



EBOR ACADEMY TRUST



Role of a Local Governing Body within the Ebor Academy Trust

A guide for school governors

Excellence | Belonging | Opportunity | Respect

March 2017

This guidance provides an overview of governance and the differences you can expect should your school decide to academise and join us in the Ebor Academy Trust.

Within any multi academy trust (MAT) there are additional layers of responsibility and an early priority for school governors should be to read the Schemes of Delegation of each MAT you may be interested in. These outline the limits of what would be your new responsibilities and will help guide you towards the MAT that is the best fit for your school. Ebor's Scheme of Delegation is at www.ebor.academy, under 'downloads'.

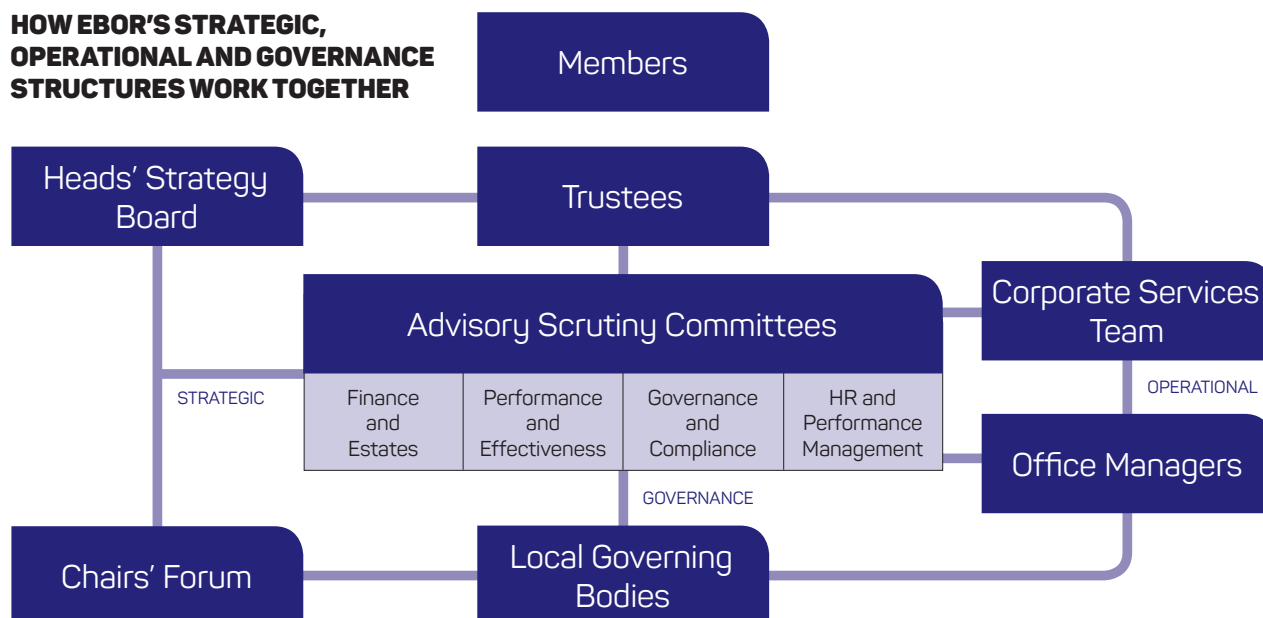
With Ebor, your role **changes** rather than **diminishes**. As a committee of the main Trust board, there is a need for governors within the Local Governing Body (LGB) to continue to be experts on their own school inside a structure that serves all of its schools fairly and without favour.

There are opportunities to develop as governors and participate in the sharing of good practice across a growing group with a clear sense of purpose.

As an inclusive Trust we embrace the diversity within the communities we serve. We consist of small village schools, large urban schools, Church schools, schools in challenging circumstances and those which have capacity to share and support others.

We celebrate the uniqueness of each individual setting and share skills and resources, where appropriate, across our group. The Ebor Academy Trust is a family of schools who have a sense of responsibility for each other, building caring, strong professional relationships.

HOW EBOR'S STRATEGIC, OPERATIONAL AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES WORK TOGETHER



Every MAT has three layers of governance:

Members ensure the charitable company achieves its objectives, signs off the financial accounts and annual report and appoints Trustees.

