

Board of Governors of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama

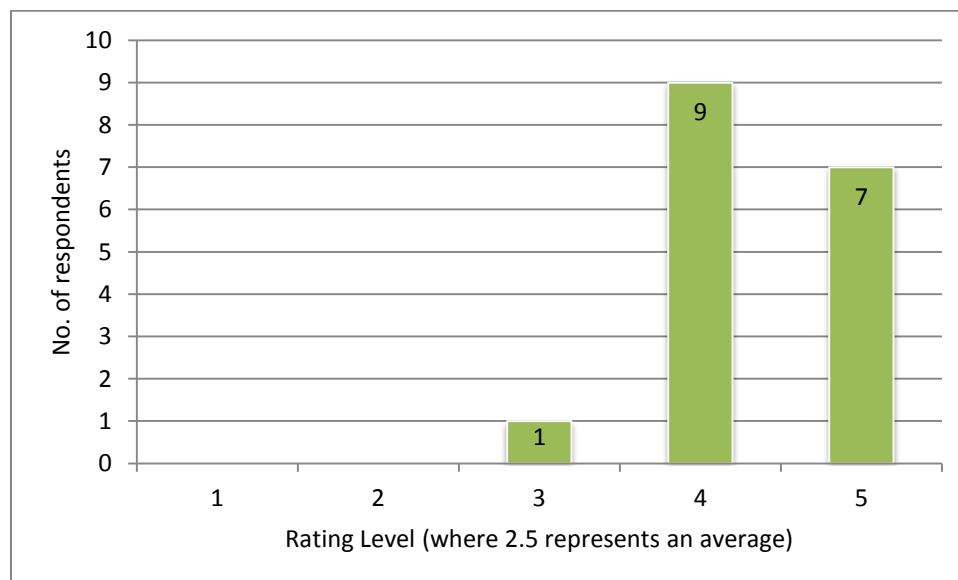
Skills and Effectiveness Review 2014 – Results and Analysis

Ratings of 1-5 were provided for the following questions where 1 represented a very low understanding/clarity rating, and 5 was a high understanding/clarity rating (2.5 represents an average).

(17 out of 20 Governors responded to the Survey with some questions not completed with a rating level)

THE SCHOOL

1. a) How would you rate your understanding of the School's mission and primary objectives relating to learning, teaching and research?



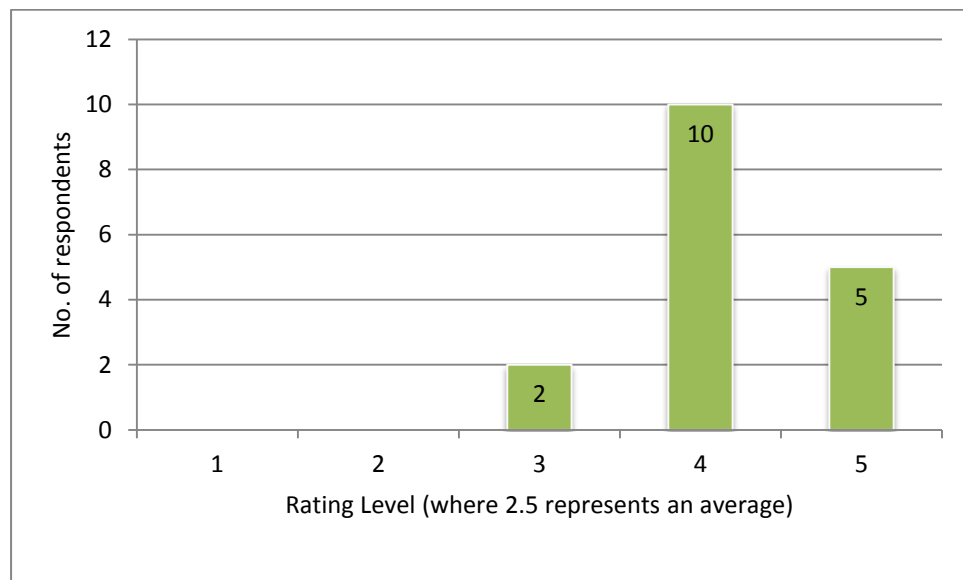
Brief analysis of results:

Governors have a very high level of understanding of the School's mission and primary objectives relating to learning, teaching and research. Some Governors would however welcome further knowledge and understanding relating to 'research' and being better informed when initially becoming a Governor of the School's mission and primary objectives.

Governor comments:

- Research is my principal area of lack of knowledge.
- I believe my understanding of the GSMD mission and primary objective to the students who attend the school is average. I feel that I would benefit (and by default so would the GSMD) if I was given more of an insight to the schools approach to research and what benefits are derived from it with particular regard to the aid that music gives to mental illness sufferers and its results.
- Least clear about the role of research or of its importance to the School in terms of numbers, finances or outcomes.
- I would rate "5" re my understanding of the School's mission and primary objectives relating to learning and teaching. My reason for rating "4": I would welcome opportunity for a little more discussion about primary objectives, priorities, and applications of research, with regard to progressing Strategic Plan.
- I think I have a good understanding of the school's mission to be (one of) the world's leading conservatories and drama schools and the strategic ambitions and current 2010-2015 business plan set down to achieve and sustain this ambition alongside a strong educational offer. I naturally focus on the ambitions, successes and outcomes of the Drama and SMTT courses to ensure they reflect well with the industry's needs and working practices, as well as ensuring they fully support the professional development of students within the academic framework. My area of weakness is probably being fully conversant with the School's Research programme.
- Greater access to the general public and media publicity reporting the School's successes, past and present, naming names. A larger drama department to be comparable with music.
- I would suggest that all newly appointed Governors are giving a tour of the school and an induction session with the Heads of Departments and the Principal, along with information of our outreach projects and Partners. The better informed Governors are from the start of their appointment the more effective that can be. Whilst the introduction pack was very helpful, I feel it would have been more beneficial used alongside an induction meeting.
- Funding.

1. b) How would you rate your understanding of the School's Strategic Plan which sets out the academic aims and objectives of the School and identifies the financial, physical and staffing strategies?



Brief analysis of results:

There is an above average understanding of the Strategic Plan but greater clarity would be beneficial especially with regard to staffing strategies.

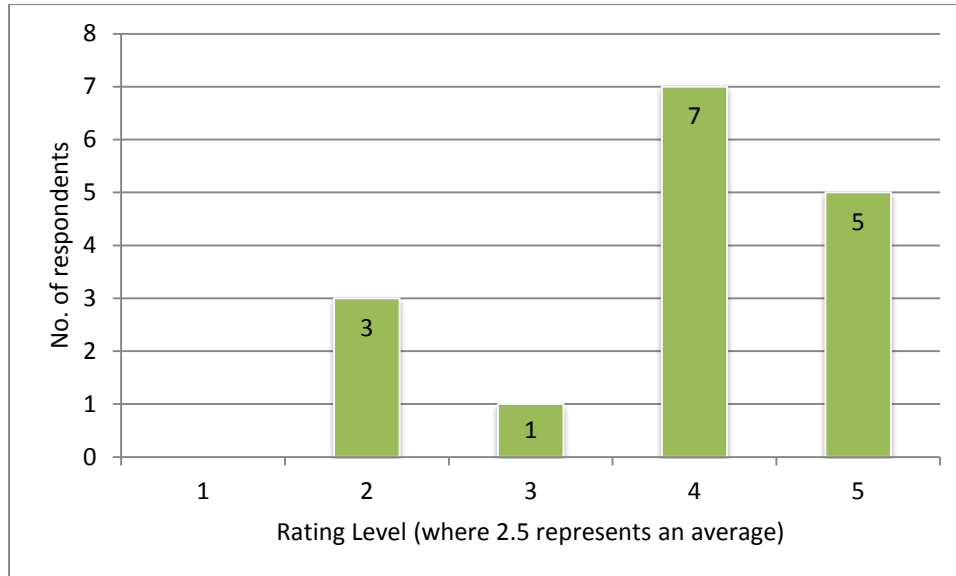
Governor comments:

- Research and to a lesser extent Development.
- Staffing strategies, particularly as the School is looking to build upon its current provision.
- Students and Staff opinions, requirements and suggestions on the academic aims and objectives of the School.
- I believe my understanding of the schools Strategic Plan with regard to the financial and physical strategies is above average, however, the staffing strategies do not fall within my area of expertise and as a result I know little or nothing of that strategy.

