

**Summary Notes from a Joint Meeting of the
Association of Sandwell Governing Bodies (ASGB) and Chairs'
Forum held at 6.15pm on 28th March 2018 at
Guardian House, West Bromwich**

Welcome and Apologies

Mr Patel welcomed guests and members to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

Horizon Presentation - Chris Ward, Director Education, Skills and Employment

Mr Ward presented an update to members. The presentation is attached (appendix 1) with additional comments/questions included in the notes section of each page.

Mr Ward encouraged governors to let him know if there were specific issues they wished him to address and/or if it would be helpful for him to invite along any of his colleagues.

Please let the Support Officer know if you do have any specific questions for Mr Ward. He is due to attend the ASGB meeting on 4th July 2018.

Governance Update – Craig Felton, Director Governance, SIPS

Mr Felton told members about the Governor Hub, a national database that would help to manage governor details. It comprised two parts, a 'back office' part which retained contact details and a front facing portal. Schools would be able to log in to the front facing portal to view all documents such as agendas, minutes and news. Governors and clerks would be able to monitor governing body functions. The system was GDPR compliant.

Cost would be £100 but SIPS was looking to absorb some or all of the cost as it would be more efficient, faster and potentially save on paper based communication. (Mr Felton, made it clear that schools would still retain their current options if they so wished.)

A governor expressed concern about sharing information and was assured that there were no issues, it was GDPR compliant. The 'back office' and front facing portal were completely separate and if a school bought into the service, they would only have password protected access to the front facing portal for their school.

The system would be available to all schools who used the SIPS clerking or support service. A pilot system would be run during the summer term ready for roll out in September and Mr Felton would be speaking to business managers and head teachers to gauge interest. Ahead of this, governors were invited to contact Mr Felton if they thought that their school might like to take part in the pilot.

Minutes and Matters Arising from the meeting held 28th February 2018

Minutes were agreed.

Updates from Executive Members

The Executive Committee met prior to this meeting and a brief update is included at the end of these Summary Notes.

Future agenda items/plans/share good practice

Executive members challenged members to think about what they wanted from the ASGB. Meetings were not always well attended and it was observed that members were 'talked at' during our meetings and did not have enough opportunity to discuss/share ideas, concerns etc. Notepads were circulated to encourage members to write down thoughts and ideas to make ASGB more a more supportive and effective association.

Newer members shared their thoughts that ASGB did not make it clear exactly what its purpose was, another member felt that the meetings/presentations were not always very useful. Further ideas, comments and suggestions for agendas were:

- We need to promote ASGB to new governors/all governors and clarify our purpose
- Attendance at Meetings: LF to report on attendance numbers and check out attendance at other association meetings. Could we see other association's agendas?

- Consult on ASGB Constitution with a view to updating it at the AGM this year
- ASGB Questionnaire to be sent to all governors
- Include open forum on every agenda; items to be forwarded to LF in advance if possible.
- More sharing good practice e.g. NGA meetings attended
- Members to attend other GB meetings to see good practice/offer feedback?
- Crib Sheet for new governors; what is a governor? etc
- Invite NGA to a meeting to talk about the free training they offer.
- NGA Inspiring Governance: Worth promoting and inviting NGA to attend?
- Ofsted inspections: Invite members to talk about their experiences e.g. one day inspection; governors role re challenge/support during an inspection.
- School budgets agenda item: Discussion around restructuring and managing budgets.
- Session on mental health? Dudley event was very successful
- Session on governor recruitment?
- Encourage members to use the experience of ASGB Executive/members if they have a specific problem.
- Consider when we hold meetings/training (dates, time of day, term time/holidays?)
- More interaction between chairs: time for them to discuss issues
- 'Buddy' programme for new chairs? Link with ASGB Executive/experienced governor?
- Session on challenging the HT? What can governors do if they feel the school is failing?
- Meet with Dudley/neighbouring associations/chairs to define issues that are common to all with a view to arranging an event of some kind.

Please let us know your thoughts on the above suggestions and if you have any other thoughts that would help us to support you better.

Next meeting date: 23rd May 2018

Notes from Executive Meeting held 5.30pm-6.15pm

- **Constitution:** Members had already been asked to review the constitution with a view to updating. Further copies of the original and proposed changes were distributed and members were asked to let support officer have feedback. Constitution would be an agenda item at the AGM.
- **General Data Protection Regulations:** ASGB only holds email addresses for members but does share them with the National Governance Association (NGA). SIPS clerks have been asked to minute that member school governors agree to this. Craig referred to the Governor Hub system which would be GDPR compliant.
- **Subscription:** Last year's subscription was £220, to include subsidised NGA standard membership. Cost this year was agreed as £228 plus VAT. This incorporated £3 increase for SIPS element and £5 rise for NGA subscription.
- **ASGB Website:** Progressing, Executive members to review progress.
- **ASGB Support and Future Agendas:** Included in the summary notes above.
- **STEPS:** Following on from his presentation at the last meeting, Mr Finegan had invited members to visit the STEPS Centre in Smethwick and also agreed to return to tell governors more about it.