



Report of the Policy & Resources Committee

Creation of an Education Board

To be presented on Thursday 1st May 2014

*To the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons
of the City of London in Common Council.*

Summary

On the 24th October 2014 the Court of Common Council approved an Education Strategy. Contained within that strategy was a proposal for the establishment of an overarching education body. Your Policy and Resources, with the concurrence of the Community and Children's Services Committee, now seeks to establish an Education Board as a grand committee of the Court of Common Council. The recommendations also have the full support of the Education Strategy Working Party.

The proposed Board will review and have oversight of the City Corporation's education-related activities and oversee the implementation of the Education Strategy. It will be responsible for reviewing the strategy and making recommendations to Committees and the Court as appropriate on the delivery of the City Corporation's vision and strategic objectives in this area. The Board will have responsibility for distributing funds allocated to it for educational purposes. It will also be responsible for the City academy schools and the City Corporation's role as a school sponsor. Further information on how the Board will exercise its duties is given in paragraph 10 of the report.

The membership of the Board will be drawn from the Court and makes provision for the appointment of external representatives. The structure of the Board and its activities is also outlined, including the creation of officer forums designed to promote communication and collaboration across the City Corporation's education offer, which will link with the Education Board.

Recommendations

We **recommend** that the Court of Common Council grants approval to:

- a) Establish a grand committee of the Court of Common Council, to be known as the Education Board;
- b) Set the terms of reference of the Education Board as set out in paragraph 9 of the report, including to:
 - i. Transfer responsibility for the City Corporation's academy schools and appointment of academy school governors from the Community & Children's Services Committee to the Education Board.
 - ii. Delegate responsibility to the Education Board to appoint the City of London Corporation's representative on school governing bodies where nomination rights are granted and which do not fall within the remit of any other committee.
 - iii. Delegate responsibility to the Education Board to distribute the funds allocated to it for educational purposes.
- c) Establish the membership of the Board as set out in paragraph 11 of the main report, including reserving two places on the Education Board for existing Common Council Members of the Education Strategy Working Party for one year only.
- d) Require the Education Board to report on its activities and outcomes after one year of its operation.
- e) Approve City-school governor appointments to follow the academic rather than civic year.

Main Report

Background

1. The recently adopted Education Strategy recommended that the City Corporation establishes *an overarching education body with responsibility for providing strategic oversight and monitoring of the education strategy. The body should be distinct from other City committees and have a regular cycle of reporting on the performance of City schools, governance and enrichment opportunities.*
2. It further recommended that the City Corporation should *create terms of reference that appropriately differentiate the responsibilities of the education body and other City committees such as the Community and Children's Services Committee and the service committees providing the wider educational opportunities.*
3. The City Corporation previously had an Education Committee that had responsibility for overseeing the City Corporation's role as a local authority (LA). These statutory responsibilities were amalgamated into the work of the Community and Children's Services Committee when that committee was established.
4. The LA function is, however, only one part of the City's much wider education offer. This includes education at primary, secondary and higher levels in the maintained, independent and academy sectors. It also includes non-academic

education through its cultural and historical institutions, learning programmes in its open spaces, and training and employability services through the City Corporation itself and via a range of partner organisations and businesses.

5. As the education strategy highlighted, there has hitherto been no central oversight of these activities that has the ability to identify links, bring these activities together, and maximise their contribution to the City's corporate strategy.

Current Position

6. The proposals set out in this report represent the culmination of discussions at the Education Strategy Working Party, Policy and Resources Committee and the Community and Children's Services Committee. These discussions have focused on:

- the proposed role of the body;
- its functions;
- the level of oversight of the City Corporation's education offer;
- its interaction with other City Corporation committees;
- its membership; and
- how information would flow to the body.

7. The primary purpose of the new body is to have oversight of the education strategy, its implementation and review. The strategy is split into five parts: developing the portfolio, the City community, the City schools, educational outreach, and the education to employment link. To ensure that the new body can effectively discharge its function as custodian of the strategy it should be incorporated into the review process for activities within these parts.

