

## Meeting of the Decision Session – Executive Member for Children and Young People

8 March 2011

Report of the Director of Adults, Children and Education

### Appointment of Authority Governors (formerly LA Governors)

#### Summary

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

#### Background

2. National benchmarking data on governor vacancies indicates a national average of 12% for Authority governor vacancies. York has 4 (2%) Authority vacancies at the time of writing this report. This is a reduction on the higher than usual number of vacancies reported in December 2010 and brings the overall percentage back to the level we can normally expect to carry at any one time.
3. The following table summarises the current position of Authority vacancies and appointments in City of York schools.

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Total number of Authority seats in City of York schools  | 174       |
| Number of Authority seats currently filled (or held)   | 152       |
| Number of new Authority appointments addressed by this paper   | 7         |
| Number of Authority reappointments addressed by this paper   | 4         |
| Number of Authority appointments in progress/ on hold  | (5 / 2) 7 |
| Number of Authority vacancies remaining after this paper (excluding those where a nominee has been identified or where it has been agreed to hold vacancies) | 4 (2%)    |
| Number of applicants placed in community vacancies since the last report.  | 0         |

| <b>Political affiliation of Authority governors</b> |                            |  |
|---|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Party</b>  | <b>Number of governors</b> | <b>Percentage of all Authority governors</b> |
| <b>Labour</b>                                       | <b>19</b>                  | 12.5   |
| <b>Lib Dem</b>                                      | <b>12</b>                  | 7.9  |
| <b>Conservative</b>                                 | <b>4</b>                   | 2.6  |
| <b>Green</b>  | <b>1</b>                   | 0.7  |
| <b>Independent</b>                                  | <b>5</b>                   | 3.3  |
| <b>Others</b>                                       | <b>111</b>                 | 73   |

### **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 Executive 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 Authority vacancies, the Governance Service also assists schools who are having difficulties filling community governor vacancies.

### **Political Balance**

10. In York the Authority governor seats are filled on merit, rather than by strict consideration of political balance. Just under a third of Authority governors are, in practice, linked to one of the political parties. Amongst this number there is a balance which very broadly reflects the political balance within the authority. As and when a situation arises in which any party has significantly more seats than their political representation would indicate to be

appropriate, steps may 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 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.

### **Analysis**

13. If the Executive 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 will deliver volunteers who are committed to developing their skills in order to make a strong contribution to the work of the school.

### **Corporate Priorities**

14. Good effective school governance does play a significant role in enhancing individual institutions and contributing as a result to the Learning City corporate priority which describes how

“We want to make sure that local people have access to world class education and training facilities and provision”

### **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 Executive Member appoints or re-appoints, Authority Governors to fill vacant places as proposed in Annex 1.

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

### Contact Details

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**Report Approved**  **Date** 24 February 2011

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)**

None

**Wards Affected:**

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

### Background Papers

None

### Annex

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