



The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust

Clerks' Handbook

Authentically Christian

Boldly passionate about excellence in learning

Relentlessly driven in our aspiration for everyone

Status and review cycle;	Draft / Annual
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Next Review Date:	July 2021

Foreword

This handbook has been created specifically to provide guidance for DGAT Clerks. It is a one-stop-shop for all the information you will need on a daily basis, including statutory requirements, best practice and guidance.

The handbook is split into the key information we believe you will need in your role as Clerk. Some sections contain a “sneak peek” to a template or resource and a direct link to where the full version can be found on the Clerks’ Area of the DGAT website. This allows us to ensure the most up-to-date version is always available to you.

At the end of the handbook you will find a FAQ section containing the most common queries we receive; however Nicki and I are always available to answer any other questions you may have or to provide guidance and support.

This handbook will be reviewed on an annual basis. Any feedback would be welcome, especially if you feel like there is anything missing or that would be useful to add.

I hope you find this useful and as always please do not hesitate to get in touch,

All my best

Ellie

Company Secretary to the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust
February 2021

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[DGAT Central Team](#)

[Diocesan Education Team](#)

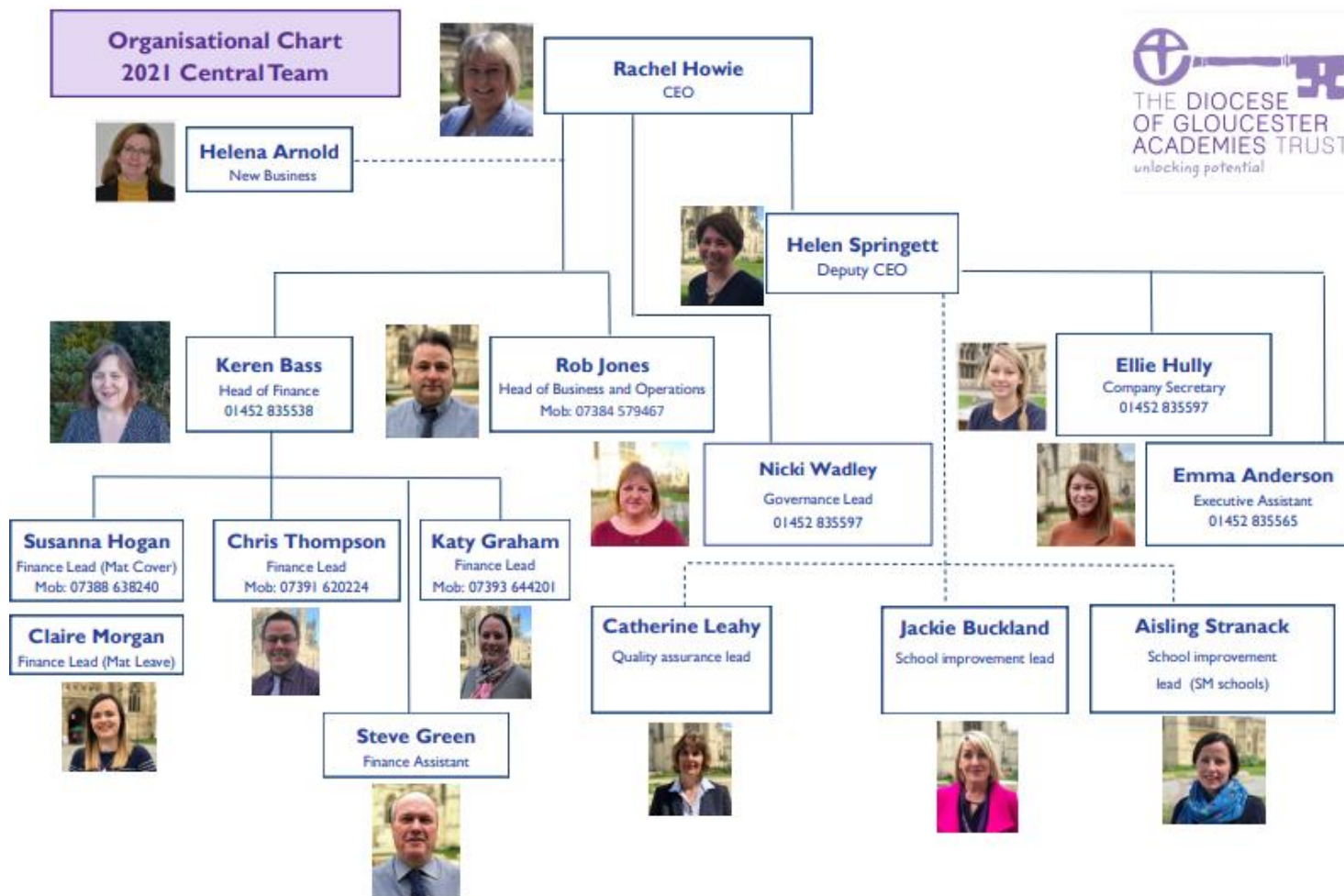
*“Good Clerking is a major contributing factor to effective
Governance and therefore school improvement”*

Information for School and College Local Governors

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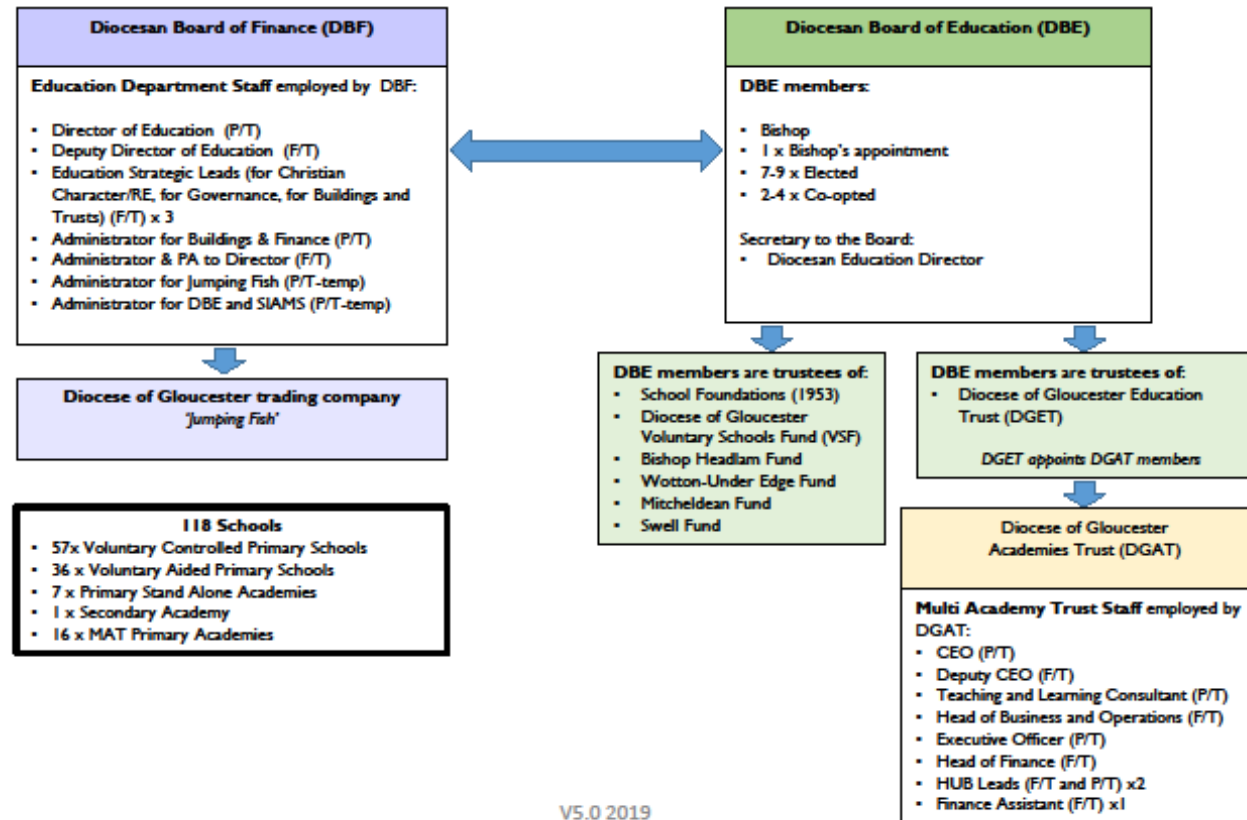
DGAT Organisational Chart As at January 2021



DGAT Governance and Resources Structure



Diocesan Education: Governance and Resourcing structure



V5.0 2019

The Role of the Clerk

A good Clerk is an invaluable resource for Local Governors!

