

## **DEVON ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNORS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 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**

The new 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 provision; 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 January and 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 Anne Whiteley, Director of Children and Young People's Services on 8 January and have arranged to meet the new Director for Learning and Schools, Judith Johnson, in advance of her taking up her appointment in April, on 22 February.

**Ivan Godfrey has completed** his 4 Area Meetings this Term and easily digestible feedback will appear in due course on the website. These Area Meetings are much appreciated by those who attend and generate discussion, shared practice and a wonderful opportunity for some cross-pollination of views. Ivan, wonderfully supported by Christine Wilson the DAG Secretary, puts in an awful lot of voluntary effort in organising and conducting these meetings and I take this opportunity to thank him publicly.

**DAG congratulates the 4 Clerks**, who were recently awarded the Level 3 Clerks Btech. They are: Nancy Drake, Dawlish CC; Maggie Dunlop, Clyst Heath Nursery and CPS and Cyst St Mary PS; Ann Inman, Horrabridge CPS and Pete Osborne, Bradley Barton School and Nursery Unit and Haytor View CPS. This is a significant personal achievement and will bring even greater strength in the support they provide to their Governing Bodies.

### **LA**

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

#### **School Governors needed for Job Evaluation Formal Appeals Process:**

In accordance with the Schools Appeals Procedure Devon County Council's Job Evaluation team is looking to recruit up to 12 school governors to assist with the school based Job Evaluation formal appeals process which is about to get underway.

Governors would need to be available to attend training for one and a half days before sitting for a maximum of three hours on an appeal panel, many of which will take place in schools across Devon. (Governors will not sit on panels involving staff at the school where they are a governor).

Governors will be remunerated for their time, both for training and panel involvement. Travel expenses will also be paid.

It is expected that training will take place in March (depending on levels of application) and the panels will meet as required until the end of 2008.

DAG will continue to update any information on the DAG website [www.dag.gb.com](http://www.dag.gb.com), meanwhile if you are interested in finding out more, please contact Debbie Clapshaw in the Governor Support team: [debbie.clapshaw@devon.gov.uk](mailto:debbie.clapshaw@devon.gov.uk), by 14 February 2008

**Debbie has also** asked me to inform you of the following:

I have had a plea for help from the Chair of Governors at Barley Lane special school in Exeter. They cannot recruit parent governors and are looking for up to five people to join the governing body who fulfil the 'parent governor' criteria. As the school is so desperate almost anybody who is or has ever been a parent will tick the box but even better that they could come in with some governor experience. The school is on the edge of Exeter at the top of Dunsford Hill - next door to the old Crossmead Conference centre. It caters for boys with emotional and behaviour difficulties in KS 2 - 4, it only has about 40 pupils I think. Currently the school is in special measures, but has appointed a new headteacher. The governing body is led by a very experienced governor who was put onto the governing body by the Local Authority, he will look to step down from the governing body when it comes out of special measures - hopefully in September this year. Any governor who is or has been a parent and feels they would like a fresh challenge and has some time to give, is very welcome to contact Debbie as per above.

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

**You are reminded** the deadline for return of the services you wish to purchase from Devon is to be returned by 28 February

**We would encourage** as full as attendance as possible at the Chairs, Clerks and Heads day on 28 February and Chairs Round a Table events on 5 and 11 March. See Checklist for details

### **NGA**

**The NGA have asked** us to bring to your notice that they "are looking for book reviewers for the NGA magazine. We regularly receive books on education and governance issues. We try to review a couple of books per issue and the work is currently falling on the same people. To write a review you need to be prepared to: Read the book; Write a short (400 word max) review to the deadline set, which may mean reading and reviewing within a two week timescale."

NGA has a professional editor who will beat your copy into shape - and edit it exactly for word length, so non-writers should not feel discouraged from volunteering.

If you are interested please contact Phil Revell at the NGA office, [phil.revell@nga.org.uk](mailto:phil.revell@nga.org.uk)

### **DCSF**

**There are a number of consultations** live on the DCSF website, [www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk)

David Tall  
Executive Officer to DAG

4 February 2008