



Season's Greetings

As we come to the end of 2019, take a moment to reflect and feel pride at your achievements over the past year. Remember to send a Christmas message to your governing board and enjoy a restful Christmas break.

Please see the following pages for some of Herts for Learning's recent highlights.

The Governance Team



Pictured: Hertfordshire Association of School Governors (HASG) Outstanding Governors Award winners

The Hertfordshire Annual Governors Conference 2019

Thank you to those of you who attended the Hertfordshire Annual Governors Conference on Saturday 16th November this year. Over 200 governors joined us for the day, which focused on what governors need to understand about the curriculum, and feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

A full news article can be found on our website [here](#), and seminar presentations are available [here](#).

Here is some of your feedback:

“ A really fantastic day, very informative. Lots of useful tools to access and share with governors. Thank you for the great seminars and speakers
Debra Gee, Chair of Governors, St Albert the Great Catholic Primary School ”

“ Inspirational talk at the beginning and the seminars I attended were excellent. I am looking forward to sharing learnings with the rest of my governing board
David Canning, Governor, Garston Manor School ”

“ I now have more questions to ask of my school. I feel better informed so that I can challenge the leaders more effectively
Nicola Santamaria, Chair of Governors, Kingsway Junior School ”



The Hertfordshire Year of Culture 2020 mascot was just one of our exhibitors at the conference this year. To access the HYOC2020 factsheet, [click here](#).

MG ModernGovernor

Over 1,700 e-learning courses have been completed through **Modern Governor** since April 2019! With plans to provide additional e-learning courses in the new year, and some exciting new plans for the partnership between Modern Governor and GovernorHub, the HfL Governance team are always happy to hear your feedback and continue to improve in this area.



GovernorHub

GovernorHub Premium

The majority of Hertfordshire maintained schools now have access to GovernorHub Premium and are now benefiting from the governing board's ability to communicate more effectively and store documents safely. This service allows governing boards to save time and improve record keeping. If your school is a Hertfordshire maintained school interested in accessing GovernorHub Premium, please get in touch with the HfL Governance team: governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk for more details.

HfL Chairs' Service: The Chairs' Portal

The Chairs' Portal is now available via GovernorHub to provide additional support for subscribers to the HfL Chairs' Service. The portal comes at no additional cost to subscribers of the Chairs' Service and will allow all Chairs to enhance the effectiveness of their role. Further details on the Chairs' Portal are available on [page 10](#).

From all of us at Herts for Learning, we wish you a relaxing festive season and a happy, fulfilling new year. We look forward to working with you in 2020.

The Herts for Learning Governance Services Team

 @HfLGovernance  HfL Governance

The Herts for Learning Governance Services Team

We offer the following services to support governors and schools:

- Governance Helpdesk
- Governance Consultancy
- Governor Training
- Chairs Service
- External Review of Governance
- Clerking Service
- GovernorHub database

For details of what these services include please contact: governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk

Contact details for support can be found below.

Governance support for maintained schools and subscribing academies (Helpdesk)

01438 843082

governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk

Clerking support for subscribing schools (Clerking Service/Clerks Training and Support)

01438 843082

governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk

Governor recruitment support for maintained schools and subscribing academies (Helpdesk)

01438 843082

lea.governors@hertsforlearning.co.uk

Clerking Service enquiries, queries and additional meetings (complaints/exclusion hearings etc.)

01438 844113

clerking@hertsforlearning.co.uk

Chairs support and guidance for subscribing schools (Chairs Service)

01438 843082

governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk

Training advice and guidance for subscribing schools (Governor Training)

01438 843082

governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk

Training bookings, cancellations or in house bookings (with agreed dates)

01438 845111 (option 2)

training@hertsforlearning.co.uk

GovernorHub support and enquiries

01438 843082

governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk



GovernorHub: saving you time recording governor training

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So as to ensure that governors continue to have the necessary skills to contribute to the effective governance and success of the schools, governing bodies should enable their governors to receive any appropriate training and development needed to address any skills gaps; and where appropriate liaise with local authorities in doing so

The constitution of governing bodies of maintained schools.

Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and local authorities in England, August 2017

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It is generally agreed that continuous professional development is essential for governors in order for them to remain effective. ***The Constitution of governing bodies***, the ***Governance Handbook*** and the ***Academies Financial handbook*** all make reference to identifying gaps in skills on the board and enabling governors to access relevant training. An accurate record of the training that governors have completed is an essential part of this identification process, as well as proof of their commitment and dedication to the role.

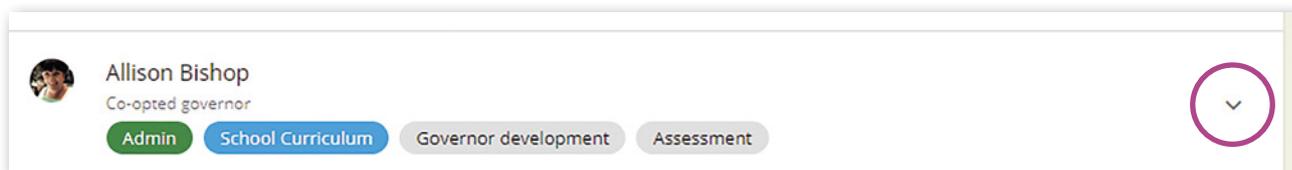
For schools that subscribe to the **GovernorHub Premium** package, maintaining accurate training records is simple and effective. Herts for Learning (HfL) recommends that governors update their own training record as soon as they have completed a course.

