School Governance Task and Finish Group Report

November 2013
## Contents

Preface 2  
Executive summary 3  
1. Context of this review 7  
2. Terms of reference and membership 8  
3. Is the existing school governance system in Wales ‘fit for purpose’? 10  
4. Issues surrounding the framework of governance in Wales 14  
5. Division of responsibilities in the existing education system 26  
6. Governor training 27  
7. Clerks to the governing bodies 30  
8. Information 31  
9. Recruitment of governors 34  
10. Improving governing body recognition 36  
11. Summary 38  
References 40  
Appendix I: National Governors’ Association – skills audit template 42  
Appendix II: Action plan for school improvement template 45  
Appendix III: How OFSTED judges governing body performance 54  
Appendix IV: Individual board member appraisal template 55
Preface

This group was set up to consider the fitness for purpose of the school governance framework in Wales and make recommendations to the Minister for Education and Skills for reform. This has been an ideal time to undertake this evaluation as the Hill review of wider issues relating to education in Wales was also underway. The opportunity therefore to impact on practice in governance and to further promote the improvement agenda has existed.

I would like to thank all members of the group for their very valuable and useful contributions to this review of governance. My sincere appreciation goes to Stephen Adamson, Stephen Morris, Hugh Pattrick, David Rees and Geraint Rees and also former members Glyn Mathias, Marc Belli and Delvin Baker. We worked well as a group and I am sure that we will all miss our meetings. There were many discussions around governance with issues raised, challenged, negotiated and agreed. Thanks also to our secretariat in Welsh Government - Sarah Jarrold and Neil Welch who have assisted greatly with context, coordination and planning.

Our key recommendations of the review are set out early in the report. These focus on further improving our existing system of school governance. It is important to recognise at this point the very important and worthwhile work which governors and their governing bodies do in securing improvement and promoting the best education for our children. As volunteers, they give their time willingly and their place in the delivery of the wider school improvement agenda is an important one. This review seeks to recognise their role and to strengthen it in the delivery of improved outcomes for pupils in schools in Wales.

Catherine Farrell,
Chair, School Governance Task and Finish Group
Executive summary

School governors undertake an important role in the governance and leadership of schools. It is clear that the best schools are those which combine good governance with a good senior management environment. The existing school governance arrangements have been in place a long time and this review has given us an opportunity to review the extent to which these are appropriate in 2013 and beyond. The sharper focus on the need to achieve the highest standards of educational performance in schools in Wales provides the context for this review.

The existing school governance system in Wales has been in operation for some time. There are important aspects of this system that could be reformed so that the governance of schools better facilitates and promotes the improvement agenda. Governing bodies need to be more skilled in their governance role and also they need to be able to recruit more widely so that the very best individuals participate in governing schools.

The Welsh Government’s introduction of compulsory training for governors is a welcome development and this will be an important component of the improvement journey for schools and their governing bodies. This review has sought to reflect both the responsibilities of governing bodies and also their accountability and it makes a number of recommendations about these. In view of both of these, we are proposing a shift from the existing stakeholder model to a mixed model of governance. This ‘StakeholderPlus’ model is identified as being appropriate for the context of education in Wales where the culture of collaboration has been valued historically (Farrell and Law, 1999).

This review of school governance has been conducted during and after the Hill (2013) review and we support the view that the federation of schools is to be recommended where it is appropriate. However, this model may not be appropriate for all schools in every part of Wales. Our recommendations on the governance of schools therefore reflect the single school with its own governing body and also the governing body responsible for more than one school.
The key recommendations of this group are presented below:

**Recommendation 1: Shift to StakeholderPlus approach to governance**

In this model of governance, we are retaining the valuable contribution made by the variety of stakeholders and suggest that the ‘Plus’ aspect allows governing bodies the flexibility and freedom to recruit additional governors on the basis of skills need.

**Recommendation 2: Flexibility in the Structure of Governing Bodies**

A. There is flexibility in the structure of governing bodies, with a minimum of number of 9 governors and a maximum of 21 governors;

B. The governing body of a federated school has a minimum membership of 9 and a maximum of 25;

C. There is a minimum of ‘quorum’ of 7 governors or 50%, which ever is the larger number in meetings of the governing body;

D. No more than one-third of governing body members be current parents or members of staff of the school;

E. Teachers and other staff who have children in a school should not take up parent positions on the governing body;

F. All members of the governing body are formally appointed by it.

**Recommendation 3: Strategic Role and Accountability**

A. Governing bodies should report annually on school performance within an ‘Annual Report’;

B. Welsh Government conduct a review of the content of a school governing body’s Annual Report;

C. Headteachers write a termly report for distribution prior to governing body meetings and this should be presented at the meetings. It should include where the school is currently in relation to the aims and objectives; a critical reflection on the achievements of the school towards realising those aims and objectives; a review of data on performance; absence and attendance levels; staffing issues;

D. Governors need to have greater participation in the formal school inspection;
E. Estyn review the aspects judged by Ofsted in school inspection and respond to the Minister directly about the appropriateness of this as part of the inspection of schools in Wales;

F. ‘My Local School’ website have additional tabs to include more school information;

**Recommendation 4: Division of Responsibilities within the Existing System**

There needs to be clarity around the responsibilities of headteachers and governing bodies with a specific focus on the appointment and dismissal of staff. This issue needs to be resolved by Welsh Government where the Terms of Reference regulations need to be reviewed.

**Recommendation 5: Governor Training**

A. New governors and chairs should be mentored by experienced governors;

B. If the recommendation from the Hill review is accepted by the Minister, lead practitioner governors to assist new chairs;

C. Whole governing body or cluster training as a model to be considered for the delivery of training;

D. Periodic self-evaluation and review for both the governing body and individual governors;

E. Welsh Government create a template for individual and governing body self-evaluation and review;

F. A Skills Audit is undertaken regularly.

**Recommendation 6: Clerks and Governing Bodies**

To recognise the professional role of clerks, there is a need to ensure that their performance is evaluated and assessed by the chair of governors and by the headteacher.

**Recommendation 7: Information**

A. The regional consortia should contribute information to governing bodies on comparative performance and good practice across Wales;
B. There should be clarity about the information which is made available to governors from local authorities, regional consortia, Governors Wales and Welsh Government;
C. There should be clarity about the service offered by Governors Wales;
D. Governors Wales should raise awareness about their body.

Recommendation 8: Recruitment of Governors
A. Welsh Government should publicise the governor role and raise awareness about school governors;
B. A recruitment drive should be put in place to attract new governors;
C. The regional consortia and Welsh Government introduce a ‘Governing body of the Year’ award.

Recommendation 9: Improving Governing Body Recognition
A. All school governing bodies in Wales be working towards achieving the Governors Wales Bronze award (and Silver and Gold as they develop further);
B. Governors Wales work with the local authority or consortia to assist with the awards assessment for individual governing bodies;
C. Welsh Government raise awareness of the award scheme more widely.
1. Context of this review

1.1 The statutory basis for school governance has existed in much the same form since the Locally Managed School Model was implemented in England and Wales by the Education Reform Act 1988. Under this model, maintained schools each have a governing body to set the school’s strategic direction and monitor and evaluate progress. The governing body receives an individual school budget and is responsible for allocating resources in a way that it deems fit to support the strategic direction and to discharge its functions effectively. Local authorities have wider responsibilities in relation to education provision in their area, distribute funding and provide other support to schools, act as the employer of staff in many cases and provide free information and training for governors to enable them to discharge their functions. Some of this training has become compulsory since September 2013. The Welsh Government sets the legal and policy context within which education operates, maintains an overview of activity and issues advice and guidance on good practice in governance. This governance framework has grown and developed organically over the last 25 years as schools and governing bodies have gained new responsibilities.

1.2 The purpose of the School Governance Task and Finish Group’s review is therefore to independently assess whether the system as it has developed over the years is still properly balanced, organised and fit for purpose in Wales and to provide our advice to the Minister for Education and Skills in Wales.

