

“If you cannot accurately predict the future then you must flexibly be prepared to deal with various possible futures” *Edward de Bono*

The summer term Training Calendar includes a new information session titled **“A Governors’ Guide to Academies”**. At the spring term Governors Forum, Margaret Woodhouse (Director of Education and Early Years) told Governors that Trafford CYPS would continue to support and work positively with all schools in the borough irrespective of their status either as a maintained school or an academy. The local authority is not able to advise you of the benefits or otherwise of academy status. Individual schools will need to decide that based on the school and circumstances. In the midst of so many changes and announcements regarding education the session will allow us to share with you what we know about academy status. It will also provide an opportunity for governors to discuss the future for schools in Trafford. Margaret and I look forward to welcoming you to the session.

I would like to compliment the Governing Body of Egerton High School. A number of new Governors bolstered the existing team from September 2010, appointed by Trafford as Co-opted Governors under special measures. The Governors are being supported by a Governor Champion (courtesy of the Greater Manchester Challenge Project). The new team are working hard to support and challenge the staff and leadership team. It has been an honour to witness the early stages of a reformation at the school and the positive impact for pupils at Egerton. It seems unfair to single out one particular team when I am faced daily with examples of great governance. So Trafford Governors, I salute you all. Keep up the good work and please keep attending the training sessions. Collaboration and networking will be more important than ever in the months ahead.

Julie Lawson
Governor Services Manager

Summer 2011

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RIP Keith Wilkinson

I had only known Keith for 12 months (many of you, I know, have worked with him considerably longer) still I find it difficult to find the words to express my sadness at the loss of a much respected colleague and friend. I would like to pay tribute to Keith by sharing with you some of the messages of condolence conveyed in Governing Body minutes last term. Keith has been a great supporter of Trafford Governors and Governor Services which is reflected in the comments below . . .

Acre Hall Primary School

Mr Varden informed Governors that Mr K Wilkinson had recently died and that he had represented the School at Keith's funeral. Keith had supported the School, on personnel issues, over many years and he would be greatly missed.

Resolved: That a letter of condolence, signed by the Chairman, be sent to Keith's family on behalf of the Governing.

Broomwood Primary School

The Chairman took the opportunity to pay tribute to Keith Wilkinson who passed away recently. Keith was a true friend to our school and the wider community. This was reflected by the tremendous turnout at his funeral. He will be greatly missed.

Delamere School

Sad News - The Head informed Governors of the sad news that Mr Keith Wilkinson the Trafford Head of HR had recently died. Governors were sorry to hear of this sad news.

Old Trafford Community School

It was with great sadness that Mrs Stott advised the Governors that Mr Wilkinson had died suddenly yesterday (25th January 2011). Mrs Stott advised that she would be attending the funeral as Mr Wilkinson had offered great support to the School.

Flixton Junior School

The Headteacher and the Governing Body express their condolences to Keith Wilkinson's family following his recent death. Trafford and schools have lost an extremely good friend and officer.

Forest Gate Community Primary School

Forest Gate Community Primary School Governors would like to pass on their condolences to the family of the late Keith Wilkinson. He had worked very closely with the School over a number of years.

Highfield Primary School

Mr Parfitt commented on the sad loss of Mr Wilkinson and how well supported the funeral was by representatives from Trafford. He will be sadly missed.

Oldfield Brow Primary School

The Head expressed his condolences to Keith Wilkinson's family following his recent death. Mr Wilkinson's work was highly valued

Partington Primary School

The Chair informed the Governing Body that Keith Wilkinson died suddenly. The Governing Body would like to send their condolences to his family and thank him for all his advice and help over the years.

Worthington Road Primary

Governors acknowledged the sad death of Keith Wilkinson (Schools HR Manager) who had provided considerable support to the school.

Meeting of the Council 26 Jan 2011

59.CONDOLENCES

It was with sadness, that the Mayor informed the Council that 2 very highly regarded officers had recently passed away. The Council stood in silence as a mark of respect to both Martin Patient who worked in Communities and Wellbeing and Keith Wilkinson in Children and Young People's Services.

Governors and Headteachers

There is a useful reference document titled *“What governing bodies should expect from schools leaders and what school leaders should expect from governing bodies”*. This is a joint statement between the National Governors Association and the NAHT and ASCL, setting out the expectations of Governors and Headteachers. I thought Governors might be interested in the following key points drawn from the paper. . .

- ***Governance and management***

The distinction between governance and management needs to be clearly understood by all involved, so that governors are not asked to, and do not try to, involve themselves in day to day management.

