

Governors' good practice guide



Introduction

There have been a range of legislative changes in recent years that have been aimed at giving the governing bodies (GBs) of maintained schools greater freedom to manage their responsibilities in ways that best suit them.

Within the freedoms opened up by these changes it is important that GBs adopt procedures consistent with the core values of good governance. These are:

- having a clear understanding of the board's core functions
- engaging the community meaningfully in the governance of the school
- taking decisions openly and corporately
- making accountability real
- developing the capacity and capability of governors to be effective

In the absence of detailed regulatory requirements, GBs need to find a way to record how their particular school will manage its governance. Here we offer guidance in how a GB can go about this, and at the end of the document is a sample "standing orders / code of conduct" which can be adapted to reflect your governors' values and preferred ways of working. In defining your own procedures you will also want to take into account the responsibilities you have for ensuring that your headteacher and staff maintain a reasonable work / life balance.

1. GB membership

i) Governors

All GBs are now set up under the 2012 Constitution Regulations which offer them greater freedoms in the make up of their membership. The statutory guidance that accompanies these regulations states that 'GBs should be no bigger than they need to be to carry out their functions.' They also require GBs to select governors on the basis of the skills and experience they have which will enable them to be effective in the role.

Issues to consider

GBs need to have enough members:

- to ensure that they can effectively fulfil their three core functions
- to form panels to deal with reviewing pupil exclusions, staffing issues, etc.
- to have effective meetings
- to be able to maintain their own work / life balance
- in post who are willing and able to be chair and vice chair

If a smaller board is adopted there may be a need to look at different ways of working e.g. fewer or no committees, greater use of delegated powers to individual governors, etc.

Succession planning will also need to be rigorous to ensure posts are filled as soon as they become vacant so that there are not periods where there are too few governors in post for the GB to function effectively.

There is a risk in setting very specific skills and experience criteria for those GBs are seeking to appoint as new governors as it may restrict the number of people willing to put them self forward.

A Hampshire view of good practice

Governance is a complex business and having people with the skills to do it effectively is important. However, there needs to be the opportunity for those who have the capacity to develop the specific skills a GB requires, through training and support, to be able to become governors. This needs to be made clear in any recruitment materials to avoid good candidates being put off because they feel they do not have the exact skills required to fill the post.

The statutory guidance requires GBs to undertake interviews, or detailed discussions, with potential new governors. This will therefore give governors the opportunity to assess a candidate's commitment to their own personal development and their capacity to meet the GB's needs with the right training and guidance.

ii) Associate Members

Associate members are individuals who are not governors but are appointed to a committee. Their voting rights in committee are determined by the GB and they cannot vote unless they are aged over eighteen. They are entitled to attend full GB meetings but, as they are not governors, they do not have a right to vote at these meetings. They are entitled to claim allowances in the same way governors can.

The GB may decide whether or not to exclude associate members from a meeting when individual members of staff or pupils are under discussion.

Issues to consider

GBs should:

- evaluate the benefits, or drawbacks, of having non-governors attending GB meetings on a regular basis
- decide under what circumstances they would wish to exclude associate members from discussions
- decide whether or not their main function is to give professional advice, if it is, associate member status may not be appropriate
- consider the merits of appointing young people as associate members, this adds to the range of ways of giving pupils a voice in the issues that concern them and meets the expectation that young people will be consulted about decisions that affect them
- assess if this would be an effective way of developing future governors
- decide on the process they will use when making appointments to ensure that it is open, fair and compliant with equal opportunities

A Hampshire view of good practice

We recommend that GBs should only appoint associate members where they are sure that having a regular input from them at committee level would contribute to the effective governance and success of the school.

If GB appoints young people as associate members it will need to ensure that their contribution is openly valued and managed in a way that does not place unrealistic expectations on them.

Limiting the number of initial appointments and reviewing the effectiveness of their contribution after a year is advisable.

2. Terms of Office

The GB may decide to set the terms of office for individual categories of governor and an individual governor to between 1 to 4 years. If a GB chooses to do this the terms of office must be set out in its Instrument of Government. An individual governor cannot have a term of office that is longer than term set for the category of governor post they occupy.