The training record function is located on each governor's personal profile and can be updated using the quick steps below:

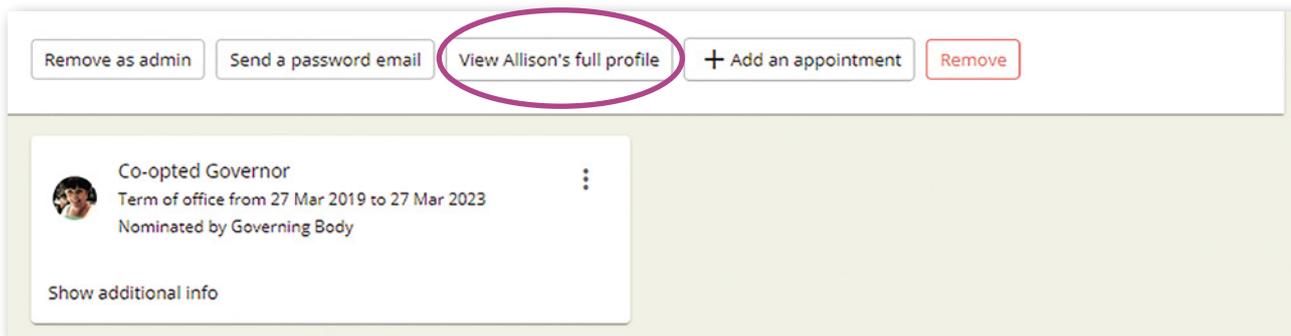
1. Log into your GovernorHub account and click on the 'Governing Board' tab.



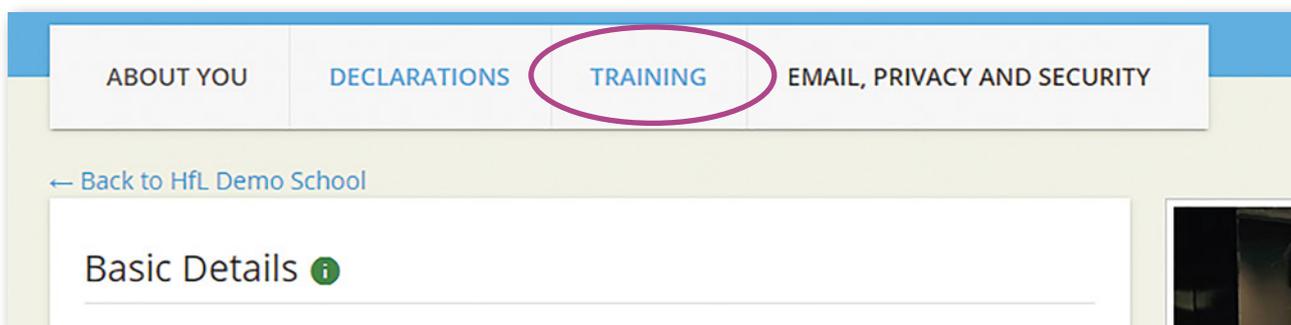
2. Find your name and click on the down arrow at the right hand side of the row.



3. Click on the 'View [Your name's] full profile' button.



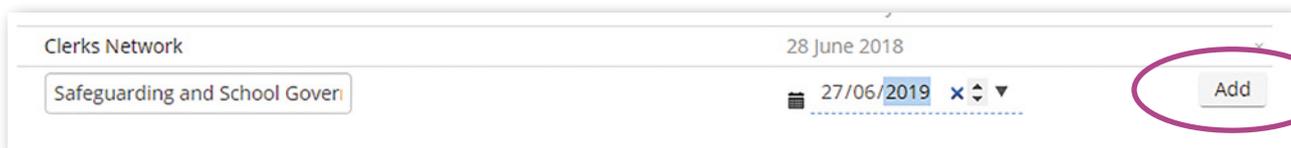
4. Click on your 'Training' tab.



5. Click 'Add a new training record...'



6. Enter the full details of the training you have completed in the boxes available and click the 'Add' button.

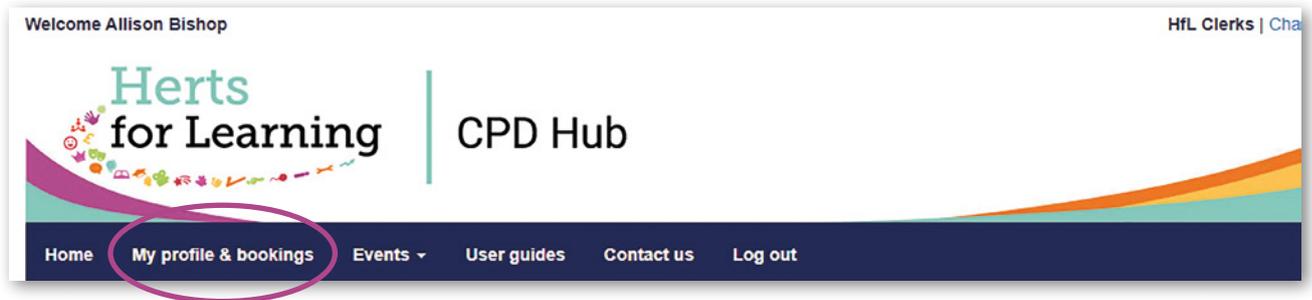


Governors in maintained Hertfordshire schools with the Standard package of GovernorHub can also make use of the training record function, but their Clerk or a Training and Development governor with admin rights will need to upload their training on their behalf. Please note – this responsibility is **not** part of the job role for an HfL Clerk.