1.3 Over the timeframe of this review, a wider review into education in Wales was conducted by Robert Hill. The group met with Robert Hill and submitted written evidence to the consultation on Future Delivery of Education Services in Wales in September 2013.
2. Terms of reference and membership

2.1 The School Governance Task and Finish Group was set up to consider whether the school governance framework in Wales is fit for purpose and make recommendations to the Minister for Education and Skills for reform based on the conclusions drawn from the group’s review. It was asked to focus in particular on issues surrounding the framework of school governance in Wales, considering the split of responsibilities between the different components of the system, whether this should be revised so as to redistribute responsibility within that system, and the nature and extent of support which should be provided to governing bodies and others to help them discharge their duties within the context of a reformed system. In addition, we were asked to consider and comment upon the Future Delivery of Education Services in Wales review undertaken by Robert Hill specifically on elements relating to school governance.

2.2 This review into school governance has been undertaken in the twelve months from November 2012 – November 2013.

The membership of the School Governance Task and Finish Group is as follows:

Prof. Catherine Farrell (Chair), Professor of Public Management, University of South Wales
Stephen Adamson (Member), Chair of National Governors Association (England)
Stephen Morris (Member), Chair of Governors, Glasllwch Primary School, Newport
Hugh Pattrick (Co-opted Member), Chair of Governors, Ysgol Maesydderwen, Ystradgynlais
David Rees (Member), Headteacher, St. Julian’s Primary School, Newport
Geraint Rees (Member), Former Headteacher, Glyn Derw/Michaelstone Federation, Cardiff
Former members of the School Governance Task and Finish Group:
Glyn Mathias (Chair), Former Chair of Governors, Ysgol y Bannau, Powys
Marc Belli (Member), Headteacher, Mary Immaculate High School, Cardiff
Delvin Baker (Member), Chair of Governors, Cwmtawe Secondary School, Pontardawe

2.3 In our review of governance, information and evidence gathering sessions were held with Andrew Thomas and Richard Gordon, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, Ian Courtney, Chair of Governors, Dartmoor Federation, Devon and also Jane Morris, Director of Governors Wales. In addition, individuals and organisations involved in school governance were invited to submit evidence to the group. A total of 19 responses were received. The group gratefully received all of these inputs and they provided useful context for discussions.
3. Is the existing school governance system in Wales ‘fit for purpose’?

3.1 The existing model of school governance in Wales is constructed on the principle of stakeholder representation. This approach to governance was put in place in the 1980 Education Act, where the membership of governing bodies was widened to include those with a ‘stake’ in the school. Central to this approach is the notion that schools should be governed by individuals who are representative of the groups with an interest in the school. Such individuals, it is argued, will have a concern for the overall conduct of the school and its performance and hence will be motivated to undertake their governing responsibilities. Thus school governing bodies are constituted by individuals who are representative of designated stakeholder groups - teachers and other staff at the school, parents of pupils/students, the local authority and the wider community.

3.2 The context within which the organisation is embedded is an important aspect of these analyses. When the stakeholder approach to governance was introduced, the UK was in a very different era politically and educationally compared with the 2010s. In addition, the role and responsibilities of governing bodies were more limited than they are today. The system was strongly dependent on the traditional support from local authorities with schools functioning under tight control. Over thirty years on from the legislation that introduced the stakeholder model and reflecting too the devolution of responsibility for education, it seems an opportune time to review the model of governance operating in schools in Wales. There is a need to consider the new context and also the new dynamics of school governing and the impact that this has on schools and governors. Ranson and Crouch (2009, p.77) suggest that there have rarely been any attempts to reform school governance as the focus is continually on the introduction of new educational reforms. Any reforms to governance have been ‘piecemeal’ and it is clear that there is a need to reflect on the appropriateness of the model of governance.
3.3 This review of school governance in Wales has been conducted at a similar time to the review of the role of school governing bodies in England (http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmeduc/365/365.pdf). The key findings of this review were that governing bodies perform a critical role in school leadership and they need to have the appropriate skills in place to do this effectively. This report also picks up issues relating to the need to improve governance in all schools and particularly those which are deemed to be failing.

3.4 Drawing on academic research for this review of ‘fitness for purpose’, is a key finding from the work of Farrell (2013, p. 12) about school governance, that there is now:

“greater control and prescription from the centre about how governors should fulfil their responsibilities…less discretion for governors to focus on what they view as critical within the school and much greater emphasis on their responsibilities in relation to pupil performance and educational outcomes”.

3.5 This represents a shift from professional accountability, which had been the dominant form of accountability in education in Wales in previous work undertaken by this author (Farrell and Law, 1999). There is clearly an expectation too that governors are part of the framework of school improvement that is at the centre of the Welsh Government’s agenda. The conclusions of Ranson et al. (2005, p.314) clearly highlighted the importance of good governance in school improvement. It argues that the “stronger performing primary schools appear to be associated with ‘executive boards’ or governing ‘bodies’ that have developed more robust practices of scrutiny, accountability and strategy. Lower performing schools are associated with weaker practices of governance, perhaps only having developed their governors merely as a consultative sounding board”. Ranson et al., (2005) drew up a typology of governing body types ranging from a forum, a sounding board, an executive board and ‘governing body’ and finds that the highest performing schools are those with a ‘governing body’ model of governance. Here, the governing body “takes overarching responsibility for the conduct and direction of the school. The head will be a strong professional leader, but a member rather than leader of the governing body that acts as a corporate entity. The chair will lead the agenda and the meeting. There will be
systematic processes of scrutiny and what distinguishes the governing body is the strategic leadership of the school” (Ranson et al., 2005 p.311). The finding that good governance is important in school improvement in the work by Ranson et al. also supports existing research in the field of corporate governance (Edwards and Clough, 2005 p.4) where it is argued that good governance “minimises the possibility of poor organisational performance”.

3.6 In addition to these arguments about good governance, Cornforth’s (2001) research suggests that there are four most important factors associated with board effectiveness. These are:

- clarity about the nature of its role and responsibilities;
- the right mix of skills;
- a common vision between the board and management about implementing the vision;
- regular periodic review of the working relationship between board and management.

3.7 In essence, this review has sought to reflect on these factors and apply them where appropriate to the system of school governance in Wales. The group has also considered governance in other areas of the public service including housing and the governing of sports. In the sporting field, for example, Taylor and O’Sullivan’s (2009) research indicates that in recent years, there has been a shift to take greater account of the skills of board members.

3.8 Recognising a need to improve the skills levels of governing bodies, the Welsh Government recently introduced compulsory training requirements for school governors (September 2013). This important step has the potential to send a clear message to potential and existing governors about the importance of the role.

3.9 However, the introduction of compulsory training in itself may not be enough to drive up school improvement. The renewed focus on standards of achievement in education in Wales and the Ministerial ‘20 Point Plan’ outlined by Leighton Andrews, Former Minister for Education and Skills in March 2011 (Andrews, 2011) all suggest
a need for greater reform. Recent evidence from Estyn supports this. This indicates that Wales is lagging behind other UK countries in performance at GCSE Mathematics, for example (Estyn, 2013) and the international PISA results for Wales are below expectations.

3.10 Research indicates that effective schools require good governance and there is a need to look at the skills individual governors bring to governing bodies and how this can contribute more to the school improvement agenda. In addition, governing bodies should be strategic about recruiting those who have a particular skill set which may be weak within the existing membership.

