

# National Governors' Association

## BULLETIN BOARD

BB 10/08

1 October 2008

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*Bulletin Board contains dates for your diary, details of consultations and other papers in and out of the NGA office, for information and action, and a digest of some of the activities of NGA on current issues. Circulation currently is to NGA Member Associations and the NGA Board. Distribution is by e-mail and post. **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

**NGA Autumn Regional Meetings – Please note:** Details of the Autumn Regional Meetings can be found in the Events Section of the NGA website. If you wish to attend one of the Regional Meetings it is essential that you let the NGA Office know in advance – by email at [governorhq@nga.org.uk](mailto:governorhq@nga.org.uk) or by telephone on 0121-643-5787.

**NGA Annual General Meeting:** Saturday, 8 November 2008, Cumberland Hotel, London. The formal AGM Notice and accompanying documentation (including the audited accounts for 2007-08) were posted to Chairs (or the main contact) of Associations on 1 September. All documentation is also available to view in the Events section of the NGA website. <http://www.nga.org.uk/events.aspx?cardid=34> **Please make sure you book your place as soon as possible and no later than 31 October 2008.**

### FOR INFORMATION

#### 1 NGA News

**NGA website:** The members' area: **please note we are still lacking details of the executive members of some associations. Please remember to contact the NGA office with names, addresses and email addresses of your association's committee** so that they will be able to log into the members' area and receive copies of the NGA magazine *Matters Arising*.

**NGA updates:** Don't forget to look at *Updates* on the NGA website for information, as well as reading the Bulletin Board. The Bulletin Board and Updates can both be found in the Briefing section of the website <http://www.nga.org.uk/updateandbulletin.aspx>

**NGA Board Elections: The NGA is your organisation – Please make sure you vote!**

There are 16 candidates standing for election for nine General Director places. The candidates are: Stephen Adamson, Vanessa Aris, Colleen Arnold, Judith Bennett, Mark Blois, Pat Colling, Clare Collins, Terry Douris, Duncan Haworth, Peter Martin, Paul Mason, Violet Rook, Paul Rosen, Richard Thompson, Joyce Woodham and Carol Woodhouse.

The candidates' 250 word statements can be viewed on the About Us section of the NGA website. A ballot paper has been included in the AGM mailing to associations, but can also be downloaded from the Elections page of the website or obtained from the NGA Office via email at [governorhq@nga.org.uk](mailto:governorhq@nga.org.uk) or by telephone on 0121-643-5787. The closing date for receipt of ballot papers is 2pm Thursday 6 November 2008. <http://www.nga.org.uk/NGAElections2008.aspx>

**NGA Association Subscriptions:** Only a very small number of associations have not yet paid their subscriptions or been in touch with Gillian Windass at NGA about payment. **Please address this as soon as possible.** If you do not think you have been sent an invoice please contact Gillian at [gillian.windass@nga.org.uk](mailto:gillian.windass@nga.org.uk).

**Please note:** Associations who have not paid their subscriptions are not eligible to vote in the elections for the NGA Board, or to take any formal part in NGA meetings.

**Associations with ‘capped’ subscriptions:** because of the change in voting rights, most associations will be allocated votes in accordance with their subscription level, but ‘capped’ associations must provide a list of their members, so that they can be allocated the correct number of votes. The number of members will not be enough: we need names, please.

## 2 DCSF News

**Education and Skills Bill:** This Bill is still progressing through Parliament. It includes the raising of the school leaving age, so should be one to keep an eye on. For details, including the debates concerning the Bill, go to <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2007-08/educationandskills.htm>

**\*\* Indicators of a School’s Contribution to Well-Being:** This consultation will be published on 15 October for a twelve week consultation period. As it is not on the DCSF website, no closing date is available. Look out for its inclusion in the Bulletin Board for 1 November. As the Indicators of Well-being will be used by Ofsted in inspections, the consultation is an important one.

## 3 Meetings Digest

**Ministerial Working Group on Governance (18.09.08):** This was the fourth meeting of the group and the second to have presentations as the main focus. Having had a series of speakers about other forms of governance at the last meeting, this time the group was addressed by three people representing ‘stakeholders’ – parents, pupils and staff. We were then asked not to make notes while we were given an outline of the findings of the Bath University research into governance. It did seem that the findings were things NGA could support, and indeed, could have told them in advance. Next, the likely contents of a report from the group, to be circulated for the next meeting, were outlined. There was a general protest that the group had spent a long time listening to presentations and that there should be time for the group to discuss issues. As a result there will be an additional meeting in November. The October meeting will be for discussion and the November meeting will consider the final report.

**Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG) (24.09.08):** This is the first full meeting of the Social Partners NGA has been invited to for more than two years. NGA’s Chair was invited to attend the whole meeting. NGA gave an update of activities and issues and the Social Partners asked what they could do to assist NGA. In response, NGA asked for better communication with governors. Since the joint work several years ago which resulted in the publication of the four guides on the Remodelling agenda, little or nothing had been directed at governors to keep them informed or to offer guidance. NGA has begun to circulate WAMG notes, since although these are sent into schools it is very unlikely that they progress as far as the governing body. Governors needed direct information and communication. A second issue was one aired on nga-assocs last year – the need for governors to be members of local WAMGs (now called LSPs, Local Social Partnerships). NGA’s evidence is that few LSPs have governor members. The Social Partners were asked to give a strong message to LAs that all LSPs should have governors among their members. They undertook to do this and to look further at communications with governing bodies and to engage more with NGA. Prior to the WAMG meeting, NGA had had a meeting with TDA. It was agreed at both meetings that NGA and TDA would meet again specifically to address the issues of communication with, and information to, governors. NGA circulated copies of the new joint NGA/NAHT/ASCL document and this was accorded due praise by almost all. Chris Keates said the document was all very well but there was no mention of staff. NGA’s response was that its purpose was to improve understanding and clarify issues between heads and GBs and that staff matters were

part of the information that we required to carry out our duties. All in all it was a good meeting and NGA's presence was clearly welcomed.

Other September events or meetings attended by NGA representatives (or for which NGA provided chairs or speakers) included: SE Regional Meeting, National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations (NCPTA), Training and Development Agency (TDA) Governors' Group, School Food Trust, meeting at Stoke-on-Trent (re. forming a governors' association), DCSF Capital Strategy Group, National Heads', Children's Services Officers' and Governors' Associations (HEG), General Teaching Council, Centre for British Teachers (CfBT), Governor of the Year National Judging visit, Teaching Awards National Panel, City of Portsmouth Girls' School, Association of Muslim Governors, Capita Briefing on School Improvement (chairing and speaking).

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

This distance-learning programme is suitable for both new governors and existing governors who require a refresher or update. It consists of four modules with accompanying questionnaires. The questionnaires may be submitted for assessment and a score of 70% on each questionnaire is rewarded with a certificate to evidence the achievement. The pack can act as an introduction to governance for a new governor and give the confidence to attend training courses to further develop knowledge. The Programme is administered and run by EduCare, experts in distance learning. *The cost of the pack of four modules has now risen to £15 + VAT (£17.63). **To purchase the package with external external assessment, feedback and a Certificate the price is £36.75 +VAT.** A link to the EduCare website can be found on the front page of the NGA website. Alternatively, email the office for a hard copy of the form – [governorhq@nga.org.uk](mailto:governorhq@nga.org.uk).*

#### **5 Teachers' TV**

Become a Teachers' TV Associate and watch online previews of future programmes. Teachers' TV Associates are the channel's first point of contact at schools. By helping to promote the channel they get access to free previews, online discussion forums and invitations to special events, among other benefits. To learn more, go to [www.teachers.tv/associates](http://www.teachers.tv/associates). Associates can access the previews through this web link.

If you visit the Teachers' TV website and type in *Just for Governors* you can view a programme which looks at the merits of face-to-face, distance learning and online Governing Training.

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.

TTV can be found on Sky Guide 880, ntl 240, Telewest 240, Home choice 845 and Freeview 88. Freeview viewing time has changed; it is now from 11.00am until 1.00pm

#### **6 Becta – the Handheld Learning Conference 2008**

Becta is supporting this conference, the International Event for Learning using Mobile and Ubiquitous Technologies, to be held on October 13–15. The first day of the conference, Monday 13 October, focuses on Next Generation Learning and is open to the general public who may register free. It is aimed at teachers, governors, parents, employers and accompanied minors. The day will include seminars, an exhibition and the Y Factor, an interactive game hosted by Next Generation Learning ambassador and TV presenter Johnny Ball. To register for the conference go to [www.handheldlearning.com](http://www.handheldlearning.com).

#### **7. Promoting Community Resilience Through Schools - A Workshop**

In association with the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Civil Contingencies Secretariat (Cabinet Office) the Emergency Planning Beacon Authorities are organising a workshop as part of a national project to develop community resilience through schools. The workshop will be held on Monday 27th October –Tuesday 28th October at the Emergency Planning College, Easingwold, Nr York. The workshop is open to school governors, headteachers, teachers and local

authority emergency planning officers. The aim of the Community Resilience through Schools Programme is to develop national guidance and teaching materials on emergency planning and disaster education. The workshop is free – but delegates may be charged for overnight accommodation, dinner and bed and breakfast (£99). For those with restricted budgets this charge could be met from central project costs. For more information contact Peter Charman, Emergency Planning Officer, Essex County Council – [peter.charman@essex.gov.uk](mailto:peter.charman@essex.gov.uk).

## **CONSULTATIONS: NEWS and ACTION**

### **8 Legislation for Sure Start Children's Centres**

The Government is consulting on proposals to give Sure Start Children's Centres (SSCCs) a specific statutory legal basis, as part of the forthcoming Education and Skills Bill. The purpose of the proposed legislation is to establish SSCCs as a legally recognised part of the universal infrastructure for children's services, so their provision becomes a long term statutory commitment and part of the established landscape of early years provision. The proposed new duties reflect current good practice as shown in existing guidance issued by DCSF, rather than creating any new requirements on local authorities or other service providers.