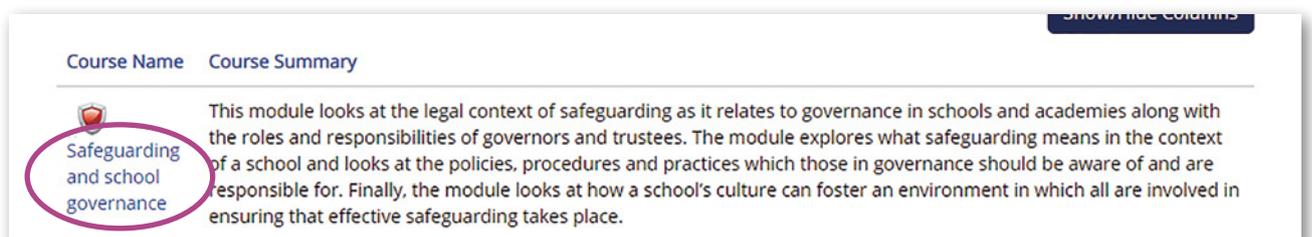
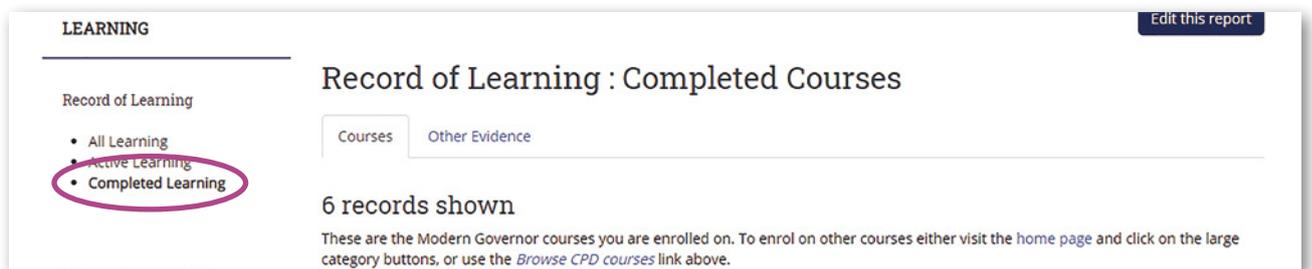
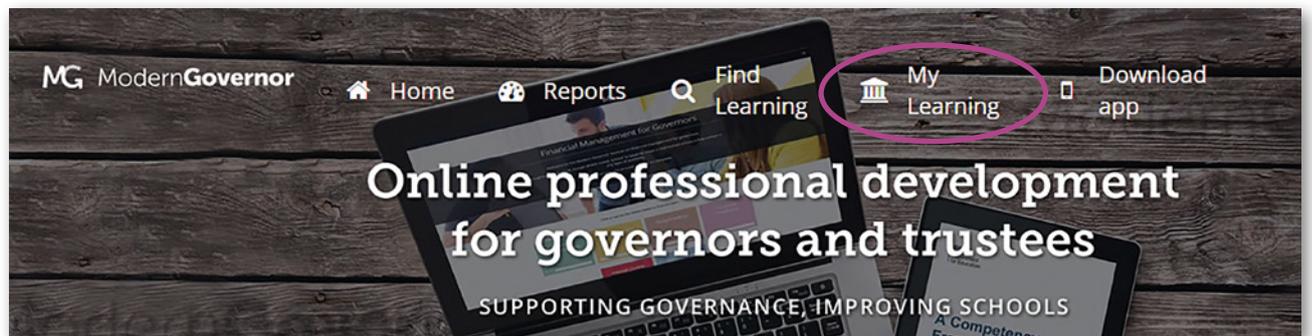
Where can I see an overview of my completed training?

Although HfL and Modern Governor training courses are currently not automatically updated onto GovernorHub, plans are underway for this function to become available via GovernorHub in the new year. Currently, an overview of your completed training can be found on the HfL CPD Hub and Modern Governor websites, using following processes.

Since June 2019, face-to-face governor training completed on the **HfL CPD Hub** has been recorded on each governors 'My profile and bookings' tab (pictured below).



Completed e-learning courses are recorded on the 'My Learning' tab in **Modern Governor**. The relevant certificates are also available to download from this location, and can be added to a central file in the 'Documents' section on GovernorHub if required.



Welcome to the Safeguarding and School Governance module.

Throughout this module we will look at the legal context of safeguarding as it relates to governance in schools and academies along with the roles and responsibilities of governors and trustees.

This introductory module should take you around 35 minutes to complete and should be completed in conjunction with the other Modern Governor modules on wider issues around safeguarding & child protection which are available as part of your subscription to Modern Governor.

[Announcements](#)

One of the great advantages of using GovernorHub to record governor training is that the system can be used to keep records of any relevant training completed by governors - all in one place. Governors can record training courses they have completed in school, at work or in any other voluntary roles in the same way that they record courses completed through HfL.

How can the Board access a list of everyone’s training?

Once governors have added their individual training records, either the Clerk or the Training and Development governor can download a record of the whole board’s training for analysis to inform future training and governor recruitment. Screenshots are provided below for a quick reference point.

Supported by Herts for Learning Governor Services

NOTICEBOARD CALENDAR DOCUMENTS GOVERNING BOARD

Members Roles Committees Constitution Healthcheck Downloads About

People who can see the Governing Board's pages
The following people can see HfL Demo School's pages on GovernorHub

[Add Member](#) [Export Data](#)

Membership

<p>Membership list A membership list for the governing board</p>	PDF	Word	Excel
<p>EduBase format list of members A spreadsheet for easily copying data into EduBase</p>	PDF	Word	Excel
<p>Training records A combined list of training records for the governing board</p>	PDF	Word	Excel

If you would like a quote to purchase the GovernorHub Standard package, or upgrade to the GovernorHub Premium package, please contact us on 01438 843082 or email: governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk.



Launch of the New Online Local Offer for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Have you heard of the Local Offer website? The Local Offer lets parents and young people know what special educational needs and disabilities services are available in Hertfordshire, and who can access them.

As part of Hertfordshire's programme to transform SEND services, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) have spent the past year coproducing with parents and families of young people with SEND to create a brand new website, which is a better signposting tool to help families find the support they need. We've launched the website in a test area - during this test phase we are asking people to take a look and give us their feedback – HCC will use what people tell us to make improvements before we do a full launch in the new year.

[Click here to access the temporary website.](#)

Save the Date: there will be a Local Offer Website launch on Tuesday 21st January from 12pm to 7pm at the Stanborough Centre in Watford. Further details will follow between now and the new year.



University of Hertfordshire, Hertfordshire Law School: Streetlaw Project

The Streetlaw project is a global legal education project aimed at improving access to justice by demystifying areas of law that affect the wider community. StreetLaw students work in teams to prepare and deliver workshops to school children about their legal rights and responsibilities as citizens within society. The workshops are designed to be interactive and engaging by having activities such as group discussions, quizzes, and role play scenarios. The programme allows learners to develop their cognitive, expressive, and independent thinking skills in a controlled and respectful manner.