- There are particularities with regard to HEFCE funding and reports that I find I need to work harder at understanding but otherwise I always find that any questions or enquiries are responded to swiftly by the Executive team.
- As Chairman I feel I need to have a deep understanding of the strategies, etc.

HEFCE REQUIREMENTS

2. Do you understand the Board's role in respect of the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) requirements?



Brief analysis of results:

There is an above average level of understanding of HEFCE's requirements; some Governors may however welcome further clarity.

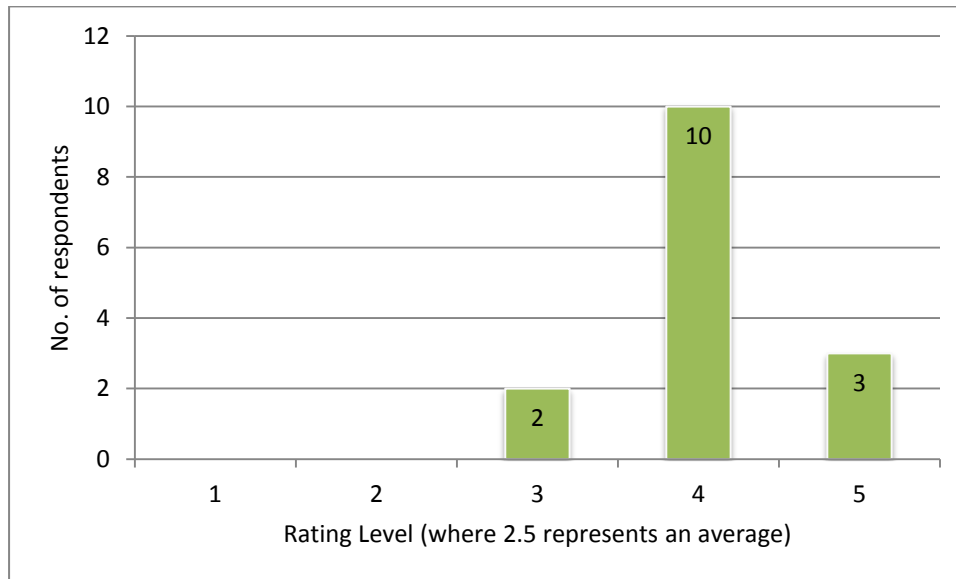
Governor comments:

- I need to understand better the Board's role in respect of the HEFCE requirements.
- I occasionally have to do further research to ensure that I am conversant with the full reporting requirements, academic standards, funding range issues and the academic cycle of work are complied with.

- I also feel confident about the School's financial and budgetary information provided and being able to make decisions with this information to ensure in the long term the school's finances are stabilised.
- Reporting and statutory obligations.
- I believe this could be explained better and the underlying reasoning of HEFCE's existence should be narrated and distributed to ALL Board members for their ongoing reference and review
- Does HEFCE serve any useful purpose now that it no longer supports undergraduate teaching costs?

THE BOARD

3. Do you feel decisions the Board is expected to take are explained clearly?



Brief analysis of results:

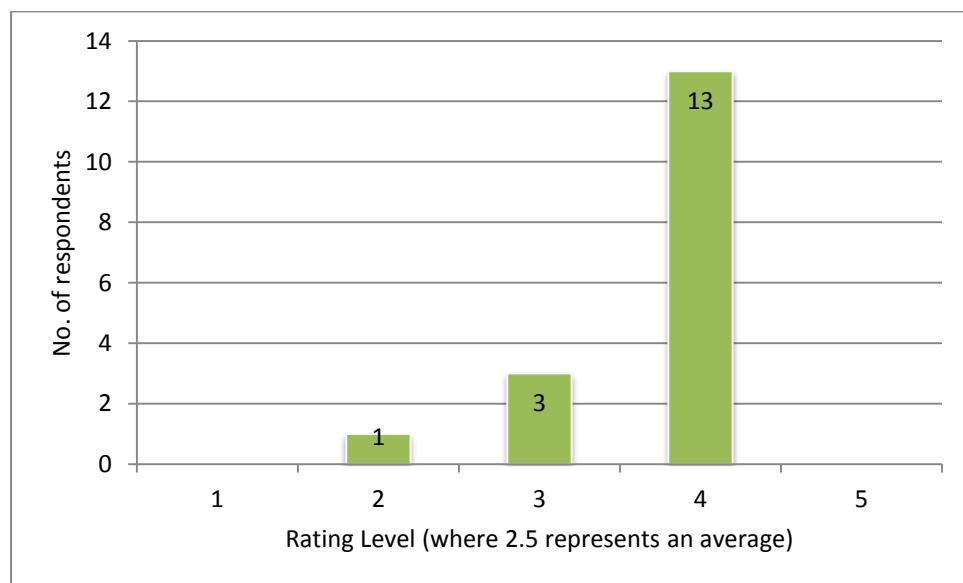
On the whole the decisions required by the Board are very clear and the Principal's Introduction to the agenda has proved as a useful tool. An understanding of the City Corporation's internal procedures on governance could be explained more fully for the benefit of external Governors.

Areas which Governors feel could be done better:

- An induction session which explains the role of the board, its responsibilities and relationship with the CoL for new members would be helpful.
- The introduction of a summary paper from the Principal has helped, but it would still be better if the volume of papers could be reduced and the key elements distilled so that it is very clear what Board members should focus their attention on.
- Broadly defined papers at Committee meetings of the Board of Governors, with competent support.

- Decisions as ratification of issues discussed elsewhere (in sub-committees or by senior management) means that the board spends less time than is sometimes ideal discussing before deciding.
- The requests offered to the Board on a variety of subjects are I believe in the main very well presented. All of the members on the Board would I think benefit from further training in a number of disciplines but on the whole I believe the balance of the Boards skill set compensates for the lack of across the Board expertise in all GSMD related matters and as such the explanations of what is needed are on the whole dealt with successfully.
- Accounts information is rather confusing, running from different date, i.e. start of academic calendar & Corps accounting dates. The accounts need to have notes of explanation where necessary. Whilst we have Officers to hand to answer our questions, we must understand that these accounts are sent to other Corp committees and they must be able to understand the information as set out in the report.
- I think the City of London's meeting format makes very clear when decisions need to be made, The only frustration is having to comply with the Local Authority requirements for both a public and private agenda.
- Decisions Board is expected to take are explained clearly. Reason for rating "4": Over time I have gained an understanding of the matters on which the Board's decision-making interlinks (inc. scheduling) with that of the City Corporation. Especially as an external Governor, it would have been useful to have had this covered as fully as possible during induction.