3.11 Reviewing and improving school governance is one part of the improvement journey for education in Wales. The Welsh Government has also been working on other elements which seek to secure improvement. These include the new Literacy and Numeracy Frameworks and associated assessments introduced in all schools for years 3-9 in the 2012/2013 academic year. In addition, there are a number of existing initiatives which seek to promote school improvement. There is the Welsh Government’s Improving Schools agenda which sets out plans for improving education systems in Wales and sets the course of reform through to 2015. This incorporates commitments made within the former Minister’s ‘Teaching Makes a Difference’ speech and the School Effectiveness Framework. There is also the ‘Core Data Sets’ which provide a comparison of performance across similar schools throughout Wales and the Lead Practitioner programme, designed to feed best practice through the school network and, since spring 2013, the new Masters in Educational Practice, focused on driving up standards and securing the highest performance for all pupils in schools in Wales.
4. Issues surrounding the framework of governance in Wales

4.1 This section draws out some of the key issues on which the group has focused in its review.

A. Stakeholder verses the skills model of governance

4.2 The group researched in depth the existing stakeholder model and its relevance in the organisation and standards of education at the school level. At one end of the debate are the Taylor Committee arguments from the 1970s about establishing a stakeholder system as described above in section 5. At the other end, is a model of governance which is more directly ‘skills’ focused. In this model of governance, governors are selected on the basis of what they can contribute to the governing body rather than the interest group which they represent. In essence, skills which might be of value to governing bodies include professional or managerial experience and those gained from work in public, private and in third sector organisations.

4.3 The stakeholder model of governance was developed as a result of perceived failures in the pre 1970s approach where local elected members dominated governing bodies. This model was not felt to be delivering school improvement and decisions were sometimes taken on the basis of wider political issues which may not have been relevant to schools (Deem et al, 1995).

4.4 In the revised model, it was decided that a more representative range of interests should be present on the governing body. The concept of the ‘critical friend’ was developed to inform governors about their role – this was to operate in the dual ‘supporter’ and also ‘challenge’ modes. Furthermore, the governing body was to have a strategic focus and to be accountable. These aspects of the governing body are discussed below.

4.5 There are four broad options for the model of governance outlined below:
i. To retain the existing stakeholder model of school governance in Wales. This model is characterised by fixed levels of representation for each stakeholder group and there is little scope for the recruitment of governors on the basis of the skills they bring;

ii. A full ‘skills’ based model where there is no direct representation or stakeholder input and governors are recruited solely on a skills basis. This model was introduced in September 2012 by the UK Government as an option for maintained schools in England and already exists for the Academies there. This model allows governing bodies to reorganise so as to select most governors with only a few elected or appointed by stakeholders. They can also reduce their size to as few as seven governors. Some proponents of this model also advocate ‘professional’ governors who are paid for their work.

iii. A hybrid model of governance that combines elements of both the stakeholder and skills-based models. In this approach, stakeholder representative governors would be augmented by governors recruited on the basis of their skills. The current rigidity of fixed stakeholder allocations would be replaced by a more flexible approach, but with some limited constraints. We have called this ‘StakeholderPlus’ and it is the model recommended by the group. A more detailed discussion of the proposed approach is set out in the next part below.

iv. A mixed model of governance for which there are a number of variations. One approach outlined by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (2006, p. 9), is based on having a full governing body that is representative of the stakeholder groups where an “executive board is appointed with full delegated powers to direct and manage the school”. The full governing body has a ‘non-executive’ role to “scrutinise decisions and policy of the executive and hold them to account” for their decisions (CfPS, 2006, p.9). This model requires large governing bodies to facilitate the executive/non executive split. This two tier model of governance was put forward in the Hill review (2013). However, we do not consider that this model is appropriate for the context of governing in Wales as although the existing stakeholder approach requires reform, the principle of the parity of the contribution of each member of the governing body is valued.
Further, there is a need for clarity in relation to responsibility and accountability of two different tiers and only a single model of governance can secure this.

**Recommendation 1:** To adopt the ‘StakeholderPlus’ approach. In this, we are retaining the valuable contribution made by the variety of stakeholders and suggest that the ‘Plus’ aspect allows governing bodies the flexibility and freedom to recruit additional governors on the basis of skills need.

**B. Flexibility in the Structure of School Governing Bodies**

4.6 The existing stakeholder model, as set out in Option A above, operates a governing body size based on the number of pupils enrolled in the school. There is a formula for the number of different types of governors which sets out fixed proportions for each stakeholder group. The clear intention here originally was to ensure parity between the different stakeholder interests. The issue of membership was addressed in the Select Committee review in England where the Department for Education (DfE) representative acknowledged that “representation need not be at odds with a focus on skills”. The DfE also argued that “representative structures do not in themselves necessarily lead to high quality governance” (House of Commons, p.7, 2013).

4.7 From our review of membership, the group is of the view that the existing formulaic model of governor membership is not sufficiently flexible to enable governing bodies to recruit governors with suitable skills. Further, it does not currently provide the most appropriate balance between stakeholder inputs and skills needs.

4.8 This group recommends that the governing bodies of individual schools should have a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 21 governors. It is our view that 9 governors provide a sufficient number of governors given the current responsibilities undertaken by a governing body. We recommend that there is a ‘quorum’ of 7 governors or 50%, which ever is the larger number so as to ensure that in any
decision, the majority of governors have been involved. A minimum of 9 enables a governing body to meet its requirements in relation to appeals. The upper limit of 21 is the existing maximum size for a governing body and we are happy to agree this as a maximum.

4.9 The composition of the governing body under ‘StakeholderPlus’ would be made up of each of the current stakeholder groups, including parents, teachers/staff and local authority governors.

4.10 Once these stakeholder representatives are established, the governing body would be free to appoint further governors, up to the maximum total number of 21. These appointments would be made on the basis of the skills needs of the governing body, and could include additional governors from interests already represented via the stakeholder element. For example, there will be schools where parents may possess valuable skills that are needed by the governing body. Similarly, additional teacher/staff or local authority representatives may bring skills useful to the governing body.

4.11 In relation to the overall size, it is our expectation that whilst there is flexibility in the system to determine the size of their body overall, governors should think about the enrolment at the school. The largest governing bodies should be attached to the schools with the highest number of pupils. Similarly, those with lower pupil numbers are likely to have smaller governing bodies.

4.12 We value the balance of the different governor interests in the membership of the body and expect the revised structure to achieve greater variety in membership. However in order to preserve this balance, the group proposes that under ‘StakeholderPlus’, and in place of the current system of fixed proportions of stakeholders, there would be maximum limits for any one stakeholder interest. We recommend that no more than one-third of all governing bodies be teachers or other staff employed within the school and no more than one-third be current parents of children within the school. We also recommend that teachers and other staff who have children currently within a particular school do not take up parent positions on
governing bodies. We support the continuation of the pupil governor(s) in secondary schools.

4.13 In the appointment of governors, the governing body specifies the skills it requires and reviews all potential appointments to the governing body in this light. Clearly, not all governors are appointed, but where they are, a ‘skills audit’ is undertaken to identify any particular gaps. Included in Appendix I is a ‘skills audit’ template document which could be amended and used by governing bodies for this purpose.

4.14 Governing bodies should be made up of the following stakeholders:

- Headteacher (there is an expectation they will be a governor)
- Parent governor
- Teacher governor
- Staff governor
- Local authority governor

4.15 In addition, schools will also have the following governors depending on their category:

- Community governors (all schools except voluntary aided schools)
- Foundation Governors (voluntary aided, foundation and voluntary controlled schools)
- Representative governors (community special schools – takes the place of a community governor)
- Partnership governor (foundation schools that do not have a foundation)
- Additional Community governors (any primary school situated in a Community Council area)
- In addition, schools may have Sponsor Governors.
4.16 All Secondary schools must also have two associate pupil governors who are non-voting and do not count against the quorum.

4.17 The group also focused on the structure of governing bodies of federated schools. For clarity, it is our view that where schools federate, one single governing body is required to lead an individual school or group of schools. There needs to be single tier responsibility and accountability. The Hill Review (2013) recommended the investigation of two-tier models of governance for federated schools. It was the view of this group that a two-tier structure could lead to duplication of activity and confusion of accountability, leading to a dysfunctional relationship between the two tiers. In relation to federated schools, governing bodies ought to encourage schools to develop channels of communication at the school level which will be appropriate for their governance. This formed part of our response submitted to the Hill Review (2013).