Topics covered include: human rights, discrimination, bullying and harassment, social media, sexual consent and stop and search. The Streetlaw project are happy to design workshops tailored to your school's needs as well as offer mentoring to schools taking part in the Young Citizens' Magistrates' Court Mock Trials Competition.

To find out more about booking a Streetlaw presentation for your school, [click here](#).

DfE School Governance Update

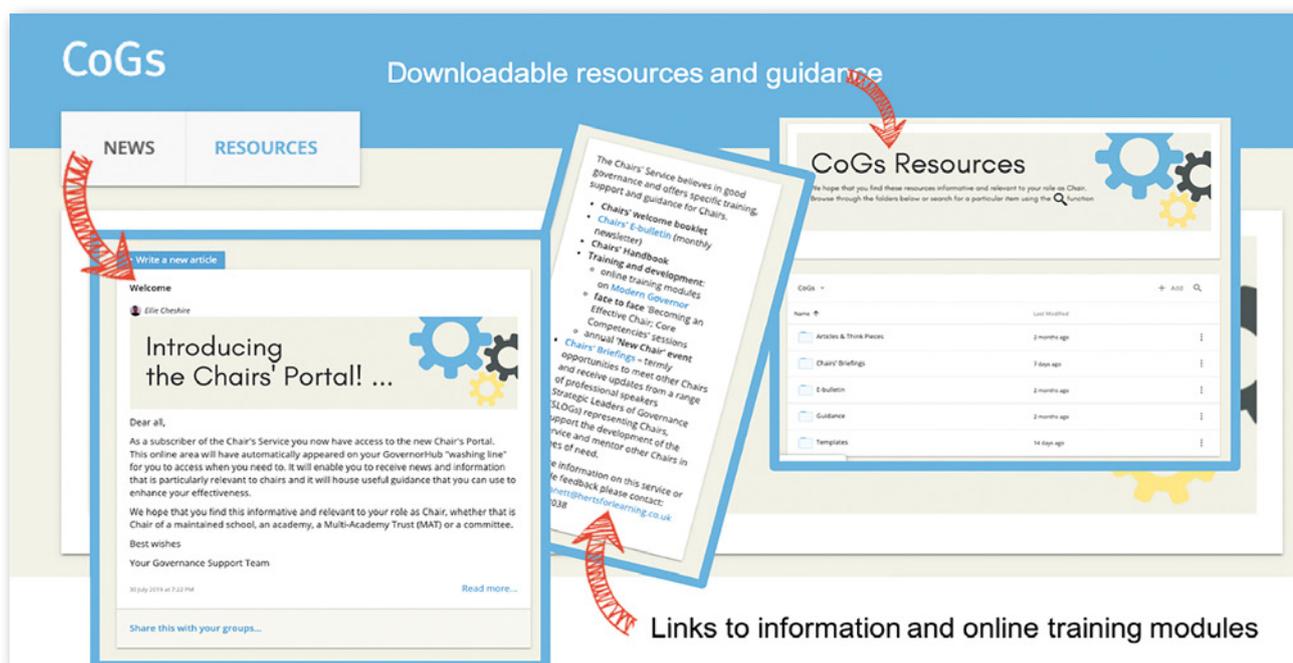
[Click here](#) for important news and communications from the Department for Education (DfE) relating to governance in maintained schools and academy trusts in England. Recent updates include:

- DfE governance research project
- Funding factsheet for governors and trustees
- Financial planning and training
- Teacher recruitment and retention strategy
- Career guidance for young people
- GIAS update

The Chairs' Portal is now live on GovernorHub

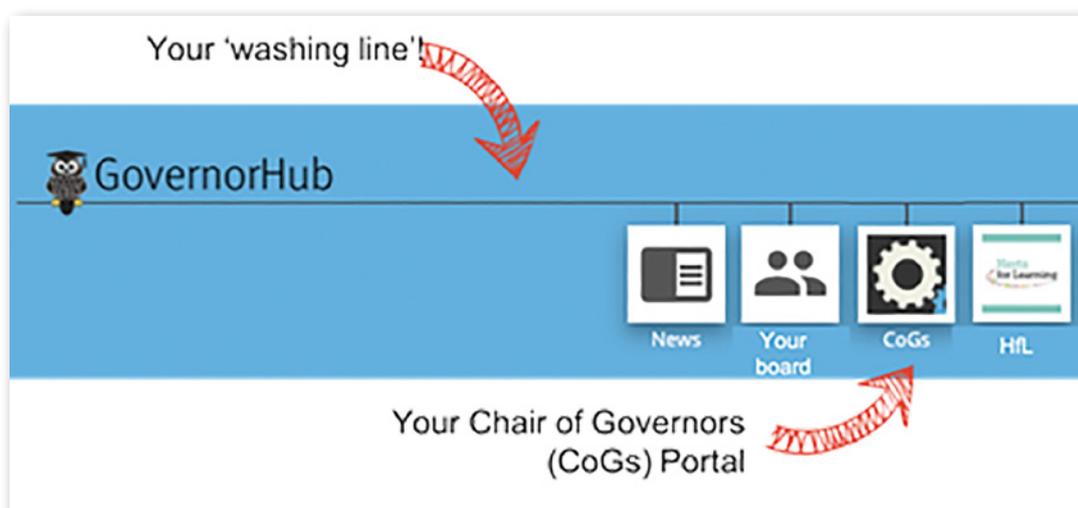
At no extra cost to all HfL Chairs' Service subscribers, the Chairs Portal provides users with:

- Focused news and information direct to their inbox
- Relevant articles, guidance, tools and templates to enhance the effectiveness of their role as Chair
- A rolling series of Modern Governor e-learning modules for Chairs



Logging on to the Chairs' Portal: GovernorHub subscribers (Standard or Premium)

The Chairs' Portal (as seen in the image below 'CoGs') appears automatically on your 'washing line' when you log in, with no need to re-subscribe or create new passwords.



Logging on to the Chairs' Portal: Non-GovernorHub subscribers

Herts for Learning will need the right details for you and your permission to add you to the Chairs' Portal.

