

General Purposes Committee



Thursday, 23 February 2023 at 6.30 p.m.

Committee Room - Tower Hamlets Town Hall, 160

Whitechapel Road, London E1 1BJ

Supplemental Agenda

This meeting is open to the public to attend.

Further Information

For further information including Membership of this body and public information see the main agenda.

Contact for further enquiries:

Joel West, Democratic Services,
Town Hall, 160 Whitechapel Road, London, E1 1BJ
Tel: 020 7364 4207
E-mail: joel.west@towerhamlets.gov.uk
Web: <http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/committee>

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London Borough of Tower Hamlets



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<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p>General Purposes Committee</p> <p>23 February 2023</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of James Thomas, Corporate Director (Children's Services)</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>A summary review of Governors within Tower Hamlets</p>	

Originating Officer(s)	Farhad Ahmed
Wards affected	All wards

Reasons for Urgency

The report was not published within the statutory deadline due to staff absences and backfilling key duties. The report cannot wait until the next scheduled meeting of the Committee. If the information is not reviewed at next week's meeting, members will not be able to provide a steer on the work being delivered.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report for Members sets out a breakdown of the most up-to-date data equality information held for Governors in the borough and details active workstreams tackling inequalities and helping to deliver more diverse boards.

Recommendations:

The General Purposes Committee is asked to note:

1. The equality information provided.
2. That Governor Services is undertaking the task of obtaining equality information from all governors in the borough.
3. The planned work to further improve diversity on Governing Boards across the borough as detailed in section 3.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 This report is for noting and no decision is required at this stage.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

N/A

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

3.1 Governor Landscape

This is a breakdown of equality information for Tower Hamlets Governors and a snapshot of the national and London landscape is provided below:

National Landscape

- 3% of Chairs and co-chairs are of a Black, Asian, or other minority ethnicities.
- 5% of Governors and Trustees are of a Black, Asian, or other minority ethnicities.

London Landscape

- 20% of Governors and Trustees are of a Black, Asian, or other minority ethnicities.

(Data provided by the NGA)

Tower Hamlets

- 31.8% of Governors and Trustees from Black, Asian, or other minority ethnicities
- 16% of Chairs and co-chairs are of a Black, Asian, or other minority ethnicities.

Tower Hamlets Governor Equality Data

Sex		Disability		Total BAME	Total BAME Chairs/Vice Chairs	Total BAME LA governors
Male	42.3%	Disability	3.8%	70 (31.8%)	16%	27% (Sample size 65 of 77 LA Governor)
Female	57.7%	No Disability	92%			
		Undisclosed	4.2%			

Age	25-34	35-44	45- 54	55-64	65-74	74- 84	85+	Prefer not to say
	18.3%	22.1%	23%	20.7%	9.4%)	5.6%	0.5%	0.5%

Ethnicity	Asian Or Asian	Asian Or	Black Or	Black Or Black	Black Or	Other Asian Background	Other Black

	British-Bangladeshi	Asian British-Indian	Black British African	British Caribbean	Black British Somali		African Caribbean
	36 (16.9%)	6 (2.8%)	6 (2.8%)	5 (2.3%)	2 (0.9%)	3 (1.4%)	1 (0.5%)

Ethnicity	Other Mixed Background	Mixed White and Asian	Other Ethnic Group Chinese	Any Other Background	Total BAME	White British	White Irish	Other White Background
	1 (0.5%)	3 (1.4%)	4 (1.9%)	3 (1.4%)	70 (31.8%)	132 (62%)	7 (3.3%)	13 6.1%

(Data sample 220 governors)

Local Authorities have little scope to influence the appointments to governing boards as the decisions are overwhelmingly the remit of Governors themselves or the appointing bodies for voluntary schools.

3.2 Talking Inequities Workstreams

It is recognised that there is an under-representation on governing bodies from Black, Asian, minority ethnic groups on our school boards. To address this, we have the following workstreams in place, all within our scope and budget:

- **Governor Equality Data**
All school Governors have been emailed, requesting they complete a Governor Equality form. Data collected will help Tower Hamlets better measure the school governance landscape and work towards a situation where Governors are more representative of the communities that they serve than is the case at present.
Our aim to is to capture feedback from all Governors by the end of the 2022/23 academic year.
- **Inclusive Recruitment Training & Handbook**
Inclusive recruitment training & handbook is currently being developed, which will provide in depth best practice guidance to schools and all governing boards to deliver more diverse boards by minimising biases in the hiring process.
- **Governor Service Training Programme**
Our Training Programme has been updated further to incorporate sessions that tackle inequalities, including:
 - Anti-Racist Training for Governors
 - Accountability, Support & Challenge: using evidence and asking good questions
 - Conscious Inclusion
 - Diversity of Thought and Respect

Training sessions that tackle inequalities can help deliver diversity by raising awareness of biases and prejudices that can limit diversity in the workplace or other settings. By educating people on the importance of diversity and inclusion, and providing tools and strategies to address inequalities, individuals and organisations can work towards creating a more inclusive environment. This can lead to increased representation and participation of under-represented groups, and a more diverse and productive workforce.

- Collaborative Working with Recruiters
We have opened dialogue with Governors for Schools and Inspiring Governors to collaborate with us and to deliver more BAME candidates for Tower Hamlets schools.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 It is important that governing boards reflect their communities so that their decisions consider the needs, perspectives and lived experiences of those communities. This is supported in the Governance Handbook 2020, p36, which states '*A board composed of governors and academy trustees who bring a diverse range of skills, experiences, qualifications, characteristics and perspectives and who are from different backgrounds and settings will have a positive impact on setting the strategic direction for the organisation*'.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:
- Best Value Implications,
 - Consultations,
 - Environmental (including air quality),
 - Risk Management,
 - Crime Reduction,
 - Safeguarding.
- 5.2 There are no further specific statutory implications arising from the report.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

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

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 The Public sector equality duty came in to force in April 2011 (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010) and public authorities are now required, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2 To ensure transparency, and to assist in the performance of this duty, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2017 require certain public authorities, including local government , to publish:
- equality objectives, at least every four years
 - information to demonstrate their compliance with the public sector equality duty
- 7.3 The provision of additional equality information from the remaining governors whose data is currently unknown will better enable the Council to ensure that they are meeting their equality duty.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- LA Governor Appointment

Appendices

- None

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:

Farhad Ahmed

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