Issues to consider

Do the proposed terms of office:

- provide new comers with sufficient time to gain experience in the role
- treat all governors equally
- minimise bureaucracy
- help with the recruitment and retention of governors

A Hampshire view of good practice

In the vast majority of GBs four year terms of office for all governors has worked well and we would see no need to vary this, because:

- it allows adequate time to learn the job and make a valuable contribution
- it treats all governors equally
- all governors have the right to resign so they are not bound to serve a full term
- variations in terms of office create more paperwork and require additional monitoring to make sure ends of term office are picked up so that appointments and elections are undertaken in a timely way to avoid any unnecessary gaps in membership

3. Chair and Vice Chair

The GB must decide:

- how elections for chairs and vice-chairs will be managed
- the date on which the term of office of the chair and vice-chair will end

These matters need to be decided in advance of the elections so that everyone is clear about the process and candidates know the expected term of office.

The Procedures Regulations guidance also puts forward the options of:

- a GB recruiting someone from outside its current membership to be chair or vice chair, if there is no one on the board with the skills to undertake these roles
- having more than one chair or vice chair to share the workload

Anyone who is employed at the school may not be chair or vice chair.

Issues to consider

The election procedure should be:

- straight forward, to avoid creating unnecessary work and to encourage people to stand
- secure so that governors' choices aren't affected by fear of colleagues' reactions
- open and transparent in the way they are conducted

Terms of office should be:

- long enough for the holder to be as effective as possible in the job and provide continuity in the working relationship with the headteacher and clerk
- short enough not to discourage people from taking it on, or burden the GB with an uninspired choice for too long
- regarded as an initial commitment which can be extended if the GB and the individual agree that it is desirable
- consistent with a need to share workloads and build experience within the team

Recruiting externally

- It would be very challenging for anyone to join a GB and immediately become one of its officers. To be an effective chair you need to know the school, the governors, the headteacher and have a clear understanding of school governance.
- There has to be a governor vacancy into which they can be appointed to enable them to take up the role of chair or vice chair.

More than one chair / vice chair

- GBs should be certain that sharing the role of chair and / or vice chair is in the best interests of the school and that it will not lead to a loss of clarity in leadership at a governance level.
- They would need to have in place agreed procedures that set out how the shared post would work in practice.

A Hampshire view of good practice

Elections are best managed if they allow:

- self nomination in advance of the meeting, with names circulated on the agenda so that all governors have time to think about the suitability of the candidate(s)
- self nomination at the meeting if no one has put their name forward on the agenda
- an opportunity for candidates to address the meeting if they wish
- a secret ballot when an election is contested
- an opportunity for open discussion where there is only one nomination to ensure the candidate does have the backing of the GB - if they do not then it follows that someone must then be willing to stand as there must be a chair in post

A one year term of office has worked well in Hampshire because:

- it gives the GB a regular opportunity to reflect on how well its leadership arrangements are working
- a good chair or vice chair will benefit from a regular expression of confidence from their GB
- it is emotionally painful to remove a weak chair or vice chair; appointing an alternative candidate is much easier

Recruiting externally

- GBs should ensure they focus on succession planning and using the vice chair post as a stepping stone to the chair's role to avoid needing to look outside of their current membership to recruit their officers.
- An effective GB should normally be able to find its officers from within its own ranks.

We run internal training to support new chairs and to provide for their on-going development once in post and the NCTL Development Programme for Chairs and Aspiring Chairs.

More than one chair / vice chair

- If GBs are convinced that having more than one chair and / or vice chair is in the best interests of the school they will need to have clear procedures in place detailing how the arrangement is going to work to ensure that there is clarity with regard to its leadership. For example, they will need to consider the following matters:
 - If it is a job share, will both chairs need to agree if emergency action is required to address an unexpected issue?
 - Will one have seniority – if this is the set up, how will this differ from have a chair and vice chair, and what will be the role of the vice chair(s) in this arrangement?
 - If only one is available will they have authority to act on behalf of both of them?
 - What will happen if there is a need for the chair to use their casting vote?
- We believe that in some situations this sort of arrangement could become divisive, leading to a lack of clarity over who is leading the GB. In our view it would be better to ensure that the vice chair has a real role in the leadership of the GB, with the post being seen as a gateway to being the next chair.
- If there is a need to increase the leadership capacity of the board having a second vice chair would seem the preferable option. The GB could decide on who would step up in the absence of the chair and if they are not available then the second post holder could take on the role. This would also help with succession planning as there should always be an experienced person in one of the two vice chair posts ready to become chair.

