry Hodgkins** – 2<sup>nd</sup> term – (since 2018) – willing to serve further term - attendance good – active link governor, additional support for Hartpury activities relating to business, sport, finance & stakeholder engagement

**The University Search and Governance AGREED to propose Henry**

4.	<p><b>Hodgkins for re-appointment for a two-year term of office, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025- 31<sup>st</sup> August 2027, recognising his strong attendance, active link activity within and outside Hartpury in relation to business, community and sport and Gloucestershire based.</b></p> <p>Henry Hodgkins rejoined the meeting</p> <p><b>Bill Marshall – 2<sup>nd</sup> term</b> – (since 2018) – willing to serve further term – willing to serve further term - attendance good – active link governor, additional support for Hartpury activities relating to business, sport, finance &amp; stakeholder engagement, estates management, banking.</p> <p><b>The University Search and Governance AGREED to propose Bill Marshall for re-appointment for a three-year term of office, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025- 31<sup>st</sup> August 2028, recognising his strong attendance, active link activity within and outside Hartpury in relation to estates management, finance, sport, community.</b></p>	
	<p>The Committees also noted Terms of office ending in August 2026. It was confirmed that Chris Moody was not seeking re-appointment at the end of his term in 2026.</p> <p>It was noted that other members whose terms came to an end in 2026 would be considered in detail in the future.</p>	
	<p>It was noted that the Chair would have served as a governor for twenty years in 2026. It was recognised that he continued to be active in a key industry for Hartpury, was well connected with the local community and continued to offer independent challenge, but it was also recognised that this length of office was outside the accepted good practice guidance. The potential risks associated with an extended period of office to an organisation and the individual concerned were highlighted.</p> <p>The Chair proposed that the position be discussed by the Boards during the away day at a session he was not in attendance at. The need to have clarity for succession planning was recognised. This approach was supported. It was suggested the Vice-Chancellor and Principal set out the role of the Chair at Hartpury for context within the discussion.</p>	Boards March 25
	<p><b>Potential Governor Applicants</b></p> <p>New Candidate- Bill Meredith – Former Principal and Chief Executive of Bishop Burton College – Breadth of expertise in agriculture, running a college, HE and FE curriculum and introducing T'levels</p> <p>He had met with the Chair, VC and Principal and Clerk and was enthusiastic about the opportunity of contributing to Hartpury. Although Bill lived in Beverley he had spoken to another travelling governor and was comfortable that Hartpury would provide support to enable his membership.</p> <p>It was noted that Bill had been identified as an individual who could meet the identified skills gap relating to agriculture.</p>	

	<p><b>The College Search and Governance Committee AGREED to PROPOSE Bill Meredith for membership of the College Board, subject to the size of College Board being increased to 12 (as was permitted within the Articles of Association) for a four year term of office from 16<sup>th</sup> March 2025- 15<sup>th</sup> March 2029 and for membership of the FE QuEST Committee for his knowledge of agriculture, leadership and management and sector knowledge.</b></p> <p>It was also agreed to invite him to the strategy days as an observer (not to attend the Board meeting).</p>	
	<p><b>Committee Membership</b></p> <p><b>HE Quest</b> Jon Renyard's term of office had come to an end and it was proposed this was extended for a further two academic years, recognising his experience with the HE operating and regulatory framework and academic quality, and compliance with the requirements of external and statutory agencies.</p> <p><b>The University S&amp;G Committee AGREED to propose Jon Renyard's membership of HE Quest is extended for a further two academic years, from 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2027.</b></p> <p><b>Audit &amp; Risk Management Committee</b> It was noted that following the end of term of Matthew Williams as a co-opted member of the University and College Audit and Risk Management Committees. The Committees considered individuals currently being held as future potential members. It was considered that the skills of Clive Stainton would be a helpful addition given that the Committees holds the remit for IT &amp; Cyber.</p> <p><b>The University and College S&amp;G Committees AGREED to propose Clive Stainton as a co-opted member of the University and College Audit and Risk Management Committee from 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2026, recognising his IT and Cyber expertise.</b></p>	
	<p><b>Appointment Process Student Governors</b> Governors were updated that it was now proposed to have a sabbatical Student Officer. The first year would be in 2025/26, subject to recruitment. It was agreed to consider further the appropriateness of this individual being identified as the student governor in the future, recognising that they might be a HE or FE student.</p>	
	<p><b>The University and College Search and Governance Committees Board and Committee Membership update was noted, with specific actions to be progressed as detailed.</b></p>	
<b>S&amp;G08/02/25</b>	<p><b>Diversity Update – Action Plan</b> It was recognised that further work was required to increase diversity of Board membership and that the decisions today, whilst skills focused had not increased Board diversity. It was agreed that a previous candidate who had withdrawn due to time availability should be recontacted in October to see if they now had more time, as they had indicated this as a potential option. Methods of reaching other potential candidates would be considered.</p>	<b>Clerk Oct 2025</b>

	The need to reach further networks to support diversity of candidates continued to be an area of focus.	
	It was agreed that the EDI Policy would be reviewed to highlight any specific actions for the Board to support Diversity. It was agreed the Clerk would bring this to the June Committees.  <b>The Diversity Update Action Plan was NOTED.</b>	<b>Clerk June 25</b>
<b>S&amp;G09/02/25</b>	<b>Board Induction</b>	
	The Committees considered the aspects incorporated within induction as part of the review to identify any additional areas to improve induction. It was confirmed it did incorporate Hartpury Familiarisation. Additionally it was agreed that access to briefings such as Wonkhe and AOC should be outlined.	
	<b>The Committees ENDORSED the current induction processes with agreed additions.</b>	
<b>S&amp;G10/02/25</b>	<b>Governor Self-Assessment</b>	
	The proposed updated Governor Self-Assessment proforma was considered  <b>The updated Governor Self-Assessment form was APPROVED.</b>	
<b>S&amp;G11/02/25</b>	<b>Board Development &amp; Training</b>	
	The Committee considered the update on Governor Development.  The recent online development modules were considered. It was noted that it had previously been agreed that governors would complete Safeguarding and EDI online modules. Data Protection had now been added. It was recognised that completion as a block was a challenge for governors. It was agreed the Clerk would discuss with HR if they could be spread over a number of years to avoid overload.  <b>The T&amp;D update was NOTED.</b>	<b>Clerk April 25</b>
<b>S&amp;G12/02/25</b>	<b>OfS Consultation</b>	
	The Committees had been updated that OfS has issued a consultation on proposals to amend the OfS Conditions of Registration to be used at initial application. It was noted that Hartpury was required to meet ongoing conditions of registration but as it was already registered these proposed changes would not apply to Hartpury as currently drawn. However it was recognised that potentially the conditions for existing Registered Providers were likely to be proposed for equivalent revision in the future. It was noted that some of the changes proposed related to governance, including requirements for a business plan.  <b>The Committees NOTED the update.</b>	
<b>S&amp;G13/02/25</b>	<b>Any Other Business - None</b>	

The meeting closed at 12.50pm