The Clerk's Role:

- To serve the whole Local Governing Board (LGB)
- To perform administrative tasks effectively
- To keep up-to-date on and provide support and advice on laws and regulations
- To maintain accurate records

The Clerk's Responsibilities:

- To convene and attend LGB and Committee meetings
- To take minutes of all LGB and committee meetings
- To keep a record of Local Governors and their attendance at meetings
- To maintain statutory information
- To report vacancies to the LGB
- To give advice in accordance with regulations
- To undertake any other functions specified by the LGB

DGAT Clerks must be familiar with their school's [Scheme of Delegation](#).

Clerks must make sure records are available for inspection by those entitled to view them.

Local Governors should know how, when and where the Clerk may be contacted.

Clerks can support their LGB by knowing where to go for authoritative advice; namely the Scheme of Delegation, policies or the DGAT Governance Team. The Clerk may sometimes need to remind Local Governors of law and policy to ensure they have the information they need to make sound decisions.

See also: [Clerking Competency Framework](#)

Section I: Compliance and Planning

I. Scheme of Delegation

As a charity and company limited by guarantee, DGAT is governed by Directors (aka Trustees) who are responsible for, and oversee, the management and administration of the Trust and the schools which it runs.

In order to discharge these responsibilities, the Directors appoint people who are more locally based to serve on the LGB which has been established to serve as a committee of the Trust Board and to ensure the good governance of the school. The day-to-day governance of DGAT schools is delegated to this LGB. All LGBs will be responsible for ensuring that the Christian character, values and vision of the Trust underpins all decision making.

The Scheme of Delegation, which is implemented by the Trust Board following consultation with each LGB, explains the ways in which the Trust Board fulfils its responsibilities for the leadership and management of the school, the respective roles and responsibilities of the Directors and the members of the LGB and the commitments to each other to ensure the success of the school. A Scheme of Delegation is personalised to each individual school and can be found on the Clerks' area of the DGAT website.

The Scheme of Delegation explains:

- Directors' powers and responsibilities
- The constitution of your LGB, including,
 - The appointment of Local Governors and their terms of office
 - Resignation, removal and disqualification of Local Governors
- The powers delegated to LGBs
- The review and termination of the Scheme of Delegation
- Terms of Reference for LGBs

The Scheme of Delegation also includes a section on clerking and the minutes of meetings, namely:

- Each LGB will appoint a Clerk (who is not a Local Governor or associate)
- All meetings will be minuted by the Clerk and include:
 - A list of attendees, apologies and absences and details of any appointments or resignations
 - Details of all resolutions and a summary of discussions with clear action points as appropriate and all questions, challenges and responses
- Minutes will be maintained by the Clerk and signed subject to approval by the LGB
- The Clerk will ensure that copies of minutes of all meetings will be provided to the Trust's Governance Lead as soon as reasonably practicable after the meeting

2. Statutory Requirements

The statutory responsibilities for LGB are set out in the Scheme of Delegation, [Academies Financial Handbook](#) and [Governance Handbook](#).

Academies Financial Handbook September 2020: Key Information and Updates for DGAT Clerks

a) Being Transparent about Governance

The Trust must be transparent with its governance arrangements. The Trust must provide details of its governance arrangements in the governance statement published with its annual accounts, including what the Board has delegated to committees and, in in Trusts with multiple academies, to LGBs. The Trust must also publish on its website up-to-date details of its governance arrangements in a readily accessible format, including:

- The structure and remit of the Trust's Members, Board of Chair
- For each Trustee and Local Governor serving at any point over the past 12 months, their full names, date of appointment, term of office, date they stepped down (where applicable), who appointed them, and relevant business and pecuniary interests including governance roles in other educational institutions
- For each Local Governor, their attendance records at LGB meetings over the last academic year.

b) Information about key individuals in the Trust

The Trust must notify ESFA of changes to the governance information described in this section within 14 calendar days of the change. Notification must be through the governance section of DfE's [Get information about schools](#) (GIAS) register, accessed via DfE Sign-in. LGBs are responsible for submitting local governance information to GIAS.

The records required in GIAS for constituent academies in an Academy Trust with multiple academies are:

- Headteacher, including direct contact details
- Chairs of LGBs (where adopted), including direct contact details
- Local Governors (where adopted).

If the Trust does not return the information ESFA requires by the deadline, or the information is not acceptable quality, ESFA may conduct investigations to collect it. ESFA may deduct the cost of the investigations from the Trust's recurrent funding. ESFA may take further actions it deems necessary, such as publication of the names of late returners, to enforce compliance where Trusts fail to fulfil their duties to provide information.

c) Register of interests

The Academy Trust's [register of interests](#) must capture relevant business and pecuniary interests of members, Trustees, Local Governors and senior employees, including:

- Directorships, partnerships and employments with businesses
- Trusteeships and Local Governorships at other educational institutions and charities
- For each interest: the name and nature of the business, the nature of the interest and the date the interest began.

The register must identify relevant material interests from close family relationships between the Academy Trust's members, Trustees or Local Governors. It must also identify relevant material interests arising from close family relationships between those individuals and employees.

Trusts must publish on their websites relevant business and pecuniary interests of members, Trustees, Local Governors and accounting officers. DGAT ask its schools to publish this information about local governance on their own websites.

3. Local Governance Compliance Checklist

Each LGB within DGAT must ensure they remain compliant with the statutory obligations as set out in section 3. To help Clerks ensure compliance we have created a Local Governance Compliance Checklist which includes both statutory and recommended documents required; noting the requirement to include Local Governors who have been in post within the last 12 months (even if they have resigned).

Sneak peek:

Local Governors	Statutory	Recommended	In-Place	Notes
School email address	*			
Information on GIAS	*			
Information on school website	*			
Local Governance Books				
Scheme of Delegation	*			
Register of Local Governors	*			
Summary of Local Governor Roles and Responsibilities	*			
Register of Interests ^(note 1)	*			

Etc.

Find the latest version of the Local Governance Compliance Checklist on the Clerks' Area of the DGAT website [here](#) (password CHRONICLES).

4. Clerk to Local Governors' Year-End Checklist

The summer is a great time to prepare for the autumn term and think ahead to your first LGB meeting of the new academic year. We have created a Year-End Checklist to get you started.

Sneak peek:

Task	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure Local Governors' contact details and home addresses are up to date (and that this is reflected in the Single Central Record) ▪ Check for any terms of office due to come to an end in the next academic year ▪ Check if any DBS checks need updating ▪ Ask Local Governors to check, update and sign a Register of Business Interests form ▪ Calculate and summarise meeting attendance for the academic year 	

Etc.

Find the latest version of the Clerk to Local Governors' Year-End Checklist on the Clerks' Area of the DGAT website [here](#) (password CHRONICLES).

5. Annual Schedule of Work

We have created a schedule of the most important compliance and best practice tasks that LGBs should cover and consider across the academic year, as reflected in the Trust's Scheme of Delegation. **We recognise that the implementation of this framework may require to be adapted this year due to the coronavirus outbreak and impact on school's priorities and provision.**

It is good practice to manage the annual business of the LGB around the three core functions of governance, as identified in the [Governance handbook](#), and plan each agenda throughout the academic year accordingly. It is the role of the clerk to Local Governors to advise and support the LGB to remain focussed on the strategic aspects of governance. The three core functions of governance are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.
2. Holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the effective and efficient performance management of staff.
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent.

DGAT LGBs must continually ensure the Trust's vision and Christian values are upheld and that these underpin all decision-making.

The annual schedule of work is divided into four sections – one section per term with an additional late autumn meeting planned to enable LGBs to focus on the administrative tasks Local Governors are required to undertake at the start of the academic year – although this is entirely optional. There is space for the LGB to assign each task to the appropriate meeting, e.g. an LGB meeting or the relevant committee meeting. There is also a section included for each term to schedule policy reviews.

This annual schedule of work provides a framework for compliance and ensuring accountability, the LGB will still need to identify appropriate monitoring activities to meet the three core functions of governance relevant to its school and local context.

It is also recommended that all LGB or committee meetings include the following procedural elements:

- Attendance and apologies
- Elections
- Policies
- Register of business interests
- Pupil voice

Sneak peek:

Early Autumn term: September – January					
Ensuring procedural compliance	LGB or committee meeting [Please specify committee]	Suggested tasks for ensuring accountability	LGB or committee meeting [Please specify committee]	Ensuring financial compliance	LGB or committee meeting [Please specify committee]
<p>Elect a Chair and Vice Chair and agree terms of office.</p> <p>All Local Governors complete a DGAT Register of Interests form and provide updated contact details.</p> <p>Review and agree terms of reference for LGB meetings.</p>		<p>Review the school's Christian ethos and values statement.</p> <p>Review and agree the LGB code of conduct.</p> <p>Review and agree the draft school improvement plan.</p>		<p>Ensure all Local Governors are aware of and pay due regard to any updates to the Academies financial handbook.</p> <p>Review the inventory listing.</p>	

Find the latest version of the Annual Schedule of Work can be found on the Clerks' Area of the DGAT website [here](#) (password CHRONICLES).

You can also find an [example LGB meeting agenda template](#) on the DGAT website.

