

**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY  
(ORDINARY)**

**WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 13 2006-09-26**

**URGENT QUESTION TO THE LEADER**

**QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR PETER JOHN**

A primary school Head has expressed extreme frustration about delays in agreeing school governor appointments, creating particular difficulties at the beginning of the school year. We know, apart from this specific query, that governor appointments are presently taking a long time to process. What are the reasons for these delays and what plans are being put in place to improve this situation as soon as possible?

**Response**

Governor vacancies are filled by election or appointment. For example, parent and staff governors are elected whilst local authority, community and foundation governors are appointed.

In most case it is the responsibility of the governing body or the church authorities to make these appointments. The local authority only has responsibility for appointing one category of governor. Primary local authority governors are appointed by the community councils and special and secondary school local authority governors by the voluntary bodies appointments panel.

The only reason for delay in making local authority governor appointments is the interval of time between meetings. Clearly if, for whatever reason, the appointing body defers making a decision, as has happened twice recently, then this will increase the period of time before an appointment is made.

It is the case that a primary school headteacher has expressed concerns about a delay in reappointing a governor. But there is no evidence of more wide spread concern.

However, the director of education, in liaison with the Office of the borough solicitor, has agreed to review the appointments process to see if any improvements are possible.

**SUPPLEMENTAL – COUNCILLOR PETER JOHN**

I thank the leader very much for his answer and wish him happy birthday. I was going to read him his star for today. You can either continue pressuring someone into surrendering to your way of thinking and make a complicated situation more difficult or you can trust that what is happening is good and let things unfold in their own time and in their way. Tonight push fears and concerns to one side. So pushing fears and concerns to one side Councillor Stanton on this birthday.

There is a real problem with some schools at the moment with local education authorities (LEA) vacancies not being filled because of the frequency with which community councils are meeting and whether they are taking decisions at those meetings or deferring them and I know that one particular problem has arisen with Cathedral at primary school now I am told that that decision is not to be reconsidered

until the next Borough and Bankside community council which is some way off I don't know the precise date but between now and then there will be two planning meetings of the Borough and Bankside community council and I wonder whether given that the appointment of LEA Governors is a closed item whether the consideration of that particular application for the LEA governorship could not be considered at one of those planning committee meetings at the Borough and Bankside community council and whether in fact other community councils where there are also similar problems of LEA governor vacancies could not have this as an item on their planning committees if that would speed up the process

## **RESPONSE**

Mr Mayor that is a very fair point – I would not seek to pressurise any community council chair into what they should have or should not have on their agenda but if that is constitutionally possible then I am sure that they will consider it favourably.