Terms of reference

8. Except where specific responsibilities are recommended for transfer to it, the Board will not take over the role of other City Corporation committees. Rather, it is proposed as a vehicle for taking a strategic overview and looking holistically at the City's overall education offer, to ensure that the City's spending in this area is being used in accordance with the City's education strategy and more generally its corporate strategy. These are reflected in the following terms of reference which are recommended for adoption.

9. It is proposed that the following terms of reference are adopted for the Education Board:

- To monitor and review the City of London Education Strategy, and to oversee its implementation in consultation with the appropriate City of London Committees; referring any proposed changes to the Court of Common Council for approval.
- To oversee generally the City of London Corporation's education activities; consulting with those Committees where education responsibilities are expressly provided for within the terms of reference of these Committees; and liaising with the City's affiliated schools and co-sponsors.

- To be responsible for the oversight and monitoring of the City of London's sponsorship of its Academies, including the appointment of governors.
- To appoint the City of London Corporation's representative on school governing bodies where nomination rights are granted and which do not fall within the remit of any other committee.
- To monitor the frameworks for effective accountability, challenge and support in the City schools*.
- To be responsible for the distribution of funds specifically allocated to it for education purposes, in accordance with the City of London Corporation's strategic policies.
- Oversight of the City of London Corporation's education-business link activities.

**In this report the expression "the City schools" means, as stated in the education strategy, those schools for which the City has direct responsibility, as proprietor, sponsor or LA, namely : The Sir John Cass Foundation Primary School, The City Academy Hackney, the City of London Academy Southwark, the City of London Academy Islington, the City of London School, the City of London School for Girls, and the City of London Freeman's School, and, when the federation with the City of London Academy Southwark is approved, Redriff Primary School.*

Responsibilities

10. Through exercising its responsibilities the Board will have oversight of the City's wider education offer. This is particularly true of its responsibility to implement, monitor and review the Education Strategy. Below is an assessment of those responsibilities and a guide on how these would be discharged:

Implementing, monitoring and reviewing the Education Strategy

The Board would monitor the implementation of the recommendations and undertake the review of the strategy after 18 months. It would also consider how the City's educational activities for under-4 and post-18 could be incorporated into the strategy.

To oversee generally the City of London Corporation's education activities and liaising with the City's affiliated schools and co-sponsors.

The Board would feed into the City's education activities across the organisation. Where these activities fall within the remit of other City committees the Board will seek to consult with these Committees on these areas. The Board will also have oversight of the City's relationship with the affiliated schools, such as King Edward's School Witley and Christ's Hospital School. It will also ensure that the City has regular communication with the other City academy co-sponsors.

Promoting opportunities for children resident in the City

The strategy outlined the City Corporation's vision for ensuring that every child resident in the City has access to high quality education and opportunities. The primary responsibility for children resident in the City rests with the Community & Children's Services Committee. The new Board would liaise with this committee to ensure that the vision is being realised.

Oversight of the City's role as a sponsor of academies

The expectation placed on academy sponsors has changed significantly since the City Corporation opened its first academy in 2003. There is more scrutiny from government and leadership and governance has become one quarter of the Ofsted inspection framework. Additionally there are proposals that OFSTED should inspect sponsors themselves. The City Corporation must ensure that it exercises its responsibilities as an academy sponsor so that it continues to strive for academic excellence whilst providing the effective leadership, scrutiny and support expected of it. It is therefore proposed that the Board will have responsibility for the appointment of City academy school governors and for liaising with those governors to monitor progress and contribution to the Education Strategy. If approved, this responsibility will be transferred from the Community & Children's Services Committee.

Appoint the City of London Corporation's representative on school governing bodies where nomination rights are granted and which do not fall within the remit of any other committee.

The City Corporation may be awarded nomination rights to school governing bodies based on factors such as association, support and sponsorship. For example, the City Corporation has been granted a position on the governing body of Prior Weston Primary School, located on the edge of the City in Islington. In addition to appointing governors to the City academies, the Education Board will appoint these City representative governors.