4. How would you rate, in your opinion, the skills, experience, time and resources the Board has to undertake its duties effectively?



Brief analysis of results:

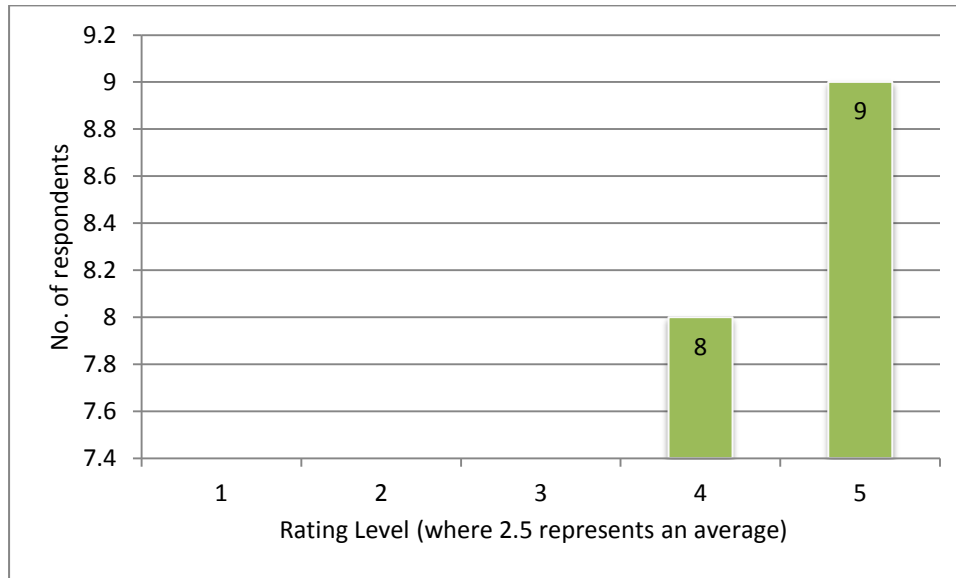
There is an above average level of Governors who think that the Board has the necessary skills to undertake its duties. There are concerns around the length of meetings and the need for specific skill gaps to be filled e.g. fundraising.

Areas which Governors feel could be improved:

- We can still improve the quality of the Board's knowledge and experience from outside the CoLC, but, otherwise, there is a good cross section of skills and experience.
- Governors' meetings over-run their time. Other forms of conveying information to the Board? More frequent meetings.

- I believe the balance of the knowledge spread evenly across the Board is very good. Where one area appears light for some members, others appear to have it covered very well and conversely where members are well versed in a particular subject others appear to benefit from that knowledge when imparted to them.
- Breaking out of the City of London format and City of London particular issues would be useful at times in order to aid better discussion.
- Probably less experienced in fund raising externally than we should be and time is always an issue with unpaid volunteers with many other calls on their time.
- Particular experience gaps - H.E., and income generation/fundraising - already identified.

5. How would you rate the leadership of the Chairman (ensures that the Board operates effectively, is decisive, open-minded, courteous, allows contribution, leads by example, holds Governors to high standards)?



Brief analysis of results:

There is a high level of confidence in the leadership of the Chairman.

Governor comments:

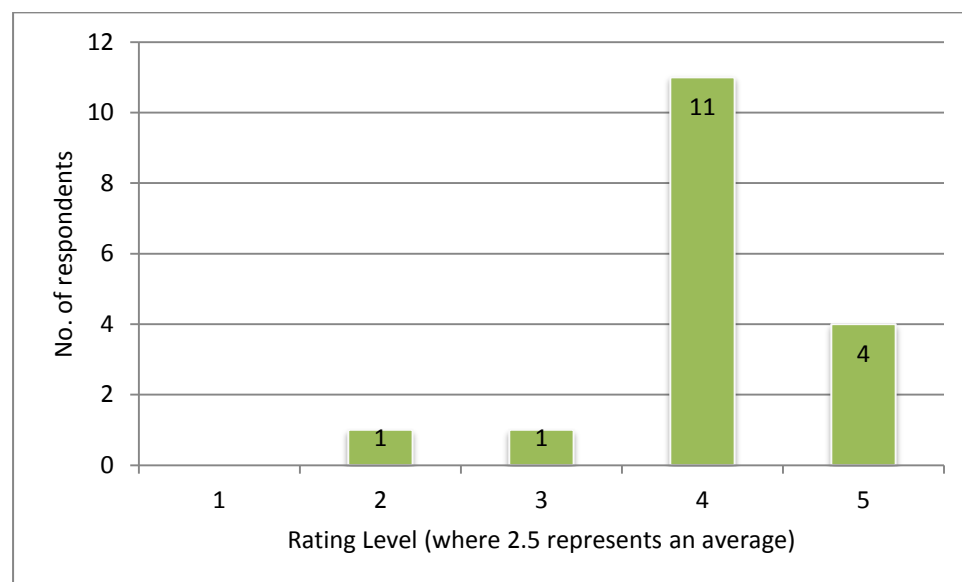
- Sometimes allows excess discussion which can prolong meetings unnecessarily.
- I feel our chairman does an excellent job in fulfilling his role as both the lead member in refereeing debate and as an arbiter of cross board questioning of officers and co-members alike. His approach to matters arising from both Board members and the running of the GSMD is professional and deliberate which was evidenced recently during the recent problems which arose when Milton Court completion did not meet delivery dates.
- The Chairman may be too courteous on occasion!

- Excellent. The current Chairman is fully conversant with the challenges the School faces and is very prepared for Governors meetings.
- Seems a bit self-serving as I am the Chairman.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE BOARD

6. Please rate the following aspects of the Board's conduct of business:-

a) Structure of the agenda? (E.g. is it clear and are you aware of how an item can be added to the agenda?)



Governor comments:

- It has taken me seven years to understand how the board papers are structured; to anyone joining new they must be daunting and confusing. And for all of us, they are (in my opinion) too bulky (it has been known to have over 200pp of board papers)
- I am not privy to how the structure of the Agenda is arrived at and neither am I aware of the selection process to get a matter on the Agenda. Notwithstanding, the Agendas have always seemed comprehensive when particular matters have been raised and I have never had reason to doubt the effectiveness of that practice.

Brief analysis of results:

Overall the administration of the Board is rated above average with Governors considering items of business which are relevant and significant to the Board.

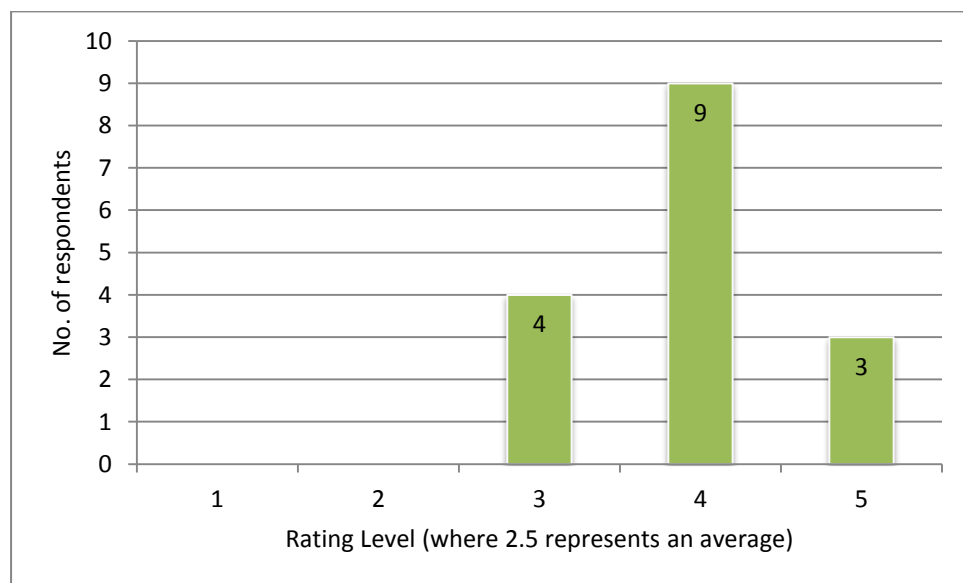
There is opportunity for reports to be concise i.e. Accounts, and for sufficient time given to discussing all items of business.