4.18 The group recommends that the principle of ‘StakeholderPlus’ is appropriate for both individual schools and federated schools. As in the case of individual schools above, it is our view that the recommended minimum of 9 governors is also in place for schools which choose to federate. A ‘quorum’ of 7 governors or 50% (which ever is the larger number) is also identified for federated governing bodies. As with the single school governing body, membership of the federated body is not prescribed other than the need to include stakeholders from the following groups:

- Federation Headteacher
- Headteacher from each school (there is an expectation that they will be a governor)
- Parent governor
- Teacher governor
- Staff governor
- Local authority governor
4.19 In addition, schools will also have the following governors depending on their category:

- Community governor (all schools except voluntary aided schools)
- Foundation Governor (voluntary aided, foundation and voluntary controlled schools)
- Representative governor (community special schools – takes the place of a community governor)
- Partnership governor (foundation schools that do not have a foundation)
- Additional Community governors (any primary school situated in a Community Council area)
- In addition, schools may have Sponsor Governors.

4.20 All Secondary schools must also have two associate pupil governors who are non-voting and do not count against the quorum.

4.21 The group considered the maximum size of a federated governing body. There is a maximum of 25 governors currently in place within the Federation Regulations for maintained schools in Wales (Federation Regulations, 2010). It is our view that this number allows the newly federated governing body to recruit stakeholders from the individual school and also permit key skills to be reflected in the membership.

4.22 Governing bodies ought to encourage schools to develop channels of communication at the school level which will be appropriate for the new federated model of governance. The promotion of ‘Parents Councils’ and other similar forums might be investigated by individual schools so as to ensure that their voice is heard within the federated governing body (Arnott’s 2013).

4.23 In terms of the balance of different governor interests in the membership of the federated governing body, there is an expectation that governing bodies will achieve greater variety in membership. We also suggest that no more than one-third of all governing bodies be staff employed by the school and no more than one-third be current parents of children within the school. We suggest too that teachers and other
staff who have children within any of the schools do not take up parent positions on the governing body. We also support the continuation of the student governor in secondary schools.

4.24 Finally, as with the governing body of a single school, we recommend all governors are formally appointed to the federated body once they become a governor. This recommendation therefore means that the governing body has the power to initiate procedures to remove governors.

Recommendation 2:
A. There is flexibility in the structure of governing bodies, with a minimum of number of 9 governors and a maximum of 21 governors;
B. The governing body of a federated school has a minimum membership of 9 and a maximum of 25;
C. There is a minimum of ‘quorum’ of 7 governors or 50%, which ever is the larger number in meetings of the governing body;
D. No more than one-third of governing body members be current parents or members of staff of the school;
E. Teachers and other staff who have children in a school should not take up parent positions on the governing body;
F. All members of the governing body are formally appointed by it.

C. Strategic Role and Accountability
4.25 Accountability is a key issue in school governance and in the delivery of the improvement agenda in Wales and internationally (Maile, 2002). With responsibility comes accountability. Governing bodies are formally responsible for “Taking a broadly strategic role in the running of the school” (Education Terms of Reference (Wales) Regulations (2000). Their strategic role means that they are responsible for:

- “setting aims and objectives for the school;
- adopting policies for achieving those aims and objectives;
- setting targets for achieving those aims and objectives; and
- reviewing progress towards achieving the aims and objectives”

Ref – Education Terms of Reference (Wales) Regulations 2000
4.26 As discussed above in Section 4A, the governing body is required to focus on its strategic role, provide accountability, and carry out a ‘critical friend’ role. It is the view of the group that a significant number of governing bodies carry through this last role, with an emphasis on the ‘friend’ aspect, at the expense of the other requirements. It is our view that more governing bodies need to have extra focus on the strategic aspects of governance, whilst day to day management remains the responsibility of the Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team. Headteachers are formally responsible to the governing body for the implementation of the governing body’s strategy into classroom teaching and learning, operating in the ‘Chief Executive’ role. The governing body should have full participation in and ownership of the School Development Plan/School Improvement Plan and Self-Evaluation reports.

4.27 A key component of governors’ scrutiny and ability to track the implementation of strategy is the report delivered by headteachers at governing body meetings. We recommend that headteachers write a termly report for distribution prior to governing body meetings and this should be presented at the meetings. This recommendation is in line with existing requirements as outlined in the 2005 School Governance Regulations. The Headteacher’s report should include the following areas:

- where the school is currently in relation to its aims and objectives;
- a critical reflection on the achievements of the school towards realising those aims and objectives;
- a review of data on performance;
- absence and attendance levels;
- staffing issues.

4.28 It is also essential that the governing body carries out a regular review of its own performance. Self-evaluation should be carried out at both school and governing body level. Appendix II includes an example of a governing body self-evaluation template that is structured to follow the requirements of the Common...
Inspection framework. This is presented as a template that can be adapted by individual governing bodies.

4.29 In relation to accountability, governing bodies are accountable to parents and Estyn for all aspects of school performance. Governing bodies are assisted in their accountability functions by local authorities and more latterly the regional consortia whose role it is to provide advice and challenge to governors to improve performance within schools. It is anticipated that there will be greater ‘challenge’ and ‘accountability’ in the system in the future as regional consortia become established.

4.30 There have been recent changes in the requirements for governors to meet with parents, which aim to make governing bodies more directly responsive to parental issues. These changes, including the abolition of the need to hold an annual meeting with parents, are welcomed in general, although it is possible that in schools without any pressing parental issues, the governing body might not meet with parents for a considerable period. It is therefore essential that methods of communication are retained to ensure that the governing body remains accountable to parents.

4.31 Currently, governing bodies prepare an ‘Annual Report to Parents’ as part of their accountability. We recommend that this report is renamed as simply the ‘Annual Report’ and is widely available to stakeholders and not just parents. We recommend that it is much sharper in its focus on the areas outlined above in the headteacher’s report and any other key improvement and performance issues. In this area, we are supporting the Hill Review (2013) recommendation that Welsh Government review the content of the annual report. The governing body’s annual report and the school website should also point parents and other stakeholders to ‘My Local School’ website www.mylocalschool.wales.gov.uk/ where other useful contextual school relevant information will be presented. The annual report relating to schools should be clearly visible on ‘My Local School web site. In addition to the existing data already captured on this site, this group recommend that the site is extended to include new ‘tabs’ with relevant school data. Some of this is included in the existing Welsh Government Core Data Sets and would be of interest as part of the wider school information.
4.32 Inspection is one of the main ways in which the public holds schools to account. It is clear to us that more attention should be paid in school inspection to the governing body’s role. Governing bodies are legally the body which leads the school and therefore should be held accountable for its overall performance. The Estyn report for 2011/2012 highlighted that school leadership and management is ‘Excellent’ in 20% of all secondary schools and 6% of primary schools (Estyn 2011/12). In its evidence to the review of school governance in England, the Wellcome Trust argues that it is “our belief that excellence in science education – as indeed in any aspect of schooling – is not possible without strong governance” (House of Commons, 2013, Response by Wellcome Trust, 2012). There is clearly room for improvement here and there is a need to ensure that those with the strategic responsibility for leading schools are formally accountable.

4.33 Currently, Estyn conduct an interview with the Chair and usually another governor at the start of the inspection and this may be the only involvement of governors in inspection. Our view is that the school governing body is key to a school’s performance and that governance is a corporate issue. It is our recommendation that the pre-inspection meeting with Estyn should formally involve more governors than just the chair. We suggest that governing bodies decide how many governors this might include although we would advise against the inclusion of all governors as this can make the interaction between Estyn and the Governing body too formal. We suggest a benchmark number is set at 4 or 5 governors.

4.34 The governing body should have a flexible role in the actual inspection of the school, and we suggest that the minutes of the governing body meetings should be part of a school’s inspection process. Governing body members should also be involved in the post-inspection meeting.