Trustees have delegated responsibility for the three core functions of strategic direction, holding headteachers to account and overseeing the financial performance of the academies.

The school's **Local Governing Body (LGB)** is a committee of the Trust board. Governors are not Trustees or Members. Responsibility is delegated to LGBs but the Trust board is ultimately accountable as the legal entity. All duties of the LGB are detailed within the Scheme of Delegation. School governors work closely with the headteacher to maintain the individual character of their school.

The roles of members, trustees and the LGB are clearly defined in the Scheme of Delegation and

all are obliged to comply with this scheme at all times.

All school governors are subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (formerly CRB check). There are statutory training courses (ie. Prevent) that all governors must complete.

The Trust board is ultimately accountable and responsible for the performance of schools in the Trust and can agree to delegate as much or as little power to the LGB at any school.

Should you join Ebor, you may need to reconstitute. We prefer to have LGBs comprising eight governors: two staff, two parents and four from the local community.

In the case of a Church school, as well as two staff and two parents, there will be two community governors and two foundation governors who are appointed to support and develop the Christian ethos of the school.

Our LGBs

Ebor LGBs are required to hold six meetings per year, in line with our leadership cycle and with standing items on the agenda. The Clerk will prepare and distribute any relevant information prior to meetings.

Reports will be supplied from the Trust scrutiny committees for information. LGBs can add their own items and while there is not a need for sub-committees, LGBs can form them if they wish, with their own terms of reference, and can co-opt participants who are not governors but who can add value to the group's deliberations. Any minutes of sub-committees are circulated to all governors entitled to attend LGB meetings. Only LGB meeting minutes are considered and put on record by the Trust board.

At LGB meetings it is important that information flows in both directions between LGBs, scrutiny committees and the Trust board so that correct documentation is available at the relevant meetings.

LGB panels are put together as required for complaints, discipline and grievance, pupil discipline and exclusions, and admission appeals.

The Trust board delegate to the LGB the responsibility for supporting the school and its leadership team in improving:

- Effectiveness of leadership and management
- Quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare; and
- Outcomes for children and learners.

The LGB establish and set the school's curriculum; develops its School Development Plan (and Ofsted improvement plan, if appropriate); and ensures

high quality teaching and learning is taking place and is continually improved.

The LGB works closely with the headteacher to appoint teaching and support staff. The LGB will appoint a governor (usually the Chair) to contribute to the performance management of the headteacher. The appointment of the headteacher is conducted by the Trust with input from the LGB.

The LGB will ensure all teachers have an annual appraisal of their performance. Governors will contribute to the research and preparation of the school's annual self-evaluation, including analysis of performance data provided by the Trust board's Performance and Effectiveness scrutiny committee.

Trust-wide policies are prepared and approved by the Trust board and the LGB is sent these for review, approval and adoption.

What happens between LGB meetings?

- LGBs need to know their school, so governors with specific roles are still important. Visits into school will continue as well-informed governors make the best critical friends.
- Chairs of governors, or their representatives, are required to attend regular Ebor chairs' meetings to share good practice and participate in shaping the Trust's future.
- Similarly, headteachers or their representatives, are required to attend half-termly heads of school meetings
- The School Development Plan will need to be continually monitored and liaison with the headteacher maintained regularly to keep abreast of day to day activities.

Scrutiny committees

Ebor Academy Trust operates four scrutiny committees that report to the Trust board and to LGBs. They are:

- Finance and Estates
- Performance and Effectiveness
- Governance and Compliance
- HR and Performance Management

Roles and responsibilities of these committees are detailed in the Scheme of Delegation. Much of the work of the Trust takes place within these committees.

Questions

This document has been compiled by Maureen Benson, a former headteacher and a school governor for over 20 years. Maureen's role with the Ebor Academy Trust is to maintain the highest standards of governance within an ever-changing education landscape.

You can contact Maureen with any questions by email via m.benson@ebor.academy

School governors in a MAT environment should remember that an Ebor LGB has a vital, strategic role to play in ensuring the best interests of the school and its local community are met. Ebor never forgets that LGBs are an integral part in each school's success.