There is some clarity required on how an item is added to the agenda.

The clerking arrangements and clarity of minutes are above average.

- I think the Chairman leads a good agenda and the Clerk services the Board well. As suggested before but not taken up, I think it would be valuable for the non-City Governors to meet with the Principal and Executive annually outside of a formal Board meeting.
- May not be as evident to non-City governors.
- The whole process seems cluttered and over complex because of the Corporation procedures.
- The structure of the agenda is clear. However, the process for constituting the agenda is not - i.e. not stated overtly. So, for example, I am not 100% certain how an item could be added, though presume this would involve discussion with the Chair.

b) To what extent does the agenda address issues which are of major significance to the School? (where 1 is not at all and 5 is fully addresses)

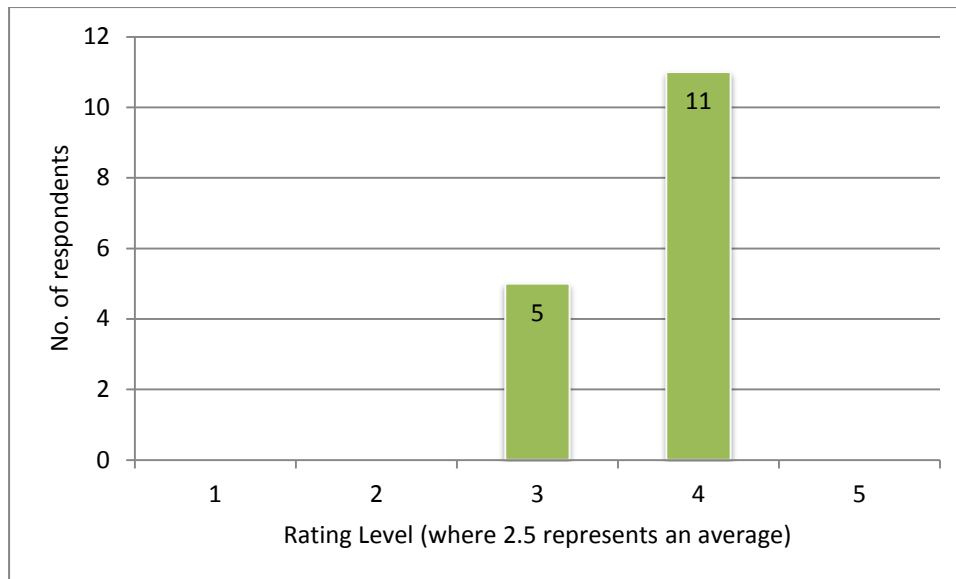


Governor comments:

- The major issues are normally contained within the papers, but it can be tricky to see the wood for the trees.
- Significant amount of time taken up, in depth, with past activities reported reducing time available for forward-thinking options.
- The agenda I hope is drawn up by the officers in tandem with the Boards senior members as matters come to light. The significance of the issues raised can only be measured in proportion to the effectiveness they have over school matters in an objective sense and one would hope that if they weren't material to the smooth operation of the school they would NOT appear on the agenda.

- Need additional time away from Board Meetings to discuss major strategic issues.
- As mentioned previously, the City of London style of agenda means important decisions are made in the private part of the agenda, which is near the end of the meeting and when Governors may have to rush off. Thus there should be an opportunity to talk about important issues for decision earlier on in the meeting. Also there can be a feeling that a separate City of London Committee or Committee Members have made a pre-determined decision elsewhere that has not involved the full Governors in the decision making process.
- The difficulty in obtaining visas seems to be a problem for many gifted students and performers from certain countries but usually arises only as an aside during discussion rather than as a subject where we should be lobbying MPs and others.
- As far as it can be given the division of powers.

c) Please rate the content of reports submitted to the Board



Governor comments:

- There is a lot of repetition in the board papers especially where a summary duplicates the main content of a report.
- On the whole I would comment that the reports presented to the Board are informative and well presented. The quality of the content of the said reports being variable to the subject matter contained therein - occasionally they leave a little margin for improvement but on the whole are usually very satisfactory.
- Accounts information is rather confusing, running from different date, ie start of academic calendar & Corps accounting dates. The accounts need to have notes of explanation where necessary. Whilst we have Officers to hand to answer our questions, we must understand that these accounts are sent to other Corp committees and they must be able to understand the information as set out in the report.

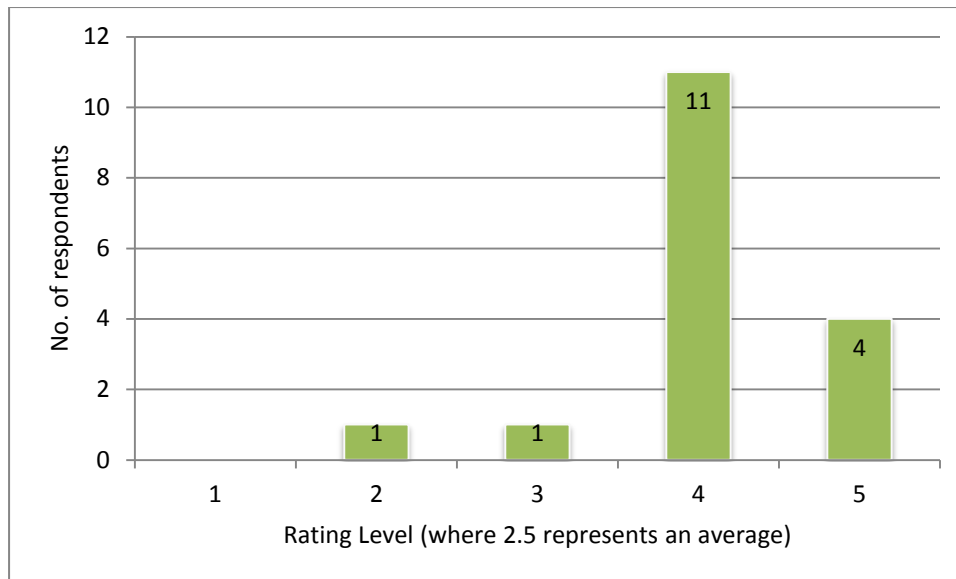
- Could be briefer, more concise.
- Sometimes the reports are too long, though on the whole they probably do need to cover the topic in full.
- Content of reports generally very good - on the whole, concise and appropriately informative to support decision-making.

Reason for rating "4": With regard to any report submitted to two or more meetings within a Committee/Board cycle - if amendment has been agreed by a committee, then such amendment (s) should then appear in the reports when subsequently submitted in the Committee/Board cycle. It is not unknown, too, for an extract of such a report to appear again (still un-amended) in a future Committee/Board cycle.

Often this is just a niggle - but could be more material. Therefore, unless there is an overriding reason why it is not possible, it would be helpful to have reports amended accordingly - i.e. in a more timely fashion, in the course of Committee/Board cycles.

