

By: Linda Lissimore, Head of Governors Services

To: Governor Appointments Panel

Subject: proposed amendment to the guidelines for the appointment of local authority governors

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

The report recommends the adoption of a revised set of *Guidelines for the Appointment of Authority Governors* which does not include the agreed change to include 'grandparents' as ineligible, pending a new set of procedures and guidelines following a major change to Governance Regulation proposed by the DFE for implementation in September 2014. These guidelines will be presented to Selection and Services Committee on 6 March 2014, taking account of any comments made by the Panel.

Background

- 1.1. The Governors Appointment Panel agreed at its last meeting on 22 November 2013 to recommend a minor change to the *Guidelines for the appointment of Authority Governors*
- 1.2. On the advice of Democratic Services, some redrafting of the guidelines has been carried out to clarify certain aspects and bring KCC's practice into line with current expectations (Appendix 1)

New Information

- 2.1 On 13 January 2014, The Department for Education opened a consultation, 'Constitution of Governing Bodies or Maintained Schools – Proposed Changes to Regulations', together with draft regulations and Statutory Guidance (Appendices 2 and 3), with a closing date for responses of 14 March 2014, and implementation of the first set of proposals by September 2014.
- 2.2 The key changes which will impact on the appointment of Authority Governors are as follows;
 - A key consideration in the appointment and election of new governors should be the skills and experience the governing body needs to be effective.
 - For every vacancy, the governing body should conduct an audit to identify any gaps that need to be filled in the skills, knowledge and experience of existing governors.
 - Anyone appointing governors to the governing body must appoint someone they believe has the skills to contribute to effective governance and the success of the school.
 - Governing bodies and local authorities should take steps to inform governor elections so that the electorate understands the extent to which nominated candidates possess the skills the governing body ideally requires.
 - All governing bodies must be constituted under the 2012 Constitution Regulations by 1 September 2015.

2.3 The Statutory Guidance suggests that governing bodies define a set of

Skills required for their needs, conduct a skills audit, and recruit governors to provide a balance of skills and experience. Individual skills suggested include inquisitiveness to question and analyse, and the willingness to learn, good inter-personal skills, a basic level of literacy in English (unless a governing body is prepared to make special arrangements), and sufficient numeracy skills to understand basic data. As a corporate team they are encouraged to develop expertise and experience in analysing performance data, in budgeting and driving financial efficiency, and in performance management and employment issues, including grievances.

- 2.4 All governing bodies will be required to reconstitute under the 2012 Constitution Regulations by September 2015. Under these regulations, local authority governors are nominated by the local authority but appointed by the governing body. The local authority can nominate any eligible person as a local authority governor, but it is for the governing body to decide whether their nominee has the skills to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school and meets any other eligibility criteria they have set. Local authorities should therefore make every effort to understand the governing body's requirements and identify and nominate suitable candidates.

Review of appointment Procedures and process

- 3.1 In the light of these regulatory changes, the local authority will be required to review its procedures and processes for identifying, selecting and appointing governors to schools, including local authority governors.
- 3.2 Governor Services has been invited to produce a draft Governor Recruitment and Retention Strategy, together with accompanying procedures, guidance documents and resources, for KCC's Education Cabinet Committee (ECC) on 14 March 2014
- 3.2 Major changes to the procedures for appointing local authority governors will be included in the new draft strategy, and will be presented to the Governor Appointments Panel once approved for wider circulation.

Recommendation

- 4.1 The committee is advised to recommend the redrafted guidelines (Appendix 1) to Selection and Member Services Committee without the proposed changes to make grandparents ineligible for appointment.
- 4.2 Revised processes, procedures and guidelines will be presented to the panel for their consideration, review and comments at the first GAP meeting following agreement by the ECC.

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