

**CABINET RESPONSE TO CHILDREN AND EDUCATION SELECT COMMITTEE****SCHOOL GOVERNANCE TASK GROUP – FINAL REPORT**

(considered by C&ESC on 26 January 2015)

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. That the Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning engages with local economic and enterprise partners, Phase Council representatives and SGOSS to consider how the Council can best encourage individuals in the business sector to serve as school governors.
2. That the Cabinet Member and Assistant Director for Schools and Learning use the Council's internal communication network to actively promote the school governor role to all local government staff.
3. That the Directorate for Children, Schools and Families work with its professional governance partners to develop and strengthen peer to peer support between school governing bodies, and relevant professional associations.
4. That the Internal Audit Team update the Committee on any themes emerging from the financial audits in schools following the conclusion of the 2015/16 audit plan.
5. That the Council's Education Finance Team and Internal Audit Team are invited to attend a future meeting of all Surrey governors in order to highlight the skills and expertise of the Internal Audit Team and discuss the role of governing bodies in financial and risk management.
6. That the Assistant Director for Schools and Learning considers how to involve the Internal Audit Team in future governor training on financial and risk management.

**RESPONSE:**

1. I am happy to engage as widely as possible to promote and encourage serving as a school governor in Surrey. Our Education partner, Babcock 4S, already works with SGOSS (a Department for Education funded charity) recruiting school governors from FTSE 100 companies and has some links with large Surrey employers, including BP and Proctor & Gamble, which it is continuing to develop as far as funding allows. Babcock 4S also engages on behalf of Surrey County Council with the Voluntary Service organisations across the 11 Surrey boroughs and districts and gets a steady flow of potential governors in this way who are matched to schools.
2. I am happy to agree to this proposal although it should be noted that LA "association" rules apply in that only 1 LA governor per school is permitted who can work for Surrey County Council. However if it could be explored as a strategy for nominating hard-to-fill LA governor roles in certain schools, it could be really helpful.
3. Babcock 4S does this extensively already through the National College for Teaching and Leadership Chairs; Governors programme, using National Leaders of Governance to conduct Reviews of Governance, mentoring of Chairs, mentoring of Clerks, etc. We are continually looking at opportunities to extend good practice. All training and development events also provide opportunities for networking and peer-to-peer

support.

4. Refer to (5) below.
5. The Internal Audit Team is happy to remind governing bodies of the role of Internal Audit in schools and where any issues should be directed, although to date this has not been identified as an area of concern. Babcock 4S routinely works with Education Finance/Audit teams to address concerns where they have arisen, and additional training is arranged if necessary. The Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) is an annual return completed by every governing body which requires governors to discuss annually with their Headteacher and senior staff 23 specific areas of financial responsibility. These returns are collated by Education Finance and, where expertise is perceived to be weak, additional training or briefings are arranged. Governors are also obliged to monitor the progress of any remedial actions. I am therefore confident that governors are aware of their responsibilities in this area, but if the Select Committee has identified specific weaknesses, I would be willing to ask Education Finance and Internal Audit to review their advice. I will also be happy to ask Education Finance/Internal Audit to update the Select Committee on their findings following collation of the 2015/16 SFVS annual returns, as referred to in 4 above.
6. Babcock 4S already runs several courses on this subject, one of which is sponsored by the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

**Linda Kemeny**  
**Cabinet Member for Schools and Learning**  
**24 February 2015**