- Quality is generally very high and provides the information Members need. There is an unavoidable element of formal "box ticking" involved, given the highly regulated nature of the sector.

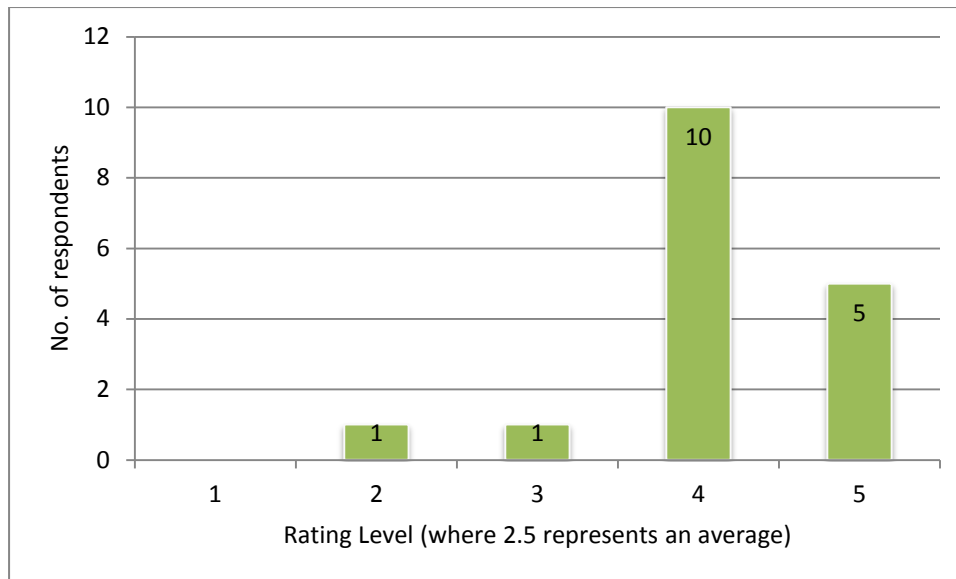
d) Please rate the clarity of the minutes (as a record of agreed decisions)



Governor comments:

- As in most Board meetings I have attended there is always some dissent regarding the production of minutes - whether it is their accuracy or the length of the minutes or the shortness of the content. I believe the GSMD Board minutes are highly satisfactory and to some extent at the better end of the spectrum when compared to other Committee minutes.
- Lack of in-depth record.

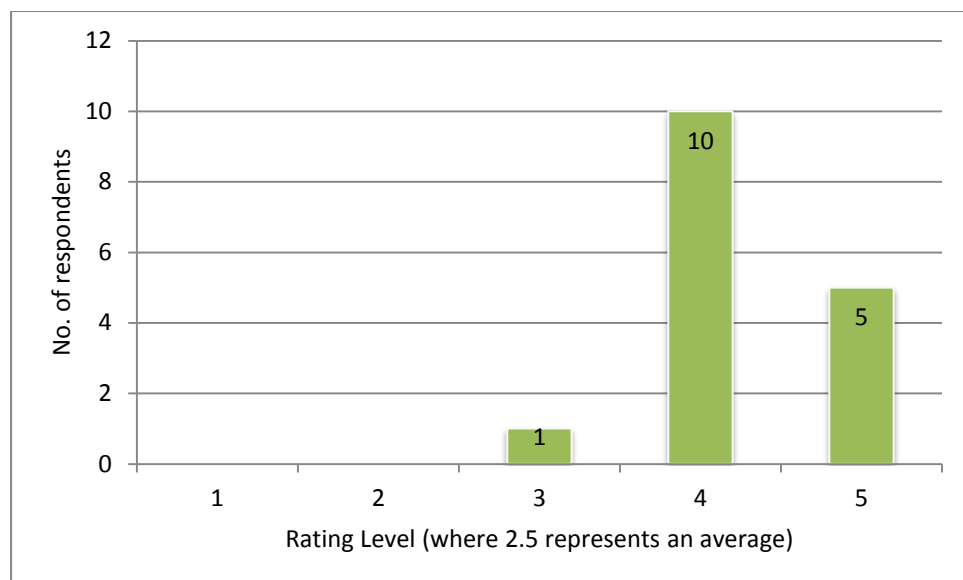
e) Please rate the scheduling of meetings



Governor comments:

- The scheduling of the meetings in my experience appears to be well balanced.
- The regular meeting times and dates are fine for me, though being Monday's occasionally clash with Shakespeare Globe Board meetings.
- Not sufficiently frequent to accommodate the work of the meetings. A bulky Agenda cannot be properly addressed by the Board of Governors and requires a longer period of two hours to complete, resulting in items in the private part of the Agenda to be rushed and opportunities for Members to ask questions reduced or vanquished. A bulky Agenda cannot be properly addressed by the Board of Governors and requires a longer period of two hours to complete, resulting in items in the private part of the Agenda to be rushed and opportunities for Members to ask questions reduced or vanquished.

f) Please rate the clerking arrangements

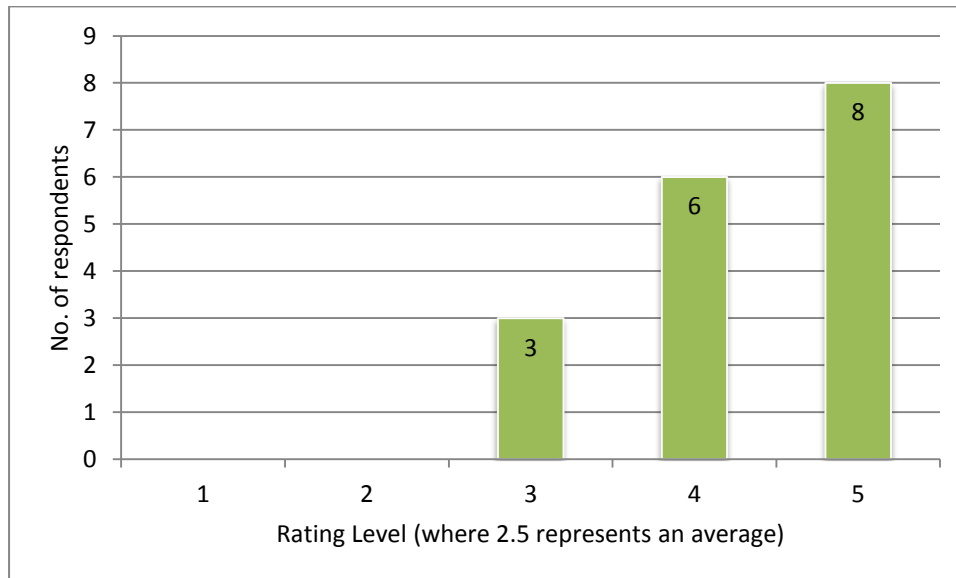


Governor comments:

- I find the clerking arrangements entirely adequate and have a lot of respect for the work the clerks put into the preparation of the relevant documents and the recording of the discussions undertaken at the relevant meeting.
- It is unclear at times when non-City Governors are due for re-election or retirement and how the cycle of Common Councilmen works.
- Fine as far as they go, but because the Clerk comes from the Town Clerk's office rather than from within the school the Clerk is not a vehicle for understanding the core of the School's life.
- Ensure that no papers are on the table for Governors consideration at the time of the meeting. All contributors to the Agenda to be put on a time alert of producing reports five working days before each meeting. All hard copies of brochures, etc. to be posted to Governors five working days before the meeting.