4. Clerks

The GB must:

- appoint a clerk with a view to ensuring that it works efficiently and must have regard to advice from their clerk as to the nature of its functions
- appoint a clerk to support its committees
- have a clear description of the work the clerk is expected to undertake

The clerk for full GB meetings may not be a governor, headteacher or associate member. For committees a governor or associate member can clerk the meetings.

Issues to consider

In deciding their clerking arrangements, governors will want to consider:

- the benefits of having someone trained to help organise their workload, proactively support their chair and provide them with guidance
- the value of having meetings minuted by someone who is qualified for the role and will ensure that the work undertaken by the GB and its committees is accurately reflected in its paperwork
- the cost of having meetings professionally clerked, including committee work

In discussing the GB's clerking requirements, governors will need to:

- be careful where their clerk is also a member of school staff and ensure that the two roles are clearly defined, with the clerk's role solely accountable to the GB
- consider the advantages and costs of having an independent employee as clerk who is trained and experienced in the role - we run a LA Clerking Service that can meet this need

A Hampshire view of good practice

Effective clerking relies on the clerk having a clear understanding of the job and the opportunity to acquire the relevant skills and knowledge to develop their capacity to undertake the role. The responsibilities of clerks have been strengthened in recent legislation with the expectation that they will be proactive in helping their GB to work efficiently and to fulfil its core functions. This would include alerting the chair or GB to any issues that they felt needed to be addressed e.g. school improvement matters not appearing on agendas of either GB or committee meetings on a regular basis, statutory policies not being reviewed, etc.

For clerks employed by the school we recommend that GBs:

- have a separate job description for the clerking role
- pay their clerks to attend training and support them in undertaking the Clerks' Accreditation programme, where the individual wishes to pursue this
- provide an annual opportunity to review the clerk's performance and to discuss their on-going development needs

For Governors' Discipline Committee meetings and panel meetings (staff dismissal, staff grievance), to avoid any perceptions of partiality, it is always better if the clerk is someone who is independent from the school. The LA Clerking Service can also supply clerks to undertake this role as part of its sold services.

5. Meetings

The GB must decide how often it will meet.

Issues to consider

The number of meetings held needs to:

- be sufficient to allow work to be completed without them being over long
- take account of the work / life balance of the headteacher, staff and governors
- be a minimum of three per school year to meet statutory requirements

GBs will also need to consider if they are prepared to allow governors to attend meetings by virtual means.

A Hampshire view of good practice

Most GBs in Hampshire meet twice per term and we feel this is an appropriate timetable for most boards. Occasionally additional meetings may be required in special

circumstances e.g. headship recruitment, reviewing and following up on an Ofsted Inspection.

It is good practice to:

- set up an annual calendar of meetings for both full GB and committee meetings so that everyone is clear when they are going to be needed
- set a maximum time for meetings, allowing for the fact it is difficult to sustain concentration much over 2 hours for most people, especially after a day at work
- ensure that the total number of meetings needed in a year is considered in the light of experience rather than rolling forward the timetable from one year to the next
- carefully timetable the work of both the GB and its committees to ensure meetings happen at times that allow governors to fulfil their core functions i.e. to enable budgets deadlines to be met, to review current data as soon as it is available so that if issues are identified the board can address them in a timely manner, etc.

Virtual attendance at meetings

Current regulations mean that GBs can opt to allow their governors to attend their meetings by virtual means. They do not have to go down this route but if they do it would need to be agreed at a full GB meeting, along with the processes that would need to be put in place to support it. There are a number of issues to be considered in making this decision and these are explored in more detail in a separate Governor Services document, 'Virtual Governance guidance'. This can be accessed via our Website in the GB practice area (under G in the A - Z index).

6. Quorums

The quorum requirement for a full GB meeting is 50% of those governors in post, for committees it is three governors unless the board set a higher figure.

Issues to consider

- Theoretically very important decisions could be taken at full GB meetings by less than three people if vacancies are high. Therefore, governors need to consider if they feel there is a minimum number of attendees required at a full GB meeting to maintain community confidence in the corporate and democratic nature of governance.
- If a committee has associate members as part of its membership and the quorum set is greater than three governors, do the board want the associate members to count as part of the quorum.

