

**Meeting of the Decision Session – Cabinet
Member for Children and Young People**

3 September 2012

Report of the Director of Adults, Children and Education

Appointment of Local Authority Governors

Summary

1. This report provides information about the current position with regard to vacancies for local authority seats on governing bodies, lists current nominations for those vacancies, as detailed in Annex 1 and 2, and requests the appointment, or re-appointment, of the listed nominees.

Background

2. National benchmarking data on governor vacancies indicates a national average of 10.2% for local authority governor vacancies. York has 8 (4.8%) local authority vacancies at the time of writing this report.
3. The following table summarises the current position of local authority vacancies and appointments in City of York schools.

Total number of local authority seats in City of York schools	168
Number of local authority seats currently filled (or held)	152
Number of new local authority appointments addressed by this paper	8 (including 1 where the vacancy arises on 1 st November 2012 and 4 who are seeking approval for appointment as LA governors prior to being assigned to a specific school)
Number of local authority reappointments addressed by this paper	5
Number of local authority appointments in progress/ on hold	7 (4 in progress and 3 on hold)
Number of local authority	8

vacancies remaining after this paper (excluding those where a nominee has been identified or where it has been agreed to hold vacancies)	
Number of applicants placed in community vacancies since the last report.	1

Political affiliation of local authority governors		
Party	Number of governors	Percentage of all local authority governors
Labour	15	10.1
Lib Dem	13	8.7
Conservative	1	0.7
Green	0	0
Independent	2	1.3
Others	118	79.2

Identification of vacancies

4. The overall picture of governor vacancies is informed by a detailed database, which includes records of all schools, the structure of their governing bodies, individuals who serve as governors and terms of office.
5. From the database can be determined such information as current vacancies and terms of office which are due to expire. In this way the Governance Service can clearly identify in advance the actions which are required and act accordingly.

Reviewing Vacancies

6. The vacancy position is under constant review. When potential new governors are identified the candidate is interviewed to discuss their interest and suitability. The chair of governors and headteacher are also asked to meet with the candidate and show him or her around the school prior to nomination for appointment. This allows the school to assess the potential candidate in terms

of a good match for the needs of the governing body and current governors.

7. Where a term of office is due to expire, the individuals are contacted to ask whether they would like their name to be put forward again for reappointment. Chairs and headteachers are contacted to invite any relevant supporting information. Where a reappointment is appropriate, this is included on the nomination paper for consideration by the Cabinet Member.
8. All local authority governors are required to apply for an enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau.
9. It should be noted that, as well as filling local authority vacancies, the Governance Service also assists schools who are having difficulties filling community governor vacancies.

Political Balance

10. In York the local authority governor seats are filled on merit, rather than by strict consideration of political balance. Just under a fifth of local authority governors are, in practice, linked to one of the political parties. Since the recent local election the balance of political representation on governing bodies across the city no longer reflects the balance of the current administration. Steps will be taken to redress the balance over a period of time, whilst always considering the need to identify the best possible governor for a school, rather than taking account of individuals' political affiliation.

Consultation

11. Consultation on the nominations for appointment has been undertaken in accordance with the agreed procedure for the appointment of local authority governors.

Options

12. The Executive Member has the options of appointing/re-appointing or not appointing to fill vacant seats as proposed at Annex 1 and 2.

Analysis

13. If the Cabinet Member chooses not to appoint to fill vacant seats this will have a detrimental impact on the work of governing bodies and their ability to meet statutory requirements. However, equally importantly is the need for confidence that the proposals in Annex 1 and 2 will deliver volunteers who are committed to developing their skills in order to make a strong contribution to the work of the school.

Council Plan

14. Effective school governance plays a significant role in meeting the council's priorities. By ensuring improved school performance and outcomes for children and young people, good governance supports the city's aim of all residents achieving their potential, and contributing to the economic health of the city. All governors have access to high quality, university-accredited training, which offers an opportunity to develop transferrable skills and improve employability as well as make a contribution to better economic outcomes. In addition to this, as the largest volunteer workforce in the country, school governors play a significant role in supporting their local communities and increasing engagement in local issues.

Implications

15. There are no implications relating to equalities, crime and disorder, ITT, property, financial, legal or HR issues arising from this report.

Risk Management

16. In compliance with the council's risk management strategy, there are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report. Good active governance arrangements do contribute to effective school management arrangements and, as a result, reduce risks to the organisation.

Recommendations

17. That the Cabinet Member appoints or re-appoints, local authority governors to fill vacant places as proposed in Annex 1 and 2.

Reason: to ensure that local authority places on school governing bodies continue to be effectively filled

Contact Details

Author:

Sue Pagliaro
Governance Service
Adults, Children and Education
01904 554258

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Pete Dwyer
Director of Adults, Children and Education

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Specialist Implications Officer(s)

None

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers

None

Annexes

Annex 1 details the current position of local authority governor vacancies and lists those governors who are being nominated for appointment or re-appointment.

Annex 2 details potential governors who are yet to be assigned to a particular school but who are being nominated for approval to take up LA governor positions as soon as a skills match to a specific vacancy has been carried out.