

Committee(s)	Dated:
Education Board	18/03/2021
Subject: Governor Succession Planning and Recruitment	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	2, 3, 8 & 10
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services	For Discussion
Report author: Daniel McGrady, Lead Policy Officer (Education, Culture and Skills)	

Summary

Goal six of the Education Strategy 2019-23 commits to ensuring that there is strong strategic oversight of education and that delivery is focused on impact. One of the key outcomes under this goal is a strong governance frameworks and appointment processes across the City Family of Schools. The City Corporation is an academy sponsor, proprietor of independent schools, and a local education authority and its relation to governor recruitment varies across these roles. This report focuses on governor succession planning and the recruitment of governors on Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) of the ten academies in the City of London Academies Trust (CoLAT) in line with the Education Board's role for this area.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note the governor recruitment and succession planning processes for CoLAT LGBs and the key recommendations which will be shared with the CoLAT Board of Trustees and Chairs of Governors Forum.

Main Report

Background

1. According to its Terms of Reference, the Education Board is responsible for: "the oversight and monitoring of the City of London Corporation's sponsorship of its Academies, including the appointment of academy governors and, where relevant Members, Directors and Trustees." The City Corporation's roles as an academy sponsor are set out in CoLAT's Articles of Association and the Sponsorship Agreement. The relevant remit of the Education Board in relation to CoLAT governance personnel are summarised in *Table 1* below.

Table 1 – Education Board remit in relation to CoLAT governance personnel

Governance Personnel	Remit of the Education Board
Company Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair and Deputy Chair of the Education Board (or their representatives) to act as ex-officio Company Members.
Trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair and Deputy Chair of the Education Board (or their representatives) to act as ex-officio Directors/Trustees. Appoint up to two Directors/Trustees nominated by the Education Board.
Governors on LGBs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree to the appointment or removal of a Chair of a CoLAT LGB. Be consulted on changes to CoLAT's Scheme of Delegations. Be consulted on appointments to CoLAT LGB vacancies. Be informed of changes to CoLAT's committees/LGB terms of reference.

- The Education Board's strategic approach to these roles is outlined in Goal Six of the Education Strategy 2019-23 which commits to ensuring that strong governance frameworks and recruitment processes are in place.
- The Governing Bodies of the City's three independent schools are committees of the Corporation and the succession planning and recruitment of governors to these committees has been included in the City's Corporate Governance Review. The Governing Body of The Aldgate School was recently reconstituted and the City's role as a local education authority is within the remit of the Community and Children Services Committee.

National Guidance and Best Practice

- The Department for Education's Governance Handbook¹ outlines the following considerations for Sponsors, Academy Trusts and Governing Bodies in relation to succession planning and governor recruitment:
 - The membership of the board should focus on the skills required and primary consideration in appointment decisions should be acquiring the skills, experience, and diversity the board needs to be effective.
 - Boards should identify the skills they need having regard to the department's Competency Framework for Governance² that sets out the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for effective governance.
 - It is important that boards reflect the diversity of the school/trust communities that they serve. Consideration should be given to all the protected characteristics.
 - Where a vacancy needs filling, boards and other appointing bodies should move to fill the vacancy as soon as possible to prevent it impacting on the board's effectiveness.
 - In filling vacancies, boards, and others responsible for nominating or appointing to the board, should make use of all available channels to identify suitable people.

¹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/925104/Governance_Handbook_FINAL.pdf

²https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/583733/Competency_framework_for_governance.pdf

- e) The board should use active succession planning to ensure the board, and the whole organisation, continues to have the people and leadership it needs to remain effective.
5. There are a number of organisations, charities and NGOs which support schools and Governing Bodies to recruit governors with the skills, characteristics and backgrounds to be an effective decision-making body for the school which it serves. A snapshot of some of these supporting organisations is included in *Appendix 1*.

