

Welcome to the March Monthly Bulletin. Our bulletin has been produced with the aim of keeping governors and clerks informed of the latest educational developments as they happen. The most effective way of using this briefing is to have it as an agenda item as part of your governing body meetings.

[National Funding Formula](#)

The DfE is currently consulting on the introduction of a National Funding formula (NFF) from 2018/19. They are introducing a national funding formula to make funding fair for schools and children. This consultation seeks views on the detailed design of the formula, building on the earlier consultation on the principles and structure. This consultation closes on the 22nd March. KCC has sent its response which can be read [here](#) with Patrick Leeson encouraging all governors to respond to the consultation with your views. Chairs of Governing Boards received an email letter from Patrick outlining the consultation and the implications of the NFF on Kent schools. Has your Chair shared Patrick's letter with you? Have you discussed the impact of the NFF within your finance committee or Governing Board? What is the implication for your school? Have you responded to the consultation?

[School Finance](#)

In Patrick Leeson's 28th February [weekly bulletin on Kelsi](#) he announced the 2017-18 Delegated Formula, Pupil Premium and Indicative Devolved Formula Capital budget templates for all maintained schools. The bulletin also contains for 2017-18 financial year a budget template specifically for academies, available on Kelsi. The links for all the above are contained within the weekly bulletin. How will you as a Governing Board consider the above?

[Schools Financial Value Standard \(SFVS\)](#)

All maintained school Governing Bodies are required to have approved and submitted the SFVS to KCC School Financial Services by the 31st March 2017. The SFVS, a financial audit tool consisting of 25 questions, has to be an agenda item within the full governing body meeting where it needs to be formally approved. The Chair signs the document including the date that it was approved by the Board. The drafting of the document can be performed by the finance governor lead/ finance committee before being submitted to the Board. When a school has a compliance visit the governing body minutes are scrutinised for approval of the SFVS. If you have not completed the SFVS please click [here](#) for the document and supporting tool. Academies can use the SFVS as an audit tool at local level. Is it/has on your Governing body agenda to approve the SFVS? How do you as a board follow up on any remedial actions required?

[Ofsted Update](#)

Ofsted has released this month a school inspection [update](#) for its Inspectors. This edition contains important information for inspectors that reinforces messages from recent training, notably: further guidance about inspecting pupil progress and not referring to 'expected progress'; key stage 2 progress from P scales; interpreting key stage 1 charts by prior attainment; understanding the GCSE reforms; Invitation to the Chair of Trust at interview and feedback for a school inspected within the Trust and Safeguarding- checking records.

It is good practise for governors in preparation for Ofsted to read how Ofsted Inspectors should be approaching the Inspection. How will this information help your board prepare for Ofsted?

[HOT OFF THE PRESS! National Chairs Development and National Clerks Development Programmes](#)

We are delighted to announce that we are able to run another National Chairs Leadership Development Programme and National Clerks Leadership Development Programme with the first of the modules for both programmes starting this academic year. Scholarships will be available for these courses making the charge to the school £80. Further details and dates will be announced in the next bulletin. For more information on the course programme for Chairs click [here](#) and for Clerks click [here](#).

[Virtual Governance](#)

We would like to remind maintained governing body's of the rules surrounding virtual governance. The School Governance (Roles, Procedures and Allowances) (England) Regulations 2013 states "the governing body may approve alternative arrangements for governors to participate or vote at meetings of the governing body including but not limited to by telephone or video conference". The essential element is being present at the meeting as the regulations also state "Every question to be decided at a meeting of the governing body is to be determined by a majority of the votes of the governors **present** and voting on the question". Being virtually present at a meeting will need agreement in advance by the Governing body with drafted approved protocols in place. There is no provision to vote on decisions by email. Academies need to comply with their articles of association regarding virtual governance.

Summer District Governor Briefings

The next round of District Governor Briefings start in term 5. We hope you found the county wide finance briefings useful and have applied the learnt skills to your governing board. We are going to have another county wide focus this time from Ana Rowley, KCC Academies Conversion team lead who will be discussing the current academies landscape and policy position with the evolution over time and your role in considering the strategic future options for your school and the support that KCC can give you. More details in next months bulletin.

Governor Training

We have made some slight changes to the Governor Training SLA this year. The majority of our courses remain free and within the SLA as core training. When you book via CPD on line there will be a few courses that are “Hot Topics”; these will be charged at £75 if you are part of the SLA and £100 if not. This was a decision the service took to enable us to produce new training courses which are both current and relevant in line with the educational landscape. We wanted to attract the experts in their field to write and deliver these topics and therefore had to take this into consideration in pricing. District Governor briefings remain free of charge as a benefit to being part of the SLA. There is a charge for these if you opt to “pay as you go”. We feel the Governor training programme offers excellent value for money and I hope the above allows you to understand the rationale behind the new format of charges. Please continue to inform us of the training you require – we want it to be relevant and tailor made to your requirements.

GEL Subscription

We have received fantastic reviews for GEL and hope that you have found the modules both interesting and useful in upskilling your governing body. These modules are being continually developed and reflect current legislation, can be accessed anywhere and can also be used as a full governing body training tool. GEL is an additional subscription to our Governor Services SLA training offer (full details can be found [here](#)) The yearly subscription ends on 31st March 2017 and will automatically be renewed (to reflect your existing subscription) unless you advise us by 17th March 2017 that you do not wish to continue.

Purchased through us the subsidised costs are:

If your governing body subscribe to the Governor Services SLA, the cost of GEL will be £150.

If your governing body does not subscribe, the cost of GEL will be £175.

GEL log ons

We have had some queries from Governing Bodies regarding not being able to log onto GEL. A year ago GEL migrated from one website to another. During the migration, there was a window of time where accounts could be transferred via logging in. If this was missed, accounts may well have expired. If that's the case, new accounts can be registered through <http://www.gelregistration.co.uk/>. If you don't feel this is the problem, please contact [GEL](#) direct with your details and they can look into it. How are you using GEL to support the development of your governing body?

CPDonline

CPD online have received a few queries about delegates not receiving emails from their website following making bookings or receiving evaluation forms after courses. This could be due to the emails entering spam folders. Please can governors add the email account of Kent CPD online as a safe site. The email address is Kentcpd@support.webbased.co.uk

NGA skills audit

Following the new Governance handbook and competency framework the NGA has released an update skills audit. The Competency framework, as we at governors services has advocated, should be used to provide clarification of government expectations, rather than as a set prescribed checklist. The NGA firmly feel that governing boards are best placed themselves to individually assess which areas outlined in the framework are most important for them, and so while the [new skills audit](#) (accessible to those whom have membership to the NGA) is structured around the DfE's six features of effective governance, it doesn't attempt to replicate all 200-plus competencies, knowledge, skills and behaviours included. Instead it combines the core aspects of the framework to inform the skills, experiences and knowledge included. If you do not belong to the NGA and would like more information click [here](#).

And finally

Thank you for your continued support with our schools. We are here to provide any advice and guidance you need with your roles, so please contact us if you have any queries:

North Kent (Dartford, Gravesham, Sevenoaks): Joanne Beale joanne.beale@kent.gov.uk

South Kent (Ashford, Dover, Shepway): Tina Gimber tina.gimber@kent.gov.uk

East Kent (Canterbury, Swale, Thanet): Lorraine Monkhouse lorraine.monkhouse@kent.gov.uk

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Please send through any suggestions/ideas to Suzanne Mayes, Interim Governor Services Manager – suzanne.mayes@kent.gov.uk