

## **Governor Development Involvement and Strategy 2020/21**

### **College Mission**

'Inspiring our community through learning for all'.

### **1. Vision Statement**

- 1.1. South Devon College aims to foster and promote a culture of development and involvement for governors through an effective and systematic approach. This paper sets out the development and involvement strategy for governors of South Devon College.
- 1.2. The strategy will provide governors with planned and relevant opportunities to be involved with the student learning experience in order to gain a contextualised understanding of teaching, learning and assessment and the broader student experience at the College.
- 1.3. The strategy will provide training and development in order to support the role of College governor to enable them to make an effective contribution.
- 1.4. The strategy provides a programme of activities planned for the College year 2020/21. The approach to governor development and involvement acknowledges that it is important to have a planned and forward-looking programme of events, but equally to be responsive to new and unforeseen needs, which may emerge during the year as a result of changes to the College's operating environment, including government policies. As a consequence, the content of the governor development programme is expected to evolve during the year, with new topics being identified or planned activities being modified.

### **2. Aims and objectives of the Governor Development and Involvement Strategy**

- 2.1. The College is committed to ensuring that:
  - a) High quality training and development are offered to all governors, and the governing body's members have the knowledge and expertise to fulfil all of its responsibilities as detailed by its Instrument and Articles of Government, and set out in the AoC's Code of Good Governance for English Colleges.
  - b) Training and development activities are focused on supporting the needs of individual governors and addressing issues of collective interest to the Governing Body and the College.
  - c) Effective induction arrangements are in place to ensure that new members are introduced to the work of the College and understand their roles and responsibilities to enable them to make an effective contribution to the work of the Governing Body. Governors can attend any Committee meeting of the Governing Body to broaden their understanding of its work by request to the Head of Governance.
  - d) Governors are involved in relevant ways to gain understanding and first-hand experience of the student experience.

## **APPENDIX: Implementation of the Governor Development and Involvement Strategy**

### **A) External and Internal Development Opportunities**

The strategy makes use of resources and development opportunities available from within the College, offered by regional organisations and nationally. Specifically, governor development events and information updates are provided by:

- a) Use of knowledgeable and trained College staff to provide updates on changes to government policies or information on specific activities or initiatives, eg safeguarding and prevent.
- b) Engaging with the Association of Colleges-South West (AoC-SW) programme for Chairs and governors
- c) Attending national events at which governance is a major theme, eg AoC Annual Conference, AoC/ETF Annual Governor Summit
- d) Governors will also be invited to:
  - i. attend internal College committees as appropriate - usually as Designated or Lead Governors
  - ii. undertake 'learning walks' to gain further understanding of good and outstanding teaching
  - iii. meet with staff
  - iv. meet with students
  - v. attend College events including prize giving and other student celebrations
  - vi. take a tour of off-site provision (another opportunity to meet staff and students)
  - vii. attend course representatives meetings and other learner focus groups (Staff/Student Governors)

### **B) Internally run training and development activities**

Indicative content for the briefing sessions delivered prior to Governing Body meetings (45-50 minutes) – these may be subject to change in year by consulting with the Search & Governance Committee or the Chair of the Governing Body:

- a) **10 December 2020 from 3-4pm:** OfS and Advance HE (Postponed from March 2020 due to COVID-19)
- b) **25 March 2021 from 3-4pm:** Digital Learning and Delivery
- c) **15 July 2021 from 3-4pm:** Ofsted 'readiness' (Postponed from July 2020 due to COVID-19)

**C) Strategic Planning Meetings:** Two annual events planned to enable governors to have the opportunity to review and discuss the key strategic issues facing the College, including, as required, the opportunity to review and discuss the College's strategy. Each meeting normally takes place away from the Vantage Point building and lasts for approximately four hours. The dates of the events planned for 2020/20 are as follows:

- a) **15 October 2020 from 3-7pm:** Topics to include: Quality and Finance/Growth Performance Year End followed by focus for 2020/2021, re: draft SAR/revised Measures Matrix. Government Policy Updates/horizon scanning.