- Schools need to email governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk confirming the name and email address of your Chair and their permission to be added to the Chairs' Portal.
- Herts for Learning will then activate a 'Chairs' Portal Only' subscription of GovernorHub and an invitation will be sent to the Chair via email.

Please note that accessing the Chairs' Portal does not require subscription to other GovernorHub features.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to email: governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk

Herts for Learning Technology Showcase: Developing your school's IT strategy

Wednesday 26th February 2020

The focus for this year's HfL's Technology Showcase has now been confirmed; Developing your school's IT strategy. Governors are welcomed to join SLT, subject leaders and teachers in attending this exciting free event featuring:

- A variety of free seminars and workshops on topics such as 'The Power of an Effective IT strategy' (separate sessions available for primary and secondary), 'The Digital Divide' and 'Effective use of technology to support SEN'.
- A tech surgery with account managers available to answer your questions on how to realise your IT strategy with unused devices and using the Cloud in your school.
- A live debate on 'Technology in Schools'.
- School case study presentations on topics such as the computing curriculum in schools.
- Exhibitors showcasing a range of innovative technology resources and services.



Please note the event runs from 9.00am – 4.30pm, but content will be repeated throughout the day to allow for either half-day attendance or full-day attendance, depending on your preference (Approx. times: Morning 9.00am – 1.00pm, Afternoon 12.00pm – 4.00pm).

To book your place, visit the CPD Hub: <https://hfl.mobi/HTSCe3> (course code: COM/19/23/A)

If you or your school would like to be involved, please contact training@hertsforlearning.co.uk for further information.

SEND module now available

A new module on SEND is now live on Modern Governor to help you understand the SEND link role and responsibilities. [Log in here to access the module.](#)

Herts for Learning: The Great School Framework

Over the past year, many of you will have heard about the **Great School Framework** (GSF), which strives to bring together and share the component parts of what makes a 'great school'. Its development has been a collaborative venture, with input from a number of HfL colleagues, and benefits from feedback from many Hertfordshire school leaders. The GSF describes the constituent parts of a utopian school, broken down into 10 aspirational features, and can be used:

- to generate debate and discussion
- to facilitate in-school, school-to-school, peer and external school improvement reviews/activities
- as a self-audit tool
- to support school improvement planning

Access to the Great School Framework

All Hertfordshire maintained schools and academies have free access to the GSF through a portal on the Herts for Learning website. To access the portal, [click here](#).

Please note you will need to login to your main school account for full access (your headteacher can provide your school access details). For further information on account set up, please see our [FAQs](#). Alternatively contact info@hertsforlearning.co.uk or 01438 845111.

Our vision of a great school goes well beyond an Ofsted "outstanding" descriptor and the features of the framework cover aspects of provision that Ofsted does not measure. We have striven to create a framework that would be as relevant to schools and settings twenty years ago as it is today and will be in the next twenty years. We hope that you and your teams are inspired by the GSF to strive for constant improvement and look forward to working with you to achieve this over the coming months and years.



Schools Financial Values Standard (SFVS): FREE on-demand webinar

This term, governors of maintained schools received information on accessing a free SFVS webinar to support with the preparation of the 2019/20 audit submission. The cost to set up the webinar has been funded by Herts County Council.

Please email: governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk if you have not received this link.

Interested in becoming an HfL Clerk?

HfL clerks provide essential support and advice to governing boards across the county. The work is interesting and flexible, with full training provided. We are currently recruiting throughout the county. For further details, please contact Kelly King: clerking@hertsforlearning.co.uk

Glossary of terms and acronyms now available on the HfL website

Many governors struggle with the acronyms commonly used at meetings. It is easy for school staff (and clerks) to abbreviate without considering that governors work in different fields and may not be aware of what everything means.

To help new and struggling governors, we've put together a 'Glossary of terms and acronyms' document to help identify those used in education settings and which may come up in governors' meetings – [online here](#). It is useful to refer to, but always remember you can ask if you are unsure of any term that is being discussed.

We've also put together the following quiz for you to test your current knowledge on commonly used acronyms. Answers can be found at the end of the Herts Governor newsletter.

1	EYFS	
2	SDP	
3	NQT	
4	DSL	
5	UIFSM	
6	GDC	
7	PAN	
8	PSHE	
9	GIAS	
10	PPA	
11	RSE	
12	SBM	
13	SFVS	
14	HLTA	
15	URN	

The Chair's Service Updates: Supporting all Chairs

The Chairs' Service is moving from strength to strength, with this autumn seeing the launch of the Chairs Portal (see [page 10](#) for further details). The Chairs' Portal is an area where all Chairs who subscribe to the Chairs' service can access a range of useful documents that will be regularly refreshed in order to help them lead and manage the board. The monthly Chairs' e-Bulletin is easy to access via the Chairs' Portal, acting as a useful reminder for a range of current governor and educational issues.

Additional Modern Governor e-learning courses are now also available to Chairs, to support with good leadership skills and team management. These will be refreshed on a termly basis.

We hope that Chairs are also enjoying the new style of **strategic briefings**. Launched last year, they have been a great success at the Fielder Centre, with over 100 attendees at the briefing in October and providing positive feedback on the venue and style. Remember, any two governors can attend if the chair is unavailable (including your Headteacher; if he or she is a governor). There is also the opportunity to speak with a Governance Adviser prior to the presentations if you have a need (please book in advance).

“ The Chairs' Service is an excellent resource when tricky issues arise. They respond quickly with clear advice. No problem is too big or too small. They have been so helpful throughout my time as chair of South Hill Primary.

Juliet Woodford, Former Chair of Governors, South Hill Primary School ”

Chairs that have been newly appointed over the 12-18 months are invited to a 'Speed Date' event, with experienced Chairs **Strategic Leaders of Governance (SLOGS)** on the **30th January 2020** at Robertson House. A further networking opportunity is also available over a light supper, to discuss informally any difficult issues you may be experiencing. All Chairs attending will receive a range of documents to further support them in their role, and can ask for a mentor to support them during their first year as Chair.