A Hampshire view of good practice

Regulations require a minimum of three governors to be present to conduct business in a committee. It would therefore seem logical that full GB meetings should have a minimum quorum requirement of at least three governors as part of their standing orders. We have actually gone for four in the sample standing orders but each GB will need to decide whether or not to set this limit and if they do, at what level.

We would not normally advocate setting the quorum for a committee above three governors as doing so presents a potential barrier to getting work completed, as it increases the likelihood that meetings will not achieve a quorum.

If you do have committees with a quorum above three governors and they have associate members with voting rights on them, then it would seem sensible to include them as counting towards the overall quorum, i.e. quorum of four committee members - three would still have to be governors to meet the statutory requirement but the fourth could be an associate member.

7. Suspension of Governors

The GB can suspend governors from meetings for up to 6 months on four possible grounds:

- a) the governor is paid to work at the school and is the subject of disciplinary proceedings in relation to his employment; or
- b) the governor is the subject of any court or tribunal proceedings, the outcome of which may be that he is disqualified from continuing to hold office as a governor under schedule 4 of the 2012 Constitution Regulations; or
- c) the governor has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the school's ethos or with the religious character and has brought or is likely to bring the school or the GB or his office of governor into disrepute; or
- d) the governor is in breach of his duty of confidentiality to the school or to the staff or to the pupils.

Issues to consider

The GB should decide on its approach to the use of suspension before any particular case emerges. In Aided or Voluntary Controlled Schools GBs might seek advice from their Diocesan Board about examples of behaviours which might be inconsistent with the school's religious character. Suspension may only be considered on the grounds listed above and such action should always be regarded as a last resort.

A Hampshire view of good practice

Suspension should not be seen as a way for a GB to restrict debate, dissent or the expression of minority views. Open and honest exploration of issues and agreeing the ground rules for the conduct of governors is a more constructive approach which should avoid the need to consider suspension. The challenge provided by dissenting voices often improves the quality of decision making.

8. Delegation

The GB must decide which decisions should be taken by the whole GB, by its committees or by individuals.

Issues to consider

In deciding what to delegate the GB should think about:

- the most efficient and effective ways of getting its business completed

- how many committees it really needs and what work could be done by working parties or delegated to individual governors
- the demands being made on its headteacher and other senior managers
- what type of decisions are likely to be controversial/sensitive in the local community and should therefore rest with the whole GB (e.g. Sex Education)
- what decisions need to only involve a limited group of governors in order to allow for an appeal to another group (e.g. pay, headteacher's performance review) - these tend to be covered by statutory guidance given in documents other than the procedural regulations so care is needed
- which decisions are part of strategic planning (e.g. the budget plan) and therefore warrant consideration by all its members, and which are part of implementing plans (e.g. deciding which quote to accept for work contained in the plan) that could be dealt with at committee level

A Hampshire view of good practice

We would recommend that GBs work with fewer committees and many are currently managing with two, one to deal with educational standards and the other to oversee resources (finance, HR and buildings). We would regard it as good practice for the whole GB to approve, at least:

- the alteration, discontinuance or change of category of a school;
- the first formal budget plan of the year
- the general principles of strategic policies such as pupil discipline and equality of opportunity
- the school improvement plan

The latest Procedures guidance sets out an expectation that 'Any important decisions relating to the core functions should be made by the full board.' This is on the basis that every governor should have a knowledge and understanding of how their school is performing in the key areas covered by their core functions.

We would expect the following to be delegated to committees:

- reviewing pupil exclusions
- admissions (in aided and foundation schools)
- pay decisions for staff
- matters concerning individual members of staff where these are not delegated to the headteacher
- the implementation of employment procedures where the Manual of Personnel Practice advises this approach
- processes for the appointment of staff on the leadership spine

Again this is not a definitive list and each GB will need to decide the functions it feels should be delegated and ensure a record is kept of these decisions, for committees they should be shown in their terms of reference.

9. Communication with stakeholders

All schools will need to show evidence that they have on-going links and communication with their pupils, parents/carers and local community as Ofsted inspections examine how they fulfil this role.