6. Terms of Reference for Committees

DGAT has provided a full set of Terms of Reference for Finance and Resources and Standards and Ethos Committees. DGAT LGBs are required to establish Finance and Resources committee and strongly recommend that they establish a Standards and Ethos committee. LGBs are permitted to put in place any other committees considered necessary.

Sneak peek:

Terms of Reference for the LGB Finance and Resources Sub-Committee

Purpose

The role of the committee is to maintain strong oversight and compliance with the Trust's financial procedures and monitor the efficient use of resources within the Academy.

Membership and quorum

The LGB Finance and Resources Committee will be appointed by the LGB (LGB). The minimum number of Local Governors appointed to the committee should be three so that there are enough members to hold a majority when voting on matters.

The latest version of the Terms of Reference for Finance and Resources and Standards and Ethos Committees can be found on the Clerks' Area of the DGAT website [here](#) (password CHRONICLES).

Section 2: Statutory Registers

7. Example Register of Local Governors

One of the key documents for an LGB is a comprehensive Register of Local Governors. This document holds the statutory information required for each Local Governor, including those we have been in post within the last 12 months (even if they have resigned). An example template has been created for you to either use or check against your current register to ensure it includes the key information required.

Sneak peek:

Name of School Register of Local Governors 2020-21

Name	Category	Appointment date	Current term ends	Resignation date	Notes
Mrs J Bloggs	Co-Opted (current Chair)	01/01/2018	31/12/2021	n/a	In 2 nd term
Revd P Artner	Foundation	05/10/2019	n/a	01/05/2020	

Find the latest version of the Example Register of Local Governors on the Clerks' Area of the DGAT website [here](#) (password CHRONICLES).

8. Attendance Record Template

It is a statutory requirement for Local Governors' attendance at LGB and committee meetings to be recorded, published and kept up-to-date. We have created a simple example template for you to use.

Sneak peek:

Name of School
LGB Attendance 2020-21
Last updated:

Name	Category of Local Governor	Full Local Governing Board meeting attendance						Full LGB attendance % total
		Insert date	Insert date	Insert date	Insert date	Insert date	Insert date	Year to date

Etc.

Find the latest version of the Attendance Record Template on the Clerks' Area of the DGAT website [here](#) (password CHRONICLES).

9. Example Register of Interest Form

A Register of Interest Form should always be completed and signed when a new Local Governor joins an LGB and then reviewed/confirmed annually. Interests include details of any employment, business, Directorship, Trustee or membership interests held in the last 12 months; including the name and nature of business, nature of interest and date interest began. Local Governors must also declare interests of any members of immediate family; including spouse/partner, siblings, children and parents. Interests include both financial and non-financial aspects. It is the Local Governors' responsibility to disclose any additional interests as they arise to the Clerk.

To help you ensure all categories of interests are thought of and declared we have created an example Register of Interest Form to circulate to Local Governors.

Sneak peek:

Name:	
Position within Organisation:	
Date:	
Employment	Details of all my employers in the last 12 months (<i>including name and nature of business, nature of interest and date interest began</i>):
Business	Details of all businesses in which I am a partner or sole proprietor (<i>including name and nature of business, nature of interest and date interest began</i>):

Etc.

Find the latest version of the Example Register of Interests Form on the Clerks' Area of the DGAT website [here](#) (password CHRONICLES).

10. Example Register of Interests Summary

As stipulated by the [Academies Financial Handbook 2020](#) the Academy Trust's Register of Interests must capture relevant business and pecuniary interests of Local Governors (as per the template in section 8).

Each Declaration of Interests form should be entered into a summary which will form part of your Governance books and can also be uploaded onto your school's website (in PDF format). You can find an example template on the DGAT website.

Sneak peek:

Name of School

LGB Register of Interests Summary as at DATE

Name	Employment (last 12 mths)	Businesses (Partner etc)

Previous Local Governors (within the last 12 months)

Find the latest version of the Example Register of Interests Summary on the Clerks' Area of the DGAT website [here](#) (password CHRONICLES).

11. Full Statutory Information Template

In addition to the various templates in sections 6 - 9 we have also created a “catch all” template which includes all the statutory information required by the Academies Financial Handbook. This includes any interests declared, date of appointment, who each Local Governor was appointed by and space to record the number of possible meetings attended over the last academic year. Again, this summary must include information about previous Local Governors in post within the last 12 months.

This template, once complete, is ideal to upload (in PDF format) to the Governance Pages of your school website or to use to check the information currently published is up-to-date and accurate.

Sneak peek:

Name of School

Full Statutory LGB Information Summary as at DATE

Name	Type of Local Governor	Date of Appointment	Term of Office / End Date

Previous Local Governors (within the last 12 months)	Date of Resignation

Find the latest version of the Full Statutory Template on the Clerks’ Area of the DGAT website [here](#) (password CHRONICLES).

Section 3: Meetings and Minutes

12. Guidance Notes for LGB Meetings

The Scheme of Delegation states that the LGB shall meet between three and six times in every academic year and the Finance and Resources Committee will meet at least three times each year.

Meetings (including sub-committees) of the LGB will be convened by the Clerk. In exercising their functions, the Clerk will comply with any directions given by the Directors or the Chair of the LGB. Instruction from the Directors takes precedent over instruction from the Chair of the LGB.

Any three members of the LGB may, by notice in writing given to the Clerk, requisition a meeting of the LGB; and it will be the duty of the Clerk to convene such a meeting as soon as is reasonably practicable. No decisions can be taken at such a meeting unless it is quorate.

The quorum for a meeting of the LGB, and any vote on any matter thereat, shall be five Local Governors or 60% of the total membership, excluding vacancies.

DGAT Clerks' Meeting Checklist

Being prepared is paramount to the smooth running of LGB meetings and therefore governance in your school. To help you stay on top of the day to day tasks of meeting administration we have created a DGAT Clerks' Meeting Checklist for you to follow from everything from annual planning, agenda and paper preparation and meeting preparation as well as tasks to complete at and following a meeting.

Sneak peek:

Item	Notes	Complete
Check for any apologies and inform Chair / Lead Officer		
Check for any papers to be tabled at the meeting		
Prepare final minutes from previous meeting for signature*	*pending approval at the meeting	
Prepare minutes template mirroring agenda	Electronically	
Check with Chair / Lead Officer for any AOB items		

Find the latest version of the DGAT Clerks' Meeting Checklist can be found on the Clerks' Area of the DGAT website [here](#) (password CHRONICLES).

13. Guidance for Taking Effective Minutes

The Purpose of Minutes

“A written record of the business transacted at a meeting”

Minutes provide an opportunity for the LGB to be held to account and demonstrate the LGB is adequately covering the three core functions (as noted in section 14).

Minutes are taken to record:

- What was discussed
- What was decided
- Who had to do what as a result
- Progress and challenge
- Information and options which have been considered
- Challenge to the senior leaders

What to Include

NB: Minutes should **not** be a verbatim record

- Title, date, time, location and the type of meeting
- Welcome
- Present, apologies, absent and in attendance
- Declarations of Interest
- Minutes from the last meeting
- Main agenda items
- AOB
- Date and time of next meeting
- Action table – impact tracker
- Background information: Only use to explain context or set the scene
- Discussion: Summary – enough for those not present
- Evidence of challenge: Clearly identifiable
- Decisions: Clear and unambiguous
- Actions: what, who and when by

You can find an [example LGB meeting agenda and minutes template](#) on the DGAT website.

Top Tips

- Be prepared: write down key information, use of a minutes template, list of apologies
- Record discussion: in the order it happened but itemised as per the agenda
- Take note of any actions: what it is, by whom, and by what date
- Use bullet points to type up later
- Develop own set of abbreviations
- Keep the tone of minutes neutral
- Condense discussion to the important information
- Ask for clarification if needed
- Use of initials/job titles: You may want to identify the speaker using their initials or job title; however "fully" attributive minutes are usually unnecessary
- Use 3rd person - Refer by name or them; their; and themselves

- Use a table plan if new to a meeting
- Use of colour coding for challenge/questions and responses
- Highlight actions and use of a numbering system

Writing up the Minutes

- Use short, concise sentences and paragraphs
- Try not to be ambiguous
- Clearly record actions
- Clearly record Local Governor questions and challenge
- Any decisions made by the LGB
- Can use sub-headings if useful
- Ensure space at the end of the document for the Chair to sign and date
- Ensure each page is numbered
- What to Avoid
 - Educational jargon
 - Unexplained acronyms
 - Identifying individual Local Governors within the meeting
 - Identifying individual pupils, parents or members of staff
 - Verbatim account of the meeting

Agreeing the Minutes

- Draft minutes produced by the Clerk within an agreed timescale (~1 week)
- Sent to the Headteacher and Chair for initial review
- Then circulated in draft to remaining Local Governors in good time (~2 weeks) and to Nicki Wadley (nwadley@glosdioc.org.uk)
- Minutes remain in draft form until they are approved and signed at the next meeting
- Any significant requested amendments should be considered and agreed at the next meeting
- At the next meeting, once approved, the Chair signs the final page of the minutes
- Filed in Governance folder – noting kept confidential until made public in a locked folder/area
- Once approved and signed minutes become public documents and requests can be made to view them (see also Guide to Writing Confidential Minutes)
- Publishing minutes on the school's website is not a statutory requirement

14. LGB Minutes Self-Audit

Minutes are the window into the work of the LGB and should include key evidence of the Board's support and challenge. It is important that each set of minutes is well-formatted, easy to read and captures all necessary information to evidence that the Board are carrying out their core functions.

