

Purpose

1. This report brings together the key issues, emerging themes and recommendations explored during the period of the review. The issues raised will enable members to agree recommendations for improvements to future governor recruitment and retention strategy.

Information

Invited guest: Jane Mansell, Senior Practitioner, Governing Body Services

2. Jane Mansell has been invited to talk about work of the re-established officer and governor Recruitment and Retention Working Group (GRRWG) and explore links to the work of the Education Review Group. She chairs meetings of the GRRWG and also acts as Clerk to Governors of different types of schools within the County Council.

Emerging themes and recommendations

Since July 2011 the Education Review Group has held 5 meetings during which consideration has been given to the following: -

- Finding out about the different categories of governors and how they are appointed or elected to the governing body.
- Looking at the role of governing body services in supporting the County Council's role in recruiting governors (including advice and information provided to schools) and the schools' responsibility for filling governor vacancies.
- Understanding different governor recruitment strategies undertaken by other councils
- Receiving a presentation from the Regional Manager of the School Governors' One Stop Shop on their governor recruitment strategies
- Examining the county-wide vacancy statistics and noting areas of greatest need (Mansfield and Ashfield).

- Considering the reasons why some schools have difficulty in recruiting governors (particularly parent governors) and what more can be done to help them.
- Receiving a presentation from Helen Bent, Head Teacher at Jeffries Primary Ashfield, a school in an area of high deprivation and pupil mobility to gain insight into parent governor recruitment
- Discussing turnover of governors and the reasons governors leave
- Identifying good practice in governor recruitment and school based induction
- Receiving a presentation from Alison Jacobson, Administrative Officer, Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham on recruitment and retention of Foundation Governors.
- Exploring the impact of different models of governance (Academies, Federations and Collaborations) on governor recruitment and retention

From this work there are the following four emerging themes and possible recommendations for consideration.

4. Information and Advice

- The need for clearer and more accessible information and advice on how to become a governor and the application process
- Review of the Local Authority (LA) governor nomination form
- Parent Governor Election Pack could be refreshed as a recruitment information pack and include exemplar letters, hints and tips on good recruitment practices.
- Encourage innovation and ideas to promote the involvement of young people in recruiting governors.
- Governing Body Clerks could be more actively involved in welcoming new governors and thanking existing governors for long service.
- Governing Body Clerks could also provide advice and guidance how governing bodies can reduce bureaucracy and signpost governors to examples of good recruitment and retention practices.

6. Publicity and Marketing

- Explore the potential for an annual governor recruitment campaign linked to corporate events and utilising the County Council website.
- Celebration of good governance, eg a celebration edition of the Nottinghamshire Governor and inclusion on the County Council website.

7. Data and information

- improve data collection to provide more accurate reports eg regarding numbers of governors from minority groups
- increase the number of existing governors who complete disability and ethnicity data monitoring forms.

- Re-design the exit questionnaire to allow governors to record further reasons for leaving and ensure it is routinely sent to all governors on resignation.
- A follow-up telephone/ face-to-face interview with a sample of leavers could be regularly undertaken.

8. Local Authority Governor Appointment Procedure

- Consideration should be given to any amendments to the LA governor appointment procedure required due to the provision within the Education Act 2011 which enable governing bodies to specify criteria for the LA governor.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Education Review Group:

Consider the themes that have emerged and their recommendations for the final report.

Councillor Liz Yates
Chair of Education Standing Committee

Lead Officer: Gill Thackrey

Attachments: nil

Background papers (to be tabled): nil