The governing body expects to be able to monitor the work of the school and to hold the headteacher to account for the performance of the school. It is vital that the headteacher is present or is represented at full governing body meetings. However, other school leaders may represent the management of the school at other meetings. For example, the school business manager may be the appropriate person to attend budget monitoring meetings.

School leaders should not be micro-managed, and the governing body should concentrate on matters related to strategy and school effectiveness, delegating those tasks which are deemed to be managerial rather than strategic (for example the deployment of staff below leadership team level). School leadership teams should be fully involved in discussions of strategic issues.

- ***The role of the chair***

As the principal link between the governing body and the headteacher, the chair of the governing body bears additional responsibilities.

The headteacher and the chair of the governing body should meet regularly at mutually convenient times to discuss school matters.

The chair should be prepared to undertake any necessary additional training, and to attend local authority (or other locality) briefing meetings in order to fulfil her/his role. This expectation should be underpinned with the appropriate budget commitment for training and expenses.

The chair must have regard to the limitations stipulated in government guidance when exercising ‘chair’s action’.

- ***Training***

Governing bodies should make it clear that there is an expectation that all new governors (including staff governors) commit to undertake both school based induction and professional induction training.

All governors should commit to specific issue based training as it arises. It is essential to have a properly trained governing body and appropriate budget allocations should enable this to happen. Effective training should be planned to include both internal and external providers and should consist of a manageable programme combining activities for individual and small groups of governors and occasional activities for full governing bodies working in partnership with leadership teams.

- ***Visiting the school***

Visits should be planned in advance and agreed with the leadership team. Governing bodies should expect school leaders to welcome governors to visit the school, both formally to monitor agreed priorities and developments, and less formally to broaden their knowledge of the school.

School leaders should expect governors to adhere to visiting protocols, to be

professional in their monitoring role, and to be sensitive to the pressures of the school calendar.

For a copy of the Factsheet in full see www.cyps.org.uk/governors (Fact Sheets) or contact governor.services@trafford.gov.uk

Chairing and Sharing

The spring term Chairing Matters sessions were well attended. My thanks to Mr Graham Barrick (Chair, Flixton Girls' High School) and Mr John Mulholland (Chair, Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College) who attended the sessions which were hosted at their school sites. Both contributed to the discussion with a Chairman's Perspective on the challenges and highlights of the role of Chair of Governors.

Attendees ranged from those who had been Chair for less than 12 months to those who had been Chair for more than 12 years! This was a wonderful opportunity to share ideas and experience, to recap on roles and responsibilities and to discuss practical solutions.

Committee Procedures

Although not statutory, an effective committee structure is an important part of effective governance. It is important that Committee remits are approved by the Governing Body annually. Minutes of Committee meetings should be circulated to governors with the agenda and paperwork so that the full governing body minutes can include acceptance of the minutes. Minutes of committee meetings are as important as the main governing body minutes, they are in the public domain and should be evidence of decisions but do not need to be a verbatim account of discussions. It is important to protect individuals confidentiality and any matters deemed confidential by governors should be recorded as such and appended to the

minutes so they are available only for audit purposes. It is not appropriate for Headteachers to clerk committee meetings. For more details on the importance of committees please consider the Committees and Communication training session (see page 5).

Handy Handbook

All schools who buy-back Governor Services' Option 1 Training and Development should have received your complimentary copies of The Governors' Yearbook 2011. I hope you have found it useful. Interestingly some of the key themes highlighted were; the recommendation to have an up to date and robust Complaint Policy, the importance of clerking services, Governing Body self-evaluation, code of conduct for governors and "challenge without tears". All themes which Trafford Governor Services have been focussing on in the last 12 months!

Equalities and Diversity Training

Annette Nelson offered us a valuable insight into the implications of the new equalities legislation during the recent training sessions. There are implications for school policies and governors responsibilities. For those of you who were unable to attend I recommend you download the latest guidance via www.fronter.com/trafford or the EHRC website www.equalityhumanrights.com/ or contact Governor Services.

Governors On-line be aware!

Channels of communication seem to be growing by the day. Social networking sites like Facebook, e-mail and chat rooms enable conversations online with rapid and easy sharing of ideas, information and experiences. However, whilst these channels may present an opportunity for governors they come with risks and governors must be aware of the implications of participating online in their

official capacity. Risks to consider include:

1. It is easy to be misunderstood: the ease of publishing online means it is easy to write something that brings the school into disrepute. Even as an individual, your actions could be criticized as bringing a school into disrepute, especially if other users know of your governor status. Problems have often arisen from trails of emails being copied or forwarded inappropriately, containing sensitive information, or written in an unprofessional manner.

2. Confidentiality can be compromised: the fact that it is so easy to put information on the web means data security policy can be easily breached, possibly inadvertently. Governors need to be aware of their individual responsibilities to respect the confidence of the school and other governors.