GOVERNOR ROLE

7) Do you understand your role on the Board (acting in best interests of the School, participating constructively in debates, acting as a critical friend, conducting behaviour in accordance with Nolan Principles)



Brief analysis of results:

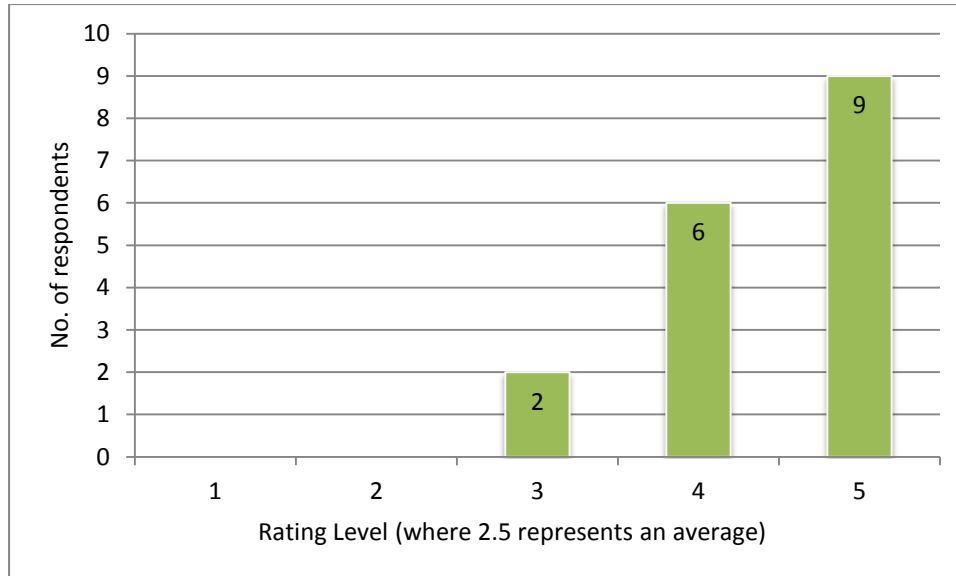
There is a very high level of understanding of the role Governors play. There is opportunity to make this clearer especially once a Governor starts their appointment, as part of the induction process.

Governor comments:

- I believe that this ties in with an effective induction that sets out an individual's role on the Board.
- Those of us who are co-opted governors have long felt under-used and without a clear role or mandate to make a useful contribution in our areas of expertise, BUT this has improved significantly under the Chairmanship of David Graves and his Deputy, John Bennett.
- I hope my attendance on the Board offers effective financial and managerial experience to others. It is the only board where I am actively involved in all matters and not just the specialized cohorts that reflect my own individual business experience.

8. Please rate your own performance in respect of the following: -

a) Meeting attendance.



Brief analysis of results:

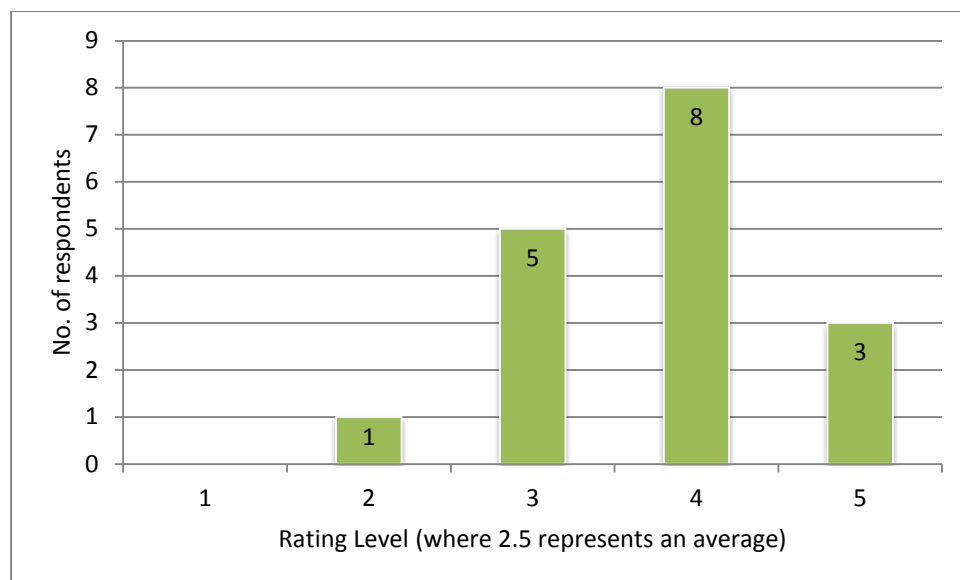
Governors feel that their attendance at meetings is very good and that when they are not able to attend, due to other commitments, comments on reports are sometimes provided to the Chairman/Principal.

Governor comments:

- I make every effort to attend whenever possible, but my role as MD of the LSO means that on certain occasions I am abroad with the orchestra and I cannot avoid that.
- I do my best and feel guilty when I am away and unable to attend meetings but, on the whole, I am at more than I miss. And when I am unable to attend, I respond to the papers in writing and with a phone call to either the Chairman or the Principal, or both.
- I believe I have an excellent attendance record - 100% during the past Mayoral Year.

- I suggest a meeting /telephone call with the Chairman or Deputy Chairman as part of an annual Board appraisal process would be useful.
- Will always attend provided not otherwise committed.
- I believe my level of attendance has been consistently good. However, in previous years, my punctuality (arrival time) was occasionally affected by conflicting commitments. I am pleased to say punctuality now achieved for all meetings.

b) Input at meetings



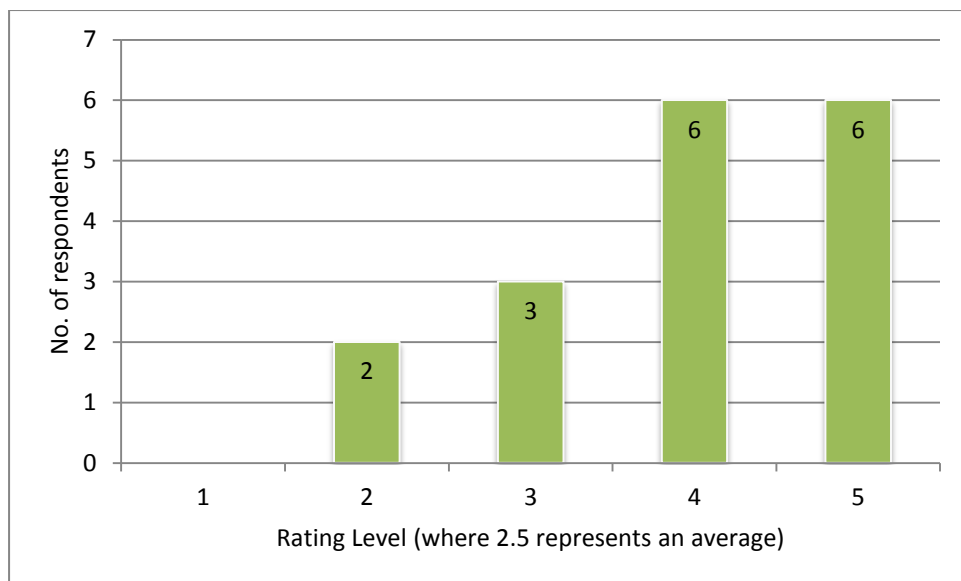
Brief analysis of results:

Input at meetings is above average and Governors feel that their input is valued.

