



MEETING MINUTES

Meeting: BASG AGM
Date & Time: 26th March 2018
Location: Learning Campus, Aston Clinton
Present: Exec Committee: Anne Sheddick, Simon Kearey*, Jennifer Crummack, Stuart Smith, Jo Pearce
 Members: Micheal Phipps, Bernadette Allison, Arif Hussain, Arfan Chaudhry, Sue Huntley, Emily Tomson, Sonia Brock, Rob Hare

Item		Action:
<p>1. Welcome & Apologies</p>	<p>The Chairman (Stuart Smith), welcomed everyone to the meeting, and invited attendees to participate in the meetings activities. Apologies had been received from Nicola Cook (BLT – Head of Governor Services), and Exec Committee members Sue Jordan and Maggi Bull.</p> <p>*note : Simon Kearey arrived during item 4</p> <p>AOB item: GDPR</p>	
<p>2. Minutes of the AGM held on 8th November 2016 & matters arising</p>	<p>The minutes were accepted as a true record.</p>	
<p>3. Matters arising from Minutes of AGM held on 8th November 2016</p>	<p>There were no matters arising from the minutes.</p>	
<p>4. Proposal for new constitution</p>	<p>SS as current chair, explained that BASG found itself in difficult times as are all local associations. SS stated that 1/3 of all local associations had disappeared. The developing educational landscape was having an effect on that. As well as finding that associations were finding it difficult to take on young committee members and difficult to be sustainable financially.</p> <p>BASG finding it difficult to find resources and its raison d’etre as well as sustainability.</p> <p>SS explained that in the past members meetings had speakers but were poorly attended and the BASG needed to agree on its proper function. SS suggested it was to act as an independent voice for school governors in Bucks, a channel of expression of wish.</p> <p>However, SS stated how do we know what the voice is? A discussion was had around this point, all agreeing that an independent voice was the right thing for BASG to be but suggestions of how to collate opinion and member’s fees</p>	

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	<p>were so far impractical. E.g. Survey Monkey and old paper methods of collecting membership fees were not feasible. SS confirmed that the BASG had moved to a new website and wanted to move to an electronic way of working.</p> <p>Questions arose from members around the communication point. These included: <i>Is it more about the way survey monkey is written and structured? Should CofG have more involvement? Or communicate with one nominated individual on a governing board?</i></p> <p>In response to these questions, SS responded stating that if it was a set piece issue, then survey monkey could work, but if the issue was more complex e.g. proposals for governor services, then the set ups like survey monkey become harder to use.</p> <p>SS stated that in the past, BASG attempted to communicate via CofG but it meant maintaining a database of CofG contact details which was difficult and was not successful as well as that method now having potential issues with GDPR.</p> <p>Another question from members was, <i>what is the BASG's USP? What had the BASG achieved in the last 12 months?</i> SS confirmed that the BASG had acted as an independent voice for example, in discussions with the Director of Education putting forward a governor position, setting up the website where there is now a framework for governors to see all the different boards a that governors have a presence on.</p> <p><i>When asked how this was put across as a marketing tool</i>, SS replied with difficulty. One member suggested an e-shot, but discussions around restrictions relating to a database of governors, no means of emailing unless special agreement and arrangements with the BLT to use their facility. However SS pointed out that this has caused issues with additional workload for BLT due to glitches and miscommunication issues between BASG, governors and BLT and could not be used on a regular basis.</p> <p>This lead to questions being asked about the BLT, the LA and the governor database. Questions related to who would maintain it given the changes to BLT structure and returning statutory duties to the BCC. It was agreed that the answer was unknown and that practical methods in communicating directly to a CofG or a governing board is a difficulty.</p> <p>SS then steered the meeting to discuss another key point of change within the constitution, that of the proposed membership system. SS explained that in the past, the set up was to request governing boards became members by completing membership forms and paying annual subscriptions. SS stated there were approximately 170 FGB's signed up in the past. Under the new proposals, which SS explained were used successfully by other local associations, a system where all FGBs were members. SS explained that this would simplify admin, removing the need for reminders and records. His concern with this set up</p>	