A set of minutes should:

- Create an official record of the LGB meeting, including question and challenge.
- A record of who has attended the meeting, including any observers.
- A record of apologies received, including any reasons for absence provided.
- Details of any newly declared or existing conflict of interest pertaining to the meeting agenda.
- Record options considered by the LGB.
- Record decisions agreed by the LGB.
- Identify and record any action points agreed, including by whom, and associated timescales.

We have created a checklist which will enable clerks to self-audit their minutes before releasing them to Local Governors for approval. The clerk to Local Governors should review the completed set of minutes against the criteria set out in the 'Key considerations' section and select 'Yes' or 'No' to indicate if the minutes include this information. In the 'Comments' section clerks to Local Governors should record any reason for information being missing or make notes to improve their own practice.

Sneak peek:

Key considerations	Yes	No	Comments
Meeting information			
Name of the school is recorded.			
Date, time and venue of the meeting are recorded.			
Type of meeting, e.g. committee/full LGB/panel is clear.			
A list of supporting papers considered for the meeting is recorded.			

Find the latest version of the LGB Minutes Self-Audit can be found on the Clerks' Area of the DGAT website [here](#) (password CHRONICLES).

15. Minute Typing Buzz Words

- Discussed
- Debated
- Deliberated
- Considered
- Examined
- Analysed
- Pointed out
- Explained
- Suggested
- Drew attention
- Raised
- Informed
- Were reminded that
- Recalled
- Benefits of
- Advantages of
- Value of
- Understood
- Clarified
- Illustrated
- Defined
- Demonstrated
- Emphasised
- Indicated
- Agreed
- Disagreed
- Disputed
- Planned
- Intended
- Hoped
- Proposed
- Existence of
- Issue of
- Reality of
- Question of
- Drawbacks
- Disadvantages
- Uncertainty
- Chose
- Opted
- Selected
- Preferred
- States
- Reported
- Established
- Confirmed
- Verified
- Declared
- Potential
- Prospect
- Probability
- Options
- Alternatives
- Preference
- Decided
- Resolved
- Approved
- Concluded
- Determined
- Concerned
- Apprehensive
- Relayed
- Updated
- Recommended
- Advised
- Alerted
- Guided
- Requested
- Summarised
- Invited

16. Acronym Buster

One of the most challenging aspects of governance for those who are not experienced in the education sector is getting to grips with the numerous acronyms used within meetings and reports. This can be particularly challenging and overwhelming for new Local Governors.

We have created an Acronym Buster to explain and describe each acronym to provide context to the discussion or information reported. The acronym buster can be used to support the induction of new Local Governors and to act as a reference and refresher for established Local Governors.

Included at the end of the document is a table for Local Governors to record any local acronyms used in their individual schools.

Our acronym buster can be printed to have to hand during a meeting and when reading reports, or it can be accessed on digital devices.

Sneak peek:

Acronym	Long form	Description
School/Trust information		
AEO	Area education officer	A role provided by the LA providing education and school improvement support to school leaders.
APS	Alternative provision school	Provision of education for pupils who do not attend mainstream schools for a number of complex reasons such as exclusion, behavioural issues or refusal to attend.
BAME	Black and Minority Ethnic	The acronym BAME stands for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and is defined as all ethnic groups except White ethnic groups. It does not relate to country origin or affiliation.
C of E	Church of England	The established Anglican Church of England.

Find the full version of the Acronym Buster can be found on the Clerks' Area of the DGAT website [here](#) (password CHRONICLES).

17. Guide to Writing Confidential Minutes

The DGAT Articles of Association, Articles 124 and 125 state:

The Directors shall ensure that a copy of:

- a. The agenda for every meeting of the Directors
- b. The draft minutes of every such meeting, if they have been approved the person acting as Chairman of that meeting
- c. The signed minutes of every such meeting
- d. Any report, document or other paper considered at any such meeting

are, as soon as is reasonably practicable, made available at every Academy to persons wishing to inspect them.

There may be excluded from any item required to be made available in pursuance of Article 124, any material relating to:

- a. A named teacher or other person employed, or proposed to be employed, at any Academy
- b. A named pupil, at, or candidate for admission to, any Academy
- c. Any matter, by reason of its nature, the Directors are satisfied should remain confidential

DGAT recommend the same level of security for minutes of the meetings of LGBs.

Minutes are confidential if:

- Names of staff or children are included
- Staff pay or conditions were discussed
- A person could be easily identified from the minutes
- The subject is deemed confidential by the LGB due to its sensitivity or nature

It is good practice to refer to confidential items in the main minutes so that people are aware that there is further information on this discussion point. Confidential minutes should still include the details of who was present at the meeting and any declarations of interest made by the Local Governors in respect of the agenda. The agenda item for the confidential items recorded should match the meeting agenda e.g. if the confidential item is discussed as agenda item 4, then the agenda meeting minutes should indicate that a confidential item was discussed, and the confidential minutes marked as 'agenda item 4'.

Confidential minutes will be deemed confidential indefinitely unless there is a timescale agreed by the LGB whereby the information will no longer be considered confidential.

For electronic copies of minutes, it is important to make it obvious which minutes are confidential – you can use a watermark, state “confidential” in the file name, or colour the header.

Paper copies of confidential minutes must be approved and signed by the Chair, but these must be stored securely in a separate folder to the non-confidential minutes, to avoid them being shared or accessed inappropriately.

Confidential minutes must only be shared with those present for the confidential item/discussion and any on-line file access must be restricted to those present.

Ofsted and other agencies e.g. the regional school commissioner are permitted to request to view to confidential minutes, but they cannot be copied or taken off the school premises.

Tips:

- You may find it beneficial to have a section towards the end of each agenda where the LGB determines which items from the meeting should be recorded as confidential minutes.
- Consider printing confidential minutes on different coloured paper to standard minutes and including the 'confidential' watermark.

18. Guide to Holding Remote Meetings

Taken from the **Board of Trustees and LGB Remote Meetings Policy**:

Participating in a meeting remotely

A Trustee or Local Governor is permitted to attend a meeting by telephone or video conference if:

- They have given notice of their intention to do so at least 48 hours before the meeting commences.
- They have provided details of the telephone number or video conferencing software to the clerk at least 48 hours ahead of the meeting.
- All other Trustees and Local Governors have access to the appropriate equipment for remote participation to take place.

If appropriate equipment is not available or accessible, then the meeting may go ahead, without the participation of the remote attendee so long as the meeting is otherwise quorate.

The attendance of the remote attendee must be recorded as such in the meeting minutes and on the published meeting attendance record.

If a vote is to be held during the meeting the remote attendee is entitled to participate and vote as usual. If an open vote is held, the Trustee or Local Governor participating remotely should be asked directly what their vote. If a closed vote is held the Clerk should ensure video streaming and speakers are turned off and they should ask the Trustee or Local Governor to confirm their vote to them. The remote attendee's vote is not required to be separately recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If this is not possible then the remote attendee will be required to vote publicly or abstain.

Chair's emergency powers

In the event of an unexpected or unavoidable circumstance where it is unsafe for Trustees or Local Governors to meet face-to-face and alternative arrangements cannot be made then the Chair of the Board of Trustees or Chair of the LGB is permitted to make the decision for a remote meeting to be held.

Remote meeting proceedings

The statutory notice arrangements of seven clear days written notice of the meeting, as set out in the Trust's articles and Scheme of Delegation for LGBs, shall apply.

A written agenda and all papers relevant to the meeting shall be distributed seven clear days of the meeting as set out in the Trust's articles and Scheme of Delegation for LGBs.

The quorum for the meeting shall be as set out in The Trust's articles or Scheme of Delegation for LGBs or the relevant committee terms of reference.

A Chair shall be appointed from the membership of the meeting attendees – excluding any employed member of Trust staff.

The meeting shall be clerked in the same way as any other meeting of the Board of Trustees or LGB. If the Clerk is for any reason unavailable to clerk the meeting, Trustees or Local Governors may appoint – excluding a Trustee or Headteacher - a clerk from their membership.

Any new or existing conflict of interest pertaining to the agenda items for discussion will be declared at the start of the meeting. If a Trustee or Local Governor, due to a conflict of interest, is prevented from participating in any part of the meeting the Clerk should ensure they fully cease participation and end the telephone call or video conference access, reconnecting when the item discussion or vote has concluded.

