

Non-Executive Report of the: General Purposes Committee 8 th October 2019	
Report of: Debbie Jones, Corporate Director (Children's Services)	Classification: [Unrestricted]
Report on Equality Breakdown of LA Governors	

Originating Officer(s)	Runa Basit
Wards affected	All wards

Executive Summary

This report sets out for Members an update on the breakdown of equality information and demographic of LA Governors currently serving in the borough.

The current data held by the LA does not include all equality information for governors as some governors have opted not to provide this information to Governor Services.

The data presented below is a breakdown of the available information.

Recommendations:

The General Purposes Committee is asked to note:

1. The equality information provided,
2. The next steps to further improve diversity on Governing Boards across the borough.
3. That the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 states that Local Authority governor is —
 - (a) nominated by the local authority; and
 - (b) appointed as a governor by the governing body having, in the opinion of the governing body, met any eligibility criteria that they have set.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

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

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 There is a drive from government to ensure that governors are skilled and able to support school improvement effectively. Therefore, more emphasis is

placed on ensuring that Boards have the right skills.

- 2.2 Governor Services is working on promoting diversity on Governing Boards in Tower Hamlets. This is however a national issue and according to the annual school governance survey 2017 just 4% school governors and trustees are from an ethnic minority...

'This compares to around a third of pupils being from an ethnic minority, and 13.5% teachers being from an ethnic minority. The annual school governance survey 2017 also shows that 10% school governors and trustees are aged under 40, with 1% aged under 30 – though ethnic diversity does increase in younger age groups. There are an estimated quarter of a million school governors and trustees volunteering in state-funded schools in England, with 1 in 10 school governing positions vacant. Research from 1999 commissioned by the then Department for Education and Employment on the composition of school governing boards revealed that 5% of those governing came from an ethnic minority, indicating that there has been no significant progress in almost two decades.' – Taken from National Governance Association's article on diversity on governing boards. Full article is available [here](#).

[\[https://www.nga.org.uk/News/NGA-News/Apr-2018-Jun-2018/Diverse-governing-boards-will-make-schools-success.aspx\]](https://www.nga.org.uk/News/NGA-News/Apr-2018-Jun-2018/Diverse-governing-boards-will-make-schools-success.aspx)

- 2.3 To increase the number of ethnic minority and young school governors, Inspiring Governance and the National Governance Association (NGA) have launched a joint campaign 'Everyone on Board'. Governor Services is working closely with NGA/Inspiring Governance and an active recruitment campaign is underway.
- 2.4 Governor Services is improving data recording and monitoring and will be able to provide updates on the progress of improving diversity in due course.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 There are 100 schools in the borough and each Governing Board is able to appoint 1 LA Governor.
- 3.2 There are currently 23 LA governor vacancies (including 10 Academies/Free Schools)
- 3.3 Breakdown of Equality information for LA Governors is provided below:

Local Authority Governors: 77
Number/Percentage of Male: **40 (52%)**
Number/Percentage of Female: **34 (44%)**
Unknown: **3 (4%)**

Ethnicity breakdown of Governors:

Ethnicity	Number/Percentage
White British	44 (57%)
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	8 (10%)
Black or Black British: African	1
Other White	1
Black or Black British: Caribbean	1
Asian or Asian British: AOB	2
Asian or Asian British: Indian	1
Mixed/Dual Heritage: White & Asian	1
Mixed/Dual Heritage: AOB	2
prefer Not to Say	3
Other/Unknown	13 (17%)

Other equality breakdown is included in appendix 1.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 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. However, it is recognised that more needs to be done to promote diversity and increase a wider representation of the community.
- 4.2 It is also important to note that the guidance from DfE emphasises that Governing Boards need to focus on ensuring that governors have the key skills to support the work of the Governing Body.
- 4.3 Further work is planned to promote diversity on Boards and as mentioned above, Governor Services is working with National Governance Association (NGA) and Inspiring Governance to support this work.
- 4.4 Planned activities include:
- reviewing the information available on 'becoming a school governor' on the TH website and publications. When speaking to parents it has become apparent that there is a lack of understanding on the role of being a governor, therefore it is through the publication that we will share more accessible information on the role of school governors, in the first instance.
 - promoting the positive aspects of becoming a governor amongst that younger generation to encourage applications from minority group. Including the CPD opportunities presented as part of the TH Governor training programme.
 - addressing the diversity issues at the Governor's Annual Conference scheduled to take place on 2nd November 2019. Through workshop and part of the speeches during the conference, the need for individual Boards to address diversity issues within their school Governing Body will be discussed. Chairs will be asked to carry out a review and take positive steps towards encouraging more diversity within their Boards. Boards are also being requested to review how they induct and retain governors from ethnic

minority on the Governing Board. Through a positive induction, training and peer support more governors (parent governors in particular) will remain on the Board and actively participate.

- supporting Governing Boards to undertake reviews of their Boards to ensure that it has the right skills and wide perspective, including good representation from the local community it serves.
- Produce a promotional video (depending on available resource) working with local community groups, which will be widely disseminated.
- Through the work with Inspiring Governors we are able to tailor our recruitment for governors to meet particular needs. We have started to positively attract applications from ethnic minority groups.
- We have started to place governors from ethnic minority through this recruitment strategy (these are co-opted governors).
- Attending local community events to raise awareness i.e. Parent Conference
- Linking up with community representatives to raise awareness

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 2011 require public authorities, named on , to publish:
- equality objectives, at least every four years (from 6th April 2012)
 - information to demonstrate their compliance with the public sector equality duty (from 31st January 2012)
- 7.3 The provision of capturing equality information from governors 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

- Appendix 1

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

Runa Basit