

<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p><b>General Purposes Committee</b></p> <p>8 March 2017</p>	
<p><b>Report of:</b> Debbie Jones, Corporate Director (Children's Services)</p>	<p><b>Classification:</b> [Unrestricted or Exempt]</p>
<p><b>Local Authority Governor Application</b></p>	

<b>Originating Officer</b>	Runa Basit
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

## 1. SUMMARY

This report sets out for Members details of applicants who have applied to be nominated as the local authority governor at Tower Hamlets maintained schools.

## 2. RECOMMENDATION

The General Purposes Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Consider the applications and agree to nominate the applicants to the positions that are available for local authority governors at maintained schools in Tower Hamlets.

### **3. REASONS FOR DECISION**

- 3.1 The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 set out the process for the appointment of local authority governors to maintained schools. The Regulations allow for the local authority to nominate a person to fill the position of local authority governor. It is for the governing body to appoint that person if the governing body considers the person meets any eligibility criteria that it has set.
- 3.2 The governor nominations in this report are to fill the current LA governor vacancies.

### **4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

#### **Background - LA appointed governors**

- 4.1 To improve the efficiency for appointing local authority governors to school vacancies, the General Purposes Committee at a meeting held on Wednesday 15 February 2006 made the decision to delegate authority to the Corporate Director (Children, Schools & Families) to appoint and revoke the appointment of local authority governors, except where there was a dispute about an appointment or there was more than one applicant for a post in which case the Committee would decide the appointment.
- 4.2 At a meeting on 29 November 2011, the Council resolved to amend the constitution and the terms of reference of the General Purposes Committee were amended. The committee is now responsible for the appointment and revocation of local authority school governors.
- 4.3 As this is a function of the local authority there is no alternative option.

### **5. LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNOR NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS**

- 5.1 Applications to be nominated as the local authority governor to five schools are attached as Appendices to this report in the restricted area of the agenda.

### **6. APPLICATIONS**

#### **Re-Appointments**

- 6.1 The Headteacher and Chair of Virginia Primary School are in support of this re-appointment and provided the following information. Kathy Darby has been a highly regarded member of the governing body since 2009. Over the years, she has been extremely supportive of the school and leadership. There have been many challenges and Kathy has not only given support in developing the school's vision, but also emotional support. Kathy asks good questions in meetings, enabling the SLT to develop their thinking. Kathy is very knowledgeable and her contributions valuable. She thinks things through carefully and helps us make informed decisions.

Most importantly, Kathy is passionate about education and making a difference to young people's lives. She enjoys visits to the school and celebrating the children's achievements. She recognises and values the work of the Virginia school team and this is really appreciated by the staff. I do hope she will continue to be part of our governing body and highly recommend her re-appointment.

Ms Kathy Darby's application is enclosed as **Appendix 1**.

**6.2** The Headteacher at Globe Primary is in support of this application and provided the following statement.

John Edwards has been a Governor at Globe for nearly 16 years and has been the Chair for almost 15 years. He has been unanimously voted as Chair each year due to how skilled he is. His knowledge of the school is immense, as is his knowledge of what makes an effective Governor. He has been a stable and consistent factor as to why our school has continually improved over the years and why it is currently a highly successful school. He is relentless in his high expectation and challenge for the school and it would be a major loss to us if he were to leave. His dedication is exemplary. He is a Tower Hamlets resident with an understanding of our school community. He is highly skilled in building management and finance in his own employment, skills which he uses in our school through chairing the Finance and Premise Committee.

Mr John Edwards's application is enclosed at **Appendix 2**.

**6.3** The Headteacher at Ben Johnson is in support of this application and provided the following statement.

Dr Ray Hall has been a longstanding governor at Ben Jonson. She has offered many years of committed and unstinting service to the school and the community it serves. Dr Hall is a lecturer at Queen Mary College at the end of the road and this connection along with others has enriched the life of the school. Her skill set is invaluable to the school and the work of the governing body. Under her leadership and her high expectations of participation and commitment the governing body has grown in strength and function. New governors, when joining the governing body, are very clear about what being a member of the governing body means at Ben Jonson and they rise (and often ) exceed these expectations. She encourages all governors (but especially the parent governors) to challenge and ask probing questions and to gather first-hand experience and evidence of the school's work.

Dr Hall has seen the school through a number of Headteachers, changes and challenging times. She has often been the constant in a sea of changes. I warmly support her reapplication as the school is still in need of her deep knowledge of the school (both now and in the past). The school still needs the support and the challenge that Dr Hall can and has provided.

Dr Ray Hall's application is enclosed at **Appendix 3**.

**6.4** The Headteacher at Stebon Primary is in support of this application and provided the following statement.

Mr Peter Sherratt has been involved with Stebon Primary School since the beginning of 2012, initially as chair of the Interim Executive Board established by the LA in that year &, since 2013, as a local authority governor & chair of the governing body.

