

Decision Maker: EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday 18 March 2014

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SCHOOL GOVERNANCE WORKING GROUP

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Chief Officer: Terry Parkin, Executive Director of Education, Care & Health Services

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report outlines the recommendations arising from the School Governance Working Group which was reconvened by the Education PDS Committee at its meeting on 30th January 2014, and met on 27th February and 11th March 2014 to consider how the role of Local Authority Governors might be developed.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 The Education PDS Committee are asked to note and comment on the recommendations of the School Governance Working Group for developing the role of Local Authority Governors as outlined in section 3.3 of this report;

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People:
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: No Cost:
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Education: Workforce Development and Governor Services
 4. Total current budget for this head: £160,300
 5. Source of funding: £54,800 DSG; £105,500 Income
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 3 FTE
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: 108 hours
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None:
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable:
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Bromley Schools & Academies (96)
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: N/A

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 The School Governance Working Group was reconvened by the Education PDS Committee on 30th January 2014, and met on the 27th February and 11th March 2014 to consider how the role of Local Authority Governors might be developed.

3.2 Following consideration, the Working Group agreed a range of recommendations for developing the role of Local Authority Governors and that they be presented to the Education PDS Committee at its meeting on the 18th March 2014:

3.3 Developing the role of Local Authority School Governors: Recommendations

3.3.1 Local Authority Governor Recruitment continue to be supported through advertising and/or speakers at:

- London Borough of Bromley;
- Bromley Adult Education College;
- A range of community meetings including the Bromley Residents' Associations annual meeting, Safer Neighbourhood Panels and Snow and Parks Friends meetings;
- Community Links Bromley;
- Local businesses, such as solicitor firms, to recruit Local Authority Governors with specific skill sets; and,
- Other advertising and/or recruitment events as appropriate.

3.3.2 A formal selection process be developed for Local Authority Governors comprising:

- An application stage where a candidate provided more information on their skills and experience;
- A selection stage where a candidate had a short interview with the Portfolio Holder for Education; and,
- A nomination stage where successful applicants would be matched with a school.

3.3.3 Training and communication processes between Local Authority Governors and the Local Authority be developed through:

- Training sessions for prospective Governors of Local Authority Maintained Schools and Academy Schools delivered through the Local Authority's Governor Services Training Programme;
- Encouraging schools to subscribe to the e-learning element of the Governor Services Training Programme;
- An induction pack which dealt with the specific role of the Local Authority Governor;
- An annual Local Authority Governor questionnaire which included the opportunity for Governors to highlight key successes for their school or academy and issues identified throughout the year;
- Circulation of the minutes of the termly Chairman's Networking Meeting to Governors, the Portfolio Holder for Education, and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Education PDS Committee;
- Use of the Link Governors Forum to circulate best practice to Governing Bodies;
- More active involvement of Governors with the Termly Governors' Briefing, for example through a letters page or FAQs;

- Identification of a named Officer for Governors to contact for guidance on areas of particular concern that they had already raised with their Head Teachers and Governing Bodies and required additional specialist guidance on;
- The Portfolio Holder for Education and Chairman of the Education PDS Committee contributing details of work being undertaken across the Education Portfolio and by the Education PDS Committee to the termly Governors' Briefing; and,
- Specialist advice from the Local Authority where appropriate.

3.3.4 Best practice be developed through:

- Advice provided to schools on areas including:
 - Developing a standing order for governing bodies;
 - Use of the updated job description for recruiting Clerks to the Governing Body.
 - Decision making matrix
- Encouraging schools to recruit an Independent Clerk, remunerated at a level appropriate to the responsibilities of the role.
- A potential Governor Conference held on a Saturday for 2-3 hours, delivered in partnership with Local Authority Maintained Schools and academy trusts.
- Making Local Authority Governors aware of the information they could reasonably expect to have access to in fulfilling their role and responsibilities;
- Continued development of the School Governance area on Fronter; and
- The Portfolio Holder for Education, and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Education PDS Committee to meet the Head of Governance on a regular basis.

3.3.5 Academy Schools be encouraged to have Local Authority Governors through:

- Being approached by the Local Authority to promote the benefits of having a Local Authority Governor.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The recommendations and actions in this report would support the delivery of priorities for children and young people as set out in the Council's Education Commitments and agreed at the Council Meeting of 21 January 2013 to work to improve school governance.
- 4.2 The recommendations and actions in this report also support the work programme as set out in the Education Portfolio Plan 2014: to promote educational opportunity in the borough, ensuring all families have a choice of good and outstanding schools and early years; and to work with governing bodies, the Department for Education and others to expand popular and successful schools and create additional early years' capacity.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 All actions arising from the implementation of recommendations in this report will need to be met within existing resources.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The local authority has a number of statutory duties pertaining to governing bodies of schools: to make the Instrument of Government for all maintained schools and federations of schools (DfE 067); to appoint local authority governors to all maintained schools and to give notice of the removal of any local authority governor (DfE 066); to provide training and information for school governors (DfE 068); to appoint additional governors if the school is eligible for intervention (DfE 117).

Non-Applicable Sections:	[PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS List non-applicable sections here]
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	ED13082 School governance working party: Implementation of recommendations http://cdslbb/documents/b50006122/Item%207c%20School%20Governance%20Working%20Party%20-%20Implementation%20of%20Recommendations%20UPDATED%20VERSION%20Tuesda.pdf?T=&\$LO\$=1