Ensuring that the City's contribution to governance of the schools is effective

The scrutiny of school governance arrangements has increased and the City will be under pressure from government to ensure that it has effective governance arrangements in its schools. It is proposed that more comprehensive arrangements are developed to ensure that City governors are appropriately appointed, inducted, trained and have the necessary support to be effective in their roles. This would include feeding into the process for appointing City governors to the City schools, although only directly appointing sponsor governors to the City academy schools through its role as a sponsor.

Liaising with City-appointed governors at the City's family of schools to monitor progress and contribution towards the education strategy

Besides the City's responsibility as an academy sponsor, its responsibilities as an independent school proprietor are as equally important. It must ensure that the schools are academically strong and provide the opportunities to fee-paying pupils expected of a top independent school. The governing bodies of these schools are well-established in the City's corporate governance framework. To ensure that the City continues to provide the effective leadership, scrutiny and support expected of an independent school proprietor, the Board should review this through liaising with the respective governing bodies.

Oversight of the City's support of and liaison with the City's family of schools and their contribution to the City's education offer, and foster collaboration between the schools

The body would bring together the activities directed through the Heads Forum outlined below to coordinate the City Corporation's education offer and provide a central point for activities being promoted and taken by the City schools. It will also promote areas and activities where the City schools can collaborate, share knowledge and support each other.

To have responsibility for the distribution of the City's education funding allocation.

It is proposed that the new body is responsible for the new City's Cash funding provision for schools. This funding allocation will include provision for central education-related resources. This funding will not be confined to one aspect of the education offer but will be made available for educational purposes. It will be for the new body to decide how much will be allocated and for what purpose.

Reviewing the City's Cash funding allocations and criteria for funding to the City schools

The City contributes funding from City's Cash across its education offer. It is delivered to a variety of organisations through a myriad of funding streams and under different criteria. The Education Board will advise the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee on how existing funds are spent in line with City priorities. As part of this the Board would take responsibility for reviewing the criteria for funding allocated from this provision.

Oversight of proposals for expanding the City schools offer

One of the strategy's strategic objectives is to explore opportunities to expand the City's education portfolio. To achieve this, a mechanism needs to be created to assess opportunities to increase the number of City schools. The responsibility for reviewing the results of this process will fall under the remit of the Board.

Reviewing the City's educational outreach offer

The Board would have oversight of the activities directed through the officer Outreach Forum to coordinate the City's educational enrichment offer and provide central coordination and monitoring of the opportunities being made available to both City schools and schools across London. It would receive reports from the group and be made aware of any new opportunities that the City will take advantage of in this area.

Reviewing the City's activities to support the transition from education to employment and education-business link activities

The oversight of employability activities of the Economic Development Office would remain within the remit of the Policy & Resources Committee. The Education Board would, however, review those activities that directly link to the transition from full-time education to employment. The Education Board would have oversight of those activities that link education with businesses through training programmes, apprenticeships, and work experience amongst others, through its link to the Employability Group. The scrutiny of work of individual departments is already contained within the terms of reference of some committees, such as: adult services within the responsibility of the Community & Children's Services Committee; and economic development activity within the responsibility of the Policy & Resources Committee. Where

there is crossover, the Education Board will work in consultation with these committees.

Membership

11. Following an assessment of the membership of other City Corporation committees and the recommendations of the last City Corporation governance review, the following membership is proposed:

A Non-Ward Committee consisting of,

- Ten Members elected by the Court of Common Council, at least two of whom shall have fewer than five years' service on the Court at the time of their appointment
- up to four external representatives, appointed by the Education Board, with appropriate expertise in the field of education (i.e. non-Members of the Court of Common Council, who shall have voting rights)
- one member appointed by the Policy & Resources Committee
- one member appointed by the Community & Children's Services Committee

Quorum

The quorum to consist of any five Common Council Members and one of the four external representatives.