The meeting minutes shall be drawn up and distributed as set out in the Trust's articles or Scheme of Delegation for LGBs.

The meeting minutes shall be agreed by the meeting membership and signed by the Chair of the meeting at the next meeting. If the next meeting is held remotely then the minutes may be agreed at that meeting and signed by the Chair outside of the meeting.

Data protection

The meeting shall not be recorded on any digital device or programme used by the Clerk, any Trustee or Local Governor unless:

- The intention to record the meeting is made clear to all attendees prior to the recording being made with the opportunity to express any objections.
- All attendees provide consent to the recording taking place.
- It is agreed that recording the meeting will assist with the accuracy of creating a written record of the meeting.

If attendees agree to the recording of the meeting the following must apply:

- At the meeting, before recording is commenced, the Chair will notify all attendees that recording will take place.
- Attendees who are not present at the start of the meeting will be notified upon their arrival if a recording is being made.

Within the minutes of a meeting, details of the following will be recorded:

- Any objections made regarding the meeting being recorded.
- The Chair's consideration and final decision regarding the commencement of recording.

Whether attendees other than the clerk are permitted to make recordings is at the discretion of the Board of Trustees or LGB. When this decision is being made, the purpose of the recording will be taken into account.

All actions taken by the Board of Trustees or LGB, including the creation, storage, retention and disposal of recordings will be in line with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulation and Freedom of Information Act 2000, where relevant.

Where a confidential item is on the agenda, attendees will be informed of this at the beginning of the meeting and prior to the commencement of recording.

Confidential items will only be included within a recording of a meeting if the purpose and intention of the recording is clear and justifiable.

Section 4: Local Governor Appointment and Election

19. Guidance Notes for when a New Local Governor Joins a LGB

LGBs are formed of different types of Local Governor, each with their own appointment or election process (detailed on the next pages). Generally, the following categories are applicable:

- a) Foundation Local Governors (for Church of England Schools), including an ex-officio Foundation Governor
- b) Co-opted Local Governors
- c) Trust appointed Local Governors
- d) Staff Local Governors
- e) Parent Local Governors

In addition the Headteacher will hold an ex-officio post and the LGB may appoint Associate Members. Your Scheme of Delegation sets out the constitution of the LGB in your school, including more detail on the appointment of Associate Members.

All DGAT forms and templates mentioned in this guidance can be found in the clerk's area of the DGAT website [here](#) (password CHRONICLES). If you have difficulties accessing any resources, please contact Nicki Wadley, Governance Lead, at nwadley@glosdioc.org.uk

You can find a full **Local Governor Induction Pack** on the DGAT website [here](#) which includes a **New Local Governors Induction Checklist**.

Sneak peek:

Action	Completed (Please tick)	Comments
Preparation		
Invited by the Headteacher to visit the school to meet pupils and staff		
Welcomed to the LGB by the Chair		
Received an informal briefing on the school from the Headteacher, including the current issues facing the school		
Assigned a Local Governor mentor		
Signposted to the school's website		

a) DGAT Foundation Local Governor Appointment Process

Process to follow as a result of Coronavirus lockdown highlighted in red.

In Gloucester Diocese it is the responsibility of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) to nominate suitable individuals to the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) and DGAT for consideration for appointment. Foundation Local Governors have a specific responsibility in law to secure that the academy's Christian character is preserved and developed, but in addition, along with fellow Local Governors, they need the skills to contribute to the effective governance and success of the academy.

Many academies undertake a skills audit of Local Governors to identify any potential gaps that may be needed. This can be harnessed and used to develop and open a dialogue between the academy and the PCC about the nomination of future foundation Local Governors. Two "conversations" or dialogues have been built into the nomination process

1. Dialogue between the academy and the PCC when a foundation Local Governor vacancy arises to:

- Discuss the skills /expertise needed by the academy
- Understand the type of person sought
- Discuss, if appropriate/relevant, whether the current role holder is willing/able to carry on and whether they have the skills etc. needed

2. Second dialogue between academy, PCC and the individual suggested for nomination to explore:

- The individuals' skills/expertise
- Expectations/responsibilities of the role (what they are getting themselves into)

If all three parties are happy a DGAT Foundation Local Governor Application Form is completed and submitted for consideration to appoint under this appointment/re-appointment protocol.

The Scheme of Delegation details how many foundation Local Governors the LGB has. Foundation Local Governors serve a 4- year term of office, apart from the Ex-officio Foundation Local Governor who holds the role for as long as they are the local incumbent.

The Incumbent or Local Minister is the Ex-Officio Foundation Local Governor and counts as one of the Foundation Local Governors. In cases where there is no Ex-Officio Foundation Local Governor, and the possibility of there not being one for some time, or where the Incumbent or Local Minister has more than one church school or academy within his/her jurisdiction, it is the remit of the appropriate Archdeacon to appoint a replacement, who is known as a *Substitute Local Governor*. This power is not exercised during a normal vacancy. If you would like to explore this possibility because of exceptional circumstances, please contact the Diocesan Strategic Lead for Governance for academies (Nicki Wadley nwadley@glosdioc.org.uk).

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) **nominates** Foundation Local Governors. They are **appointed** and **re-appointed** by the Diocesan Board of Education on behalf of DGAT

The Appointment Process:

1. The PCC Secretary (or the Clerk to the Local Governors) notifies the Diocesan Strategic Lead for Governance when there is a Foundation Local Governor vacancy

N.B At certain times the Diocesan Strategic Leads for Governance may send out reminder letters/e-mails to the PCC Secretary advising of Foundation Local Governors who are due to come to the end of their term of office. This is always copied to the Clerk.

2. The PCC nomination process including the “two conversations” takes place and the agreement to nominate is discussed and minuted at a PCC meeting.
As face to face meetings are currently not taking place please submit an additional e-mail to nwadley@glosdioc.org.uk to confirm

- the dates when the two conversations took place,
- the date when the PCC agreed the nomination
- whether this was done by phone/e-mail/video call or conferencing, or similar method.

The DBE Appointments Panel will not consider nominations if this information is missing

3. The nominee, whether they seek re-appointment or are new, **must** complete a DGAT Foundation Local Governor Application Form.

N.B. If this is a nomination for re-appointment please ensure the section requesting details of training undertaken is completed.

The form must also be completed on behalf of **the PCC** by way of endorsement. If this is a new nomination, please indicate the name of the Foundation Local Governor who is being replaced wherever possible. Please ensure a member of the PCC **and** the Incumbent have signed the application form.

In the current circumstances it may not be possible to have these two signatures, in which case the e-mail referred to above will suffice.

4. The completed form is returned to the Diocesan Strategic Lead for Governance.

For the moment please submit completed application forms by e-mail to nwadley@glosdioc.org.uk. DO NOT post as the Diocesan Office is currently un-manned.

5. The decision on whether or not to appoint, or re-appoint, a foundation Local Governor is made by the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) Local Governor Appointments Panel, acting on behalf of DGAT.

The DBE Appointments Panel will make decisions via e-mail.

This means that completed applications will be e-mailed to panel members. Please be reassured that in line with GDPR requirements panel members will delete the forms immediately a decision has been made.

6. DGAT will issue an appointment/re-appointment letter to the foundation Local Governor. A copy of the appointment letter will be sent to the Clerk to the LGB and the Secretary to the PCC.

Appointment letters will be issued by e-mail to the appointed foundation Local Governor, copied to the Clerk to the Local Governors and the Secretary to the PCC.

Please be aware that a Foundation Local Governor is not officially appointed until a letter of appointment has been received from DGAT, until then a potential foundation Local Governor may attend LGB meetings with the permission of the LGB as an observer.

7. Records held DGAT by are updated.

b) DGAT Co-opted Local Governor Appointment Process

Co-opted Local Governors are appointed by the LGB by a majority decision at a LGB meeting. The appointment is subsequently confirmed by DGAT via an appointment/confirmation letter.

The Scheme of Delegation details how many co-opted Local Governors the LGB must appoint. All co-opted Local Governors are appointed for a 4-year term of office.

A person who is employed at the academy cannot be appointed as a co-opted Local Governor if this results in the number of staff on the LGB exceeding one third of the total number of Local Governors (including the Headteacher/Principal)

Co-opted Local Governors who have come to the end of their term of office may be re-appointed. Their willingness to stand again needs to be ascertained before the appointment process takes place.

All DGAT forms and templates mentioned in this guidance can be found in the clerk's area of the DGAT website – if you have difficulties accessing any resources, please contact Nicki Wadley, Governance Lead, at nwadley@glosdioc.org.uk.

