

# National Governors' Association

## BULLETIN BOARD

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Ground Floor, 36 Great Charles Street, Birmingham B3 3JY

Tel: 0121 237 3780 Fax: 0121 122 1323 E-mail: [governnorhq@nga.org.uk](mailto:governnorhq@nga.org.uk)

Website: [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)

*The Bulletin Board is circulated to NGA Member Associations and to Co-ordinators of Governor Services to advise on NGA's work and important consultations and publications.*

*It is a membership benefit.*

*Please share this information widely, through your email contacts and at local meetings, to keep governing bodies better informed of, and more involved in, current activities and national issues.*

### FOR ACTION: NGA DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

#### Annual Joint Conference on Governance

##### *Stakeholder School Governance Under Threat: What's Worth Fighting For?*

Bloomsbury Hotel, London: Thursday, 17 June: 10am–3.30pm (registration from 9.15am).

Speakers to include: Fiona Millar (Journalist), Roy Evans (National Education Trust) and Councillor Andrew Grant (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Northants). For further details see the *Events* Section of the NGA website: <http://www.nga.org.uk/events.aspx?cardid=114>

The free places given to NGA have already been allocated to members on a first come first served basis. But further free places for governors may still be available through local authority governor services. You will need to ask your local authority about a free place through this route. A flyer about the event is available to download from the NGA website – [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk) and for further information contact [events@lgiu.org.uk](mailto:events@lgiu.org.uk) or call the Local Government Information Unit on **020 7554 2811**. Delegates will be responsible for their own travel costs.

**NGA Conference and AGM:** 6.11.10; Hotel Russell, London

### FOR INFORMATION

#### 1 **NGA News** ~ *please note any changes and additional items*

**NGA Membership Benefits:** Members of the executive committees of local associations are entitled to receive a copy of the NGA magazine *Matters Arising* to their home address, access to the members' only section of the NGA website and the e-newsletter direct to their email address. If you have not yet let us have the names, addresses and email addresses of your executive members, or if these have changed, please let us have the information as soon as possible. Without those details your association is not receiving its full membership benefits.

**\*\* Association Membership invoices:** these have been sent out. Please let the Office know: by email to: [membership@nga.org.uk](mailto:membership@nga.org.uk) or phoning **0121 237 3780** if you have not received an invoice.

**Email Forum:** Have you joined the forum yet? *If you wish to be placed on the forum email Gillian Allcroft – [gillian.allcroft@nga.org.uk](mailto:gillian.allcroft@nga.org.uk)*

#### 2 **NGA Draft Code of Conduct**

The National Governors' Association has for a number of years recommended that governing bodies adopt a code of practice which sets out the purpose of the governing body and describes the appropriate relationship between individual governors, the whole governing body and the leadership team of the school. We recommend that the code should be thoroughly discussed so that the whole

governing body has ownership of it, and, once it has been adopted, the governors should be asked to review it and sign it, on an annual basis ideally at the first meeting in the autumn term. The NGA has included a specimen code of practice in our annual publication 'Welcome to Governance'. We are now in the process of updating this code for the September 2010 edition of 'Welcome to Governance', and this year are encouraging partners to comment on it and where they are in agreement to endorse it and encourage its widespread use. We know that many governing bodies do already have a code of conduct and indeed ours has been based on a number of codes already in use. However there are also many governing bodies which do not yet have a code of conduct and the NGA wants to help spread this good practice. Each governing body may want to tailor this recommended code to their own situation, but this gives them a starting point which is built on the best practice from around the country. Thanks to all of you who have already contributed to this code in the past and I look forward to receiving any other comments on this updated version by 21st June to [emma.knights@nga.org.uk](mailto:emma.knights@nga.org.uk). The final version will be available in mid-July and we hope that governing bodies without a code will consider adopting this one, or a variation on it, at their autumn meeting.

The Code of Conduct can be found on the NGA website via the attached link – [The NGA Code of Conduct](#).

### **3 NGA Manifesto: Every child deserves a good school; every community needs good schools**

To see what NGA is calling for go to [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk). The Manifesto can be found under *NGA Policies and Manifesto*.