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	<p>related to a difficulty in democratic legitimacy, i.e. how do we know that governors want to be spoken to in that way? One member at this point raised the point that they already assumed that they were automatically a member using this set up.</p> <p>SS confirmed that he had written in an 'opt out' clause to ensure governors wishes could be utilised if they did not want to be included. However, he wanted assurances that this was acceptable. The example used was MP represents you in parliament, but you don't always write to your MP to give them your views and this is considered acceptable. SS also stated that this system would give governors opportunities to get in touch.</p> <p><i>A question was asked about how the financial arrangements would work under this proposed membership system?</i></p> <p>SS explained that in the past there was a fixed fee, SS used the Oxford Association as an example, where all voluntary contributions requested specified indicative funds. He also stated that some associations get paid via their LA and a buy back system, but this wouldn't be a possibility in this county. SS stated that by moving to a voluntary system, BASG would become much more efficient and economical, e.g. use a free venue such as a school to hold executive committee meetings, use electronic means to communicate which would drastically reduce costs. Where in the past we have paid for speakers to present at members meetings, other local associations such as Oxford don't, so perhaps the BASG shouldn't need to pay speakers either. All these things would help reduce the need for BASG to hold any significant funds and could therefore support this membership arrangement financially.</p> <p>SS highlighted that the annual NGA subscription of c.a. £450 which is based on the number of schools in the association and the number on the exec committee is too much and SS stated he would like an arrangement like some other associations have the NGA that are based around the number of schools that pay them. SS is still waiting on feedback from the NGA about this point.</p> <p><i>Another question was could the BASG take on some of the support role that the BLT currently provide, given the changes happening within the BLT? How will the LA get messages out to all the governors?</i> The response to this questions was that the BASG couldn't do that as it did not have the resources to take on such a role.</p> <p>It was agreed that BASG could only be a representative voice and a communication channel to the LA through the various bodies that governors sit on and that BASG has representation on (currently Maggi Bull and Stuart Smith). SS gave an example of School Governors Consultative Board, but stated that governors are represented on BLT Trustees and schools forum, for example. SS also pointed out the BASG had part funded link activities such as governance networking groups, aiding collaboration.</p>	

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	<p>JP stated that clear communication was the key to ensure free flowing information between the committees and the wider views. Where one voice was required BASG could fill that role and independence was critical for that.</p> <p>AS stated that as BLT are only going to provide a limited resource of clerks from September, are the LA going to have to maintain their own database of governors. A key question therefore is how will the LA know who its governors are and for which school? It was pointed out that although this would mainly affect maintained schools, MATS and SATs have access to certain functions within the LA.</p> <p>Action: it was agreed that SS, AS and MB would take this point to Sarah Callahan (Director of Education – BCC) and Kate Rumboll (Director of Education – BLT) as it couldn't be raised at the SGCB as no officials turned up.</p> <p>SS Brought the meeting back to the point about finances. SS proposed that this year as part of the transition there should be a fees holiday, given the amount of money held in the accounts.</p> <p>The general consensus was that if there were no fees then the BASG would be forgotten. <i>This lead to the question about how do BASG raise its PR?</i> Discussions were had about the general idea of using electronic social media such as Facebook or Twitter to promote BASG profile and build communication networks. General discussions were around the fact that meetings would still be required with a small group to manage it, but it seemed a good idea in principal. BASG could be seen as a certainty in uncertain times.</p> <p>SS stated he proposed to adopt the constitution for big shift in membership model and fixed sub to voluntary constitution. More questions were raised about how many people know about BASG, answer was not enough. What about the mechanisms and resources available to BASG, to continue with current set up and answer was, don't have the capacity.</p> <p>A suggestion was made by a member to go to council meetings e.g. every 6 months and request funding for promoting local organisations. Funding could potentially be available through specific grants to employ one person to create and maintain a communication and PR database.</p> <p><i>Another question was raised as to whether there was a need for the BASG at all?</i> SS confirmed that the meeting had established that BASG should be an independent voice that promotes and facilitates collaboration between schools, manages and engages governors and it was suggested by another member that that is where social media could help. It was agreed that BASG should be present as a stable force, bringing governor's together signposting and networking different groups. It was suggested that using the website where governors had to subscribe to it and a facility such as 'mail chimp' to communicate with, would avoid GDPR issues</p>	<p>SS / AS / MB</p>

