

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY REPORT:**1 Aim of the Report**

To update governors on the work of the Barnsley Governors Association.

2 Main Points

The Barnsley Governors Association was set up in 2010 and is now 9 years old. By virtue of our constitution we are an independent, democratic and non-political association of school governing bodies in Barnsley and our aim is to support, promote and work towards the improvement school governance in Barnsley. As an organisation we aim to be inclusive and transparent and welcome feedback from our members and others.

Nine years on and we continue to be committed to these aims. Given the changing face of governance and the greater challenge we believe this work to be as important as ever. Our debates and training are designed to cover all features of governance, whether in the local authority-maintained sector or within academies. Our focus has naturally shifted over time to the wider concept of governance rather than just the statutory technicalities related to the operation of the maintained sector.

All member organisations are entitled to nominate potential candidates for membership of the BGA Executive. We are anxious to build on this and widen the scope of experience.

As part of our core purpose, we continue to organise and provide training courses for governors in conjunction with the Local Authority. We are not in direct competition. Rather we try to provide value added training to supplement the core offer from the Local Authority and we have tried to do this again, this academic year. Details of the offer are available on our website at www.barnsleyga.org.

As stated in previous reports we have been reviewing our offer in this respect to widen it and make it more relevant to people's actual experience of governance. As part of this we have undertaken consultation exercises with governors and governing bodies. We welcome expression of the governor voice in such exercises and beyond.

In 2019, we have offered courses on Solving problems and Making Decisions, Finance for Governors of Maintained Schools and Academies, The Role of the Chair, Governing Body Self-Evaluation and Review of the Chair, The Governor's Role in Supporting and Challenging a School. We had also hoped to offer a two-part course on Safer Recruitment but had to cancel this.

In addition, we held a Forum on addressing need and deprivation on 5th March 2019. We would encourage all governors to attend such forums to meet colleagues doing similar work and to join the wider debate about governance and share their experience, in order to add to the quality of debate. We believe such sessions are perhaps more valuable than formal training, drawing out as they do personal experience and outcomes.

We are currently preparing our Spring Conference, to be held at the Holiday Inn in Dodworth on 11th May 2019. The central theme is School Finance.

Governors will have also noted that we have also resurrected our E Mail News Letter, and this will be circulated as widely as possible. We hope this will inform governors of the work of the Association and current developments in school governance. We hope governors find it useful.

We are still keen to see a wider roll out of the Local Leaders of Governance programme. These people will be experienced governors in the district who would like to mentor and support other governors and governing bodies in their work.

Such governors would work alongside the National Leaders of Governance (NLG) programme. The aim of appointing such people is similar to the NLG programme. We wish to ensure that there is a group of experienced and skilled governors available who are able to be quickly deployed to support local governors/trustees. We believe that additional capacity provided by Local Leaders of Governance (LLGs) in their work with Barnsley governing bodies will further accelerate school improvement in the district.

Please visit our website for further details, if you feel that you have the skills and would like to support the work of governing bodies in the Borough.

If you would like to receive details of our conferences, forum meetings, training sessions and any other events, along with a regular e-newsletter, please let us have your email address, or register on the home page of our website.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Report to be noted.

A copy of the main report is available on: www.barnsley.gov.uk/governorsagenda

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