

## HANDY HINTS

We occasionally hear of ideas that clerks have come up with to make their lives a little easier. This paper reproduces some of those ideas. Please feel free to adopt these suggestions or amend them to suit you and your governing body.

1. Help governors to help themselves and at the same time encourage them to read the documents that come to you by providing them with a termly list of new documents received. You could send this list out with the agenda for the next meeting, including a note pointing out that governors will find this information in the governors' file in the school office (or wherever else you keep the file). This puts the onus of looking up and reading relevant material back on the governors' shoulders and off yours.
2. When you send out notification and agenda for meetings, add a note asking governors to ensure they read any enclosures or relevant papers before the meeting. Hopefully, this will cut down on wasted time while papers are shuffled and digested on the night.
3. When you type up your minutes, include an 'action' column, to remind your governors of the actions they have been delegated to carry out, eg write to the Director of Education, speak to their councillor, phone the diocese, etc.
4. You may wish to copy documents on different coloured paper to differentiate between, say, minutes and headteacher's report or the reports from the various committees.
5. Circulate a 'register' for governors to sign at the beginning of the meeting, then there cannot be any dispute about who was or was not present.
6. Keep a list to hand during the meeting which shows to which category governors belong and of which committees they are members. It may be necessary for example, to ask associate members to withdraw and it is easier, especially in large governing bodies, if you have a list to hand to remind you who's who.
7. When you set out the agenda, add a column with the estimated time that you expect to spend on each item e.g 10 mins etc. This will need to be agreed with the Chairman, but it will help the Chairman to keep better time control and will also give attendees an idea of how long the meeting will last.
8. Prepare a master distribution list of all governors and others who receive copies of the GB papers e.g. the LA, the Deputy Headteacher and the Diocese as appropriate. This can be used as a checklist for distributions but also as a list for other purposes eg to tick off who is at a meeting, or who has returned their business interest form etc.
9. If you are the returning officer for a governor election, add a photo of each candidate with their election statements.

**Please let us have any other tips that you can recommend**