

## More information about a no-committee (flat) model of governance

### Steve Barker

'This no-committee model, was developed as a consequence of the comments made by Sir Michael Wishaw's (HMCI – Head of Ofsted) comments about what he saw as silo'ed governance. Department for Education (DfE) expectations, within the 2017 Governance Competency Framework, strengthen the idea of a core set of knowledge aspects shared by 'everyone' on the board. Meetings should be no longer than two hours and the agenda, driven by the work programme (see below), should facilitate this. The key to making this structure work is all about changing mindset; you can't cram every element of what committees did historically, into a two hour meeting, but what it does is provide an opportunity to reflect on what must be included, what can be delegated and what simply doesn't need talking about.

The model works very well in primary schools, but some larger secondary schools still prefer the more traditional model with a range of committees. In my experience it can work well in any school, but works best where work (i.e. the work of the Gov. Body) is planned across the whole academic year, and I am attaching a template/exemplar work planner for a board meeting six times p.a. The idea of the 'information section is that it is simply that, information, that needs little or (preferably) no discussion. If it warrants discussion, the subject matter should be a strategic agenda item. Alongside the *work planner* governors can take on individually or via small working parties tasks such as SFVS etc. and report back to the main board.'

For more information, please contact Steve Barker: [steve.barker@strictlyeducation4s.co.uk](mailto:steve.barker@strictlyeducation4s.co.uk)

### Sujal Zaveri, Governor Services Manager at Enfield Council

'With regards to the committees we have had a mixed experience. The removal of committees has been ongoing for the last 7 years and some of our schools found that detail got lost and there wasn't enough time in a GB to review financial items so they reverted back to committees. Also, if they invite middle leaders to GB instead of curriculum then the meeting can become very long. However, it does all depend on the context of the school and the GB so some smaller schools continue with the GB two/ three times a term without any committees. This does help with attendance but they need to be better prepared and workload distributed outside of the meetings. So e.g. a delegated governor will review the budget in detail with the SBM and then provide a report at the meeting.'