

LINK GOVERNORS' MEETING

Autumn Term 2005

Date: Wednesday 16th November 2005
Venue: Windsor House
Time: 7.00 – 8.30pm
Present: Mary McIntyre (Governor Support Officer)
Louise Brailey (Governor Support Team)
Link Governors (see attached list)
Apologies: See attached list

16. Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 22nd June were approved.

17. Matters Arising

3.1 Clerk's course – An informal training session has been booked for 29th November 2-3pm

10 – Training survey – sent out via Clerk's in September 2005. To date only 49 forms back from 19 schools (from a potential of 1600)

10b – Training venues – Only 2 courses at PPDC during winter nights
Ofsted Framework – course booked for Summer 2006

13 – Inclusion Conference – a successful conference with 65% of schools represented. The Inclusion Strategy would be published shortly – certainly by the end of term.

14 – Minutes – Covered in Clerks' Newsletter

14b - Clerks' Corner – Also expanded to website and PGFL

18. Governor Training 2005 – 2006

Mary McIntyre and the Link Governors discussed why attendance was low at GST training courses in the Summer term with an average of only 13 delegates. The reasons suggested were:-

- Same courses being repeated
- Experienced governors have completed most if not all courses – could there be a greater variety of courses?

Mary McIntyre advised she has spoken to the Press Officer regarding the possibility of running a public relations course for governors – this was felt to be a good idea.

ACTION - GST

The quality of the new induction course was praised. It was agreed that it would be helpful if the best parts of the course could be used to create a

'refresher' training session for more experienced governors to update and share good practice.

ACTION - GST

Mary McIntyre asked whether there was now less scope for centralised courses – did schools want more bespoke training? By reducing centralised courses Mary McIntyre would have more time available for individual targeted training. Governors were asked to consider if this would be preferred by some governing bodies.

ACTION – Link Governors

Governors from Special schools felt they would welcome individual training – in groups to receive specific training rather than having to pick relevant parts from training aimed at all schools.

ACTION - GST

Mary referred to a previous conference which was held with governors from across the south west peninsula which was very successful. This could be a consideration for the future.

ACTION - GST

Ideas for other courses

- Generating income – including how to apply for grants and what grants are available.
- Finance training – some governing bodies are fortunate enough to have members with specific finance skills. For those GBs without such expertise would a finance officer (Jayne Gorton) be able to visit the finance committee at the school to assist with understanding and to make it more real and tangible.

ACTION - GST

Mary promoted the current roadshows run by Jayne Gorton and also discussed the training provided by Jayne with school administrators. GST to check attendance rates and to change the title of Finance training provided regularly in the GST training programme to encourage all governors to attend rather than targeting new governors exclusively.

Some discussion was held over the most convenient times for GST Training. It was suggested that in the winter afternoon rather than evening courses may increase attendance although some concerns were raised over childcare costs. Morning courses from 10 to 12 were generally felt to be most convenient for parent governors in particular.

ACTION - GST

Mary read through course evaluations from Summer term training courses.

19. Government and LEA initiatives

School Profile – Mary McIntyre updated governors on the Profile and requirements of the prospectus. At this stage there was no definitive answer regarding how the profile would be accessed or what would

happen with the finished profile. There were more questions than answers but GST will keep governors updated with any new developments.

Website Update - Mary McIntyre advised governors of the newly expanded website. It was hoped that this would provide governors with an excellent source of updated information.

Governor Roles - The GST are producing a series of leaflets outlining the roles of individual governors including SEN Governor, Race Equality Governor, Child Protection Governor, Literacy and Numeracy Governor and SEN Governor. Mary explained that advisors had been consulted over the draft copies of these leaflets and they would explain the statutory requirements for each governing body. It was envisaged a pack would be made available for each school and it was expected to be launched at a conference next term covering the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters agenda.

Clerks' Corner - The newly introduced clerks' newsletter was circulated and received very positive feedback. Governors present felt it was informative and may increase attendance at clerks' training courses.

Government White Paper – Higher Standards, Better Schools for All
Mary McIntyre presented a summary of the White Paper. She added that no formal consultation was planned but she had produced a summary of the key initiatives and encouraged all governors to read the full document. Mary McIntyre had also compiled a series of questions and governors were asked to complete the consultation paper and return it to the GST (or send it direct to the DfES) in order for feedback to be made.

Link Governors thanked Mary for her summary of the White Paper. It was noted that PAG (Plymouth Association of Governors) were also co-ordinating a response to the NGC - any feedback could be made through Jan West, the Chair, c/o the Clerk – Karen.Powell@btinternet.com - 5 Corfe Avenue, Plymouth, PL3 5SQ. It was agreed that contacting MPs would also be helpful.

20. Other business

Associate Members

A brief discussion was held regarding the role of an Associate member. A former governor had been retained by a governing body as an associate member at a time when there were no governor positions vacant. The individual had felt the associate member role had little significance. Mary McIntyre explained how best to use Associate Members and what their roles and responsibilities were.

Drugs Course

Feedback from a governor who had attended the 6 week drug course was very positive. Another governor made a request for a condensed course

be run over a day to enable people with work commitments to attend.
GST to make enquiries regarding this.

ACTION - GST

20. Date of Next Link Governor Meeting

Wednesday 22nd March 2006

Please can Link Governors inform the GST if they wish to attend meetings either by: completing the Events Programme Application Form, e-mailing the GST at governor.support@plymouth.gov.uk or by contacting the team on 307483/80.