Roles, Responsibilities and Processes

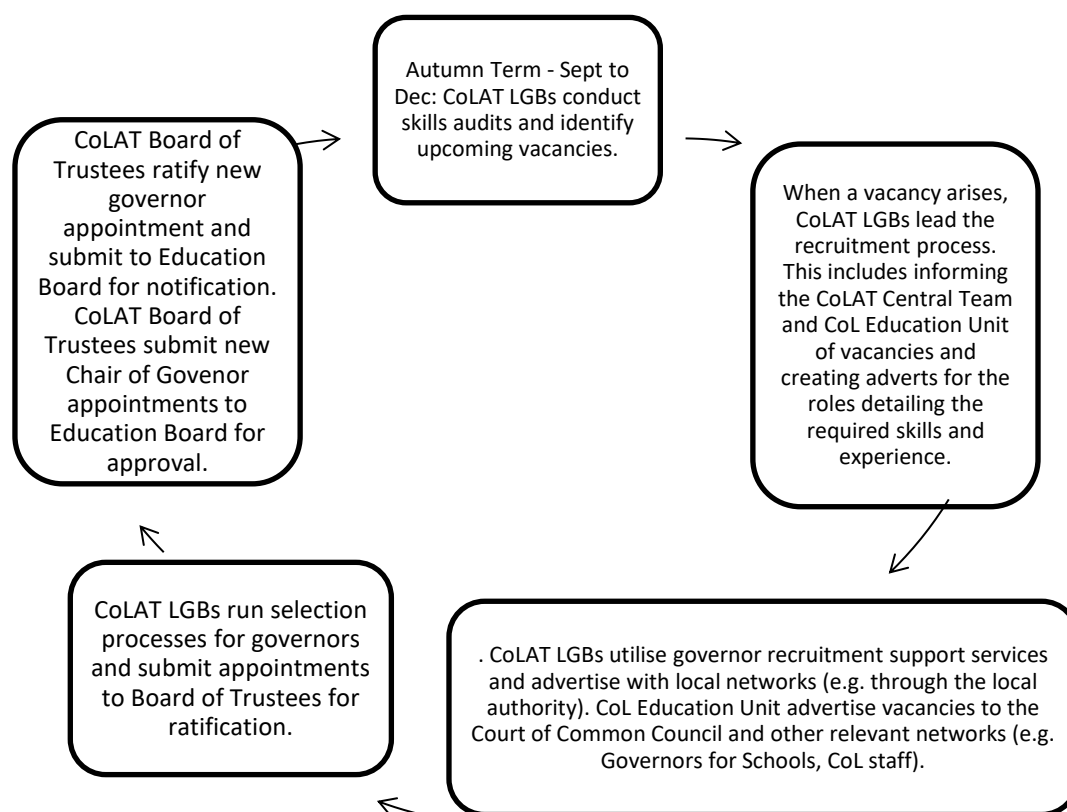
6. At the Education Board meeting on 18 July 2019, Members endorsed a series of recommendations to be made to the relevant decision-making committees of the Family of Schools regarding their governance arrangements. At their meeting on 12 December 2019, the CoLAT Board of Trustees discussed the recommendations relating to CoLAT LGBs and approved the implementation of the following actions relating to governor succession planning and recruitment:
 - a) Establish a formal process for consulting the Sponsor on nominations to LGB vacancies.
 - b) Establish a regular cycle for annual governance reviews (e.g. schemes of delegation and terms of reference), skills reviews and reporting to the Sponsor.
 - c) Adopt a guideline template of no more than 12 individuals on LGBs selected based on required skills.
 - d) Adopt terms of office which run for a four-year term coinciding with the academic year (beginning in August/September and ending in July/August) up to a maximum of two four-year terms.
7. At the same meeting, the CoLAT Board of Trustees approved a governor succession planning and recruitment cycle to enact these recommendations which was subsequently noted by the Education Board at their meeting on 5 March 2020.
8. Based on these decisions and the agreement on governor succession planning and recruitment outlined in the CoLAT Articles of Association, the Sponsorship Agreement, the CoLAT Scheme of Delegations, and the CoLAT Terms of Reference for LGBs, *Table 2* below summarises the responsibilities of the Education Board, CoLAT Board of Trustees and each Governing Body in governor succession planning and recruitment. *Diagram 1* summarises the resulting process exercised by these roles.

Table 2 – Roles and responsibilities in CoLAT LGB governor succession planning and recruitment

Education Board	CoLAT Board of Trustees	CoLAT LGBs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Education Board are consulted when governor vacancies arise so they can make nominations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CoLAT Board of Trustees have overall accountability for the membership and constitution of LGBs including to ensure that LGBs have the skills, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CoLAT LGBs are responsible for succession planning and leading the process for governor recruitment. LGBs are responsible for conducting regular skills audits and using the findings to target recruitment strategies.