4.35 It is the view of this group that Estyn should also make judgements about the role of the governing body in key areas including strategy and vision, its review and assessment of performance and so on. The key aspects which are judged by OFSTED in England as part of a school’s inspection are listed in Appendix III and we think that there is merit in Estyn reviewing this and considering its appropriateness for inclusion in inspection in Wales.
**Recommendation 3:**

A. Governing bodies should report annually on school performance within an ‘Annual Report’;

B. Welsh Government conduct a review of the content of a school governing body’s Annual Report;

C. Headteachers write a termly report for distribution prior to governing body meetings and this should be presented at the meetings. It should include where the school is currently in relation to the aims and objectives; a critical reflection on the achievements of the school towards realising those aims and objectives; a review of data on performance; absence and attendance levels; staffing issues;

D. Governors need to have greater participation in the formal school inspection;

E. Estyn review the aspects judged by Ofsted in school inspection and respond to the Minister directly about the appropriateness of this as part of the inspection of schools in Wales;

F. ‘My Local School’ website have additional tabs to include more school information;
5. Division of responsibilities in the existing education system

5.1 There needs to be clarity around the division of responsibilities in the education system in Wales. The duplication of service provision at any level is not recommended. The Hill review (2013) found evidence of confusion about responsibility and proposes options to end this.

5.2 In relation to the review conducted by this group, we specifically highlight some clarity around responsibility in the governor area.

5.3 Headteachers operate as the school’s chief executive and there needs to be clarity around the responsibilities of headteachers and governing bodies. In relation to the appointment and dismissal of staff, the group spent a great deal of time discussing whether these issues should be the sole responsibility of the headteacher or to devolve to the headteacher with the chair of governors, or to retain the existing system whereby this is the responsibility of a governing body committee. The group was unable to agree on the appropriate level of delegation in respect of staff appointment and dismissal but recommends that this issue should be the subject of further consideration by Welsh Government.

5.4 Another issue that the group focused on in relation to the location of responsibility was with regard to Additional Learning Needs (ALN) support. It has been suggested that the funding and administration of ALN be devolved to governing body level. However, it is our view that this would not be appropriate especially as it has the potential to lead to conflict between schools and parents.

Recommendation 4: There needs to be clarity around the responsibilities of headteachers and governing bodies with a specific focus on the appointment and dismissal of staff. This issue needs to be resolved by Welsh Government where the Terms of Reference regulations need to be reviewed.
6. Governor training

6.1 The new mandatory aspect to governor training introduced in September 2013 is a positive development. There will a need to monitor the impact of the new training arrangements. This may include a review by Estyn focusing in particular on school governance.

6.2 The role of the chair is crucial to the function of the governing body. The group recommends that mentoring and coaching be made available for all new chairs and for more experienced chairs where appropriate. This mentoring could be provided by a chair of another local governing body. The Hill Review (2013) proposed a role of Lead Practitioner Governor, and the group commends this proposal. It is our view that this role should be open not only to current chairs, but also where appropriate to former chairs and other experienced governors. This system of collaborative peer support will complement the mandatory training for chairs recently introduced.

6.3 Mentoring support should also be encouraged within governing bodies, in order to provide additional support for new governors, or governors who are taking up a new role within the governing body. This support might be coordinated by a single governor, but would probably involve a number of more experienced governors working with colleagues. Given the relatively small number of meetings in a year, it is essential that newly elected or appointed governors are able to become familiar with and effective in their role as quickly as possible. It is the view of the group that the effectiveness of mentoring and training activity by the governing body should be an aspect of Estyn’s inspection process.

6.4 A recognition of the significance of the chair role is important and this, it is highlighted, is an important influence on effective leadership (Zhang, 2010). Chairs are currently elected annually and we support this annual ‘review’. We further suggest a maximum 6 year term for a chair of a governing body. This will encourage governing bodies to be mindful of succession planning for the chair role in their governor development programmes. This change will also bring in new interests and
promote variety, and ensures that relationships continue to promote the values of ‘scrutiny’ and ‘challenge’ rather than becoming too ‘familiar’ and ‘cosy’.

6.5 The group expect that the training function will be located within the regional consortia where a range of specialist courses at a variety of levels can be delivered. The quality of training needs to be monitored and we suggest that this aspect could be the subject of a future Estyn review. Training itself could be from a variety of providers offering accredited courses. Having a range of training opportunities in a variety of forms of delivery, including on-line, is most likely to develop key governor skills within the areas of challenge and scrutiny.

6.6 Currently, the vast majority of governor training is delivered to single governors from different schools, normally at a county level. We recommend that local authority or consortia consider offering more ‘whole governing body’ training, or training delivered to clusters with to include an emphasis on self evaluation and reflection. It is envisaged that this model of best practice training will be more prominent in the future where this is practical. Whole governing body and cluster training will both be valuable for building networks and, in the case of whole governing body training, developing group skills. Overall, and accepting that some training is in specialist areas, training needs to focus on the improvement of the challenge and scrutiny skills of governors so that governance of schools is improved.

6.7 The group feel that the performance and feedback of individual governors should be reviewed annually using self evaluation; this would be consistent with Cornforth’s (2001) four key issues associated with board effectiveness. We suggest an informal ‘pairing’ of governors and a short summary of the key issues raised by governors in this to be prepared by the clerk and given to the chair. This reflective mechanism should focus on governor improvement and ensuring that individual views are heard. A similar practice operates in the Housing Association sector and a sample ‘toolset’ used by one housing association in Wales is set out in Appendix IV. This is included here as an example of practice used elsewhere which could be adapted for a governing body and governors to evaluate their contribution and identify areas for improvement. In essence, this aspect seeks to promote and develop reflective practice, to provide governors with a greater awareness of their role and
responsibilities and to ensure that governors have a forum for expressing issues in relation to their experiences. We recommend that Welsh Government create a template for individual self-evaluation and review. As part of the development of individual governors, we suggest ‘refresh’ courses for all governors to ensure that their skills and knowledge base are maintained. Welsh government should issue guidance to recognise the need for governors to keep up to date with education issues.

6.8 This group recommends that governing bodies regularly conduct a ‘skills audit’ of the existing governing body membership and draw in additional governor expertise (up to the maximum number of governors when needed). The template presented in Appendix I can be adapted by an individual governing body to assist with the review of existing skills. This review would be especially useful when there is a governor vacancy.

**Recommendation 5:**
A. New governors and chairs should be mentored by experienced governors;
B. If the recommendation from the Hill review is accepted by the Minister, lead practitioner governors to assist new chairs;
C. Whole governing body or cluster training as a model to be considered for the delivery of training;
D. Periodic self-evaluation and review for both the governing body and individual governors;
E. Welsh Government create a template for individual and governing body self-evaluation and review;
F. A Skills Audit is undertaken regularly.
7. Clerks to the governing bodies

7.1 The role of the clerk is central to the effective operation of governing bodies. The clerk needs to be recognised as a professional role. It is useful for clerks of individual governing bodies to have a Governor Support Officer role at the regional consortia/local authority level as this can provide very useful background and context information. The group feel that the mandatory training for all clerks will improve their knowledge and enhance their effectiveness. We recommend that in the performance of their duties, clerks need to be evaluated by the chair of governors and the headteacher.

**Recommendation 6:** To recognise the professional role of clerks, there is a need to ensure that their job is evaluated and assessed by the chair of governors and by the headteacher.
8. Information

A. Data about School Performance

8.1 Information is central to improving governor challenge and questioning. The group is strongly supportive of the new information from the national literacy and numeracy tests. This has been the first independent review of children’s progress in the early years of schooling in Wales and the data provides very useful information for governors. Teacher assessment data also continues to provide very useful data for governor reviews. Both of these should form part of the accountability of headteachers to governors and be included in the headteacher report in governor meetings.

8.2 Tracking and assessment are two of the most important parts of teaching, learning and leadership in schools and a consistent method of tracking is important. Hill (2013) recommends that a single tracking and assessment tool is adopted across Wales. Whilst this might be useful in providing consistency of data, there are a number of tracking tools available and careful research needs to be undertaken to ensure that these are appropriate and effective.

8.3 In addition to the raw data from the Literacy and Numeracy frameworks, the All Wales ‘Core Data Set’ family relevant context will be crucial. The website ‘My Local School’ provides very useful information – we suggest that governors (and others) use this fully to drive improvements in schools.

