

## **DEVON ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNORS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2008**

The newsletter order is as follows:

- Devon Association of Governors (DAG)
- Local Authority (LA)
- National Governors' Association (NGA)
- Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF)

### **DAG**

**I apologise for any repetition but I remind all Governors that the DAG Website**

[www.dag.gb.com](http://www.dag.gb.com) is now active. It contains a number of useful facilities including a comprehensive Jargon Buster / Glossary, an easy way to read the feedback from Ivan Godfrey's excellent Area Meetings, links with other organisations, a Q and A and a discussion board. Some model policies are available for you to adopt. ***In this instance if your school is willing to share any of yours, and other good practice, please use us as the conduit.*** There are other aspects to the site which we are sure will benefit Devon Governors, not least the ability to book on line for this year's Governors' Conference.

**The DAG Governors' Conference** will take place on Saturday 29 March at County Hall Exeter.

In addition to two guest speakers who will address the future of Governance in the next 5 years nationally and locally, we will be running 3 workshops to address SEN Framework; Succession Planning and the Role of SIPs.

The Devon Youth Choral Experience will entertain us during the day and you will have the opportunity to read what our children think of their schools and Governors!! The children's thoughts will be expressed visually and your School Council could win a prize of £50 if they submit drawings and script of what it is they think Governors are or do. In addition we are seeking the views of children by inviting you to forward (for anonymous display) 6 things they like about their school and 6 things they would change. DAG does hope you will be able to participate in these bits of (serious) fun, if that is not a contradiction.

The new Constitution will be discussed at the Conference. The current Constitution requires that: "Alterations to the Constitution shall require a two thirds majority of those present and voting at a quorate meeting of which 60 days due notice must be given to each branch and each member governing body". Such notice was given in the December newsletter and is repeated here, with the reminder the current and proposed Constitutions are available on the website.

**Devon Arts in Schools Initiative (Daisi)** are organising a series of dance performances in March. Some 35 Devon Schools are involved in the 6 separate performances. There will be a small charge to attend. Further information can be obtained by contacting the DAISI office by email [admin@daisi.org.uk](mailto:admin@daisi.org.uk) or phoning 01392 385214.

**The Chairman, Vice Chair** and EO met the new Director for Learning and Schools, Judith Johnson, in advance of her taking up her appointment in April, on 22 February. We have agreed a termly programme of meetings

**The Chair and EO** have also met the LA Headteacher Succession Planning Group this month

### **LA**

We have received the following from Devon Governor Support Services (DGSS):

"Please could you through your network thank all governors who have volunteered to help with the school based JE appeals process. More than 50 governors came forward and I have passed all

the names on to the JE team. They will be in touch within the next couple of weeks with training dates.” I am delighted to pass on this message.

**The LA has** received the Boundary Commission’s Terms of Reference about its review of Local Government in Devon. The Boundary Commission review will be complete by the end of 2008, but its recommendations are not likely to come into force until 2011

**Following representations from DAG and individual Governors** the deadline for return of the services you wish to purchase from Devon has been extended to 20 March 2008, a three week extension

**We would encourage** as full as attendance as possible at the Chairs Round a Table events on 5 and 11 March. See Checklist for details

**You are reminded that all** responses concerning Schools Admissions for 2009 – 10 are to be complete by 7 March and that the consultation on school dates for 2009 – 10 ends on 18 March.

**One way to stay in touch** with LA issues is through the Just4Schools website, [www.devon.gov.uk/index/learning/schools/just4schools](http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/learning/schools/just4schools)

### NGA

**The NGA Board Bulletin** for March has been sent to all schools and is also on the DAG Website. There are a number of interesting items and articles in the Bulletin, but one of interest concerns the Home Officer Green Paper, *The path to citizenship: next steps in reforming the immigration system*. Under 4.5 *Active Citizenship*, in paragraph 171, migrants awaiting citizenship are encouraged to make a contribution to the community by ‘undertaking voluntary work, or becoming a school governor, for instance’. In the response form (question 6), becoming a governor sits alongside raising money for charities or a school, running or helping with playgroups and running a sports team. This does display some lack of understanding of school governance! NGA’s Chair has written to Jacqui Smith to raise concerns, but please respond to the consultation and make your views known.

**There is an NGA Regional Conference** planned for 15 March and the Chair and EO intend attending, though we await specific details of the event.

### DCSF

**There are a number of consultations** live on the DCSF website, [www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk). This includes a response to the Green Paper mentioned above.

David Tall  
Executive Officer to DAG

2 March 2008