Issues to consider

- How will the GB discharge its responsibility to be accountable to parents/carers and its local community at an appropriate strategic level?
- How will the GB ensure that the school gathers the views of parents/carers, pupils and staff and that it acts upon the information it receives?
- How might a school supplement information for parents/carers that it has to publish on its website to meet the requirements of The School Information Regulations 2012 to be as open and transparent as possible?
- Has the school got a written complaints policy and does the GB monitor that it works effectively?
- How will the GB respond to entries from parents/carers on Parent View (Ofsted's online survey available for parents/carers)?

A Hampshire view of good practice

GBs need to ensure their school has effective ways of engaging with pupils, parents/carers and their local community if they are to demonstrate they are accountable for the work they do.

This should include:

- the school undertaking parent surveys and collating any entries made on Parent View, and governors reviewing the outcomes
- governors attending 'New Intake' evenings and open evenings
- having a governor attend Pupil Council and/or Parent Council meetings
- the GB reviewing annual pupil satisfaction survey outcomes
- the GB monitoring trends in complaints, grievances and staff absence
- making sure GB minutes are freely available for all to view on its website, excepting any that it has decided are confidential
- the GB publishing a short report detailing the work it has undertaken and the impact this has had on helping the school move forward

Sample Standing Orders / Code of Conduct

1. Membership

- The GB will ensure it has sufficient governors to undertake its duties effectively and to maintain the quorum for a full GB meeting of not less than 4.
- All governors will be appointed for a 4 year term of office.
- The GB will ensure that it creates an environment which enables it to recruit and retain effective governors and which encourages the participation of all groups and sections of the community.
- The GB will be proactive in recruiting governors whose appointment is its responsibility.
- The GB will seek to recruit people with the relevant skills and experience needed to deliver good governance.
- The GB will publish on the school's website all of the information relating to its structure and membership as required by the Constitution Regulations Guidance, August 2015, section 25.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/459032/The_Constitution_of_Governing_Bodies_of_Maintained_Schools_Stat_Guidance...pdf

2. Election of chair and vice-chair

Any changes to the GB's arrangements for elections in these standing orders will be made in advance of any election.

- The chair and vice chair will be elected for one year and their term of office will end on the day of the first full GB meeting following the anniversary of their appointment.
- Candidates should self-nominate and do so in time to have their name included on the agenda for the meeting at which the election of officers will take place. Self-nomination at the meeting will only be accepted if no one has put them self forward on the agenda.
- If they wish to, candidates will be able to make a personal statement to the meeting before the vote.
- Where an election is contested voting will be by secret ballot.

3. Appointment of the clerk to the GB

- The clerk will have a contract of employment that includes specific provisions in relation to their work as clerk. This will show their hours, rate of pay, method of payment, overtime pay and period of notice.

- The GB will arrange for the clerk to discuss their role with the chair of governors on an annual basis.
- The GB will support the clerk in their continuing professional development, by enabling them to participate in the Clerks' Accreditation programme, the Clerks' Development Programme, Clerks' Support meetings and inviting them to attend their whole GB training sessions.

4. Meetings

- An annual calendar of dates for main and committee meetings will be set and published.
- The GB will plan its business across the year to take account of the school's internal management cycle and the availability of information and reports that are needed for it to effectively hold senior leaders to account.
- The GB will hold the minimum number of meetings necessary to ensure the strategic business of the school is properly addressed.
- Meetings will focus the work of the GB on its three core functions and meeting its statutory responsibilities. They will demonstrate that the GB is monitoring progress, evaluating outcomes across the school and that it is ensuring that the school improvement plan is being successfully implemented.
- Governors will receive relevant information sufficiently in advance of meetings for them to be able to review it, leading to informed discussions and sound decision making.
- Governors will read all relevant information forwarded to them so that they can effectively contribute during the meeting by providing support, and appropriate challenge through the questions they ask.
- The submission of apologies should not be taken as the GB giving consent to the absence with regard to the disqualification regulations for non-attendance, each case will be considered on its own merits.
 - Consent for absence may be granted by the GB on request from governors who know they will be unable to attend meetings for an extended period.
 - Where a governor's pattern of attendance is causing concern they will be alerted to this by the clerk or chair.
- The GB will aim to complete full GB and committee meetings within two hours.
- Any additions to the agenda (any other business) will only be dealt with if agreed by governors at the beginning of the meeting.