8.4 The recent focus by the Welsh Government on ensuring that governors receive and understand key aspects of school performance data is to be commended (included in the compulsory training). Using this data and other relevant sources, governors should be better able to hold school leaders to account. This will promote an attitude of enquiry and challenge within governing bodies. Regional consortia, responsible for school improvement and governor training, should ask questions of governing bodies in this respect, as should Estyn.
B. Information for Governors

8.5 Governing bodies need to be supported effectively. Currently, the source of much of this support is provided by local authorities. This support system and the flow of information to governing bodies have largely remained unchanged despite the growing responsibilities of governors over the last 30 years.

8.6 There should be a central source of information for governors in relation to their role and responsibilities. We are aware that there is much diversity in practice across Wales at the present time. It appears that new governors are not always aware of the support provided by their local authorities, the regional consortia, or Governors Wales as well as The All Wales Centre for Governor Training and Research. There is also a range of documents, including the ‘Guide to the Law’, Governors Wales handbook and website, local authority information, Learning Wales (Welsh Government), and Cadwyn, and this may be confusing for governors and governing bodies. There should be greater coordination of these resources to provide governing bodies with a more coherent framework of information. There could also be more prominent links between these sources of information with links across websites, for example.

8.7 In acknowledgement of the wider changes taking place in education in Wales, we expect that it will be the regional consortia which will be delivering support to governors. Clearly, this will reduce the diversity in the information base from 22 existing local authorities down to 4 regional consortia. These regional bodies need to provide standardised advice and information to all governors. We expect the regional consortia will do much to develop good practice and the adoption of appropriate templates such as those included in the Appendices would shift many governing bodies further towards a critical and challenging mode of improvement in schools. The regional consortia are uniquely placed to drive up standards of governance.

8.8 There is an enhanced role for a body which offers central support such as that currently offered by Governors Wales. However, the division of responsibility between what is offered at the regional consortia level and Governors Wales needs to be made clear and this must be apparent to individual governors and to school
governing bodies. Leaving aside which body delivers the functions, this group is of the view that there are some key responsibilities of real importance to governors and governing bodies and these include quasi-legal advice, a ‘hotline’ for governors, templates and examples showing best current practice, for example. In addition, a body which provides a strong ‘voice’ for governors and the important role which they undertake is vital. The existing governor conference programme is also an important event for governor information and networking. The issue of the Governor Wales role in driving up standards of governance through the use of the existing ‘Governors Wales Quality Mark Bronze Award’ is addressed below.

**Recommendation 7:**

A. The regional consortia should contribute information to governing bodies on comparative performance and good practice across Wales;

B. There should be clarity about the information which is made available to governors from local authorities, regional consortia, Governors Wales and Welsh Government;

C. There should be clarity about the service offered by Governors Wales;

D. Governors Wales should raise awareness about their body.
9. Recruitment of governors

9.1 Individuals who have professional or managerial skills and others more widely who may work in a voluntary capacity can bring very useful skills to governing bodies. However, in addition to the business sector, as highlighted in the Hill (2013) review, there are also the public and third sectors to think about in terms of attracting governors.

9.2 One way of attracting governors from commercial organisations would be to offer tax relief to companies which release staff to become governors. If this was being done at Wales level rather than UK level, then business rates relief could be enabled as an alternative.

9.3 We recommend that Welsh Government investigates ways in which to improve and accelerate the recruitment of new governors and the best way in which to advertise existing vacancies. We also recommend a recruitment drive for governors and an awareness raising campaign to publicise the role widely to attract new governors. Each local authority and regional consortia should consider including an area on their website promoting the role of governors and inviting interest. Other public, third sector and private organisations could also be encouraged to carry out similar activity to assist in recruitment. The Wales Council for Voluntary Action, for example, might feature a governor volunteer as part of their publicity. Each regional consortium could also nominate a governing body to be a ‘Governing Body of the Year’ and there could be a ‘Wales’ prize for the overall winner. We recommend that the ‘Governing Body of the Year’ be incorporated into the new St David’s prizes. This would build on the ‘Clerk of the Year’ award which exists in Wales and also at the UK level.

**Recommendation 8:**

A. Welsh Government should publicise the governor role and raise awareness about school governors;

B. A recruitment drive should be put in place to attract new governors;
C. The regional consortia and Welsh Government introduce a ‘Governing body of the Year’ award.
10. Improving governing body recognition

10.1 It is clear that the role of governing bodies has changed markedly over the last 30 years and there are now much greater expectations on governing bodies to challenge performance, scrutinise data and provide a greater leadership role for schools in their improvement journey. The governance and scrutiny skills need to be encouraged and developed. One mechanism for doing this is to promote further the award scheme for governing bodies. The scheme already in place is the Quality Mark Bronze Award, currently awarded by Governors Wales. Further details can be found about this at http://www.governorswales.org.uk/qmbronze/. According to Governors Wales, the Quality Mark Bronze Award “Provides a benchmark against which governing bodies can assess their effectiveness. The Award benefits not only the day-to-day operation of the school but would be beneficial when the governing body is preparing for inspections and assessments, such as Estyn, IIP, to show that the governing body is meeting their statutory requirements etc. The Quality Mark is centred on an audit of policy and procedural documentation with governing bodies required to build a portfolio of evidence based on a checklist designed to enhance and improve governing body effectiveness. Achieving the Quality Mark Bronze Award is a celebration of the success of the governing body and its role within the school and in raising standards”.

10.2 We recommend that all governing bodies in Wales should be working towards the Quality Mark Bronze Award and those schools which have been awarded this level already should be moving beyond this to the ‘Silver’ or ‘Gold’ Quality Mark Award when these become available. We suggest that Estyn might consider having the Quality Mark Bronze Award as a standard in their judgements about school leadership in school inspections. It should be an aspiration that the Quality Mark Bronze Award becomes a pre-requisite for schools to achieve the highest mark from Estyn with regard to leadership. The Welsh Government should be promoting the Quality Mark Award scheme as does not command widespread awareness. Further guidance on the application process for the bronze award can be obtained from the Governors Wales website (http://www.governorswales.org.uk/media/files/documents/2013-11-
In order to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to do the award assessments, Governors Wales should work with the consortia to develop the assessor roles. Governors Wales would be the awarding body.

**Recommendation 9:**

A. All school governing bodies in Wales be working towards achieving the Governors Wales Bronze award (and Silver and Gold as they develop further);

B. Governors Wales work with the local authority or consortia to assist with the awards assessment for individual governing bodies;

C. Welsh Government raise awareness of the award scheme more widely.
11. Summary

11.1 This group has conducted its review of school governance over the 11 months November 2012 – October 2013. The changes recommended in both the structure and processes of the governing body will not lead to overnight success, but will provide the basis for continual improvement across a wide variety of schools. The development of the ‘StakeholderPlus’ model for Wales is viewed as an appropriate one, reflecting cultural and educational aspects. This model seeks to retain the stakeholder approach with governing bodies more sharply aware of the skills agenda and associated needs. We suggest that re-constitution along the StakeholderPlus model will not take place immediately, but will evolve as needs and succession change over time. There will be the need to raise awareness, for headteachers, chairs, clerks and governing bodies, in order that the opportunities afforded by the revised structures can be maximised.

11.2 Ensuring that governors understand their role in the improvement journey of every school is clearly a key priority. School governance has changed and the demands on governors are increasing. It is essential that those who take up the role are fully aware of the responsibilities and have a willingness to challenge and scrutinise in a positive way. Quality training can support governors in their role and governors need to ensure that they fully engage with this. Securing recognition for the valuable and important role which governors undertake will be seen by many as an adequate reward.

11.3 As Wales moves into the next phase of the delivery of education in the post Hill review, the wider review of public service delivery is also underway by the Public Service Commission. This Commission will be an important influence on the way in which public services are organised in the future and the issue of which public body delivers education is a key question which will be resolved. The priority of this Task and Finish Group has been to review school governance and to make recommendations to make this more effective.
11.4 In recent years, the government of Wales has put many reforms in place in Wales which should impact positively on the effectiveness of school governing bodies. This group would like to recommend a further review of school governance to be undertaken in two years time to determine the extent to which governance has improved over the period (Autumn 2015).
References


Education Terms of Reference (Wales) Regulations 2000, Cardiff: National Assembly for Wales.


