



## SGA chairs report 2019

Like all years one tends to write the Chair's Report at the last few days before the AGM often in the hope that something exciting will happen.

This year has been something of an exception, the Chair's Report has been written in the last few days but not in the hope that something interesting would turn up but because so much has been going on of late, that it was again left to burning much midnight oil over the last few nights.



When I set out to recall the year apart from my diary, my planner and my meeting notes I have had a quick look at last year's Report to see how and where we have moved forward.

Last year's conference covered the ideas for a Schools-Led System, and talked about For Schools by Schools supporting each other and working with the Surrey Teaching Schools Network. We also met Dave Hill who had come to Surrey CC to rejuvenate the county's Child Protection Services that had been struggling with making improvements. The pressures on SEND were becoming obvious to all and remain with us but with more Governors aware of the needs and pressures a sharing of solutions is beginning to take place in some quarters.

With the concepts of major change growing from the beginning of last year it became obvious by last year's Conference that the year 2018 /19 was going to see some major re-organisational, management and leadership changes; welcoming and exciting to some daunting and unwarranted to others. Change was ever thus and creating the improvements and moving the focus, the established processes and structures of many years takes some major handling.

Such change programmes often create rumour, frustration and scepticism even in the best of organisations and can leave some stake holders with doubts and fears while filling others with optimism, hope and ambition. In Surrey Education as a whole, many were still recovering from the previous few years growth in Academies and others were wondering how things would function with less direct input from SCC. Also how were we going to cope without the mammoth support of Babcock 4S for school support services. and governor training and development of Steve and his team and projects like Better Governor.

The rumours of total academisation or other giant shifts, pervaded the school corridors and the situation went very quiet as we watched many changes, as the names on the office doors changed or the email address changed and the title of the services and the telephone numbers began to change; for some Halloween had taken hold of life and for others it was fire works and fun. At least there was some reassurance from the Halls of Westminster that when much change was promised sometimes nothing happens at all; now what's the word for running round in circles and going nowhere beginning with B.

Well here we are in Surrey where things do happen, a year on and some way into the planned changes and with some distance still to go and I would like to think that your Association has had a hand in moving things forward and in implementing some changes

that have helped take us on into a viable dynamic and creative future for education in Surrey. After all that, why was it we all became Governors and Trustees wasn't it to play our part in helping build a better future for the next generation through ensuring that every child in the county irrespective of circumstance receives the best possible inclusive broad skilled education.

I would like to think that everyone noticed that SGA nailed their intent to see a brighter new future for education when we launched into the Schools-Led System a year of change with our bright new livery and identity but that was neither the beginning nor the end in March we launched a brand new website taking on the new identity and offering more information in a one-stop-shop helping Governors and Trustees to quickly get to the information they need to keep up-dated, Every month since we have added new links forming new alliances and strengthening old ones with other bodies in Surrey Education.

Now if governors are looking for the latest Strictly Education 4S programme for training and development or if you need the Cognus telephone number or simply wish to know how SAFE is establishing its services start with SGA website. Want to know what is happening in The DfE this week or what Ofsted inspectors are working towards or looking for and more, is all on the SGA website at <https://www.surreygovernance.org.uk> So why not make it your challenge to tell every Governor you know to visit the website once a fortnight for ten minutes and discover the support and the links we offer for you to reach all the agencies in Surrey Education and if one is not there please tell us and we will do something about it. We aim to join all in an easy access one stop web hub.

Leading on from last year's Conference. How have those changes and proposals we were talking about moved on?

- For Schools by Schools has now manifested as SAFE and was launched on the 11<sup>th</sup> October
- SGA launched a new website as a one-stop-shop for Governance
- Much change took place in support, Babcock 4S became Strictly Education 4S
- Surrey Education changed with Liz Mills becoming Director of Education and developed a team around her with the appointment of several Assistant Directors
- Ofsted changed the inspection process and Governance became more in their focus
- The Child Support Service which featured in Dave Hill's speech last year has seen great change and an improved Ofsted letter. The Multi Agency Support Hub (MASH) has now become the Single Point of Access (SPA) and progress is being made.

As these changes have been made SGA have been in there inquisitively asking challenging questions and rigorously checking on what, where, when, how, why and who; not to be awkward, not to slow things down but to help understanding, explain, facilitate and progress each change through fuller awareness deeper consultation and a wider inclusion of the stakeholders to meet broader needs and shape the future with all involved as part of the team. An all-in it together approach while keeping a focus on the fact that we are here to support the improvement of every child's education.

Surrey Governance Association will continue to support through scrutiny and ask that all those who volunteer and take on the mantle of Governors and Trustees do the same in order to build stronger bonds across education and help support and facilitate the strategies for growth and changes we so need.

However Information only flows if you participate and share it. The fact that it exists does not mean anyone other than you are aware of it. It is only what you discuss and share that moves it on that gives it air and creates the debate that brings about successful change. So I am asking you to do one important thing for governance awareness and improvement visit the SGA website for just ten minutes once a fortnight and read one article or find some information on something you're interested in and tell every governor you know or meet to do the same thing, it will make a difference, you will make a difference.

Finally, nothing would happen without you who are reading this now and much is helped by all those thousands of volunteer Governors and Trustees through the county. In turn SGA are all volunteer Governors who want to do a little extra to support colleagues Please consider supporting us by joining our Executive and please support us by telling other Governors and Trustees to use our website and to look out for our termly bulletins.

Those incredibly valuable colleagues who have supported this Chair over three years now most of whom are at the Conference a very special thank you they have performed sterling and exciting work for Governors and neither you nor I could be the same without them. Associations throughout the land are invaluable to society and we should all support those who endeavour to support us. I am deeply indebted to the commitment effort and challenge and support, in no particular order of:

Fred Greaves (Vice Chair), Rosemary Hucker (Treasurer), Doris Neville-Davies, Colin Taylor, David Barter, Sandy Horvath, Glenys Mason, new member Catharina Hickson, Philip Miller, Graeme Ross, the team all supported if not indeed carried by our excellent dedicated and my SGA prop administrator Sheila Danson.

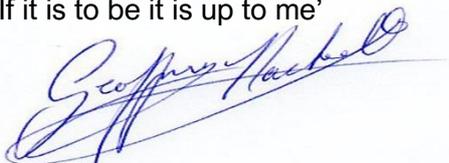
If you can spare a little extra time and would like to play an active part on the [SGA Executive](#) please contact us through Sheila Danson [admin@surreygovernance.org.uk](mailto:admin@surreygovernance.org.uk) you will be very welcome.

Last of all, I would like everyone to recognise that every Governor in Surrey plays a vital role in maintaining and improving the standards of education for every child in Surrey. Ensuring that they receive the best opportunity through their school, to become valued members of the community fulfilling a role we can all recognise, appreciate and applaud loudly with pride.

Well, while in a Chair's Report the indulgence of looking back is fine, the important thing is to look forward. So on with the Conference and essentially the new year my offering for you is simply these ten very powerful words of only two letters each but when worked together in order are so powerful for each and every one to write in the front of their diary.

Ten powerful words for you.

'If it is to be it is up to me'



Geoffrey Hackett

Chair **Surrey Governance Association**

2<sup>nd</sup> November 2019