Meetings

The Education Board will generally meet six times a year.

Chairman

The Chairman of the Board will be appointed by Board members and will be a member of the Court of Common Council and not an external representative.

12. To provide continuity with the work already underway by the ESWP, it is proposed that for the first year only two places on the Education Board are reserved for existing Common Council Members of the ESWP should they not be elected in the popular vote. These Members would be appointed from within the ESWP and would serve to stagger the appointments of members to the Education Board.

Terms

13. To stagger the membership of the Board and to avoid an all-out election every four years it is proposed to stagger the terms of these Members elected to it in its first year in relation to the number of votes received by the Court in the following way. Of the eight Members appointed:

- The two candidates with the most votes – four year terms.
- The third and fourth placed candidates – three year terms.
- The fifth and sixth placed candidates – two year terms.
- Two places reserved for members of the ESWP, should they not be elected in the popular vote. If two ESWP members are elected in the popular vote in the top six places then this falls to the seventh and eighth placed candidates – 1 year term.

Education Board support – Officer groups

14. The strategy highlighted the need for greater information sharing across the organisation and promoted joint working to improve the provision of education-related services. To achieve this, the work of the Board would be complemented by the creation of three officer groups that will report to the Board periodically and undertake activities as requested by Members.

- *Heads Forum*

A forum for the Heads of all the City schools to promote partnerships, peer to peer support, and share best practice. This will not replace the Joint Consultative Committee of the three independent schools as this discusses issues relevant and common to these schools alone, such as human resources and staff pay.

- *Outreach Forum*

A forum for officers from the City departments that provide educational outreach and programmes to schools.

- *Employability Group*

The City Corporation already has this group established and its work feeds into the employability framework overseen by the Policy & Resources Committee. The strategy highlighted the need for the City to support effective education to employment arrangements and this group will feed its work and progress back to the Education Board as it implements and monitors the strategy.

15. The establishment of these groups does not need Member approval but Members should be aware of the support being directed to the new Board to ensure it is effective in carrying out its responsibilities.

Proposals

16. It is proposed that an Education Board is established that will have oversight of the City Corporation's education-related activity. It will have responsibility for implementing and monitoring the education strategy and strengthening the City Corporation's education offer. It is further proposed that responsibility for the City academy schools is transferred from the Community & Children's Services Committee to the Education Board and that the Board has responsibility for distributing funding allocated to it.

17. It is proposed that for the first year only two places on the Education Board are reserved for existing Common Council Members of the ESWP. These appointments would provide continuity and serve to stagger the appointments of members to the Education Board.

18. To allow governor terms of office to include whole academic years and to prevent a situation where terms expire midway through the school year, it is proposed that Members approve City school governor appointments to follow the academic, rather than civic, year.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

19. The desire to focus on, improve and strengthen the City Corporation's education offer stems from the corporate aim of providing valued services to London and the nation.
20. If Members choose to establish the Education Board then a new committee would be added to the City Corporation's governance framework. This will require Members to sit on the Board and officers to support it.
21. If approved, nominations will be sought for the 12th June meeting of the Court of Common Council. The first meeting of the Education Board will be held on the 24th June 2014.
22. Its primary activity would be to oversee work that is currently being undertaken within the organisation. It complements the City Corporation's focus on improving its education offer and supports the corporate priority to maximise the opportunities and benefits afforded by our role in supporting London's communities, as set out in the Corporate Plan 2013-2017.
23. Members should also note that through having responsibility for the distribution of a funding allocation the Board would be determining the priorities in this area.

Conclusion

24. There is a renewed focus on the City Corporation's education offer that stems from the need to improve the current provision. The plethora of activities falling under this offer has grown considerably without any single central coordination to be able to link these together. The Education Strategy recommended creating a new education body that would do this and this report represents the culmination of Member-led discussions which proposes a set of responsibilities and membership for a new Education Board.

All of which we submit to the judgement of this Honourable Court.

DATED this 20th day of March, 2014.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee.

Mark Boleat,
Chairman