The Appointment Process:

- 1) The prospective Local Governor must complete the DGAT Co-opted Local Governor Application form and the DGAT LGB Declaration of Eligibility Form. This form must be completed by prospective co-opted Local Governors who would be new to the LGB and any Local Governor seeking reappointment.
- 2) The consideration and decision to appoint, or re-appoint, a co-opted Local Governor must be an agenda item of a full LGB meeting. It is good practice to have this as an early item so that later items that need a vote are not impacted by issues of the meeting not being quorate.

N.B. The individual(s) being considered for appointment or re-appointment as a co-opted Local Governor should not be present for this item.

- 3) The case for appointing, or re-appointing, an individual as a co-opted Local Governor needs to be put forward, often by the Chair, and the LGB should discuss the merits of this.
- 4) The LGB then votes whether, or not, to appoint or re-appoint. In the event of an equal division of votes the Chair has the casting vote. The LGB's decision must be minuted.

N.B. If the LGB decides not to re-appoint or appoint then the LGB will need to seek replacements and follow the same process at a subsequent meeting.

- 5) The Co-opted Local Governor's term of office will commence from the date the last term expired if a re-appointment, or the date of the meeting where the appointment was made if a new appointment.
- 6) The clerk to the LGB is responsible for issuing the appointed Local Governor with:
 - The Co-opted Local Governor Appointment Letter
 - A copy of the Local Governor Code of Conduct for signing and return
 - A copy of the DGAT Declarations of Interest form for completion and return
 - Details of future meetings
 - Details of how to set up their school email address
 - Details of access to any membership services and the Local Governor area on the DGAT website
- 7) If the LGB decide not to appoint or re-appoint the clerk should send the applicant the DGAT Unappointed Local Governor Letter.
- 8) The clerk to the LGB should forward the following documents to the Governance Lead at nwadley@glosdioc.org.uk within 14 days of the Co-opted Local Governor's appointment:
 - A copy of the Co-opted Local Governor's DGAT Co-opted Local Governor Application
 - A copy of the Co-opted Local Governor's LGB Declaration of Eligibility Form
 - A copy of the Co-opted Local Governor Appointment Letter

The clerk should retain copies for the LGB's own records and store securely in line with Data Protection requirements and GDPR.

- 9) The Chair of the LGB must ensure that the appointed Local Governor's Section 128 check and DBS check is completed within 21 days of appointment and confirm either completion or non-completion via email to the Governance Lead within 14 working days.
- 10) The Chair of Local Governors should ensure the Co-opted Local Governor commences an induction process.
- 11) The Co-opted Local Governor's term of office will commence from the date the last term expired if a re-appointment, or the date of the meeting where the appointment was made if a new appointment.

Please be aware that a co-opted Local Governor is not officially appointed until the vote concerning their appointment has taken place at an LGB meeting, until then a potential co-opted Local Governor may attend LGB meetings with the permission of the LGB as an observer.

- 12) The Governance Lead will ensure that all records held at DGAT are updated and stored securely in line with Data Protection requirements and GDPR.

c) DGAT Trust Local Governor Appointment Process

Trust appointed Local Governors are appointed directly by DGAT. The Trust Board have delegated the appointment of Trust Local Governors to the CEO and Governance Lead.

DGAT welcomes nominations from the LGB for this role.

The Scheme of Delegation details how many Trust Local Governors the LGB must have. All Trust Local Governors are appointed for a 4-year term of office.

Trust Local Governors who have come to the end of their term of office may be re-appointed. Their willingness to stand again needs to be ascertained before the appointment process takes place.

The Appointment Process

1. An individual being considered for appointment or re-appointment as a Trust Local Governor must complete the DGAT Trust Appointed Local Governor Application Form.
2. The completed form is returned to the DGAT Strategic Lead for Governance.
3. The consideration and decision whether or not to appoint, or re-appoint, a Trust Local Governor is made by CEO and Governance Lead on behalf of the DGAT Trust Board.
4. DGAT will issue an appointment/re-appointment letter to the Trust Local Governor. A copy of the appointment letter will be sent to the Clerk to the LGB.

The term of office will commence from the date the last term expired if a re-appointment, or the 1st of the month following receipt of the application form if a new appointment.

Please be aware that a Trust Local Governor is not officially appointed until a letter of appointment has been received from DGAT, until then a potential Trust Local Governor may attend LGB meetings with the permission of the LGB as an observer.

5. Records held at DGAT are updated.

d) DGAT Staff Local Governor Election Process

See also: guidance from TheSchoolBus on [Electronic Governor Elections](#)

The requirement for a staff Local Governor to be elected to a LGB is set out in the LGB's Scheme of Delegation.

Staff Local Governors are elected to the LGB by the staff employed within the Academy where they work.

All employed members of staff are eligible for nomination and will be eligible to vote in a staff Local Governor election.

If no staff member expresses an interest to join the LGB a person who is employed within another Trust School/Academy may be appointed by the DGAT.

All staff Local Governors are appointed for a four-year term of office.

Staff Local Governors who have come to the end of their term of office may stand for election again but must not be appointed without an election, which must also be open to other staff within the Academy.

If a staff member ceases to be employed by the Academy or Trust they will cease to hold office as a staff Local Governor and an election will take place to fill the vacancy.

Disqualification from holding or continuing to hold office as a Local Governor of a DGAT academy.

The DGAT articles of association, state that ‘Articles 68 to 74, Articles 77 to 79 apply to any committee of the Directors, including a LGB, who is not a Director’. Therefore, a member of staff is disqualified from holding or continuing to hold office as a Local Governor of a DGAT academy in the following circumstances (adapted from the DGAT Articles of Association).

- Unless they are aged 18 or over at the date of their appointment.
- If they become incapable by reason of illness or injury of managing or administering their own affairs.
- If they are absent without the permission of the Directors or other members of the LGB from all their meetings held in a period of six months and the Directors resolve that their office be vacated.
- If their estate has been sequestrated and the sequestration has not been discharged, annulled or reduced.
- They are subject of a bankruptcy restriction or an interim order.
- If at any time they are subject to a disqualification order or a disqualification undertaking under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 or to an order made under section 429(2) (b) of the Insolvency Act 1986 (failure to pay under county court administration order).
- If they have been removed from the office of charity Trustee or Trustee for a charity by an order made by the Charity Commission or the High Court on the grounds of any misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of the charity for which they were responsible or to which they were privy, or which they by their conduct contributed to or facilitated.
- If at any time they have been convicted of any criminal offence, excluding any that have been spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 as amended, and excluding any offence for which the maximum sentence is a fine or a lesser sentence except where a person has been convicted of any offence which falls under section 178 of the Charities Act 2011.
- If they have not provided a criminal records certificate at an enhanced disclosure level under section 113B of the Police Act 1997. In the event that the certificate discloses any information which would in the opinion of either the Chair of the Board of Trustees or CEO confirm their unsuitability to work with children that person shall be disqualified. If a dispute arises as to whether a person shall be disqualified, as referral shall be made to the Secretary of State to determine the matter. The determination of the Secretary of State shall be final.

- Where by virtue of the Trust Articles a person becomes disqualified from holding, or continuing to hold office as a staff Local Governor, and they are proposed to be a such a Local Governor or Director, they shall upon becoming disqualified give written notice of that fact to the Clerk.

The Role of the Returning Officer

The role of the returning officer can be decided by the LGB. It is usual for the role to be undertaken by the Clerk to the LGB.

The returning officer has the following duties:

- To ensure elections are conducted in line with Trust guidance.
- To make certain that votes can be made by post, by hand or by electronic means
- To arrange a secure location for nomination and ballot papers to be submitted.
- To receive nomination forms.
- To invite nominees to observe the counting of votes.
- To count nomination forms and establish if a ballot is required.
- To ensure the counting of votes is undertaken in the presence of a witness.
- To ensure any spoilt ballot papers are discounted
- To announce the results of the election to all interested parties.
- To re-count votes in the event of a tie.
- To draw lots in the event of a tie following a second count.

The Election Process:

Inform all staff eligible to vote and be nominated of the vacancy using the DGAT Notice of Staff Local Governor Vacancy Template Letter. The letter includes a template for nominations, which must be completed by any staff member wishing to self-nominate or be nominated for election.

The completed form is returned to the Returning Officer.

If more than one staff member is nominated for election, conduct an election for the appointment of the staff Local Governor.

Ensure that all employed members of staff at the Academy are given the opportunity to stand for election and vote in the election, consider how staff who may be absent from work are able to participate in the election process.

Ensure sufficient timescales are implemented to allow for a fair election and accessible process.

The Clerk to the LGB is responsible for issuing the appointed Local Governor with:

- The Staff Local Governor Appointment Letter

- A copy of the Local Governor Code of Conduct for signing and return
- A copy of the DGAT Declarations of Interest form for completion and return
- Details of future meetings
- Details of how to set up their school email address
- Details of access to any membership services and the Local Governor area on the DGAT website

The clerk to the LGB should forward the following documents to the Governance Lead at nwadley@glosdioc.org.uk within 14 days of the Staff Local Governor's appointment:

- A copy of the Staff Local Governor's nomination form
- A copy of the Staff Local Governor Appointment Letter

The clerk should retain copies for the LGB's own records and store securely in line with Data Protection requirements and GDPR.

