


Non-Executive Report of the: General Purposes Committee 16 March 2016	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Debbie Jones, Interim Corporate Director (Children's Services)	Classification: [Unrestricted or Exempt]
Local Authority Governor Application	

Originating Officer	Hania Franek
Wards affected	All

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.

Recommendation:

The General Purposes Committee is recommended to:

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.

1. LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNOR NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

- 1.1 The General Purposes Committee is responsible for the nomination and revocation of local authority school governors.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 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.

2. APPLICATIONS

Application for re-appointment

- 2.1 Rob Crothers has completed three terms of office and has applied to continue serving as the LA governor at Morpeth School. The Chair of governors has commented that during his current period Mr Crothers has contributed greatly to a number of important issues including the transition between Head teachers at Morpeth and the successful development of a 6th Form at the school. In addition as the Chair of the Finance Committee, he has shown leadership and acumen in ensuring that Morpeth is managed on a competent and solid financial basis. Accordingly, he strongly recommends that Rob Crothers is nominated for appointment as the LA governor. Mr Crothers has attended all twelve full governing body meetings over the last two years and every meeting of the finance committee in the same period, which he chairs. His application is provided at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Darren Milgate has been the local authority governor at Cyril Jackson school for four years and is applying for a further term of office. The clerk to the governing body has advised that at the last meeting, the governing body supported his re-application to serve as he brings a business perspective and hands-on assistance to the school. Since the spring term 2014, Mr Milgate has attended ten out of 13 governors' meetings. He serves on the Finance, Personnel & Premises Committee and is the link governor for SEN & Inclusion and Computing. The application form is provided at Appendix 2.

New applications

- 2.3 Mr Mohammed Abdur Rahman has applied to be the LA governor at Bow School. Mr Rahman has visited the school to meet the Chair of Governors and Headteacher. He has also attended a governing body meeting and Business Committee as an observer. The governing body has asked the local

authority for a potential governor with finance skills who would be willing to join the Business Committee. Mr Rahman has the required skills and as a local resident is very keen to contribute to the future success of the school. He has been working for LBTH but will be moving to a post in the Department of Business, Innovation & Skills at Westminster during March. He is also an associate member of the governing body of Old Palace school and has attended induction training for new governors. Mr Rahman's application is attached at Appendix 3.

- 2.4 Catherine Fisher is applying for the LA governor vacancy at Harry Gosling School. She has been to the school to meet the Chair of governors and Headteacher. The Chair has advised that Ms Fisher expressed a strong desire to become a school governor and her ethos and aspirations for making a valuable contribution to the school and the children was very much in line with the ethos of the governing body. Ms Fisher is very familiar with the local area having previously studied in the borough where she now works. In his view, she brings a wealth of skills and experience from the legal and financial sector and he feels that she will be a valuable addition to the governing body. The Chair described her as polite and professional, eager to learn and make a difference and added that she has the full support from her employer to undertake voluntary/community work. Both the Head Teacher and the Chair would be extremely happy, without reservation, to welcome Ms Fisher to the governing body at Harry Gosling.

The Head has commented that Katy Fisher is a highly suitable candidate for the following reasons:

- She has a background in law and finance. These are skills which are needed within the governing body.
 - She is resident in the borough and would like to contribute to the local community.
 - She empathises with many of the families and children in the school, having arrived in the UK as a teenager from another country.
 - She shares the values of the school, and, in conversation with the Head and the Chair, clearly has high expectations of all pupils, and of schools to ensure they remove barriers for children's achievements. The application is at Appendix 4.
- 2.5 Alexandra Ploussard has been an associate member on the governing body of St Agnes school since September 2015. She has been appointed to the Resources Committee, Pay Committee and Admissions Committee and has attended all seven meetings to date. The clerk has advised that Ms Ploussard brings an outside perspective to the governing body which has a majority number of parishioners and parents. Her HR skills have already been very useful and she also brings French language skills. Ms Ploussard has so far proved to be an enthusiastic associate making a positive contribution to the governing body, which supports her application to be nominated to the LA governor vacancy. Her application is at Appendix 5.

4. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

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

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

5.1 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.

5.2 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. The Regulations, as amended, provide an explicit requirement that all appointed governors have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and the success of the school and it is for the governing body to decide whether the Local Authority nominee has those required skills 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.

5.3 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.

5.4 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.

5.5 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.

5.6 The Council's Constitution gives the General Purposes Committee responsibility for appointment of local authority school governors.

6. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 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.

7. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no best value implications arising from the report.

8. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

8.1 There are no SAGE implications in the report.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

9.1 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.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The proposals in the report do not have an impact in relation to the reduction of crime and disorder.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE.

Appendices

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

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended) List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

- NONE.

Officer contact details for documents:

- Hania Franek