### **4 The Queen's Speech (including the Academies Bill)**

The Academies Bill had its first reading in the House of Lords on 26 May. For those who want to read it, it's available to download via the attached link - [Academies Bill](#).

The Bill is not extensive, in essence it gives schools the power to apply to be Academies and the Secretary of State the power to approve them.

The NGA has put together a Q&A which is available to download from the NGA's website via the attached link - <http://www.nga.org.uk/pol-academies.aspx>. The current Q&A focuses very much on the initial information about the 'fast-track process'. We will update the Q&A over the coming weeks to include details of the issues schools will need to consider if they wish to adopt academy status.

There will be another Education Bill in the autumn – the Education and Children's Bill – full briefing on the Bill will be available when it is published.

**Other news** – the Government has announced that two education bodies (quangos) will close: the Qualifications, Curriculum and Development Agency and Becta both based in Coventry. The former having just been established in its new guise and brand new offices by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill will be abolished as part of the Education and Children's Bill. No word yet on what will happen to those new offices.

## 5 NGA Governance Awards 2011

Nominations are now open for the National Governors' Association Awards for Outstanding School Governance 2011. There are two prestigious awards:

the NGA's and Governor Wales Outstanding Clerk Award (England & Wales) and NGA's Outstanding Governing Body (England only).

There will be both national and regional winners, which will be awarded at a national ceremony in March 2011.

The closing date is 15th November 2010 (12 Noon), so there is plenty of time to spread the word or to nominate someone yourself. Don't let great work go unnoticed. All our members have supported our first 'ask' in our manifesto of raising the profile of governors and the importance of school governance. These awards are a very good way of joining in – please do so.

Nomination forms are now available via the attached link - [NGA Awards 2011](#)

## 6 Meetings Digest

**School Governors' One-Stop Shop (SGOSS) (5.05.20):** An interesting item on the agenda for this meeting was the findings of some research undertaken in the City of London into the value gained by businesses as a result of the volunteering activities of their staff. The skills/competence developed by school governors ranked very highly when measured against companies' competency frameworks. This seems to indicate yet again the value of becoming a school governor. It is not just what an individual brings to the position of governor, but the fact that skills learned in governance can impact on one's professional life. The report can be found on the City's website [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk), searching *Volunteering – The Business Case*.

**National Heads' Children's Services Officers' and Governors' Group (HEG) (11.05.10):** This regular group met on the day the new Coalition Government was formed. There was some discussion of school budget surpluses and the thinking of the two Heads' associations, which should perhaps be noted by governors. ASCL had advised members to try to create a surplus this year if this can be done without pain. NAHT, however, was taking a contrary view. Its thinking was that if schools carried forward surpluses this would enable the Government to justify cuts in schools' budgets on the grounds that the schools did not need all the money they were getting. An important point made was that many heads would find managing reduced budgets very difficult because they had only known times of plenty. Discussing school/LA relations, it was agreed that the shift of delivery to the private sector would test the expertise of governing bodies. The LA's role would be of collaborator rather than provider.

**Employer Task Force Expert Group – Governance (25.05.10):** This group has been working on various strands: Policy Recommendations, Employer Focused Materials, the Role of the Governor and a Model Code of Conduct. Policy recommendations have been re-written to reflect the areas that the group believes will chime with the new Government's thoughts in an attempt to engage with ministers. The group is close to final drafts of both the Role of the Governor and employer focused materials, to ensure that these provide useful information a new governor can give to her/his employer to explain the role.

Other May events or meetings attended by NGA representatives (or for which NGA provided chairs or speakers) included: Devon Association of Governors' Conference, Lancashire Association of

Governors' Conference, Go-East Children and Learners Team, National College Diversity Panel, Essex Governors' Association Conference.

## 7 **Stoke on Trent Governors' Association**

The NGA would like to welcome the Stoke on Trent Governors' Association. The Association was officially launched at its inaugural meeting on 20 May 2010 at the Civic Centre, Stoke on Trent, attended by Gillian Allcroft (Policy Manager) on behalf of the NGA. The launch followed two years of hard work by a Steering Committee led by Neil Dawson. At the meeting the new Executive Committee was elected and it is going to meet shortly to elect officers and organise the first general meeting of the Association.