- b) **06 May 2021 from 3-7pm:** Topics to include: Review Strategic Planning/Vision Visuals, including HE Strategy; 'Ofsted readiness'; Curriculum Developments 2021/22, Government Policy Updates and Funding Environment/horizon scanning.

**D) Induction and mentoring support for new Governors:**

- a) All newly appointed Governors receive an induction. The induction includes the opportunity for new governors to receive a detailed briefing about the College and its work from the Principal and the senior team, to receive an induction pack/Governor Handbook (providing copies of the College's key constitutional instruments) and the opportunity for the governor to undertake personalised training and development.
- b) Mentors are available to support new Governors, upon request.
- c) Governors are invited to have a 1:1 development discussion with the Chair annually.

**E) Meet the Students:**

This is a twice-a-year event during which Governors are able to meet a cross-section of the College's students and enter into dialogue on a number of previously chosen topics. Notes of the meeting, together with the responses by the senior leadership team are reviewed by the QTLA Committee. The dates for the 'meet the students' events in 2020/21 are:

- a) 19 November 2020
- b) 11 March 2021

**F) Meeting the College Staff:**

- a) Governors are able to meet staff at College events, during Learning Walks (available on request) and as part of the annual Tour of the College Campuses.
- b) Designated and Lead Governors (see below) have contact with College staff for their area of designation.
- c) A 'Meet the Staff' event takes place annually. This has evolved into an informal networking event immediately before the May Strategy Meeting. The date for 2020/21 will be Thursday 06 May 2021.

**G) Self-Assessment and Evaluation**

- a) All Governors are encouraged to self-assess annually with the Chair or Vice Chair of Governors. This self-assessment process will be reported to the Governing Body via the Search and Governance Committee minutes.
- b) All Committees undertake a self-assessment at the end of their annual cycle of business to evaluate their effectiveness in fulfilling their responsibilities delegated to them by the Governing Body.
- c) The Governing Body undertakes an annual self-assessment of its effectiveness during the summer term and the outcome of this report is included in the published Annual Accounts.
- d) The Search & Governance Committee benchmarks the work of the Governing Body against the AoC Code of Good Governance once every three years and is responsible for identifying any potential areas for improvement.

- e) The Governing Body reviews the draft Self-Assessment Report (SAR)/QIP (Quality Improvement Plan) at its Strategy Day in the autumn term. The SAR is the main document that Ofsted would refer to during an inspection, and as such all Governors need to be familiar with its contents.

## H) Designated Governors

The following roles on the Governing Body are a statutory requirement and form part of the assurance framework for Governors. Designated Governors are invited to attend termly internal meetings to observe how these statutory requirements are fulfilled.

### 1. Child Protection, Safeguarding and Prevent

- a) Mark Waldron is the Designated Governor (DG) and a member of the College's Learner Safeguarding & Welfare Group. This Group meets termly.
- b) The DG meets termly with the Assistant Principal for HCL, who is the Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility for Safeguarding.
- c) The DG receives appropriate training through Torbay Safeguarding Children Board and WRAP has been undertaken.
- d) The Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually and approved by the Governing Body.
- e) The DG is invited to comment on the Termly Safeguarding Reports to the QTLA Committee and Annual Safeguarding Report to the Governing Body.
- f) This Lead role provides 'triangulation'/assurance that effective systems are in place at the College for meeting statutory responsibilities around safeguarding and prevent.

### 2. Equality & Diversity (E&D)

- b) Judy Ravenscroft is the Designated Governor and is a member of the College's Equality, Diversity, Access & Participation Committee. This Committee meets termly.
- c) The minutes of these meetings are circulated to the QTLA Committee for information.
- d) The Designated Role for E & D includes governor responsibility for SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and CLA (Children Looked After). The DG should help support the monitoring of any achievement 'gaps' for these particular groups.
- e) The DG is invited to comment on the annual E & D monitoring report received by the QTLA Committee in March.
- f) This Lead role provides 'triangulation'/assurance that effective systems are in place at the College for promoting equality and diversity.