3. An online discussion between some but not all members of a governing body undermines collective knowledge and responsibility: there is a danger of a two-tier governing body resulting from online discussions that exclude those governors not online.

The guiding principles for online participation really are no different to communicating in any other medium. The seven principles of public life are a very good starting point:

- **Selflessness:** holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
- **Integrity:** holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- **Objectivity:** in carrying out public

business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

- **Accountability:** holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- **Openness:** holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands this.
- **Honesty:** holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership:** holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

I suggest that you use these guidelines as the basis for a discussion as part of a governing body meeting, in order to clarify common expectations and standards. It may also be wise to review your governing body's Code of Conduct and consider adding a section on online participation. In addition, why not consider joining us for the **Committees and Communication** training session where we will explore some of these issues and look at positive communication.

Smiley Culture

We are delighted to welcome the very 'smiley' James Britton to the Governor Services Team as Administrative Officer working alongside Dominic and Caroline. James is on a steep learning curve regarding governance. He is a comedy sketch writer but says that the volume of work at Governor Services is 'no joke'!!!!

Summer Training Programme

Roles and Responsibilities * For New Governors *

New governors sometimes wonder what they have let themselves in for. It is important that they have a chance to ask questions about their new role. We shall explore how, as individuals, they work as members of a corporate team and the framework in which they carry out their responsibilities.

Governors' Forum

All governors are invited to the Forum. The Forum will start with a buffet tea at 5.30p.m. and the formal meeting will begin at 6.00p.m. This is a chance for Trafford CYPS colleagues to present updates to governors and for you to submit questions or subjects for discussion.

Chairing Matters

Are you a newly appointed chairman, or do you chair a committee? If so, this is the course for you. Considering the particular responsibilities of the chairman and the procedures they need to be aware of. This will be a workshop session allowing governors to share experiences and consider how to deal with situations that can arise.

Pupil Discipline and Exclusion

It is important that all exclusions are handled fairly and properly. The principles of natural justice, reasonable timescales and decisions based on evidence are embodied in the procedures. If you are a member of the Pupil Discipline Committee – this session is highly recommended to ensure you understand your remit.

A Governors' Guide to Academies

Margaret Woodhouse and Julie Lawson present a summary of the information we have on Academy status including the funding arrangements, governance procedures, considerations for governors and the changing role of the local authority.

Committees and Communication

We look at the importance of the work of committees, the remits and responsibilities as well as procedural requirements. In addition we will explore some communication styles and strategies to help governors work together positively to achieve common goals.

Understanding your school's budget

The session will look at the different types of funding, including standards fund grant, and how those are allocated to individual schools. We will also look at reports and how these should be interpreted to ensure governors feel actively involved in monitoring and planning the school budget.

SEN Update

Reflect on the key issues regarding Special Educational Needs. A chance to discuss and consider the implications for schools of new legislation and guidance.

Previous Training Courses

If you would like a copy of reference booklets which support previous courses just telephone Caroline Myers on 0161 912 5853.

April

Pupil Discipline and Exclusion

Wednesday 27 April 2011
1.00 p.m. to 3.00 p.m.

Closing date for applications
18 April 2011

Understanding Your School's Budget

Wednesday 4 May 2011
9.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.

Thursday 12 May 2011
6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.

Closing date for applications
22 April 2011

May/June

Governors' Guide to Academies

Wednesday 25 May 2011
9.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.

Thursday 9 June 2011
6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.

Closing date for applications
13 May 2011

Governors' Forum

Buffet tea available from 5.30 p.m.

Tuesday 14 June 2011
6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.

Closing date for applications
3 June 2011

Roles and Responsibilities

Wednesday 22 June 2011
1.00 p.m. to 3.00 p.m.

Closing date for applications
10 June 2011

June/July

SEN Update

Wednesday 29 June 2011
1.00 p.m. to 3.00 p.m.

Tuesday 5 July 2011
6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.

Closing date for applications
17 June 2011

Communication and Committees

Thursday 7 July 2011
6.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.

Tuesday 12 July 2011
1.00 p.m. to 3.00 p.m.

Closing date for applications
24 June 2011

Course details can be found on page 6 of the Newsletter

**Governor Training Sessions will be held at Sale West Development Centre,
Manor Avenue, Sale, M33 5JX (see map overleaf)**

VENUE

Sale West Development Centre

The Sale West Development Centre is located on Manor Avenue, Sale, M33 5JX. Approaching from Carrington Lane (with the Development Centre on the right) turn into the first gateway. Car parking spaces are available at the back of the building, overlooked by the Development Centre.

