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| Committee(s) | Dated: |
| Education Board | 15 September 2016 |
| Subject: Proposed model governance structure for local governing bodies of City of London Academies Trust | Public |
| Report of: Director of Community and Children's Services | For Decision |

Summary

The City acting as academy sponsor will soon be obliged to appoint sponsor governors to the forthcoming City academies. The City of London Corporation, as local authority, independent school proprietor and academy sponsor, currently appoints to 105 school governor, academy trustee and Education Board posts. A total of 46 Members of the Court of Common Council fulfil 73 of these roles, with a number of members sitting on more than one body. The remaining vacancies are filled by non-Members of the Court of Common Council appointed for their particular skills and experience.

City of London Academies Trust (the Trust) has developed a proposed model membership for the local governing bodies of all new schools which join the Trust. The proposed model for the composition of Local Governing Bodies meets the statutory requirements of a governing body in terms of minimum numbers and membership, allows sufficient flexibility to meet local needs, and reflects the relationship between the Trust and sponsor as set out in the sponsorship agreement.

The Board of Trustees remain the accountable body for the performance of schools within the Trust therefore it is essential that they maintain a strategic overview of each schools progress.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- note the current governor positions that are filled by Members of the Court of Common Council;
- endorse the proposed model membership for LGBs of new schools which join the Trust; and
- endorse the proposed use of existing reporting/accountability process as an accountability mechanism for strategic school leadership which will include the local governing body and the effectiveness of the Chair of Governors.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London Corporation, as local authority, independent school proprietor and academy sponsor, currently appoints to 105 school governor, academy trustee and Education Board posts. A total of 46 Members of the Court of Common Council fulfil 73 of these roles, with a number of members sitting on more than one body (see table). The remaining vacancies are filled by non-Members of the Court of Common Council appointed for their particular skills and experience. As set out in the body of this report, the City acting as academy sponsor will soon be obliged to appoint further governors to the new City academies.

| Number of Posts Held | Number of Members |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 4 | 2 |
| 3 | 5 |
| 2 | 11 |
| 1 | 28 |

2. City of London Academies Trust (the Trust) has developed a proposed model membership for the local governing bodies of all new schools which join the Trust. This model has been developed to ensure that minimum requirements are met and that all relevant interests are represented. While LGBs may request to make small changes to this model, in order to reflect their local circumstances, such requests would be considered on their merits by the Trust Board.
3. The Board of Trustees remain the accountable body for the performance of schools within the Trust therefore it is essential that they maintain a strategic overview of each schools progress.

Current Position

4. The proposed model has been developed with in anticipation that, if it is approved, it will be adopted by City of London Primary Academy Islington, City of London Academy Highgate Hill, City of London Academy Shoreditch Park, and City of London Academy Downs Park.

Proposal

5. The proposed model membership for LGBs of the Trust is:
 - 1 Chair (Sponsor Appointee),
 - 1 Vice-Chair,
 - two elected parent Governors,
 - the Headteacher, and
 - 1 elected staff Governor.

6. Other Governors will be co-opted according to skills set and expertise, up to a maximum of 12.
7. City of London Academies Trust needs to ensure that the governing bodies that are created for the new academies are able to fulfil their role as well as being effective and efficient. There needs to be a balance between being large enough to provide the range of skills and experiences that are required for modern school leadership and being small enough to ensure that functions are efficiently discharged. The responsibilities and accountabilities of governing bodies are set out in the Governance Handbook publication from the DfE and the relationship between the authority of the Headteacher/Principal, local governing body and the Trustees are described in the agreed schedule of delegation.
8. As set out in the sponsorship agreement the establishment, terms of reference, constitution and membership of any such Local Governing Body or committee shall be notified to the Sponsor who shall be invited to nominate suitable candidates to be appointed as members of such Local Governing Bodies. The Chairman of every Local Governing Body will be nominated by the LGB and approved by the Trust Board. The Chairman of every Local Governing Body must be approved by the Sponsor.
9. It is recommended that Members endorse the proposed model membership for LGBs of new schools which join the Trust.
10. Each Local Governing Body will appoint sub committees (Finance & Premises /Curriculum /Staffing) depending on the needs of the individual schools. The responsibilities of the sub committees are set out in the Scheme of Delegation. The Local Governing Body can establish other statutory committees and working groups as necessary and co-opt members with relevant expertise to these bodies, including people who are not Governors.
11. The performance of the Chair of Governors and the local governing body will also need to be subject to periodic monitoring by the Trust Board. The Board is accountable for strategic leadership in each school and the impact this has on performance. It is suggested that the existing reporting and accountability mechanism is used to establish the effectiveness of school leadership which will encompass school leader performance, the local governing body and the Chair of Governors.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

12. The City Corporation has been approved to move to the pre-opening phase for three of four new schools (with a decision on the fourth expected imminently).
13. Interim governing bodies are already in place for City of London Primary Academy Islington and City of London Academy Highgate Hill with a number of governors likely to wish to transition from the interim to the full governing bodies.

14. The most immediate strategic implication is the need to establish an interim governing body for City of London Shoreditch Park, including a Chair approved by the City Corporation.

Conclusion

15. The proposed model for the composition of LGBs meets the statutory requirements of a governing body in terms of minimum numbers and membership, allows sufficient flexibility to meet local needs, and reflects the relationship between the Trust and the Sponsor, as set out in the sponsorship agreement.

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