The 'Becoming an Effective Chair' training course has now been remodelled to encompass the **Core Competencies**, and acts as a useful reminder for experienced and new Chairs. Further information is emailed out to all delegates after the event, to enable all Chairs to access what they want when they need it. Please note that all of the face-to-face training is available to all Chairs – Vice Chairs, Chairs of Committees and aspiring Chairs.

The Hertfordshire Chairs' Handbook, which is free as part of the subscription is currently being revised as an online tool. It will be ready for the new financial year in April and available via the Chairs portal.

Finally, don't forget the **Chairs 360 Review** assessment available (as recommended in the Twenty/Twenty One Questions – NGA), which is designed to be supportive, personal and reassuring in your voluntary 'career' as a Chair in Hertfordshire.

“ The Chairs service provides invaluable advice on best practice; experienced mentoring if we come across any challenging issues, plus very professional training resources and good networking opportunities. It has helped us create a really effective Governing Body.

Nicola Mullett, Chair of Governors, St John's VC Infant and Nursery School ”

The Chairs' service is here to support all Chairs. It is a service for Chairs, run by Chairs. If you have any ideas how the service can be improved, please email: kathy.dunnnett@hertsforlearning.co.uk

Your Governing Board: Who is in your Team GB?

Building and maintaining your Team GB is important.

Starting with governor recruitment. For most boards, recruitment can be an issue – for some boards it feels more like a battle – constantly trying to find anyone – with the time and commitment, the **skills audit** can feel impossible.

What you are aiming for (of course) is a **diverse** group of people with the right skills, the time, the energy, the commitment and the will to work within a team in running the business of a school (**The Right People Round the Table**).

If you are one of the unlucky schools that struggles constantly with governor recruitment, it is worth considering the task as a link role – focused on governor recruitment and retention. Perhaps it is a role that a staff governor could undertake, as it does not involve holding their colleagues to account. You could extend the role to also involve governor development, ensuring that boards book their free in-house with Herts for Learning (**subscribers to training**) in a timely way (maintained schools before January and academies before May) – to avoid a mad rush during Feb/March and June/July.

Is your governor recruitment process working well?

Does the Chair or another governor contact potential candidates in a timely way – or are they contacted two weeks later, because of holidays or emails not working? You may miss your opportunity if you do not respond quickly to candidates.

Do you have an experienced mentor for all new governors? Is your mentor welcoming and friendly – clearly showing them key processes and where to find relevant information? Do they explain what the role descriptor really means in practice? And the acronyms? (refer to our article on **page 13**). A mentor could do one or two governor visits with a new governor, to build their confidence and to iron out any misunderstandings they may still have about their role.

What about the existing team?

Are you an active team, or a group of people that get together occasionally? Do you support each other in your roles and plan effectively for the next year? Who is looking to stand down and who is looking to step up? Does everyone have an opportunity to discuss their concerns and celebrate successes with the Chair or Vice Chair on an individual basis at least annually? Taking the time to understand your team and their needs helps encourage new governors to stay – and persuade those who can no longer commit to consider their options (perhaps as an associate member?).

Who leads Team GB?

If the Chair is strong and the team are well led, the board will also be strong. The opposite can apply if the Chair is not confident in leading the team and having 'courageous conversations'.

Governors need to reflect on **succession planning** within the team, and not vote in weak leadership due to a lack of volunteers. It is fair to say that some Chairs may feel trapped in a position where they are no longer able to manage the helm. They have worked hard, taking on everything that no-one else wants to do and trying to be everything to everyone, instead of effectively delegating, managing and leading. Chairs that do everything become their own worst enemy, stuck in a role they no longer enjoy because they are exhausted. As a result, their team, without an effective leader, are not a team at all - but a group of people without structure or a plan and wondering what to do next.

The role of Chair is not to be left with completing the unpopular jobs. There is a statutory role for all governors that needs to be adhered to. Chairs can set themselves up to fail as other governors then believe the role of the Chair is to do everything, as well as discouraging others to volunteer as they feel unable to commit. Is it time to refresh and reframe?

Consider if you are achieving your statutory responsibilities and whether other 'jobs' that are not part of the **governance role** have crept in. For example – writing policies or proof reading. As a team are you strategic or have you become operational? Be clear on where the boundaries are – supporting the Christmas school play, advising the Headteacher on HR issues, painting sheds, training staff are preparing book bags are all not governance tasks. Ensure as a team you are completing essential **governance** tasks. Plan to achieve your 'could dos' as a team, with equal opportunities for all.

All of the above may seem a big as – which is why **Herts for Learning's Governance service team** are here to support all boards. Tools like GovernorHub also improve the organisation and coordination of governing boards – also reducing the risk of losing good practice, procedures and policies when strong governors leave.

If you feel that you have strong working practices and these could support other boards, please consider providing a case study for the next Herts Governor newsletter. By sharing good practice and great ideas with all schools in Hertfordshire we can all help children fulfil their potential.

Kathy Dunnett

Senior Governance Adviser, Herts for Learning

Welcome to the 'Clerks in Herts' section of the HfL Governance Newsletter. This term's focus has been on appointing, training and mentoring new clerks. The highly valued HfL Governance Helpdesk has also been answering all of your clerking queries – key themes this term have including parent elections, complaints, exclusions and clerks training.

Although we have been focusing on recruitment this term, we do still have clerking vacancies. So if you are interested in increasing your clerking experience, please see the recruitment article on **page 19**.

Wishing you all a lovely Christmas and new year.

Kelly King

Clerking Officer, Herts for Learning

Clerks' Networks

The autumn term networks focused on the strategic role of governors and the part the clerk plays in supporting this.

Kathy Dunnett (Senior Governance Adviser, HfL) provided a very informative and interactive session focused on dealing with challenging governors, the confidence of the clerk and strategic challenge from the board. Kelly King (Clerking Officer, HfL) focused a best practice item on minutes, giving advice and examples. Updates on GovernorHub, governor training, education news and reminders were also addressed.

The presentation, handouts and further resources recommended in the session have been circulated to all HfL clerks and clerks with a current clerks' training and support subscription. If you have a subscription and have not received this circulated information please email: clerking@hertsforlearning.co.uk and we will confirm if your contact details are on the subscription list. If you do not subscribe to the clerk's training and support service, please see the article on this essential clerks' service and upcoming changes.

