

Non-Executive Report of the: General Purposes Committee 25 January 2017	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Debbie Jones, Corporate Director (Children's Services)	Classification: [Unrestricted]
Local Authority Governor Applications	

Originating Officer:	Runa Basit, Head of Governor Services
Wards affected:	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 three 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 provided the following comments in relation to the re-appointment of Dr Lowe as the LA governor at Chisenhale:
Jenny Lowe has been a governor at Chisenhale for more than 10 years including serving as the Chair and committee chair. She is currently the nominated governor for safeguarding, a role she undertakes with great professionalism. Her commitment is evidenced by her excellent attendance record, her contribution to meetings and to policy review. She regularly attends governor conferences and training events and always feeds back her learning to other

governors. Jenny brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the governing body and is very well respected by her fellow governors.

The Headteacher and Chair would like Dr Lowe to continue as the LA governor at Chisenhale. Dr Lowe's application is enclosed at **Appendix 1**.

6.2 The Headteacher and Chair provided the following comments in relation to the re-appointment of Ms Le-Tessier as the LA governor at Seven Mills:

Geeta Le-Tessier has played a valuable role on the Seven Mills Governing Body during her term of office as an LA governor:

- She is Chair of the Premises Committee. Her professional experience (in public housing) gives her valuable insights into the school's management of its buildings/site, and into related Health and Safety issues. She takes part in the annual Governors' Health and Safety site audit.
- Her professional experience has been very useful to the school during the past four years.
- Geeta is a member of the school's Finance and Staffing Committee. Her professional experience of setting, managing and monitoring budgets for large housing projects is very valuable for the work of this committee.
- Geeta also acts as one of two link governors for SEN/Inclusion and Safeguarding. This involves meeting with the deputy head/inclusion co-ordinator (who is also the school's safeguarding lead) on a regular basis.
- Geeta's attendance record at meetings is very good, and she also makes additional visits to school (e.g. for special events) whenever she can.
- Most importantly, Geeta understands well the role of the governor as critical friend. She does not shy away from asking challenging questions, but she is always constructive in any criticism she makes and is realistic in her suggestions for ways forward. She is very supportive of the school's child- and community-centred ethos.

The Headteacher and Chair very much hope that Geeta will be able to continue in her role as the LA governor for a second term. Ms Le-Tessier's application is enclosed at **Appendix 2**.

New application

6.3 The Headteacher fully supports Ms K Marriner's application and provided the following comments in relation to appointing Ms Marriner as the LA governor at the PRU Management Committee:

Kerri has previously been an Associate Governor and has supported various governor actions including:

- Staff appointments
- School policy development

More importantly Kerri has excellent knowledge of student behaviour and the support required to challenge and in improving the behaviour which leads to social exclusion. She also has very strong knowledge and understanding of Alternative Provision more generally, which will also support the school's ongoing development. Ms K Marriner's application is enclosed at **Appendix 3**.

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.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE.

Appendices

- Appendices 1 – 3 [EXEMPT]. LA Governor Application Forms

Officer contact details for documents:

- Runa Basit, Head of Governor Services, 020 7364 4302