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	<p>and facilitate communication. It was noted that G’Hub had been explored but not an option through the BLT as the BASG group of member would be too big for the system.</p> <p>SS proposed that a vote was taken on the new draft constitution which was passed, but the fees holiday was not passed.</p>	
<p>6. Election of Officers</p>	<p>In light of the above discussions, all agreed that SS could swap the items 5 & 6 around. Item 6 was discussed next. <u>Election of officers:</u></p> <p>Chair – SS was nominated and seconded however, SS pointed out that as of November 2018 (8 months from now), he would be retiring from governance completely and would therefore not be eligible to act as Chair. No one else agreed to stand for the position. SS agreed to remain as chair until he retired from governance in November.</p> <p>Vice-Chair – SK agreed to stand and was nominated and seconded. Motion passed.</p> <p>Secretary – no nominations, JC wished to stand down. However, Bernadette Allison (member present at the meeting), enquired what was involved and agreed to consider it the position if the committee was “desperate”.</p> <p>Treasurer – SS explained that this position had not been filled permanently for some time. He had been carrying out these duties on a temporary basis and the previous treasurer had agreed to stay on for some years before that because no one wished to take it on. Jo Pearce agreed to stand as treasurer which was nominated and seconded.</p> <p>At this point, due to the time, several members had to leave the meeting, one being Bernadette Allison.</p>	
<p>5. Executive Committee Members</p>	<p>SS confirmed that currently there were seven members of the executive committee and five vacancies. It was assumed that Su Jordan and Maggi Bull wished to continue on the executive committee as no word had been received to state otherwise. SK, AS, SS, JP all agreed to remain on the executive committee. JC expressed her wish to stand down from the committee. In light of the secretary post possibly being filled by Bernadette Allison, Bernadette would need to become a committee member.</p>	
<p>7. Adoption of the accounts</p>	<p>SS had distributed the accounts to all. He stated that they had yet to be reviewed by an external auditor, however, the executive committee had agreed them. Action: JP stated she would ask an independent accountant to review them.</p>	<p>JP</p>

Item		Action:
8. Report of Activities in 2016-17	SS stated that these had been covered previously in the meeting but listed the following activities and actions: LINK meeting, SGCB meetings, supported local groups (sometimes paying for their meeting rooms, but this no longer took place), BASL conference.	
9. Open Members Discussion	<p>All agreed there was no time to discuss this in detail. In summary: <u>Future of Governor Services</u> – AS stated that there could be substantial chunks of support lost with the changes at the BLT. Request, could we put up a simple bit of information on the website to support governing boards decision making, which will have to be done in a short space of time. AS gave Hampshire LA as an example. Action: AS to obtain information and / or guidance from other LAs that could help governor’s signpost or go about recruiting clerks. It was pointed out that there is a Chairs Update meeting on 23rd April which might also provide more information.</p> <p>Jo Pearce as a current clerk with the BLT explained at this point the issues facing clerks and governing bodies attempting to recruit clerks. Issues relate to independence / loyalty concerns relating to employing clerks and issue about how clerks could set themselves up as self-employed and be used by both MATs and maintained schools. JP explained that there are current hurdles that need to be understood and addressed before more information could be provided to schools.</p> <p>AS suggested clerks look at how groups such as speech therapists who provide services to schools are set up for advice. Another suggestion was to look at the HMRC toolkit on the government’s website about IR35.</p>	AS
10. AOB	It was agreed that GDPR could not be discussed in detail as it depends on the details of how BASG will proceed, but would be considered at that point.	
11. Meeting Closure	SS thanked those who attended and closed the meeting at 9.40pm.	

Signed:

Date:

Chair BASG – Stuart Smith