Estyn Annual Report 2011/12.


Appendix I: National Governors’ Association – skills audit template

Skills Audit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of expertise</th>
<th>Level of experience: ‘None, basic, moderate, extensive’</th>
<th>Evidence, including any training attended</th>
<th>Any training required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Generic skills, knowledge and experience
No single governor is expected to have all of these, but across the team of governors these should appear and can be considered as essential for the governing body as a whole.

Experience of governance (including in other sectors)
Strategic planning
Self-evaluation and/or impact assessment
Data analysis
Experience of staff recruitment
Performance management
   a) Staff
   b) Organisation
Community relations
Chairing
Leadership
Coaching/mentoring or CPD
Negotiation & mediation
Communication skills, including listening
Problem solving &/or creativity
Ability to influence
Handling complaints, grievances or appeals
Risk assessment
Knowledge of this school
Parent’s perspective: current of school
Knowledge of the local community
Knowledge of sources of relevant information/data
Knowledge of the local/regional economy

**Specialist knowledge or experience**

Essential for GB as a whole: Financial management/ accountancy

The following are useful or in some case desirable, but not necessarily essential for a GB to contain. These are useful in order to be able to challenge, monitor and scrutinise effectively. They are not required in order to carry out operational tasks or to take the place of external expertise.

- Premises & facilities management
- Human resources expertise
- Procurement/purchasing
- Legal
- ICT &/or management information systems
- PR & marketing
- Work placements/career planning
- Teaching & pedagogy
- Special educational needs
- Children’s & young people’s services or activities (in any sector)
- Health services (particularly relevant in special schools)
- Safeguarding
- Primary schools – Nursery sector
- Secondary – FE and HE
- Project management
- Health & safety
- Quality assurance
- Surveying, consultation &/or research
- Other: please specify

No individual is going to have all these skills! The way in which this exercise is introduced is crucial so that no governors feel undermined; it is important to value all perspectives. The governing body is a team, and we need to ensure that between us, all the necessary skills and knowledge are covered around the table. Governors are not there to provide pro-bono professional services. If a skills gap is identified, then the next vacancy which occurs should be used if at all possible to fill that gap. If you don’t have local connections, you should approach School Governors One-Stop
Shop. This same list of criteria could also be used during the recruitment purposes to ascertain if the applicants do have the skills being sought.
Appendix II: Action plan for school improvement template

### Target for improvement:
To further develop the role of the Governing Body in contributing to the strategic leadership and direction of the school through knowledge and understanding of:

- The Governing Body’s role and duties
- The performance of pupils’ standards across the school compared to Core Data Set Family, Local Authority (LA) and Wales
- How pupils’ wellbeing is measured across the school
- The need to maintain and improve standards of provision in all areas of school improvement.
- The need to give high priority to governor training and development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Question</th>
<th>Quality Indicator</th>
<th>QI Name</th>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Success Criteria linked to Key Question</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Target Date</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Standards</td>
<td>1.1.1</td>
<td>Results &amp; trends in performance compared with national average, similar providers &amp; prior attainment</td>
<td>Governors have a clear understanding about pupil performance as a school and in comparison with Local, LEA and national performance (school, LEA, family, national data). This includes understanding of standards of gender, AEN, EAL and other groups</td>
<td>SMT to present Govs with school Teacher Assessments for full academic year</td>
<td>Autumn - November</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Standards</td>
<td>1.1.2</td>
<td>Standards of groups of learners</td>
<td>SMT to present Govs with analysis of core family data, LEA profile data – Sep/Oct</td>
<td>Autumn - November</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Standards</td>
<td>1.1.3</td>
<td>Achievement of progress in learning</td>
<td>Above evaluations will lead to identification of priorities for target setting, catch up programmes</td>
<td>Autumn - November</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Standards</td>
<td>1.1.4</td>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>HT and CoG to meet with EAS to present targets</td>
<td>Autumn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

46
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.1 Standards</th>
<th>1.1.5 Welsh</th>
<th></th>
<th>Targets to be monitored and progress reported to GB throughout year</th>
<th>Termly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Wellbeing</td>
<td>1.2.1 Attitudes to keeping healthy and safe</td>
<td></td>
<td>School Council and Eco Committee to meet with GB to discuss progress against annual plans, minutes from meetings, SDP action plans, aims, initiatives</td>
<td>Spring - January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Wellbeing</td>
<td>1.2.2 Participation and enjoyment in learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>Governors will have a clear understanding about the role and activities of the School and Eco Councils and their impact on improved pupil outcomes particularly those of well being</td>
<td>Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Wellbeing</td>
<td>1.2.2 Participation and enjoyment in learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>Details of after school club activities and school time enriched curriculum activities to be shared with GB</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Wellbeing</td>
<td>1.2.2 Participation and enjoyment in learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>Share process of tracking well being – pupil questionnaires, learning squads, pupil voice activities, SEAL assessments</td>
<td>Termly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Wellbeing</td>
<td>1.2.3 Community involvement and decision making</td>
<td></td>
<td>Governors will have a clear understanding and ensure appropriate outcomes for pupil attendance, behaviour.</td>
<td>Autumn - September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Wellbeing</td>
<td>1.2.4 Social and life skills</td>
<td></td>
<td>Share cluster transition plans and transition arrangements with other schools</td>
<td>Autumn - November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Wellbeing</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Governors will have a clear understanding of the school policies which reinforce pupil wellbeing</td>
<td>See Policy Timetable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Wellbeing</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Examine all statutory obligations are in place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Learning Experiences</td>
<td>2.1.1</td>
<td>Meeting the needs of learners, employers/community</td>
<td>Governors will contribute to and have a clear understanding of priorities in SDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Learning Experiences</td>
<td>2.1.2</td>
<td>Provision for skills</td>
<td>Governors will have an understanding of how new approaches in SDP are implemented in classes - implementation of new literacy &amp; numeracy strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Learning Experiences</td>
<td>2.1.3</td>
<td>Welsh language provision and the Welsh dimension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Learning Experiences</td>
<td>2.1.4</td>
<td>Education for sustainable development and global citizenship</td>
<td>Governors will have up to date knowledge and understanding of progress in SDP priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>2.2.1</td>
<td>Range and quality of teaching approaches</td>
<td>All Governors will have a clear understanding of the teaching approaches in school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>2.2.2</td>
<td>Assessment of and for learning</td>
<td>Link Governors for assessment will have an in depth understanding of the assessment for learning agenda and how it is implemented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KQ2 - Provision**