Themes for the upcoming year will include: the financial timeline for governors, GovernorHub and Ofsted – what has been learnt in 2019. If there are items not included, that you would like more information, please contact: clerking@hertsforlearning.co.uk

The networks are held across the county and we rotate the venues throughout the academic year to ensure all clerks have an opportunity to attend.

School Complaints (Maintained Schools)

Best Practice Guidance for School Complaints (for maintained schools) was updated in March 2019 – available [here](#). The Herts County Council (HCC) Complaints team are currently finalising the HCC model policy available on the Grid and the new version should be available by the end of this term. The **current version** features helpful guidance for clerks regarding the process and templates on the Grid.

Complaints to the school about an one-off issue must be handled in line your school's complaint policy. Important advice for a clerk to give on a potential complaint is:

- Read the policy and check the school's agreed procedure.
- Highlight the importance of governors not getting involved in any discussion at informal, or stage 1.
- Explain the reason for the above in that you may need sufficient impartial governors on the school's own board to form a panel if moved to stage 2.

The DfE's document draws attention to complaints about the whole governing body (which we believe will be a rarity). As a clerk it is important to take note where this applies the complaint will be made direct to the clerk. It is the clerk's responsibility to source an independent investigator to complete stage 1 and co-opted governors from other schools to complete stage 2.

Schools may have links with other settings whose governors can support with an impartial panel to hear the complaint. If this is not an option, the Governance Helpdesk can be contacted but please note there is no guarantee of being able to provide volunteers to support, hence the above is essential. **HfL clerks must contact the Governance Team in the first instance.**

Once the HCC model policy is updated, your board may wish to review and update their school's policy in line with the model policy.

Any subscribing governor/clerk involved with a complaint can contact the Governance Helpdesk for advice/support (this is included in the helpdesk/clerk's training and support subscription) but please ensure you have read your school's complaints policy and procedures in advance.

Parent Elections

The full process for parent elections can be found by visiting the FAQs on **HfL's Clerks Corner** or by referring to your copy of the Clerk's Handbook (clerk's training and support subscribers only). Please make sure you have reviewed this guidance first, as you may find the answer to your queries without needing to contact the Helpdesk.

Exclusions

HfL highly recommends that all clerks receive exclusions training, as your school may be challenged at any time with arranging an exclusion hearing. The DfE document and HCC guidance and templates can be found on the Grid [here](#). For details of the next available clerks training session on exclusions, please refer to the training section of this newsletter. Please note this invaluable session is only held every other term and places go quickly.

New Herts for Learning Clerks required

HfL are looking to recruit additional clerks in all areas in Herts due to a number of clerks recently retiring and moving out of the area. If you would like to increase your clerking experience or are looking to become a clerk for the first time, please email: clerking@hertsforlearning.co.uk

We offer a full induction for all new clerks, and all clerks are put on an internal development programme to increase their skill set. We pay competitive rates to clerks in line with their skills, experience and completion of our development programme.

Department for Education (DfE) new monthly updates and school policies

In September, the DfE launched their new monthly [school governance update](#). This is intended to provide those working within governance access to relevant government information.

The monthly update will be circulated to all governors whom have provided details on [get information about schools](#) (GIAS). To guarantee that your governors receive the monthly updates, please ensure your school keeps the GIAS records up to date.

The DfE has also looked to consolidate its resources into a web page for [trustees and academy committee members](#) and a web page for [governing local authority maintained schools](#). Governors and clerks can now find useful links, guidance documents and other resources (such as model policies) provided by the DfE in one location.

The new collections also include links to a new guidance document on [statutory policies for schools and academy trusts](#). Here you will find a helpful new list of statutory policies required of both maintained schools and academies. The guide starts with a list of all such policies - stating who it applies to, the review period and the approval level. It then goes on to list each policy – listing each type of school to which it applies, information on how and by whom the policy should be reviewed.

2019/20 Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) checklist (Maintained Schools)

The DfE has added minor clarifications to its [2019/20 SFVS checklist](#).

The clarifications state that “maintained schools must submit the SFVS annually to their local authority (LA)” and the SFVS is designed to help schools and governing boards meet “basic standards for good financial health and resource management”.

The updated checklist offers governors and trustees a series of questions to answer regarding the financial skills, structure and accountability on their board. This guidance is specifically relevant for maintained schools, but could also be useful for academy trusts. The submissions arrangements have not changed: the SFVS form should be sent to the Herts County Council by 31st March each year. Herts guidance is available on the Grid [here](#).

Ofsted Feedback: Clerk's Attendance

Clerks can now be invited to attend the Ofsted feedback meeting to take notes. Please be advised information received at these meetings is confidential until publication of the report and can only be shared with the Headteacher, SLT and governors.

If HfL clerks receive a request to attend these meetings, please notify the HfL Governance Services Team in advance.

HR Services Policy and Portal updates

HR Services have reviewed many of the HR policies/procedures and/or supporting documents available on the HR Services Portal. **Please note the portal is only available to school's that subscribe to HR services.**

New guidance and toolkit documents on the areas listed below have been added to the portal:

- Disciplinary; this includes policy, toolkit and supporting guidance.
- Redundancy; this includes Redundancy policy, toolkit and useful guidance.
- Recruitment and onboarding; this includes Safer Recruitment policy, Probation policy and supporting documents.

The following guidance and toolkit documents will follow later this term once union consultation is complete: Flexible Working, Managing Performance, Social Media and Resolving Problems in the Workplace.

A summary of the latest additions and revisions can be found via the HR Services Portal. Please use your individual school login details to access HsR Services documents on the portal.

Reminder: Book your In-house Governor Training Session

All schools now receive one in-house training session as part of their Governor Training subscription (MATs - please refer to your subscription details for what is included in your package). This in-house session must be taken by the end of your settings financial year and **cannot be carried over**. Maintained schools must have received these sessions by the end of March 2020. We strongly advise contacting our training and events team to book your session if you have not done so already. When booking, please identify 3 dates of availability and send these with the title of your chosen session to: training@hertsforlearning.co.uk. A full list of courses available can be found on our website [here](#).

