

COUNCIL

17 JUNE 2010

APPOINTMENT OF AUTHORITY SCHOOL GOVERNORS: CHANGES TO CRITERIA – ADDENDUM REPORT

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Les Wicks, Children's Services
Report from: Rose Collinson, Director of Children and Adults
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Summary

This addendum report informs Members of the Home Office's decision to postpone the registration with the Vetting and Barring Scheme.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Government has announced (15 June 2010) that registration with the vetting and barring scheme has been postponed to allow the government to review it and remodel it.
- 1.2 Voluntary registration with the scheme for new employees and job-movers was due to start on 26 July. This registration has now been stopped. The scope of the remodelling process – to be coordinated by the Home Office in partnership with Department of Health and Department for Education – is being finalised and will be announced shortly.

2. Advice and analysis

- 2.1 Rather than remove the requirement for CRB disclosure in September, with the consequent risk, it is suggested that a revised set of criteria be used until the situation is clear; this also incorporates the additional criteria around governance and training. These changes are set out in a revised appendix 2, in attached, in bold italics (Avii, Biv and Civ). The other changes in the original report remain as shown in bold.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the criteria be amended following the outcome of the Government review, subject to the Director of Children and Adults being satisfied that the registration scheme provides sufficient protection to children and young people.

3. Revised recommendations

- 3.1 The Council is recommended to approve the criteria for the appointment of Authority school governors as set out in the revised appendix 2 to the addendum report, with effect from 6 September 2010.
- 3.2 The Council is recommended to delegate authority to the Director of Children and Adults, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, to amend the criteria for the appointment of Authority school governors, in line with the outcome of the Government's review of the Vetting and Barring Scheme.

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Background papers

Home Office press release – 15 June 2010:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/press-releases/Vetting-barring-scheme>

Part A

In deciding whether a candidate should be appointed as an Authority governor, the Council will consider the following:

- i) the statutory qualifications and disqualifications criteria as set out in the current Regulations;
- ii) the skills and experience of which the school has the greatest need;
- iii) the skills and experience of the candidate and the ability to make full and effective contribution to the work of the governing body of the school;
- iv) the candidate's support for the school's ethos and mission;
- v) in the case of governors requesting re-appointment, the candidate's prior attendance record, **and evidence of their commitment to maintaining up-to-date expertise, and taking a full part in the work of the governing body;**
- vi) **the willingness of the candidate to commit to regular training, to keeping expertise up-to-date and to taking a full part in the work of the governing body**
- vii) ***the results of an enhanced CRB check – or current one dated within the last 12 months***

Part B

Unless in exceptional circumstances, the following candidates will not normally be eligible for appointment as Authority governors:

- i) a member of staff in any maintained school in Medway (apart from supply teachers, who can be a Authority governor of a governing body in schools at which they do not work);
- ii) the spouse, partner or close family relation of any paid employee of the school (as a governor to that school);
- iii) a former head-teacher or teacher to the governing body of the school where they were employed, until at least two years after the end of his/her employment; unless at the express recommendation of the Director of Children and Adults;
- iv) ***those where the result of the enhanced CRB check raises issues of child protection.***

Part C

Once appointed, the Local Authority will expect that the governors appointed by them will continue to meet the criteria set out in Part A above and in particular will

- i. do nothing that could bring the school or the Local Authority into disrepute, and
- ii. disclose any information that could form the basis for disqualification; and
- iii. **demonstrate a commitment to regular training, to keeping expertise up-to-date and to taking a full part in the work of the governing body**
- iv. ***be prepared to apply for an enhanced CRB check if requested to do so by the Governor Services Manager or equivalent.***

Failure to do so will be grounds for removal from office.

The Authority would, in line with the School Improvement Strategy, expect to review Authority governors' commitment if their school went into an Ofsted category or became of serious concern to the Authority.

(Note: The effect of amending the criteria following the outcome of the Government review would be to remove A vii, B iv and C iv).