

Final newsletter of 2020 foreword by Janet Myers, Chair of Cheshire West Governance Association

What a year 2020 has been! Every aspect of our lives has been affected by Covid-19 and lockdown, and governance is no exception. We have all had to adapt to governing online; from virtual meetings and electronic paperwork, to understanding online and blended learning offers, and scrutinising risk assessments. It hasn't all been bad. Our members have told us that attendance at online meetings is often better, and that meetings are more focused. They have described the creative ways that they have governed virtually, including online link governor visits, and governors being beamed into classrooms to listen to the pupil voice. Happily, most headteachers have reported that they have received the support that they need from their governing boards during this time.

We have adapted as an association, and have so far run three online networking events, focusing on Covid-19, chairs and vice chairs, and new governors and trustees. We have had record attendance at these events, and many members have told us that they find it easier to attend online meetings. Our next event is at 7pm on 28th January and is exclusively for Secondary and Post-16 governors, trustees and clerks. If you govern at a secondary school, sixth form or FE college we hope that you can join us.

****SAVE THE DATE****

Secondary & Post-16 Governors Virtual Networking Event

Thursday 28th January 2021 @ 7pm

Free for CWGA members, £20 for non-members

Thank you for the support that you have provided to your schools and trusts during this challenging year. I hope that you have a happy, peaceful and safe Christmas and I look forward to seeing you at our events in the New Year.

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governance**

Development *for* Chairs

Funded by

Department
for Education

The Department for Education (DfE) has contracted five organisations to provide a professional development programme for those in governance leadership roles like chairs, vice chairs

and committee chairs. This programme is being funded by the DfE until March 2021. The National Governance association is running a North West cohort of the programme from January to September 2021. If you would like to register for this free training, further details are available [here](#).

This year Cheshire West Governance Association will host their annual Heads, Chairs & Clerks Conference virtually on Friday 26th February 2021.

Keynote speakers include: a leading representative from the NGA, Andrew Cook, Regional Director of Ofsted and Professor Mick Waters. We have also just heard that David McNaught, Director of Education and Inclusion (CW&C) will also be speaking.

Members & non members tickets available via the Eventbrite link below. If you need to check if your school is a member then please email CWGA@cwgovernanceassoc.co.uk

[Cheshire West & Chester Schools Heads, Chairs & Clerks Virtual Conference Tickets, Fri 26 Feb 2021 at 09:00 | Eventbrite](#)



CHESHIRE WEST & CHESTER SCHOOLS HEADS, CHAIRS & CLERKS

VIRTUAL CONFERENCE 2021

Friday 26th February 2021 - 9.00am to 12.30pm

Members £30 Non-members £35

SPEAKERS



National Governance Association Speaker to be announced.

NGA Speaker



Andrew Cook, Ofsted

Andrew Cook became the Ofsted Regional Director for the North West in November 2016. Andrew was appointed Her Majesty's Inspector in 2005. Since joining Ofsted he has worked in school improvement, school inspection policy and organisational restructuring. His previous posts in Ofsted were Senior Her Majesty's inspector in the West Midlands and Regional Director for the East of England. Before joining Ofsted, Andrew was a successful head teacher and worked in an advisory capacity for a local authority.



Professor Mick Waters

Professor Mick Waters, former director of the curriculum at the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency, where he gained a heroic reputation, is now the president of the Curriculum Foundation. He's the down-to-earth voice in the increasingly complex world of education and has endeared himself to school communities in the UK and overseas by talking the sort of sense they need to hear.