<p>This is fulfilled by the Education Unit sharing details of governor vacancies with the Court of Common Council to attract nominations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Education Board approve the appointment of Chairs of Governors. 	<p>knowledge and attitudes outlined in the Governance Competency Framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CoLAT Board of Trustees ratify the appointments of governors to CoLAT LGBs and ensure that these are notified to the Education Board. The CoLAT Board of Trustees submit Chair of Governors appointments to the Education Board for their approval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LGBs are responsible for leading the recruitment process when vacancies arise including informing the CoLAT Central Team and Education Unit (for promotion to Court of Common Council) and utilising governor recruitment support services nationally and in the local area LGBs are responsible for interviewing and choosing appropriate new governors and submitting governor appointments to the CoLAT Board of Trustees for ratification.
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Diagram 1 – CoLAT LGB governor succession planning and recruitment process



9. It should be noted that *Diagram 1* applies to vacancies which are identified at the start of the academic year (e.g. where governors' terms are due to expire in August of the Academic Year) and to vacancies which might occur mid-year where a governor resigns or is no longer able to serve the full-term.

Key Areas for Development

10. Whilst much work has been underway since 2019 to streamline governance processes and align to best practice, there are still areas for improvement. *Table 3* below summarises the key recommendations for continual development and have been developed in consultation with the Chair of the CoLAT Board of Trustees. These recommendations have been shared with the CoLAT Board of Trustees and will be discussed in an upcoming Chair of Governors' Forum.

Table 3 – Areas for development in governor succession planning and recruitment to CoLAT LGBs

Action	Recommendations for Development
Identifying the skill requirements of the Governing Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CoLAT Board of Trustees (BoT): Ensure that the DfE's competency framework informs a standardised approach to annual governor skills audits. Education Strategy Unit (ESU): Make available governor templates which may be used for governors' skills audits. LGBs: Take ownership of annual skills audits and ensure that the results inform governor recruitment.
Finding the right governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BoT: Develop templates for advertising governor vacancies and recruitment packs which can be shared with national and local recruitment support services (including local authorities). ESU: Promote the sharing of skills and experience between the City's independent schools and CoLAT LGBs including governors and school staff serving as governors on other governing bodies across the Family of Schools. LGBs: Make effective use of national and local governor recruitment services, focusing on addressing skills needs and attracting diversity.
Attracting governors from a diverse range of backgrounds which reflects the school community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BoT: Consider the City Corporation's Tackling Racism Taskforce Recommendation of establishing a CoLAT alumni network to support governor succession planning and recruitment. LGBs: Develop strong links with local community organisations and local authorities which can support with governor recruitment.
Training and development of governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BoT: Encourage more governors to access Education Unit provided training in Safeguarding, School Finance and School Performance. These are the statutory training requirements and governors need to have refresher training in these three areas every two years. Additional training is also offered on topics of relevance for governors including safer recruitment training, mental health first aid training, and others. BoT: Ensure that statutory governor training is undertaken across CoLAT LGBs including the two-year cycle of update training.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LGBs: Ensure that there are appropriate records of governor training for the governing body and that these are monitored to ensure that governors are up to date with the statutory requirements.
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11. The processes and impact of governor recruitment and succession planning will continue to be reported in the Annual Action Plan as key outcomes aligned to the Education Strategy 2019-23.

Proposals

12. This paper has been shared with the CoLAT Central Team and Board of Trustees for their input, the final report, and the minutes of the discussion of the Education Board will be shared to inform continual improvement.

Options

13. N/A

Key Data

14. N/A.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

15. Successful governor succession planning and recruitment is a strategic outcome aligned to Goal Six of the Education Strategy 2019-23 which commits to ensuring that there is strong strategic oversight over education and that delivery is focused on impact.

Conclusion

16. This report updates Members on governor succession planning and recruitment arrangements for CoLAT LGBs. Members are asked to note the current framework and processes for governor recruitment and key areas for development.

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Appendix 1 – Snapshot of governance support organisations

Governance Theme	Supporting Organisations
Identifying the skill requirements of the Governing Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The National Governors' Association have a comprehensive skills audit framework for Governing Bodies to use to understand the breadth and depth of skill requirements on the Board and which is based on the DfE's Competency Framework for Governors.
Finding the right governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governors for Schools, Academy Ambassadors and Inspiring Governance all find and match governors to schools and Boards of Trustees based on experience, skill requirements and connections to the local area.
Attracting governors from a diverse range of backgrounds which reflects the school community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The National Governors' Association are running a campaign called Everyone on Board aimed at increasing diversity on school Governing Bodies with a focus on ethnic minorities and representation from young people.
Training and development of governors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modern Governor, Governors for Schools and The Key provide online training for school boards through e-learning modules, training, resources and guidance materials.