The NGA looks forward to working with the Association over the coming months and years.

## 8 **The NGA *First Certificate in Governance***

Changes have been made to this distance-learning programme. Details are available on the NGA website at [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk). Click on *Resources* and then *Training*.

## 9 **Teachers TV**

*Teachers TV now has a microsite on the NGA website <http://www.nga.org.uk/ttv.aspx>*

*The Just for Governor presentations can be viewed directly from the NGA website and have been split into programmes for primary governors and programmes for secondary governors. The link to the TTV microsite contains further information and resources for governors.*

**NB From this summer Teachers' TV will be available exclusively online. You will be able to access all you may wish to view by going to [www.teachers.tv](http://www.teachers.tv).**

*Until then it's business as usual:*

Programme information can be found by visiting the home page at: [www.teachers.tv](http://www.teachers.tv) and clicking on *Full TV Guide* at the foot of the page. Every Monday night at 7.00pm is **Governors' Hour**.

TTV can be found on Sky 880, Virgin TV 240, Freesat 650 and Freeview 88 (4–6pm). TTV programmes can also be viewed online at: [www.teachers.tv](http://www.teachers.tv).

## **CONSULTATIONS: NEWS and ACTION**

### 10 **Consultation on the future distribution of school funding**

This consultation seeks views on proposed arrangements for distributing the Dedicated Schools Grant to Local Authorities from 2011–12 onwards. Respondents are invited to comment on the proposals.

The consultation can be found at: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/)

Responses may be made online at: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/) or sent by email to: [dsg\\_consultation@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:dsg_consultation@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk) or by post to Ian McVicar, Funding and Technology Department, DfE, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

**DfE deadline 7 June 2010**

**Please copy comments to NGA**

### 11 **Publications available from NGA**

For NGA publications, visit both the Publications and Guidance sections of the NGA website: [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk).

**NGA Guides:**

**Welcome to Governance:** a handbook for new governors, used extensively by local authorities as part of their induction packs for new governors.

**The Chair's Handbook:** is designed to be a comprehensive aid to newly elected chairs.

**Welcome to Clerking:** aims to aid clerks in the performance of their duties.

**Support and Challenge:** will help governors to meet their legal obligations, at a time when the new Ofsted framework will look keenly at, and judge, governing bodies' performance.

Full details can be found on the NGA website: [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk) under Publications.

Please note: Workforce reform for a 21<sup>st</sup> century school: a brief for governors. This can be found via this link: <http://www.nga.org.uk/uploadfiles/documents/Workforce%20reform%20for%20>

## 12 Other useful publications to be aware of

### **Audit Commission – Valuable lessons: a value for money guide for school governors**

In June 2009, the Audit Commission published a report about value for money in schools. One of the conclusions of the Commission was that insufficient attention was paid to economy and efficiency in schools and that as a result the Commission could not be sure that the taxpayer was receiving value for money. Following the report the Audit Commission issued separate guidance for local authorities, headteachers and school governors.

The guidance for governors, *Valuable lessons improving economy and efficiency in schools*, was published in July 2009 and is available to download from the Audit Commission's website via this link: <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/AuditCommissionReports/NationalStudies/valuablelessons/governorsguide30jun2009.pdf>

**Extended Schools Toolkit for Governors (Revised Edition April 2009):** This new and improved edition of the TDA's publication can be downloaded from <http://www.nga.org.uk/TDA.aspx> or ordered online from the Training and Development Agency for Schools at: [publications@tda.gov.uk](mailto:publications@tda.gov.uk) or by telephone on 0845 6060 323. (Reference TDA0664/03.09/COL).

**School Improvement Planning Framework (New Edition October 2008):** To find this useful tool visit the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) website. It can be downloaded or ordered in hard copy: [http://www.tda.gov.uk/leaders/schoolimprovement\\_framework.aspx](http://www.tda.gov.uk/leaders/schoolimprovement_framework.aspx)