

New Chair of St Chad's Governing Body: Summer 2017

St Chad's is an independent college within Durham University and aims to be an academically excellent community, hospitable and values driven, respected for its ethos of social justice, taking faith seriously – rooted in the Anglican tradition – and embracing diversity with a generosity of spirit.

We are seeking a new chair of our Governing Body as our present Chair, Mr Jonathan Blackie CBE, retires after 8 years in post.

Context

1. Internal: we are updating and developing our Vision, Values and Strategic Framework. (Drafts available from the Vice Chair of the Governors, the Ven Dr Richard Pratt archdeacon.west@carlisle-diocese.org.uk) These are working documents, which will guide and support the appointee:
 - 1.1. Our new Chair will need to be broadly in agreement with our Vision, Values and Strategic Framework, but their wisdom and insight will be welcome inputs.
 - 1.2. Our new Chair will need to support the Principal in moving our strategy from paper to actions including supporting the major fund-raising efforts that will be needed to develop our plans.
2. External: our new Chair needs to be aware of the big issues we think may be facing us over the next six years (even though our ability to influence some of them is limited):
 - 2.1. our relationship with the University as we pursue a complementary but distinctive strategy
 - 2.2. the potential impact of other new student accommodation providers in the city on the take-up of our accommodation
 - 2.3. proposed Durham University expansion, and the effect on the University, on the colleges, and on the City of Durham
 - 2.4. The potential effects of current political and economic uncertainty on Durham University and its colleges

Job Specification

1. Length of commitment: a five year term with a possible extension for another three years.
2. Minimum time commitment:
 - 2.1. Chair four Governing Body meetings each year;
 - 2.2. Chair four Finance Committee meetings each year;
3. The Chair is formally responsible for line management of the Principal on behalf of the Governing Body, including carrying out the Principal's annual appraisal. Less formally the Chair acts as a support for, and critical friend of, the Principal, keeping in touch approximately a couple of times a month by a variety of means as appropriate such as email, phone calls or in person.
4. As Chair of Governing Body, you will be responsible for:
 - 4.1. setting meeting agenda and timing;
 - 4.2. encouraging the active participation in meetings of all members of Governing Body (especially the student representatives from the Junior and Middle Common Rooms);
 - 4.3. building a strong and diverse group of Governors;
 - 4.4. maintaining the boundary between governance and management;
 - 4.5. and both encouraging and challenging Governors and College Officers.

5. Our new Chair should be able to be in Durham at least once a month
6. Our new Chair should be able to be immediately available either over the telephone or by being in Durham as appropriate to support the Principal if there were a serious crisis
7. Our new Chair should be “visible” in College beyond Governing Body meetings:
 - 7.1. enough to have a good feel for College (know the right questions to be asked, not be anonymous/invisible to staff and students);
 - 7.2. to be present at major College events (on average once or twice a term, usually in the evening);
 - 7.3. to engage with our undergraduate and postgraduate students to support their understanding of the work of Governing Body
 - 7.4. demonstrate to our stakeholders that the Governing Body acts in the best interests of the College
8. Our new Chair should engage with and support the College’s commitment to the civic, cultural and economic life of the north-east of England, bringing to this a broader national or international perspective.
9. We very much hope that our new Chair will come to love the College and all it stands for

Potential candidates could, if they wished, have a telephone conversation with the outgoing Chair, for background information and to better understand the role.

Contact Jonathan Blackie on jonathanblackie@hotmail.co.uk

Person Specification : Essential

1. Skill and experience in chairing meetings
2. Having a broad perspective of life gained through a range of different life experiences
3. Financially astute with experience of managing budgets comparable with an institution of the scale of St Chad’s College.
4. Able to take a strategic overview of institutional development
5. An inclusive personal style, with experience of facilitating participation in groups of people from differing backgrounds
6. Able to form a supportive relationship with the Principal
7. Credibility with the University
8. Able to be an Ambassador for the College
9. Able to work with and appreciate the Anglican ethos/foundation/heritage, whatever their own faith position
10. Able to commit to the values of St Chad’s College: social justice, taking faith perspectives seriously, and embracing diversity with generosity of spirit

Person Specification : Desirable

11. Possibly a background in governance and charity / education / church or faith organisation / public service / business.

What we offer

St Chad’s College is a vibrant, thoughtful, and exciting multi-generational community of learning with ambitious plans for our future development. Our undergraduates regularly achieve the best final exam results in the University, whilst enthusiastically joining in with a wide range of cultural,

sporting and social justice activities. Our students have a great and lasting affection for the College, and see it as a huge positive influence on them.

Our Governing Body is an interesting, committed, friendly and welcoming group with a huge variety of skills and experiences, and Governors frequently talk of the privilege of supporting and helping to shape the college to serve its students now and for the future. The role of Chair is a very worthwhile piece of voluntary service.

Expenses are paid.

Interview process

Those wishing to be considered should submit (electronically) a CV and letter of application, explaining why they would like to be considered and why they may be suitable for the post.

Applications to the Vice-Chair of Governors:

The Venerable Dr Richard Pratt

Archdeacon of West Cumberland

Moorside 50, Stainburn Rd, Workington CA14 1SN 01900 66190

archdeacon.west@carlisle-diocese.org.uk

- 26 September 2017: closing date
- 28 September: shortlisting
- end of October/early November: a fairly wide initial engagement, including Governing Body, Principal and Staff, JCR, MCR and SCR
- next day, interview by small group which will make a recommendation to the whole Governing Body
- Governing Body ratify decision of small group