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

Responses may be made online to: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/) or sent by email to: [SSCClegislation.CONULTATION@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SSCClegislation.CONULTATION@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk). Written responses should be sent to: Consultation Unit, Ground Floor, Area B, DCSF, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GJ.

**DCSF deadline 6 November 2008. Deadline for comment to NGA 20 October 2008**

### **9 A New Way of Handling Parents' Complaints about School Issues**

The Children's Plan committed the Government to look at ways of improving the current arrangements for parents' complaints. The consultation invites comments on handling parents' complaints to their child's school affecting their child, including those which concern bullying. The DCSF is asking for views on ways to improve: handling of complaints at school level; the place of mediation services to resolve disagreements early on; and possible new arrangements to consider complaints that cannot be resolved at school level.

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

Responses may be made online to: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/) or sent by email to: [parentscomplaints.consultation@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:parentscomplaints.consultation@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk). Written responses should be sent to: Consultation Unit, Area GB, DCSF, Castle View House, East Lane, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GJ.

**DCSF deadline 21 November 2008. Deadline for comment to NGA 7 November 2008**

*Also see 'Zero Carbon School Buildings'. The DCSF has set out its ambition for new school buildings to be zero carbon from 2016, and has appointed a Task Force to advise on how this might be achieved. It is undertaking a Call for Evidence to gather ideas, information and experience to inform the Task Force's early work. Details are given at: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/). Closing date: 10 October.*

*Also 'Local Authority Performance Targets for Under Achieving Pupils'. The DCSF is looking at a new model for statutory targets. Details are given at: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/). Closing date: 3 October.*

*And 'Revised Statutory Guidance for local authorities in England to identify children not receiving a suitable education'. This aims to provide practitioners across agencies guidance about how to implement the duty placed on local authorities by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to identify these children. Details are given at: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/). Closing date: 24 October.*

## 10 Publications available from NGA

Items available include:

- ◆ *What governing bodies should expect from schools leaders and what school leaders should expect from governing bodies.* The NGA have signed a national agreement with the Association of School Leaders and the National Association of Headteachers setting out how these important groups should work together. The agreement establishes ground rules for the relationship between headteachers and governing bodies. The document can be downloaded from the Guidance section of the NGA website – [www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)
- ◆ *Welcome to Governance 2008-09 Edition – (available end September 2008).* This popular guide for new governors provides an overview of, and introduction to, the role and responsibilities of a governing body, with sections on meetings, school budgets, policies, development planning, visiting the school and much more. Price: Single copies – £4.00 to members, £8.00 to non-members. Discounts for multiple copies: 5% for 2–29, 10% for 30-99, 20% for 100-499 and 25% for 500+.
- ◆ *Food Policy in Schools – A Strategic Policy Framework for Governing Bodies.* The revised publication was launched in September 2007 to take account of the new standards for school food. Available free from NGA. <http://www.nga.org.uk/gdncedocs.aspx>
- ◆ *NGA/Defra – A Strategic Policy Framework for Governing Bodies, Catering and Food Procurement Supplement:* The NGA in partnership with Defra has produced a supplement to the Food Policy Document, looking at issues surrounding food procurement and sustainability. The document is available to download from the NGA website via the attached link. <http://www.nga.org.uk/gdncedocs.aspx>
- ◆ *Papers:* The papers cover a wide range of topics providing detailed guidance and information on aspects of governance. The papers available currently are: *Governors and the Role of Inspection, Governors and the Curriculum, Financial Responsibilities of the Governing Body, Governing Bodies and Staffing, Governors who they are and what they do and Succession Planning.* Other NGA papers are currently undergoing revision and will be available later in 2008. Watch the website for more information. Price for all Papers: £3 to members and £4 to non-members.

## 11 Other useful publications.

**Common Mental Health Problems: Supporting school staff by taking positive action:** The DCSF has just published this short guidance document aimed at governing bodies, employers, line managers and school staff. It can be downloaded from the DCSF publications website <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/> or ordered in hard copy from DCSF Publications Tel: 0845 6022260 (Ref: 00380-2008BKT-EN)

**Recruiting Headteachers and Senior Leaders:** This publication outlines a seven-stage process, which provides a governing body with the practical guidance needed to find success in recruiting a headteacher. The publication can be downloaded free from the NCSL website: [www.ncsl.org.uk/publications](http://www.ncsl.org.uk/publications)

**School Improvement Planning Framework:** To find out more about this useful tool visit the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) website. The framework 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)

**Extended Schools Toolkit for Governors:** This can be downloaded from TeacherNet or ordered online from the Training and Development Agency at: [publications@tda.gov.uk](mailto:publications@tda.gov.uk) or by telephone on 0845 6060 323. (Reference no: TDA279/05.07/BEL/158)