
Scrutiny Management Committee

15 September 2008

Report of the Democratic Services Manager

Final Report of the Education Scrutiny Committee - School Governors

Summary

1. This report presents a final report from the Education Scrutiny Committee detailing their review of School Governors.

Background

1. In coming to a decision to review this topic, certain key objectives were recognised. Due to the work involved in examining these objectives, the Committee chose to split the review into two parts, and the following revised remit was agreed:

Remit

2. In regard to Governing Bodies, to encourage an improved level of community involvement and maximise their diversity and skills.

Part A - Key Objectives

- i. Investigate the current composition of governing bodies with an effort to find ways of improving the diversity of governing bodies to better reflect the community
- ii. Identify ways of increasing the number of community Governors
- iii. Identify ways of increasing community involvement with Governing Bodies
- iv. Investigate ways of maximizing the skills that individual members of governing bodies bring to their role

Part B – Key Objective

- v. Investigate the role of Governors and current clerking arrangements in extended schools

3. At a meeting in February 2008, the Committee received a briefing paper from the Head of Early Years & Extended Schools on the Government's 'Extended Services in Schools' agenda, and in May 2008 they considered a scoping report for Part B of the review. As a result, Members recognised that there was no issue around the current clerking arrangements in extended schools and therefore agreed not to proceed with Part B of the review. Instead they agreed that the broader issue of governance of extended school provision should be considered as a possible separate topic in the future.

Consultation

4. As part of their review, the Committee carried out a number of consultation events, as detailed in their final report attached at Annex A.

Options

5. Having considered the findings contained within the final report and its annexes attached, Members may choose to support all, some or none of the recommendations shown in paragraph 7 below, and provide their comments, prior to the report being considered by the Executive.

Analysis

6. In regard to the aims and objectives of the review, the final report attached, analyses all of the information gathered and the arising issues.

Summary of Recommendations Arising From the Review

7. The recommendations arising from the review of School Governors are that:
 - i) the significant voluntary contribution of school governors to the successful running of York schools, be acknowledged;
 - ii) the work of the Governor Support & Development Service Team be noted, in particular in supporting this scrutiny review and the resulting benefits gained to their service area as referenced in Annex F to the final report .
 - iii) the Governor Support & Development Service Team be instructed to:
 - (a) Continue to develop improved methods for advertising governor vacancies i.e. by targeting specific organisations, in order to attract a more diverse mix of individuals to the role of governor and ensure it captures the information necessary to reflect changing circumstances and monitor diversity. (*objective (ii)*)
 - e) Create an information guide which identifies the most effective methods for finding and recruiting potential community governors and distribute it to all York schools (*objective (ii)*)
 - f) Continue use of the 'Exit Questionnaire' in order to investigate governors motivation for leaving their post (*all objectives*)

- g) regularly maintain, update and develop their database to ensure it remains an effective tool (*objective (i)*);
- h) share information on best practice with all York schools (*objective (iii)*)
- i) be encouraged to consider the most applicable form of training for maximizing skills, whether that be whole governing body or online training. (*objective (iv)*)

Corporate Direction & Priorities

- 8. Although the remit for the School Governors review did not fit directly with any of the Corporate Priorities, it was recognised that it could indirectly have a positive effect in relation to Corporate Priority No.7 – ‘Improve the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in the city’.

Implications

- 9. There are no known legal, Financial, Equalities, HR, or other implications associated with the recommendation below or the recommendations within the final report at Annex A.

Risk Management

- 10. There are no known risks associated with the recommendation within this cover report. The risks associated with the recommendations within the final report are detailed therein.

Recommendations

- 11. Members are asked to note the contents of the attached final report and its annexes and provide comments on the findings and recommendations as shown in paragraph 7 above.

Reason: To inform the Executive’s consideration of the final report.

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Report Approved **Date** 1 August 2008

Wards Affected: **All**

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes

Annex A – School Governors Review - Final Report dated 30 July 2008

Annex AA – Ethnicity Information

Annex AB – Information From Completed Exit Questionnaires

Annex AC – Information Relating To Community Governors

Annex AD – Information On Community Involvement With Governing Bodies

Annex AE – Information On Training Requirements

Annex AF – Update From governor Support & Development Service