New Governors & Trustees Networking Event by Zoe Lochlin, Executive Member CWGA

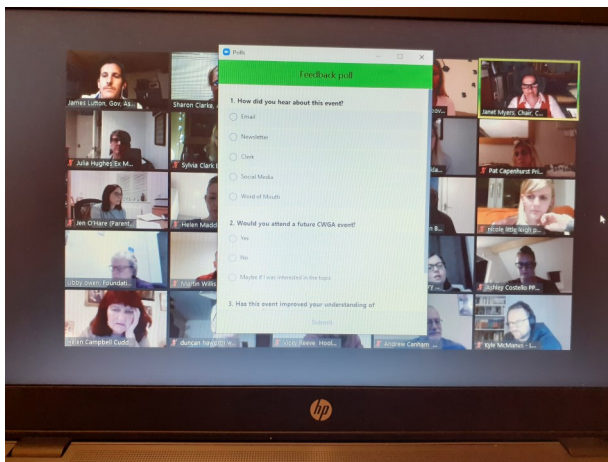
On Thursday 26th November we held a virtual New Governors and Trustees networking event, 27 delegates from maintained, academies, primary and secondary schools joined together to share their personal experiences of joining a governing board. This event allowed plenty of opportunities to discuss induction, challenges faced and what important information and documentation all Governors should be aware of, as well as getting a quick glimpse of each other's pets, spouses, and children as they popped on camera from time to time!



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To start the session, we discussed the 3 core functions and 8 elements of governance. Delegates shared with Executives their own experiences of meetings that they had been involved with and good practices were highlighted. These included making sure that challenging questions are minuted correctly and that actions are developed and actioned accordingly in a timely and effective manner.

Another area of discussion was the role of governors in effectively safeguarding children in their school. This topic highlighted the need for all governors to record that they had received and read 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' annually. This discussion also opened up conversations about having the right people around the table, how governors knew what their roles and responsibilities were, and how each governor's skill set could be used to strengthen and enhance their governing board to support them in asking challenging questions.



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End poll data showed that 96% of attendees felt that attending the event improved their understanding of governance. We hope that the shared knowledge and good practices highlighted will support governors and trustees go back to their respective boards and offer suggestions on how to develop best practice.

We received a lot of positive feedback about the event. Comments included 'really enjoyable and lots of ideas from different people' and 'Excellent session, questions and advice in breakout sessions very helpful'. Many thanks to all who attended for making another virtual networking event so successful.

Clerks Corner By Sharon Clarke, Admin Support to CWGA

When I was first introduced to clerking, one of the stumbling blocks I came up against whilst minute taking was the number of acronyms used during the meeting. My advice is don't be afraid to ask what they mean! The Chair at the time directed me to an internal document that the school governing board used as part of the Governor Induction. It was appropriately named 'Words you might hear and wonder'. I found that minuting the acronym and then putting the meaning of that acronym in brackets within the minutes helped me as a new clerk to remember what it meant. I also use this method when a new governor joins the school, to help them with all the educational acronyms.



The discussion of Governor Induction was mentioned at our recent New Governors & Trustees Networking event and members of CWGA will be sharing best practice with Clerks & Governors in future newsletters...so watch this space! Here is a taster of some of the acronyms that new clerks & governors are likely to hear during their first meetings.....

SEF – Self Evaluation Form

SDP – School Development Plan

SIP/SIA – School Improvement Partner/Advisor

FFT – Fischer Family Trust data

SFVS – Schools Financial Value Standards

DFC – Devolved Formula Capital

CPD – Continuous Professional Development

SLT/SMT – Senior Leadership/Senior Management Team

NQT – Newly Qualified Teacher

MDA – Midday Assistant

PAN – Pupil Admission Numbers

LA – Local Authority

TLR – Teaching and Learning Responsibility

CO-OPTED GOVERNOR VACANCY..... Cherry Grove Primary School

We have a vacancy for a co-opted Governor to join our dedicated governing body. Ideally we are looking for someone with a desire to be considered for a future Chair or Vice Chair of Governors. Our vision is our passion for nurturing individuality and respect for the rights of everyone enabling members of our community to achieve their potential and be outstanding local and global citizens. We are a rights respecting school and are proud to hold the UNICEF GOLD Right respecting school award for 2020. Email the clerk to governors for more information sclarke@cherrygrove.cheshire.sch.uk



DOES YOUR GOVERNING BOARD HAVE A VACANCY THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH OUR READERS.....we are more than happy to share for you! Email the details to CWGA@cwgovernanceassoc.co.uk

If your board is finding it difficult to recruit a new chair, Future Chairs is a free service offered by Inspiring Governance and the National Governance Association and funded by the Department for Education until March 2021. You can search for local volunteers who have indicated an interest in becoming a Future Chair by [registering for Inspiring Governance](#) and selecting 'future chair' in the volunteer search.