**Curriculum policies to be reviewed and updated according to timetable**

**See Policy Tracker**

**Termly**

**Summer - AGM**

**Autumn - September**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.2</th>
<th>Teaching</th>
<th>2.2.2</th>
<th>Assessment of and for learning</th>
<th>All Governors will have knowledge of target setting procedures, assessment tools, data and data analysis, issues arising as a result</th>
<th>HT report and presentations at governors meetings will inform governors of target setting and assessment</th>
<th>Autumn - November</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>2.2.2</td>
<td>Assessment of and for learning</td>
<td>All Governors will have a clear understanding of views of various stakeholders – parents, pupils, staff</td>
<td>Analysis of questionnaires given to parents and children will be presented and discussed</td>
<td>Termly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>2.2.2</td>
<td>Assessment of and for learning</td>
<td>Governors will have a clear understanding of impact of initiatives from pupil voice, school council, eco committee</td>
<td>Results of pupil voice activities will be presented to Governing Body</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>2.2.2</td>
<td>Assessment of and for learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>School Council and Eco Committee initiatives will be presented to Governing Body</td>
<td>Termly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Care, Support and Advice</td>
<td>2.3.1</td>
<td>Provision for health &amp; wellbeing</td>
<td>AEN Governor will have knowledge and understanding of SEN, LAC, E2L, children – on register and statements, support initiatives in school and progress being made by children</td>
<td>AEN Link Governors to meet with AEN Co-ordinator to discuss all aspects of AEN</td>
<td>Termly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Care, Support and Advice</td>
<td>2.3.2</td>
<td>Specialist services, information and guidance</td>
<td></td>
<td>AEN Link Governors to undergo AEN governor training</td>
<td>Termly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Care, Support and Advice</td>
<td>2.3.3</td>
<td>Safeguarding arrangements</td>
<td></td>
<td>Review AEN policies and procedures with Governing Body</td>
<td>See Policy Tracket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Care, Support and Advice</td>
<td>2.3.4</td>
<td>Additional learning needs</td>
<td>All Governors will have knowledge and understanding of AEN at Glasllwch – policies and procedures, statutory duties, challenges</td>
<td>HT report and presentations at governors meetings will inform governors of AEN at Glasllwch</td>
<td>Termly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Learning Environment</td>
<td>2.4.1 Ethos, equality and diversity</td>
<td>All Governors will be aware of Health and safety policy and procedures</td>
<td>H&amp;S Governor to meet with HT to discuss H&amp;S on termly basis</td>
<td>Termly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Learning Environment</td>
<td>2.4.2 Physical environment</td>
<td>H&amp;S Governor will be involved in risk assessments, audit, general school issues</td>
<td>H&amp;S Governor to review risk assessments according to timetable</td>
<td>Termly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Learning Environment</td>
<td>2.4.2 Physical environment</td>
<td>Governors involved in decisions that ensure that adequate and suitable use is made of resources and accommodation</td>
<td>Governors to review accessibility plan and policy annually</td>
<td>See Policy Tracker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Learning Environment</td>
<td>2.4.2 Physical environment</td>
<td>Governors involved in decisions ensuring accommodation is fit for purpose</td>
<td>Governors to carry out buildings/accommodation survey annually.</td>
<td>Autumn - November (Finance)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Learning Environment</td>
<td>2.4.2 Physical environment</td>
<td>Governors involved in drawing up rolling programme of refurbishment to building</td>
<td></td>
<td>Termly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.1 Leadership</th>
<th>3.1.1 Strategic leadership and the impact of leadership</th>
<th>All Governors will have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and meet regulatory and legal requirements annually</th>
<th>All Governors to undergo Introduction to Governance training</th>
<th>Termly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Leadership</td>
<td>3.1.2 Governors or other supervisory boards</td>
<td></td>
<td>Governing Body to meet at least once per term</td>
<td>Termly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Leadership</td>
<td>3.1.3 Meeting national and local priorities</td>
<td></td>
<td>HT report and presentations at governors meetings will inform governors of national and local priorities</td>
<td>Termly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Leadership</td>
<td>3.1.3 Meeting national and local priorities</td>
<td></td>
<td>Allocation of teams and link governors</td>
<td>Summer - AGM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Improving Quality</td>
<td>3.2.1</td>
<td>Self-evaluation including listening to learners and others</td>
<td>All Governors will attend at least one training session per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Improving Quality</td>
<td>3.2.2</td>
<td>Planning and securing improvement</td>
<td>Governors have ownership of school development plan and have input into its creation understanding priorities arise from issues identified in self evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Improving Quality</td>
<td>3.2.3</td>
<td>Involvement in networks of professional practice</td>
<td>Governors will be invited to school INSET as appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Partnerships working</td>
<td>3.3.1</td>
<td>Strategic partnerships</td>
<td>Governors will be invited to school INSET as appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Partnerships working</td>
<td>3.3.2</td>
<td>Joint planning, resourcing and quality assurance</td>
<td>Team members to schedule meetings with link governors throughout year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Partnerships working</td>
<td>3.3.2</td>
<td>Joint planning, resourcing and quality assurance</td>
<td>Key documentation to be distributed and discussed at meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Partnerships working</td>
<td>3.3.2</td>
<td>Joint planning, resourcing and quality assurance</td>
<td>School Effectiveness (SEF) and Common Inspection Frameworks (CIF) to be shared with all Governing Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Partnership working</td>
<td>3.3.2</td>
<td>Joint planning, resourcing and quality assurance</td>
<td>Action Plans in line with CIF to be drawn up by teams involving governors if possible/ shared with all governors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Partnership working</td>
<td>3.3.2</td>
<td>Joint planning, resourcing and quality assurance</td>
<td>Governor self evaluation to take place at end of every governors meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Partnership working</td>
<td>3.3.2</td>
<td>Joint planning, resourcing and quality assurance</td>
<td>Governors involved in self evaluating and reviewing subjects and areas of learning at SDP days – summer term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Partnership working</td>
<td>3.3.2</td>
<td>Joint planning, resourcing and quality assurance</td>
<td>Governors involved in self evaluating action plan end of July 2012 and drawing up new action plan for September 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Resource Management</td>
<td>3.4.1</td>
<td>Management of staff and resources</td>
<td>All committees to meet in line with LEA guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Resource Management</td>
<td>3.4.1</td>
<td>Management of staff and resources</td>
<td>All governors to have secure knowledge of how staff are deployed throughout the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Resource Management</td>
<td>3.4.1</td>
<td>Management of staff and resources</td>
<td>Governing Body has clear understanding of Performance Management of staff, including HT, taking place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Resource Management</td>
<td>3.4.1</td>
<td>Management of staff and resources</td>
<td>HT report to Governing Body concerning PM activities in school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Resource Management</td>
<td>3.4.2</td>
<td>Value for money</td>
<td>Finance Committee to meet half termly and have clear direction of school spending and ensure they provide value for money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Resource Management</td>
<td>3.4.2</td>
<td>Value for money</td>
<td>Governors are aware of the impact SDP has on measurable improvements across all aspects of school provision</td>
<td>HT reports and presentations to Governing Body ensure SDP is monitored and reviewed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Resource Management</td>
<td>3.4.2</td>
<td>Value for money</td>
<td>Governors are able to evaluate effectively whether the school provides value for money</td>
<td>Report of Finance Committee to Governing Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Resource Management</td>
<td>3.4.2</td>
<td>Value for money</td>
<td>Governors are involved in decisions that ensure that adequate and suitable use is made of staffing, learning resources and accommodation.</td>
<td>Spending and virement limits set for HT and Finance Committee. HT reports to Governing Body on use of resources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix III: How OFSTED judges governing body performance

Ofsted’s manual on inspection states that in assessing the quality of governance in a school inspectors should consider “the effectiveness of governance including how well governors:

- ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- contribute to the school’s self-evaluation and understand its strengths and weaknesses
- support and strengthen school leadership
- provide challenge and hold the headteacher and other senior leaders
- to account for improving the quality of teaching, pupils’ achievement and pupils’ behaviour and safety
- use performance management systems, including the performance management of the headteacher, to improve teaching, leadership and management
- ensure solvency and probity and that the financial resources made available to the school are managed effectively
- operate in such a way that statutory duties are met and priorities are approved
- engage with key stakeholders
- use the pupil premium and other resources to overcome barriers to learning, including reading, writing and mathematics.”

*(School Inspection Handbook, April 2013, para 127)*
Appendix IV: Individual board member appraisal template

Housing Association Review (this element of a more detailed form has been presented below)

**INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER APPRAISAL**

**How do you rate your own performance in the following key areas?**

6.1 Preparing for meetings fully in advance
6.2 Exercising a ‘duty of care’ as a Board Member in a conscientious way
6.3 Making appropriate and focused contributions
6.4 Constructively probing issues or proposals that are not clear to you
6.5 Working as part of the Board team
6.6 Using your experience & skills to enhance decisions
6.7 Listening to the views of others
6.8 Constructively challenging when you do not agree
6.9 Using opportunities to learn and develop
6.10 Accepting collective responsibility for decisions
6.11 Attending meetings
6.12 Observing confidentiality
6.13 Actively supporting equality and diversity

7.1 How do you feel the last year has been for you?
7.2 What are the strengths that you bring to the Board?
7.3 Are there any aspects of performance that give you cause for concern?
7.4 Have you felt restricted in what you have achieved?
7.5 Are there any actions that could improve your performance?
7.6 Please let us know if there is anything we can do to assist you in your role.