### 3. Health and Safety (H&S)

- a) Lee Soden is the Designated Governor and is a member of the College's Health and Safety Committee. This Committee meets once a term.
- b) The minutes of this Committee are circulated to the People & Resources Committee for information.
- c) The DG is invited to comment on the annual Health & Safety report received by the People & Resources Committee in November.
- d) The Health and Safety Policy is reviewed annually by the People & Resources Committee and is approved by the Governing Body in July.
- e) This Lead role provides 'triangulation'/assurance that effective systems are in place at the College for promoting Health & Safety.

## I) Lead Governors

The following roles on the Governing Body are not a statutory requirement but help to support robust systems of governance. Some Lead Governors are invited to attend termly internal management meetings to support governor scrutiny of key College Strategies. Others have been appointed as Lead Governors to recognise their particular expertise in relation to a key College Strategy.

### **1. Teaching Learning and Assessment (TLA)**

- a) Philip Gibson, the Chair of the Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee is the Lead Governor for TLA and reports directly to the Governing Body via the QTLA Committee minutes.
- b) The Lead Governor will be closely acquainted with the College SAR, be familiar with the committee structure in place to ensure high standards of academic governance and will encourage governor participation in Learning Walks and 'Meet the Students' events.
- c) The Lead Governor for TLA will be a member of the College's FE Academic Board which meets termly.
- d) This Lead role provides 'triangulation'/assurance that effective systems are in place for maintaining high academic standards and a positive student experience.

### **2. Higher Education (HE)**

- a) Jon Goldman is the Lead Governor for HE.
- b) The Lead Governor will be closely acquainted with HE Strategy, development plans and KPIs.
- c) The Lead Governor for HE will be a member of the College's HE Academic Board (HEAB) which meets termly.
- d) This Lead role provides 'triangulation'/assurance that effective systems are in place for maintaining high academic standards and a positive student experience.
- e) The Lead Governor for HE will be a member of the Honorary Awards Committee

### **3. Careers**

- a) Tracey Cabache is the Lead Governor for Careers.
- b) The Lead Governor will be familiar with the College's Careers Strategy and attend termly meeting of the Careers Committee Strategy Group.
- c) This Lead role provides 'triangulation'/assurance that an effective Careers Strategy is in place for learners at the College.

### **4. Estates**

- a) Lee Soden is the Lead Governor for Estates.
- b) The Lead Governor will be familiar with the College's Estates Strategy and will use his expertise to help the Governing Body support and challenge the management team.
- c) This Lead role provides 'triangulation'/assurance that an effective Estates Strategy is in place for delivering the College's mission.

### **5. Digital**

- a) Kate Doodson is the Lead Governor for Digital.
- b) The Lead Governor will be familiar with the College's Digital Strategy and will use her expertise to help the Governing Body support and challenge the management team.

- c) This Lead role provides 'triangulation'/assurance that an effective Digital Strategy is in place for delivering the College's mission.

#### **J) Externally run training and development activities**

- a) Training and development activities will include invites to external conferences for governors especially for those with specific duties and roles such as Chairs of Committees and Staff/ Student Governors.
- b) Governor attendance is encouraged at the AoC-SW Governor Seminars, which are held on a regular basis. These cover a variety of topics, and often include external speakers from, for example, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), Ofsted, OfS or other key agencies.
- c) Newly-appointed Governors have the opportunity to attend an AoC-SW New Governor Induction Seminar, which is held in the region.
- d) The Chair or Vice Chair normally attend the Annual AoC Conference (November 2020), and/or the AoC/ETF Governance Summit (March 2021).
- e) Governors also have access to a wide range of online learning materials.

#### **K) The Ambassadorial Role of Governors**

- a) Governors play an important ambassadorial role for the College in the wider community.
- b) Governors are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the College website, especially the news section. College life can also be followed on social media:  
<https://www.southdevon.ac.uk/about-us>
- c) Governors will also be kept abreast of College developments and achievements via the termly Principal's Report. This will include 'key messages' for governors to promote.