It is no understatement to say that Peter has been instrumental in the rapid & sustained improvements made at Stebon both in terms of the standard of governance (leadership & management was graded 'outstanding' at our most recent Ofsted inspection - of which governance is a significant part) & pupil outcomes. In the last 5 years, Stebon has gone from being one of the worst performing schools in the LA to being well above the local average.

A barrister by training, Peter now spends the majority of his time leading & supporting charities close to his heart. Apart from his considerable skills in terms of business, finance, charities & the law, He brings a strong commitment to our school & its pupils & to building the best possible future for them. Peter shares our vision of Stebon becoming one of the best schools in the country & we would love the opportunity to continue to work together to make that happen.

Mr Peter Sherratt's application is enclosed at **Appendix 4**.

**New application**

**6.5** The Headteacher of St. Luke's C.E. Primary School is in support on this application and provided the following information.

For as long as I have been the Headteacher here, Valentine has coordinated Music Partners for our school, from her employer Credit Suisse. She herself is an accomplished Musician and committed teacher of young people. So much so, she runs her own Saturday school to teach children piano and theory of music. Thanks to her diligence the children at our school have had weekly tuition for: drumming, piano and guitar. She has also taught children theory of music and with Credit Suisse's backing, paid for and entered them for their theory of music and piano exams.

I was particularly struck by Valentine when she invited one of our children to come, with her mum, to her place of work during the summer holidays, so that her theory tuition could continue consistently.

Valentine has an excellent work ethic and she embodies our school values. She is a superb role model to the children and will bring professionalism and commitment to the governing board. I as the headteacher, whole heartedly support her application.

Ms Valentine Phillip's application is enclosed at **Appendix 5**.

## **7. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **8. LEGAL COMMENTS**

- 8.1 Section 19 of the Education Act 2002 requires each maintained school to have a governing body, which is a body corporate constituted in accordance with the Regulations. Each maintained school is required to have an instrument of government, which specifies the membership of the governing body. Regulations require a governing body to include person appointed as a local authority governor and for a number of associated matters.
- 8.2 The 2012 Regulations detail the composition of the governing body and the appointment of governors, including local authority governors. The 2012 Regulations provide that there can be only one local authority nominated governor. A local authority governor is a person who is nominated by the local authority and is appointed by the governing body after being satisfied that the person meets any eligibility criteria set by the governing body. It is for the governing body to decide whether the Local Authority nominee has the skills to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school and meets any eligibility criteria they have set. If the governing body has set eligibility criteria, then these should be notified at the meeting, so the Committee can consider them before making a nomination.
- 8.3 Schedule 4 to the 2012 Regulations set out the circumstances in which a person is qualified or disqualified from holding or continuing in office as a governor, details of which are as follows –
- A person who is a registered pupil at a school is disqualified from holding office as a governor of the school.
  - A person must be aged 18 or over at the date of appointment to be qualified to be a governor.
  - A person cannot hold more than one governor post at the same school at the same time.
  - A governor who fails to attend meetings for six months without the consent of the governing body becomes disqualified from continuing to hold office.
  - A person is disqualified from holding or continuing in office if: (1) his or her estate is sequestered (under bankruptcy) or the person is subject to a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim order; (2) he or she is, broadly speaking, disqualified from being a company director; (3) he or she has been removed from office as trustee of a charity; (4) he or she has a criminal conviction of a specified kind within a specified time period; (5) he or she is subject to a specified prohibition or restriction on employment, such as being barred from 'regulated activity' relating to children under the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006; or

- (6) he or she refuses to apply for a criminal records certificate when requested to do so by the clerk to the governing body.
  - A person is disqualified from appointment as a local authority governor if he or she is eligible to be a staff governor.
- 8.4 Once appointed, a governor will hold office for a fixed period of four years from the date of appointment, except in a limited number of circumstances. This does not prevent a governor from being elected for a further term. A governor may resign, be removed or be disqualified from holding office in the circumstances specified in the relevant Regulations.
- 8.5 In determining whether to appoint an authority governor, the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who don't. The Committee will wish to be satisfied that the process of selection is fair, open and consistent with furtherance of these equality objectives.
- 8.6 The Council's Constitution gives the General Purposes Committee responsibility for appointment of local authority school governors.

## **9. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS**

- 9.1 Local Authority Governors are drawn from all sectors of the community. There is a mechanism in place to ensure, as far as possible, that the composition of governing bodies reflects the makeup of the school and wider community.

## **10. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no best value implications arising from the report.

## **11. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT**

- 11.1 There are no SAGE implications in the report.

## **12. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 Governors have a crucial strategic role in promoting school improvement and supporting Headteachers and staff in their work. Their statutory responsibilities and duties require a range of skills. There is a risk that the local authority will not be able to meet governing body requirements for particular skills. The LA engages in a number of activities to ensure a range of applications from the community and local business.

### **13. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1 The proposals in the report do not have an impact in relation to the reduction of crime and disorder.
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#### **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

##### **Linked Report**

- NONE.

##### **Appendices**

- Appendices 1 – 5 [EXEMPT]. LA Governor Application Forms

##### **Officer contact details for documents:**

- Runa Basit, Head of School Governance & Information