Governor comments:

- Scrutinising the papers in advance for issues that relate to the administrative staff at the institution and raising any causes for concern.
- I seek to bring the perspective from the profession. I find it difficult at times to avoid such comments being received as criticism, when in fact they are intended to help the School to ensure the highest possible standards and recruitment/retention of the best possible students.
- I believe my involvement in the GSMD Board is highly effective and I enjoy being fully involved in debate relating to the financial and musical side of the Schools existence.
- I feel the Chairman values my input at meetings and I find the Sub Committees I serve on useful to secure a broader and better understanding of the School.

c) Interaction with the School outside of meetings



Brief analysis of results:

There is a high number of Governors who interact with the School outside of meetings but some Governors feel this could be improved, time permitting.

Governor comments:

- I could get more involved in understanding the internal workings of the school in addition to attending functions and performances.
- Attendance at performances a requisite. Opportunity for the Board of Governors to attend general meetings (? get-togethers) of students and staff, followed by refreshments. Creating more personal involvement and learning more of the School, literally at the "coal face".
- I try and attend as many performances as possible and am always available to the school for anything they might need.

- I try and attend as many performances as possible undertaken by the GSMD and where they don't clash with the Barbican or COLF performances. My time has not been my own over the past few months and I don't believe I can change this in the near future so my attendance to performances are dealt with on an individual demand basis
- Whilst I attend School performances, that currently is about the sum of it.
- I find attending concerts, operas, plays and other events at the School significantly assists me in my role as Governor. I also value supporting the Development Team and have assisted on some HR appeal issues.
- Only by having more hours in the day and more days in the week sadly.

d) How might your own performance be improved (e.g. time of meetings, training etc.)?

- More informal meetings with staff and students.
- Clear guidance provided from the start as to the Board's expectations of a governor.
- The timing of meetings is fine for me (apart from the time I missed one, arriving at lunch only to find the meeting had already taken place!). The training sessions we have, whilst infrequent, have been valuable and well run.
- Currently, I don't believe I can spare any time for further education on my own performance and I do believe my punctuality at meetings could not be improved. I would admit that my experience of chairing meetings is slight and if I am to rise to becoming chairman in a few years' time I could benefit from some form of education in that regard.
- Would like to visit some of our outreach projects and the Saturday school if possible. Along with more information on how we work with the Barbican Centre.
- I expect that additional training wouldn't make much difference. It doesn't help that after most Board meetings, I have to depart for a late afternoon meeting at Hampstead.
- More involvement with School and its managers outside meetings.
- More experience of what HEFCE expects from Governors - arising from the comment that Governors should have more experience of higher education which to my mind could be overdone.
- I shall be very preoccupied on non-GSMD business in 2014, but will do my best
- The only challenge is that of combining the GSMD role with many other roles and working for a living.

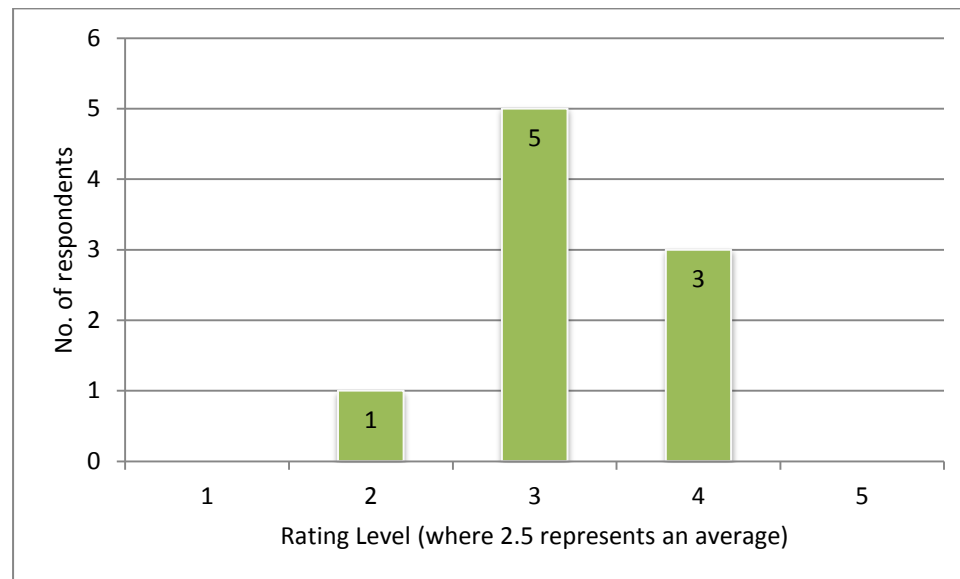
INDUCTION AND ON-GOING GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT

9. a) Did you receive an induction pack upon your appointment as a Governor of the Board?

YES = 10

NO = 6

9. b) If yes, how useful was it?



Brief analysis of results:

The majority of Governors received an induction pack with its usefulness being rated as adequately average. Some Governors have highlighted that the induction pack has improved since they started their appointment and that a meeting with the Chairman/Principal when initially becoming a Governor would prove beneficial in understanding their role.

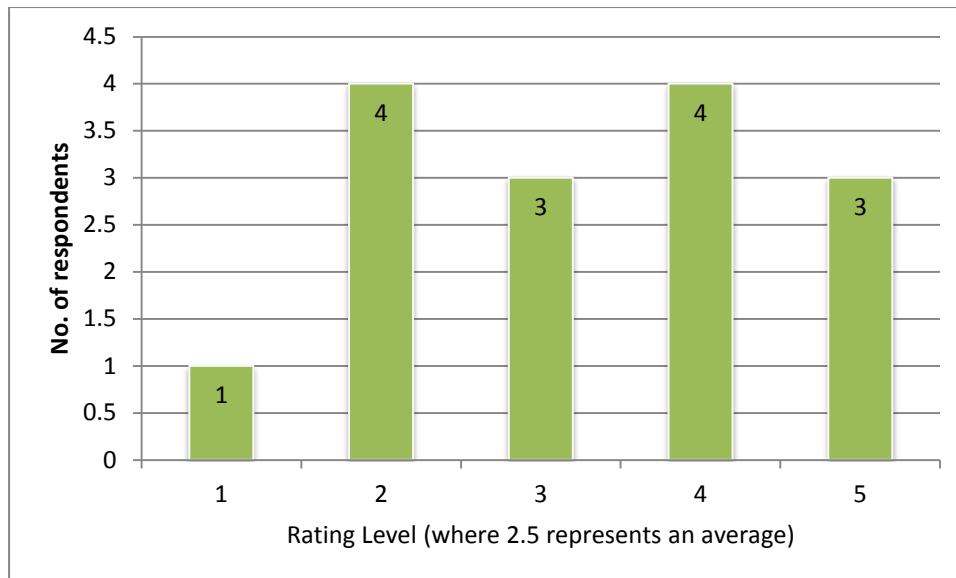
There is also opportunity to publish all induction material online so that it is easily accessible and can be updated accordingly.

9. c) In your opinion, how might the induction process be improved?

