

A Trusted Governance Improvement Organisation

Shaping Governance: A-Z of Governance

Breaking down key governance concepts into clear, digestible insights

E is for Evaluation

Su Turner, our CEO shares her thinking...

Effective governance is the foundation of any successful organisation—whether it's a school, council, or charity. One powerful habit is at the heart of strong governance: **regular board evaluation**. It's how boards stay effective, accountable, and aligned with their mission.

The importance of Board Evaluation

Boards carry huge responsibility. They steer their organisations to be well-run, ethical, and financially sound. But without regular reflection, even the best boards can drift, losing focus, repeating mistakes, or missing key opportunities. Board evaluation is not about ticking boxes but learning, growing, and ensuring that governance makes a difference.

Benefits of Regular Board Evaluations

1. **Enhanced Accountability and Transparency**: Regular evaluations promote a culture of accountability, ensuring that board members adhere to established policies and ethical standards. This transparency builds trust with stakeholders and the community.
2. **Strategic Alignment**: Assessments help boards align their activities with the organisation's mission and strategic goals, ensuring that all contribute effectively to the desired outcomes.
3. **Identification of Skill Gaps**: Through evaluation, boards can identify areas where additional expertise is needed, informing recruitment and professional development efforts.
4. **Improved Decision-Making**: Reflective evaluation encourages critical thinking and collective problem-solving, leading to more informed and effective decisions.

Approaches to Effective Board Evaluation

There's no one-size-fits-all. The best approach depends on your board's context, but here are some tried-and-tested methods:

- **Self-Assessment Tools**: Utilising surveys and questionnaires allows board members to reflect on their performance and identify areas for improvement, using a set of evaluative questions.

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- **External Reviews**: Engaging independent experts provides an objective perspective, offering unbiased insights into board dynamics and effectiveness.
- **Skills Audits**: Regularly assessing the skills and experiences of board members ensures the board possesses the necessary competencies to navigate challenges and seize opportunities.

How Shaping Governance Supports Board Evaluation

At Shaping Governance, we specialise in helping boards evaluate, reflect, and grow, with services tailored to schools, councils, and charities.

Our flagship **Shaping Governance Programme** is our most popular and in-demand offer. It combines the depth of an **external review** with the power of **self-assessment**, creating a reflective, engaging, and evidence-based experience for boards. Boards value it because it's practical, constructive, and built around their real-world challenges. We also offer **independent external reviews** as a standalone service — ideal for boards seeking an objective, expert-led evaluation of their governance practices.

Whichever approach you choose, we provide:

- **Bespoke Evaluation Frameworks** – Designed around your organisation's context, priorities, and governance model
- **Expert Facilitation** – Supporting honest dialogue, constructive challenge, and shared understanding
- **Clear, Actionable Recommendations** – So you leave with a plan that drives real improvement

Our proven methodologies have helped thousands of boards gain clarity, confidence, and the insight they need to govern more effectively. As one client put it:

> *"Shaping Governance had a massive impact on securing governors' knowledge and the skills needed to challenge school leaders effectively."*

Become a Learning Board

Regular evaluation is not merely a best practice but a vital component of organisational success. By committing to ongoing assessment and improvement, boards can ensure they are well-positioned to lead with integrity, transparency, and effectiveness. Shaping Governance is here to help your board become a learning board and transform your governance.

Contact us: Get in touch if you want to find out more: office@shapinggovernance.co.uk

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