Does your Governing Body or a member of your Governance team go above and beyond for your school? Do they deserve to be recognised with an Award?

We recognise the incredible work being done across CW&C, by people who give their time voluntarily, in order to make a difference to our schools. We think you will agree that their contribution is invaluable and so we invite you to nominate a Governing Body or an individual, for one of our 2020/21 CWGA Governance Awards.

If you feel you know someone deserving of that extra recognition then nominate them for one of the three categories. We know how busy everyone is so we have made the process super simple. All you need to do is pick the category from below and complete a nomination form with details of the person or group you wish to nominate, supported with some words as to why you have nominated them (email CWGA@cwgovernanceassoc.co.uk for more details).

Cheshire West Governance Association Award Categories 2020/21

CWGA Governing Board of the Year

CWGA Chair of the Year

CWGA Clerk or Governance Manager of the Year

CWGA Governing Body of the Year - Celebrating a governing body who have shown great commitment and made a significant impact on the school. This award will go to the Governing Body that can demonstrate outstanding performance during 2020-21 academic year.

CWGA Chair of the Year - Celebrating a Chair who has demonstrated outstanding leadership

CWGA Clerk or Governance Manager of the Year - Recognising an individual who has shown dedication and commitment as Clerk to Governors or Governance Manager

The Awards are open to all education boards in Cheshire West & Chester, including those within the private and further education sector. Judges will be looking for evidence to strengthen the nomination i.e.

- ***Outstanding leadership and performance especially if through adversity***
- ***Strong and creative initiatives that have enabled the school to improve and thrive***
- ***Impact on the education experience***



You can keep up to date with our events and news on Twitter [@your_CWGA](#).



Or follow us on Facebook at [CWGA Facebook](#)

Upcoming event... see Twitter or Facebook for details or email CWGA@cwgovernanceassoc.co.uk



Secondary and Post-16 Governors Virtual Networking Event

CWGA 'supporting the work of governors, trustees & clerks'

Would you like the opportunity to network with other governors and discuss your responsibilities as a governor including: What does good governance look like? As schools enter the COVID-19 recovery phase, what are the challenges of governance in the 'new normal'? How can we balance the finances?

Here at the CWGA we recognise what an extremely difficult time it has been for schools and governing boards and we want to offer our support by holding an event specifically tailored for those governors who govern in high schools, sixth forms or FE colleges.

This is a free event* for CWGA member schools (email CWGA@cwgovernanceassoc.co.uk to check your member status). All governors/trustees and clerks are welcome!

Join us on Zoom on **Thursday 28th January 2021 at 7pm** Please complete a booking form and return to CWGA@cwgovernanceassoc.co.uk

Name of school
Name of delegate(s) and governor role held
Contactable email address(es)
Please help us plan this event and include any questions you would like discussed at this session....

**If your school is not a member of the Association, then the charge for attending is £25. Annual membership of the Association is only £35 per school (which is due for payment no later than 30th Sept 2020). For the £35 subscription, your governors, trust members and your clerk get access to our networking events and conference. We run three networking events a year, and they are free for members and £20 per person for non-member schools. For a subscription form, please email the address above.*

SAVE THE DATE Heads, Chairs and Clerks Virtual Conference Friday 26th February 9am to 12.30pm Confirmed speakers – Professor Mick Waters, Andrew Cook (Ofsted Regional Director), National Governance Association & David McNaught, Director of Education and Inclusion (CW&C)

Cheshire West Governance Association Committee



Would you be interested in becoming an Executive member of the Cheshire West Governance Association?

- Our voluntary executive team leads all of our activities, supported by our paid administrator.
- In order to drive the association forward, we are looking for new members to join our association. Are you currently a serving governor, trustee or clerk? Then we'd love to hear from you!

Interested or want to find out more?

Please speak to one of the CWGA members today or email CWGA@cwgovernanceassoc.co.uk

[@your_CWGA](#)