

Report to: County Consultative Committee
Date of meeting: 11 July 2024
By: Charlotte Johnstone
Title: Local Authority Governor appointments and Governor and Clerking Service Update for Councillors
Purpose: To update Councillors on the nomination for appointment of local authority governors and governor training

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) For information

11 Background

1.1 The local authority has a statutory duty to approve nominations for local authority governors. Once nominated, schools then appoint local authority governors onto their governing board.

1.2 This report provides a summary of local authority governor applications approved for nomination, and information about the level of governor vacancies across the county.

2 Supporting information

2.1 Since the report sent to Councillors on the 20th March 2024, 3 local authority governors were nominated for appointment, all were approved for a 4 year term of office. There was one new appointment and two reapplications.

Beverley Waldis	Riverside Federation	Reapplication
Ian Sandbrook	Western Road Community School	New Application
Ann-Marie Murphy	Icklesham CofE Primary School	Reapplication

2.2 Since the County Consultative Committee last met in March 2024, the Governor and Clerking Service has been reflecting on further support that could be provided to East Sussex governors. The Governor and Clerking Service has run an Exclusions briefing session which was delivered in collaboration with the Inclusion and Partnerships team within the Education Division. This session focused specifically on the East Sussex process for exclusions including Governor Disciplinary Committees. The session provided a structured outline of the procedure governors must follow during these processes with the aim of enabling boards to comply with regulations and feel confident about the process. We kept exclusions as a theme that we also fed down through our Clerk Networking sessions where clerks could discuss their best practices and top tips for clerking a Governor Disciplinary Committee, again with a key focus on policy and procedural compliance. In our Governor and Clerk Training Programme Survey which went out to all boards at the end of April, several governors cited the Exclusions briefing session as one of the most valuable sessions they have attended this academic year.

2.3 The Governor and Clerking Service has also responded to the upcoming statutory government guidance on school attendance. Attendance is a priority focus for the East Sussex Education Division, and in collaboration with Sarah Speedie, the Strategic Lead for Education Improvement we ran a Local Area Forum with the subject 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'. 58 governors over 50 schools attended these sessions and many provided feedback including "*this was very useful...I have lots of questions to go back and ask to the SLT*" and the ESGF-facilitated networking enabled practical support and advice shared amongst governors across East Sussex school boards. Due to the statutory obligations and popularity of the session, the Governor and

Clerking Service are going to run these sessions again in the 2024-2025 academic year to ensure all boards have access to this information.

The Governor and Clerking Service is also developing and delivering a new '*Attendance and Inclusion*' training session for governors which will look at the relationship between attendance figures at school and the topics of inclusion, considering how building on and improving inclusivity can impact attendance figures.

2.4 There have been 58 new governors appointed since the County Consultative Committee last met in March 2024 and in total there have been 178 new governors appointed since the 1st September 2023 in maintained schools.

2.5 Clerking: When the County Consultative Committee last met in March 2024, the Governor and Clerking Service had just begun the new ESCC certified course for clerks, the Excellence in Clerking Programme. In the last two weeks we finished the final session with our clerks. They are currently undertaking the final component of the programme which is a candidate test which will challenge their knowledge and also offer them the opportunity to practically put together a plan that supports the professional development and improvement of their boards. This programme started by covering the most essential basic elements of governance and clerking and goes on to cover some of the more complex procedures a clerk has to administer, as well as managing problems and navigating difficult discussions on the board. We are proud of how our first cohort has managed their time effectively and engaged thoughtfully with the work.

The second cohort is full and will start in September 2024, and the third cohort waitlist is starting to build with clerks already in place for March 2025.

The Governor and Clerking Service also wants to ensure that clerks are considered across the board, so we are running a new session in the academic year that is aimed at Chairs of Governors. The session '*Chairs Briefing: Working Effectively with your Clerk*' will be delivered by Jenny Barnard-Langston. Chairs are invited to discuss how the working relationship between Chairs and Clerks can be improved and reminding Chairs of the Clerk's position on the board, being that of advisor and maintaining compliance. The aim is that this session will be of benefit to Chairs to develop their responsibility as line manager, and to also have a positive benefit on the role of the Clerk.

Charlotte Johnstone
Project Officer

Contact Officer: Charlotte Johnstone

Email: Charlotte.Johnstone@eastsussex.gov.uk