

GBA News - March 2019



GBA Annual General Meeting



Left to right: Sir Gerry Loughran (Vice Chair), Nuala O'Neill (Chief Executive), Prof Francis Campbell, Terry McDaid (Chairperson) & Ian Noad (Vice Chair)

The GBA hosted its Annual General Meeting on the 20th March in Riddel Hall. We were pleased to be joined by guest speaker Professor Francis Campbell, Vice-Chancellor of St Mary's University Twickenham. In a change to the traditional format, attendees were able to discuss the education budget with a panel of guests including incoming Education Authority (EA) Chief Executive Sara Long.

Finance Session

Conscious of the challenging financial environment, the GBA decided to change the traditional AGM proceedings and introduce a morning session specifically to address the issue of the education budget and school finances. Members of Boards of Governors and Principals heard from Gary Fair, Director of Finance in the Department of Education, who explained the Northern Ireland budgetary position and the allocation for Education. Sara Long, Incoming Chief Executive of the EA, discussed the budgetary challenges for EA. GBA Executive member Dermot Mullan joined the panel and presented key questions that Governors should be asking about school finances, while Jim Dunbar from the EA outlined the opportunities and challenges of Community

Use of Schools as a means of income generation.

After the presentations, there was a Q&A session to give attendees the opportunity to put questions to the panel. Topics included one-year pay deals, the Transformation Agenda, zero-based budgeting, employer pension cost increases and the Common Funding Formula.

Professor Francis Campbell



Professor Francis Campbell

The GBA was delighted to welcome Professor Francis Campbell, Vice-Chancellor of St Mary's University, Twickenham to speak at the event. Professor Campbell outlined the challenges facing Higher Education including financial sustainability. As a former pupil of St Colman's College, Newry, he praised Principals and Boards of Governors for delivering exceptional educational opportunities, particularly during the challenging budgetary environment.

Annual General Meeting

Terry McDaid, Chairman of the GBA, began his address by reflecting on the recent tragedy in Cookstown and expressing his condolences to the families and wider school communities of the three young people who tragically lost

their lives.

Terry commended the GBA Executive and staff members for their work throughout the year. He highlighted the imbalance in financial support from the Department for the GBA as a sectoral body, organisations with the GBA's functions directly comparable to other education support organisations. He also discussed the unsustainability of the current financial situation across the education sector in Northern Ireland. He noted the GBA have repeatedly highlighted these issues throughout the year, including at the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee inquiry into Education funding. He noted that the GBA will continue to campaign for more funding for education in the future. Terry acknowledged there is little prospect of early improvement to the financial situation in the absence of a functioning Executive. The Chairman praised member schools for the excellent education and other opportunities they provide for our young people.

GBA Chief Executive Nuala O'Neill provided an overview of Area Planning. She noted that the publication of the third annual action plan is imminent and reflected that as we approach the final year of the strategy it is now an opportune time for a review. She updated members of GBA activity in Area Planning including representation of schools at the Area Planning Steering Group, the Area Planning Working Group and the Area Planning Local Groups. Members were also advised that the GBA had recently engaged with schools in a focus group to identify barriers to Area Planning and identify support required by schools following the approval of a development proposal.

Ronnie Hassard discussed the GBA's involvement on Management Side of the Teachers Negotiating Committee (TNC), where he and Nuala O'Neill represented the sector. He provided an overview of activities throughout the year and advised that the priority has been to try and resolve the ongoing industrial action. Ronnie proposed a resolution that members mandate the GBA to nominate an individual to represent them and to speak for them in all discussions of the TNC, including direct negotiations about teachers' pay and conditions of employment. It was noted a high volume of positive responses were received prior to the meeting and the resolution was unanimously approved on the day.

GBA Treasurer, Teresa Campbell, provided an overview of the Financial Report

for the year ending 31st July, 2018.

The Chairman advised that the GBA received 3 nominations for 3 vacancies on the GBA executive. Sir Gerry Loughran (St Malachy's College, Belfast), Ian Noad (Strathearn School) and Dr Clare Ryan (Lumen Christi College, Derry) who were elected to the Executive for a three-year term.

Joint Review of Reconstitution of Board of Governors

Following the reconstitution of Boards of Governors for all controlled, maintained schools and a small number of voluntary grammars in 2018, the Department of Education is undertaking a joint review of the process along with the EA and CCMS.

It is estimated that there may be as many as 12,000 school governors in Northern Ireland. There are a large number of schools involved and their Boards of Governors are made up of several different categories of governor including representatives of the foundation, the trustees, the transferors, parents, teachers, the Education Authority and the Department of Education.

The procedures for appointing, nominating or electing school governors can vary widely and 2018 was the first time that the Education Authority as a single body was involved in the appointment of Governors in Controlled Schools and a small number of voluntary grammars.

The Department of Education has launched a questionnaire as part of the review process with a view to improving future reconstitution exercises.

The Department of Education issued the questionnaire to all schools seeking their views on the process. Schools wishing to respond please view the questionnaire [here](#). Please note that this consultation will close on 26th April 2019.

Connecting Classrooms

Connecting Classrooms is a global education programme for schools delivered by the British Council in partnership with the Department for International Development. The programme aims to help young people worldwide develop the knowledge, skills and values they need for life and work in a global economy.

In Northern Ireland, the programme is delivered in conjunction with the Centre for Global Education (CGE), who support the recruitment of schools and clusters wishing to engage in international school partnership projects and deliver CPD training packages for teachers on global learning.

From 2018-2021, Connecting Classrooms is offering a flexible menu of opportunities to support pupils and teachers to connect with their peers across the world, and to become critically engaged and active in the issues that are shaping their lives.

To find out more please click [here](#).

Upcoming Events

[Skills Northern Ireland](#)

20 - 21 November 2019, Titanic Exhibition Centre

[Irish News Workplace and Employment Awards](#)

Closing Date: 3rd May 2019.

Teaching and Non-Teaching Vacancies

We would like to remind you that the GBA can host teaching and non-teaching vacancies. The vacancies will appear on the GBA [website](#) and are shared on social media through our [@gbani_jobs](#) twitter account.

If you would like the GBA to host a vacancy please send details of the job title, job description and a link to the vacancy on your website to terence@gbani.org.

Email Subscription

If you wish to unsubscribe to these emails, please let us know via email (e) administrator@gbani.org.

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