5. GB organisation

a) Committee structure

- The GB will operate a two committee structure
 - Standards – attainment, progress, behaviour, SEND, etc.
 - Resources – finance, staffing, buildings, etc.
- Subject to regulations, the GB will set up staff dismissal and appeal, pupil discipline and (in voluntary aided and foundation schools) admissions committees.
- The GB is required, on an annual basis to:
 - review the constitution and membership of its committees
 - review the terms of reference of its committees – this task will be undertaken by the committees at their first meeting of the academic year and brought to the GB for agreement
 - set the quorum for its committees
- Terms of reference must show the date of the meeting at which they were agreed and be signed by the chair
- Committees will elect their own chair annually, who will not be a member of staff or an associate member.
- Committees will be clerked by a trained individual who is not a member of the committee.
- The overall effectiveness of the committee structure and the way it works to support the core functions of the GB will be reviewed annually.

b) Delegation

- In addition to responsibilities retained at GB level by regulations, the GB will not delegate:
 - approval of the school improvement plan
 - approval of the first annual budget in each financial year
 - approval of key policies – these policies will be identified in the GB policy review planner

c) General

- The GB will ensure that there are opportunities for parents to engage with governors so that their views can be considered by governors.

6. School Improvement

The GB:

- will focus on gaining a shared understanding of the key strengths and weaknesses of the school

- will be actively engage with school self-evaluation
- will continuously self-evaluate its own performance
- will be involved in setting the agenda for school improvement and contribute to setting the strategic direction for the school
- will use a variety of internal and external information / data to hold the school to account and, where required, take appropriate action to drive up standards
- will require written information from the headteacher covering:
 - pupil achievement and progress
 - an analysis of the school's performance data, including vulnerable groups, with details on how pupil premium has been used and the impact it has had
 - progress regarding the implementation of the school improvement plan
 - budget monitoring and forward financial planning
 - the effectiveness of performance management in the school
 - how it impacts on the quality of teaching and standards
 - the link between pupil outcomes and pay progression
 - strategic staffing issues
 - behaviour and exclusions
 - attendance data
- require the headteacher to provide a written report for each of its meetings
- will receive and make use of external reports from the Local Authority, where appropriate (except those naming individual staff)
- will receive and make use of external inspection reports from Diocesan advisers and Section 23 inspections
- understand the requirements of the Ofsted Leadership and Management criteria, especially those relating to governance (refer to the Ofsted section in the A –Z index in our Website)
- will ensure that the school has in place all relevant statutory policies and meets all other statutory requirements - for further information on these matters see the 'Policies and other statutory requirements HCC guidance' on the Governor Services website (under 'P' in the A- Z index)

7. Governor relationships

The GB and headteacher will respect each other's roles and maintain a professional and open relationship, acknowledging the skills and contributions of all.

The GB:

- will use staff and governor time appropriately, sensitively and effectively

- will have regard to the need for the headteacher and staff to maintain a reasonable work / life balance in the way it conducts its business
- will have regard to equality of opportunity for both current and future governors in planning the frequency and times of meetings
- believes conflict is best resolved openly through discussion, corporate decision-making and acceptance of the majority view
- will be welcoming to new governors and ensure they receive appropriate induction and training

All governors will:

- share the workload and take on additional responsibilities as and when required to ensure the GB fulfils its core functions
- undertake a focused school visit at least twice a year
- undertake training relevant to their role
- contribute to discussions, and support the corporate decision-making process, maintaining appropriate levels of confidentiality and discretion
- always act in the best interests of the pupils of the school
- conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the ethos or the religious character of the school
- uphold 'The Seven Principles of Public Life'
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life>
- be mindful of internet security if e-mailing sensitive information and consider if it is appropriate to use a work e-mail address for governor business
- will only act within the delegated powers granted to them by the GB
- be respectful of the view of others and help to foster open and honest debate
- refer anyone with issues or concerns about the school to its Complaints Policy
- provide relevant business and pecuniary interests (as recorded in the register of interests) including, governance roles in other educational institutions, any material interests arising from relationships between governors or relationships between governors and school staff (including spouses, partners and close relatives)

8. Governor conduct

Any conduct issues resulting from governors being in breach of school governance regulations or this code will be investigated in the first instance by chair, or the vice chair where the matter relates to the chair. All possible efforts will be made to resolve issues at this level and the suspension of a governor will be only be considered as a last resort, in accordance with the relevant regulations.