The Governance Lead will ensure that all records held at DGAT are updated and stored securely in line with Data Protection requirements and GDPR.

The Chair of the LGB must ensure that the appointed Local Governor's Section 128 check and DBS check is completed within 21 days of appointment and confirm either completion or non-completion via email to the Governance Lead within 14 working days.

The Chair of the LGB should ensure the Staff Local Governor commences an induction process, including any required training.

The term of office will commence from the date the last term expired if a re-appointment, or the date of the nomination/election if a new appointment.

e) Parent Local Governor Elections Process

See also: guidance from TheSchoolBus on [Electronic Governor Elections](#)

The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust (DGAT) Directors have overall responsibility for academy governance in any DGAT academy and are the ultimate decision-making authority for all the work of the organisation.

The Memorandum and Articles of Association provide for the appointment of a LGB (LGB) who, under the direction of the Directors, will have certain delegated powers to run the academy on behalf of the Directors. Amongst the membership of the LGB there is provision for the appointment of elected parent Local Governors.

Qualification for Election

Parent Local Governors are elected by parents/carers of registered pupils at the Academy and must be a parent/carer of a pupil at the Academy at the time of election.

The Returning Officer will make all the necessary arrangements for the election of the parent Local Governors, including any question of whether a person is a parent of a registered pupil at the Academy. The Trust defines a parent/carer as *“the actual parents of a child and any person [i.e. an individual, but not a public or voluntary organisation] who is not an actual parent but who has parental responsibility for the child or who has care for the child”*. Thus a child may have more than two eligible parents.

Election Procedure

Returning Officer

Responsibility for the process will be with the nominated ‘Returning Officer’. The Principal will usually act as Returning Officer, a function formally delegated by the Trust.

Nominations

Where a vacancy for a parent Local Governor is required to be filled by election, the Returning Officer will take such steps as are reasonably practical to secure that every person who is known to them to be a parent/carer of a registered pupil at the Academy is informed of the vacancy and that it is required to be filled by election. In addition parents/carers will be

informed that they are entitled to stand as a candidate, and vote at the election, and will be given an opportunity to do so.

A letter must be sent by the Returning Officer to all parents notifying them that there is a parent Local Governor vacancy on the LGB. The letter should include information about the voting procedure, together with a notice of the time and date by which expression of interest forms should be returned. The letter should invite nominees to submit, using the form, a short statement, (maximum 1 side of A4) which will be circulated to parents in the event of more nominations than vacant posts being received and a ballot then required.

DGAT academies will not publish or assist with the distribution of manifestos or provide lists of voters to candidates.

Disqualification

All nominees will be asked to sign a declaration of eligibility before any election is organised.

Ballot Process

If more nominations than vacant posts are received a ballot will need to be conducted. Elections will be by a secret ballot.

A letter giving details of the voting procedure, together with a ballot paper will be distributed to each parent. (Examples attached) **Each parent/carer should have one vote for each vacancy**, irrespective of the number of children s/he has at the academy.

A ballot box will be available at the Academy reception for the purposes of collecting in returned forms. All ballot papers must be returned in an enclosed envelope which is marked ‘Parent Local Governor Elections’.

Election Period

The Returning Officer will determine the election period and this should not exceed two weeks.

All papers relating to the election (including disallowed ballot papers) should be kept securely for three months in case the election result is challenged.

Elected Unopposed

In the event of the number of parents standing for election not exceeding the number of vacancies, the nominees are elected automatically as parent Local Governors.

Count of Votes/Ballot Papers

The Returning Officer at the closing date for return of ballot papers should arrange for candidates and a member of the LGB to have the opportunity to be present at the verification and count of ballot papers. The number of ballot papers issued and returned should be recorded to monitor participation and verify the result.

The Returning Officer determines whether ballot papers are valid. Votes should be allowed where the voters' intention is clear. The election should be decided by a simple majority of votes cast. In the event of a tie the Chair of the LGB, in consultation with the Academy Directors, will determine which of the nominees' skill set will best complement the existing LGB.

All parents will be informed in writing of the outcome of the election.

Administration

The names and addresses of those elected and the date of the election will be notified to the clerk to the LGB without delay. The clerk will issue formal letters of election. The clerk will also inform the Academy Trust of the appointment by forwarding copies of the completed expression of interest form and election letter to the Strategic Lead for Governance, who in turn will issue a letter of confirmation on behalf of DGAT.

The date of appointment is either the closing date for nominations where a candidate is elected unopposed or the date of the ballot if more candidates than vacancies were received. Where the Academy is newly opened, the date of appointment will correspond to the date that the school changes status.

If No Parents Stand for Election

If vacancies for parent Local Governors still exist after an election procedure has been followed, the Trust may appoint the required number of parent Local Governors from parents of children of compulsory school age, preferably, although not necessarily, with children at the school.

20. Guidance Notes for when a Local Governor Leaves a LGB

The resignation, removal and disqualification of Local Governors is set out in your Scheme of Delegation. We have created a checklist to ensure all administrative tasks are completed when a Local Governor leaves or ends their term of office.

Sneak peek:

Action	Complete	Notes
Delete school email address		
Update email distribution lists		
Update Register of Local Governors and any related Committees		
Update Single Central Record		

Find the latest version of the Removal of Local Governor Checklist can be found on the Clerks' Area of the DGAT website [here](#) (password CHRONICLES).

21. Skills Audit

Effective governance requires an LGB with a range of skills. These skills enable Local Governors to ask the right questions, analyse data and have discussions which create robust accountability for school leaders. This skills audit from the NGA is a way of assessing the board's breadth and depth of skills, knowledge and behaviour.

The skills audit should be completed together with the accompanying skills matrix as part of an evaluation process (see guidance on [how to use the NGA skills audit and matrix](#))

This skills audit is based on the six features of effective governance that are referred to in the [DfE's competency framework](#). The audit is designed to cover a broad range of skills, knowledge and behaviour but does not attempt to replicate the 200 plus competencies listed in the framework.

No individual will have all the skills listed in the audit. The LGB is a team, and the purpose of the audit is to ensure that each skill below is covered by at least one of the Local Governors/Trustees around the table.

Sneak peek:

	I. Strategic leadership	Desirable or Essential	Overall	Gov A	Gov B
1	I am/have been a Local Governor or Trustee in another school or board member in another sector	D	-		
2	I am/have been Chair of a board or committee	D	-		
3	I have an awareness of national education policy (e.g. school funding, curriculum, teaching and learning)	E	-		
4	I have experience of the school's local community	E	-		

Find the full version of the NGA Skills Audit and Matrix on the Clerks' Area of the DGAT website [here](#) (password CHRONICLES).

Section 5: Policy Management

22. Policy Management

Effective policy management is essential in all schools and academies.

The '[Governance handbook](#)' (2020) states that the Board of Trustees is the accountable body for its academy or group of academies; this accountability extends to policy compliance and management.

The DfE dictate a variety of [statutory policies and guidance documents](#) which are to be held by the proprietors of Academy Trusts.

All DGAT Policies can be found on the DGAT website [here](#).

Accountability and Responsibility

The DGAT Board of Trustees have ultimate accountability and responsibility for policy management and compliance across the Trust, but the scrutiny, local adaptation and delivery of policies and guidance may be delegated to LGBs (LGBs), through their Scheme of Delegation. Oversight of the way in which LGBs deal with and implement the requirements of the policy lies with the Trust Board, who is responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements of each policy implemented.

Schemes of Delegation are essential in ensuring that policy management is understood and delivered at all levels across the Trust. Through these the Trust Board specifies the role and responsibilities expected from LGBs and schools; acknowledging that LGBs in conjunction with teaching staff and senior leaders, are ideally placed to ensure that accurate, meaningful and deliverable policy scrutiny takes place within their own setting.

Reviewing Policies

Individual, as well as corporate, accountability and responsibility are paramount to ensure compliance and many of the documents academies need to have in place may be inspected during an Ofsted inspection or other external monitoring and auditing activities. It is important for the Trust to have a focused approach to policy management which enables them to maintain strategic oversight of policies and their implementation.

The Trust Board will ensure:

- That all statutory policies are in place at the school or within the Trust and its academies.
- That there is a sound, practical reason for implementing any non-statutory policy and they understand the reason for implementation.
- There is a LGB led process in place for reviewing non-statutory policies.
- A process exists for ensuring LGBs are notified of any updates to policies issued by the Trust Board.

To ensure compliance the Trust Board has delegated co-ordination of a policy review schedule to the Central Office Team. They are responsible for tracking which policies are due for review and need attention, where there is new information they must understand, or when policies must be updated in line with new or existing statutory guidance. Noting that The DfE guidance states that Schools and Trusts are not always required to hold a specific policy for each requirement. It is possible to meet several requirements collectively, unless stated otherwise.