- The induction process should be influenced significantly by feedback from newly inducted governors.
- For new Governors, it is a matter of getting to know the School and its aims and targets. Perhaps a one-to-one meeting with a School representative might be a good idea.
- A half-day session on the work of the board, expectations of governors, the work of the School and relationship with the CoL.
- To receive a pack; a walk around the school, meeting staff, provided with termly work programmes. To receive information on the Governor Development Programme.
- For governors coming onto the board from outside, one of the hardest things to understand is the structure of and processes of the Corporation and the role of the Board within the Corporation (i.e. the Board isn't a board, as such). That impacts so much on the way meetings are run and how, for example, the opaque procedure for selecting a chairman and deputy chairman just seems to happen. A meeting with the Chairman some time before a new governor's first meeting would be invaluable, and with the Principal too.
- As far as I can remember (it was some 4 years ago) the pack contained everything needed to give me a sound bases on which to build to becoming an effective Board member.
- Whilst the introduction pack was very helpful. I feel it would have been more beneficial used alongside an induction meeting with the Principal and Heads of Departments and a tour of the schools facilities for new Governors.
- Cannot recall.
- A lot of paperwork did not really align with the Governor role. I believe this has been much improved since my original induction in 2007.
- Much shorter!

- By offering groups of Governors the opportunity to see behind the scenes, including Sundial Court. I have indicated "yes" as I am sure I must have received a pack. However, I cannot recall, therefore also cannot comment on usefulness. My apologies! In future, it would be helpful to have all induction material available online (intranet for Governors?) so it is easily accessible for reference and, when necessary, updating.
- So long as it works, it should be fine. We might need new governor sessions to help with the considerable volume of printed materials that new Governors receive.

9. d) Please rate your interest in the Governor Development Programme led by the Leadership Foundation?



Brief analysis of results:

There is a broad interest in the Governor Development Programme from Governors.

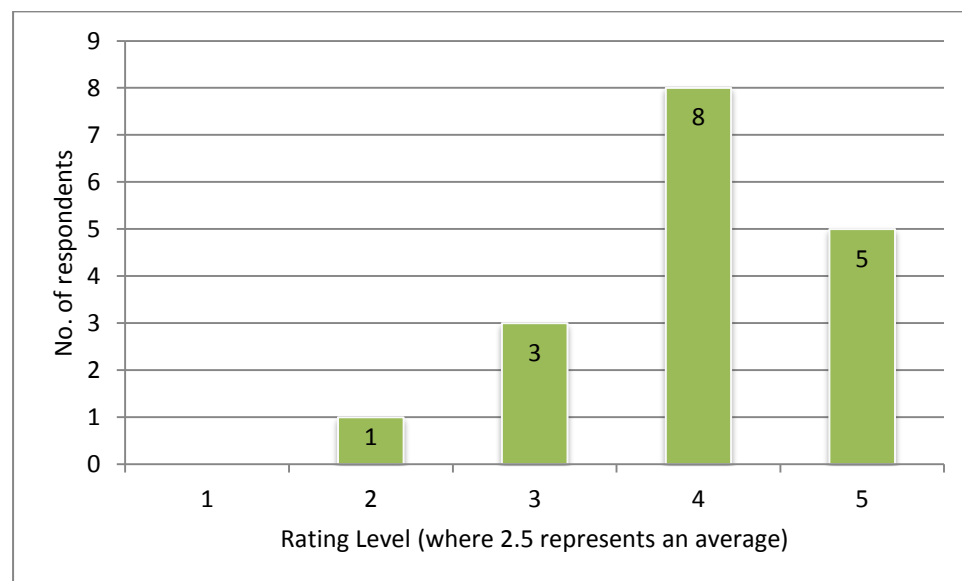
This may be an area where detailed information may be provided to Governors on what the programme consists of before a decision is taken on whether or not to engage with the programme.

Governor comments:

- Not on my first appointment although this may be done nowadays.
- I have to be honest and to the best of my knowledge - I have never been involved in the Governor Development Programme.
- Being provided with more information on the programme.
- I know nothing about this.
- This question assumes we know about this, or can remember. And I am not going to follow a web reference in case it throws me out of this questionnaire.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE SCHOOL

10. How would you rate the relevance and usefulness of School communications to your role (e.g. fundraising updates, strategic updates, progress against strategic targets and other indicators)



Brief analysis of results:

The relevance and usefulness of the School's communications are considered to be highly useful.

Governor comments:

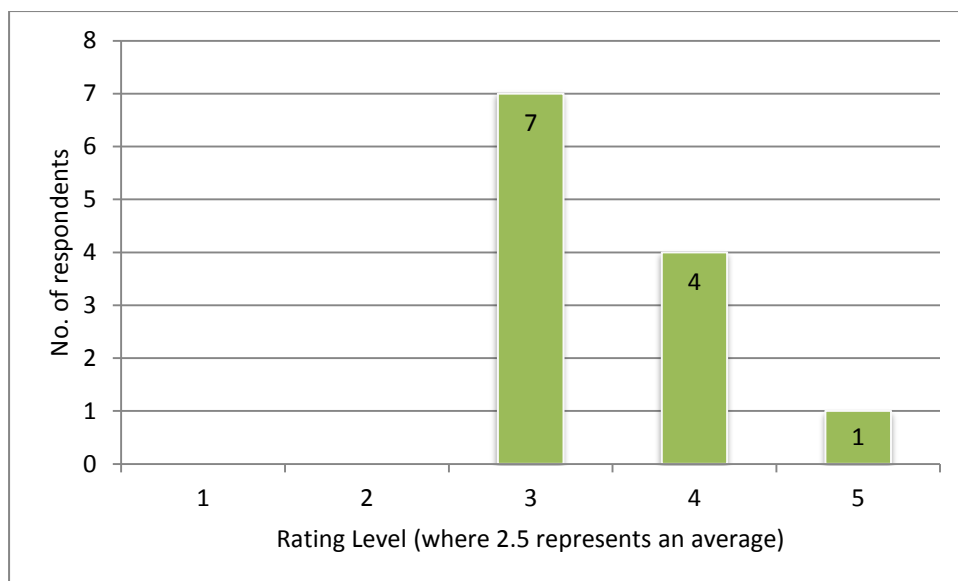
- Better to receive this information at meetings of the Board of Governors to encourage Governors participation and questions.
- The school communications appear to be sufficient. I cannot complete this further as the text for this box response appears to be faulty.
- I think there is scope for greater dissemination of the School's Communications.

11. a) Do you use the School website?

YES = 13

NO = 4

11.b) If yes, how useful do you find it?



Brief analysis of results:

The School's website is considered to be useful with potential for a secure Governors only portal containing quick links to relevant material i.e. Strategic Plans, induction material etc.

11. c) How could it be made more useful to governors?

- This is a small point, but I use it often to find out what events and performances are taking place in the school, and finding a number to call if, for example, one needs to change a booking at the last minute, isn't always clear. So - a more outward-facing public-oriented element to the 'What's On / Events' section would be good.
- As I am not a regular user of the site I cannot offer any suggestions that reflect my experience of the site. I will say however as a general overview it does appear busy and the text is very small.
- I use it mostly to find out what is on. It would be helpful in planning ahead for external bodies with which we are associated to be able to know up to six months in advance what performances are planned so that we can encourage more groups to take up tickets.
- It provides information for and about students which interests the Board, but it is not relevant to governance about which it says nothing.
- Intranet/Governors' portal? Generally find the site a bit dull and jumbled, so tend to use rarely.
- It would be useful to have a secure Governors area of the website.

12. Other comments about the effectiveness of the Board:

- It is for the Principal, Staff and Students to offer their views on the effectiveness of the Board of Governors, which would be very welcome.
- Should the Board be reduced in size?
- An away day at least once a year, with the involvement of external practitioners, would enable the Board to examine and understand issues in greater detail.
- I wonder how the governors, those not connected to the performance world, are elected and whether this process can be improved so that we ensure that discussion is relevant and useful.