**Top Tips to Consider when Reconstituting the Governing Board**

A useful starting point in reviewing the governing board constitution is for the board to carry out a skills audit to identify the skills, knowledge, experience and capacity of current governors and any additional specific skills or experience that the governing board needs to be effective.

Governors should be able to demonstrate that they have the skills to contribute to effective governance and the success of the school. The majority of Essex maintained governing boards have reduced the number of elected parent governors to two or three – instead they have ensured they have the flexibility to appoint/keep governors with the competencies they need by appointing parents with valuable skills and experience as *co-opted* governors

Consider changing your composition by altering the number of governors required in a particular category in order to build capacity (if the governing board is small), address long standing vacancies or to bring in governors with the desired skills and experience

Hold any governor vacancies until the governing board has agreed on a new constitution. This will give greater flexibility. For example, the board may agree to reduce the number of parent governors from 5 to 3 – but have just gone out to election for new parent governors!

Remember that another governor cannot simply be slotted into a local authority governor role. There is a process for the appointment of local authority governors (add key contact)

If governors are moving into the co-opted category, they must be appointed as such by the full governing board and their term of office will start again

Reviewing the Instrument of Government is a decision of the full governing board – not just the chair. It must be considered by the governing board as an agenda item at a full governing board meeting

Any proposal to change a school name must be determined by a unanimous vote of the governing board and any governor who is unable to be present at the meeting when the vote is taken will be able to vote by proxy. Proxy voting is not allowed in any other circumstances

Remember that changing the Instrument of Government gives the governing board an opportunity to review the term of office for each category of governor. The Instrument may specify a shorter term of office (being at least a year) for a particular category of governor or that the term of office for an individual governor within a category of governor may be between one and four years

[There is a process for removing surplus governors](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/constitution-of-governing-bodies-of-maintained-schools) (p18, B.3) if reconstitution results in more governors in a particular category than is provided for in its Instrument of Government.