When reviewing a policy, the Trust or LGB needs to ensure the policy:

- Meets statutory requirements and includes the most up-to-date information available.
- Is fit for purpose.
- Clearly outlines responsibilities of key staff.
- Is implemented in practice.
- Confirms a review date.
- Is written in such a way that it can be understood and is accessible to its intended audience.

Communicating Policy Compliance

It is imperative that communication regarding policy compliance and management is effective, open and transparent, at all levels. This ensures that any requirement placed upon an individual or the organisation is understood, actioned and that policy compliance is achieved.

DGAT commit to ensuring that up-to-date policies and guidance are available and accessible on the Member's Area of the [DGAT website](#) and that any updates to policies will be communicated to schools via the DGAT Newsletter and Forum meetings.

Local Context and Considerations

In some cases policies or guidance require a local contextualisation to ensure local procedures are in line with the policies of other stakeholders or institutions involved.

As an example a Trust-wide Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy should be amended locally to reflect issues pertinent to local risk or concerns around geographic or demographic context, e.g. rural community and farm machinery dangers, or areas where risks of radicalisation may be an issue.

Many policies require both Trust Board and school input to ensure that compliance is achieved and maintained.

Monitoring the Implementation of Policies

In order to ensure a policy is being implemented in practice, the LGB should look to the conclusions drawn from any relevant Local Governor monitoring visits and from any reports presented to them. For example, when reviewing the SEND Policy, Local Governors should look at whether the SEND Local Governor Visit Report shows that measures are effective, or highlights areas of concern, and request amendments to the policy.

LGBs need to be able to dedicate the appropriate time to reading and reviewing policies and, as such, review dates should be taken into account when planning Local Governor meetings (if possible).

When considering and deciding review dates, the Trust Board will ensure review schedules are in line with the academic calendar, any statutory requirements and/or updated DfE guidance. Noting that statutory guidance requires a consultation to take place when some policies, such as the Admission Policy, are reviewed.

It is the LGBs responsibility to ensure that all the correct policies are uploaded onto the school website and implement a process for enabling parents to request a paper copy of the information published on the website.

Ways the Clerk can Support their LGB

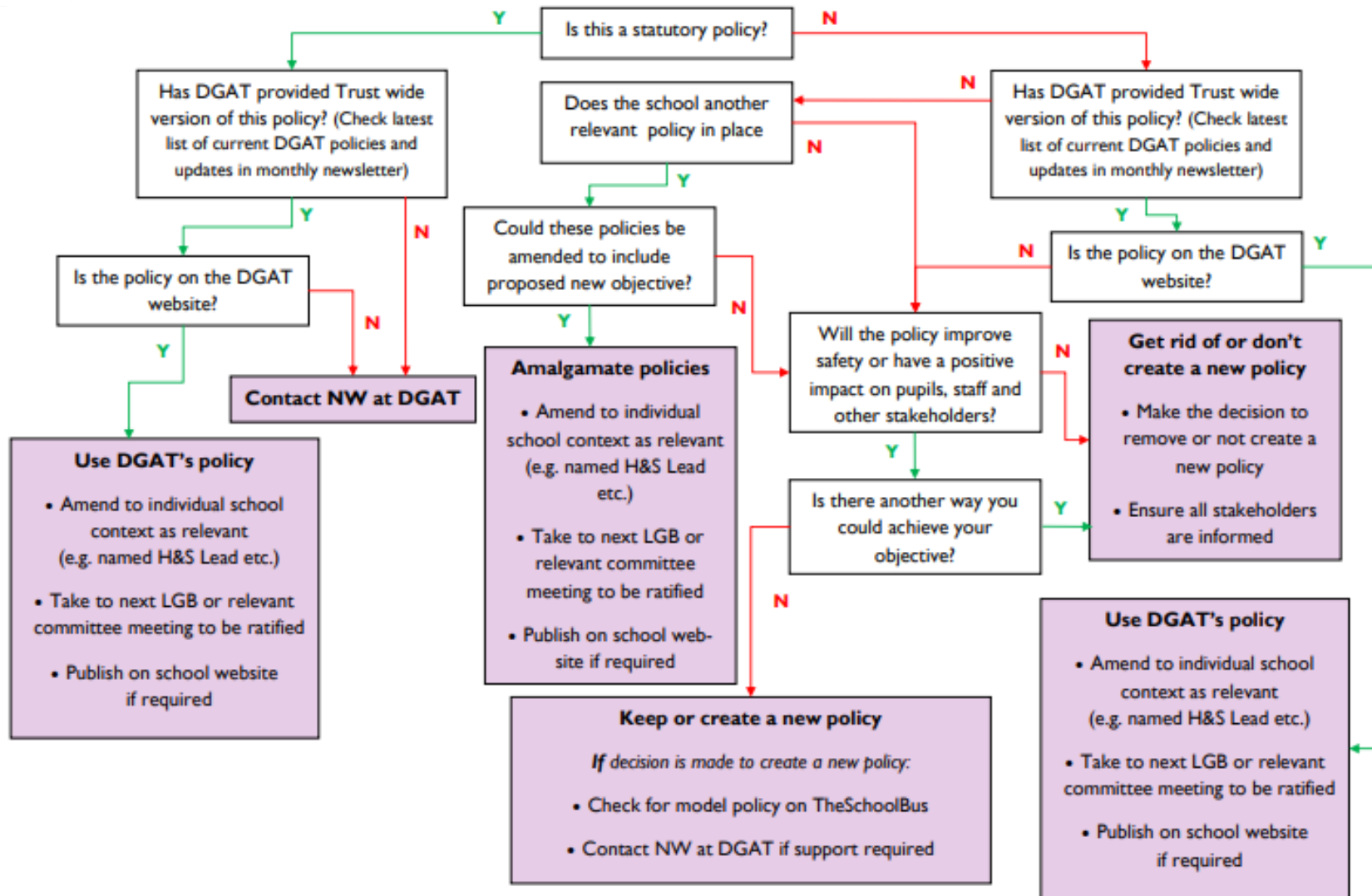
- Knowledge of what policies are required and where to find them on DGAT website
- Knowledge of and referral to the Scheme of Delegation when necessary
- Up to date with and able to communicate policy or guidance updates from DGAT to the LGB
- Remind LGB to include local context considerations
- Ensure Local Governors submit visit reports in a timely manner
- Ensure Local Governors have enough time to read and review papers before a meeting
- To work in conjunction with the SLT to ensure a robust policy summary is in place and policies are uploaded onto the school website as required

Summary

To ensure that policy compliance is maintained it is important that Trustees are clear on the policies that are required to be in place. Trustees will effectively and clearly communicate any delegated roles and responsibilities for the implementation or monitoring of policy compliance through the Scheme of Delegation.

By having robust review and communication methods in place policy compliance becomes more achievable and an environment of openness, transparency and accountability is created which ensures statutory responsibilities are achieved and that policy implementation has a positive impact within academies and for all stakeholders.

23. DGAT Policy Management Flow Chart





FAQs

COMING SOON!

Additional Guidance and Related Documents

DfE Guidance:

As well as being your one-stop-shop for all up-to-date information, guidance, forms and templates we have also included a section on [DfE guidance](#) in the Clerks' Area of the DGAT website. This includes the latest:

- [Governance Handbook 2020](#)
- [Academies Financial Handbook](#)
- [Latest guidance on statutory policies](#)
- [Clerking Competency Framework](#)
- [Competency Framework for Governance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Exclusion Guidance](#)
- [Admissions Code](#)
- [What academies must publish online](#)
- [DfE School Governance Update](#)
- [Academies list of resources](#)

TheSchoolBus:

You can also find the following documents from [TheSchoolBus](#) (if you don't have a login for TheSchoolBus please contact Nicki at nwadley@glosdioc.org.uk):

- [Key Resources for Clerk to Local Governors](#)
- [Ten Features of a Successful Clerk](#)
- [Preventing Overwhelm](#)

Also available in the Clerks' area of the DGAT website:

- [Your school's individual Scheme of Delegation](#)
- [The most recent DGAT policies](#)
- [Induction Pack for New Local Governors](#)
- [Local Governor Appointment Guidance and Forms](#)
- [Clerks' Forum and DGAT Governance Briefings Papers](#)

Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to use this handbook - as always we are so grateful for your support. We hope you found it useful and always value feedback so please do not hesitate to get in touch by either emailing me at ehully@glosdioc.org.uk or Nicki at nwadley@glosdioc.org.uk or by completing this short [feedback form](#).

This Handbook will be reviewed in line with any statutory updates, usually over the summer, and re-published (at least) every year ready for the new academic year. The latest copy will always be available on the [Clerks' Area of the DGAT website](#).

If you think of something you think would be of value to add please let us know; this is YOUR handbook and we want it to be as user friendly as possible.

Thanks again

Ellie

Company Secretary to the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust
February 2021