Governor Training Records

- For governor face-to-face training and in-house training sessions records up to the end of May 2019, please email: governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk.
- For governor face-to-face training and in-house training sessions records from June 2019, governors will need to view their individual profiles on the CPD Hub (guidance provided on [page 7](#)).
- For e-learning training governors will need to access their individual 'My Learning' tabs on Modern Governor (guidance provided on [page 7](#)).
- We would advise you to ask your governors to record their training, when completed, on GovernorHub (Premium package), or to let the Training and Development governor know what they have completed, so that it can be recorded centrally if the school has a GovernorHub Standard package or does not subscribe to GovernorHub.

New Governors: Actions Required by Clerk

GovernorHub Subscribers

Please add new governors to GovernorHub. Ensure you have added the governor category and term of office otherwise they will be treated as non-governors (e.g. school office staff).

Non-subscribers to GovernorHub

Please email: governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk with the governors name and governor email address.

The HfL Governance Services Team run a weekly report on new governors. New governors will receive an email from governance welcoming them as a governor and advising of training recommendations.

Please note: Governors that have been added without a category or term of office on GovernorHub will not receive this email.

Resigning Governors: Actions Required by Clerks

GovernorHub Subscribers

Please keep note of the term of office and category for the school's records, but remove the governor's access to GovernorHub.

Non-subscribers to GovernorHub

Please email: governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk with the governors name and governor email address.

The governance helpdesk frequently run a report on resigning governors and will ensure that the relevant governor no longer has access to Modern Governor e-learning.

Please note: The school office will need to remove the governor's access on the CPD Hub and cancel any training booked to avoid any unnecessary charges.

End terms of office: Governor Re-appointments

It is the clerk's responsibility to keep an up-to-date membership list for the governing board.

Please ensure you keep an eye on ending terms of office and notify the chair of Governors of any upcoming expirations, so that new re-appointments can be made in advance and not after they have expired.

You may wish to add 'Governor membership/vacancies' as a standing agenda item to keep the board aware of pending expirations.

GovernorHub

As clerk please use this excellent governance system effectively. Please ensure that governors contact details, categories and terms of office are correct and that you have added/updated your governors' roles as relevant. Committees should be added, and the constitution should be in line with your Instrument of Government (IOG) or Articles of Association. Users of the GovernorHub Premium package should also be making sure governor meeting dates are added to the calendar, and that they are using the Noticeboard and Documents storage area effectively.

We will be focusing on GovernorHub in the Clerks' Networks. In the meantime, please view GovernorHub's recent clerks' webinar [here](#), which gives a really clear demonstration of the key areas for clerks.

GovernorHub: Archiving Documents

There is no recommended time limit for keeping files on GovernorHub (hard copies of minutes should be kept indefinitely), but you can create an archive folder to store the documents from previous years on the system in case any governors decide they would like to access these.

Local Authority (LA) Governor appointments

LA governors are appointed by the governing body. The only stipulation is that they cannot be a member of staff at the school where they are going to be a governor. The governor needs to be appointed at a FGB meeting and the appointment must be minuted. Clerks should then add them onto GovernorHub and the HfL Governance Services Team will send a welcome letter, which informs them about the training that is available to them.

Changing of Governor Categories

If a governor changes category they will start their term of office again, but it is not statutory to re-do the DBS (although some governing boards will re-do them whenever a governor is re-appointed - every 4 years). It would be up to the governing body to decide if that was a requirement for the relevant governor – depending on how long it has been since their last DBS.

Copies of LA maintained school minutes

As clerk of a Hertfordshire LA maintained school, there is a statutory requirement for you to provide copies of draft FGB minutes to governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk at the point of the draft set being agreed by the CoG/Head (ideally within 21 school days of the meeting).

HfL are commissioned to support schools in terms of school improvement. Minutes are essential in providing key people within HCC/HfL with background information to enable them to ensure they are providing support in the right area and swift, effective action can be implemented.

ACTION: If this applies to you, please could you as a matter of urgency send draft copies backdated to September 2018 to the above address and any previous copies before the Easter break. It would also be helpful for the team if you would kindly save the minutes in the following format as this will ease the filing of the minutes –Date/school no./School name GB Mins–e.g. 180307 111 Hogwarts GB Mins.

Committee and confidential minutes are not required.



Herts for Learning: Clerks' Training and Support Service

The clerks' training and support service is a highly utilised service that provides clerks with access to training, guidance, networks and access to further support from our Governance Helpdesk. This includes:

- Free attendance at a clerks-specific full day induction programme. Full lunch and beverages are provided.
- Free attendance at termly clerks networks for governance updates, keynote speakers on governance topics, clerking best practice and networking opportunities.
- Access to exclusions and complaints training for clerks at reduced fee of £15 (non-subscribing schools £52).
- Access to governor e-learning via Modern Governor (if your school is subscribed to Governor Training).
- Access to the Governance Helpdesk by phone and email for general and statutory clerking advice.
- A copy of the Clerks' Handbook.
- Suggested agenda items for each term.
- Summaries of relevant documents and initiatives, provided periodically by email.

We will be adding new initiatives to this service from April 2020 - information will be communicated in Spring 2020.

To enquire about this service and the price for your school or trust, please contact governance@hertsforlearning.co.uk or 01438 843082.

Clerks Training and Networking Opportunities Available this term

All training courses are bookable via [the CPD Hub](#).

Being an Effective Clerk – Friday 14th February 2020

This course is aimed at potential and new clerks. By the end of the course participants will have a better understanding of the main functions of the clerk to the governing body.

Clerks' Networks – Wednesday 11th March 2020, Monday 23rd March 2020

These termly seminars provide an opportunity for clerks to get together to discuss issues and share good practice. Guest speakers will present on areas of interest to the governing body. This term we will be joined by the HfL Financial Services Team to highlight the financial timeline that governors need to be aware of. If there are other items that you would like added to the agenda please email: clerking@hertsforlearning.co.uk

Exclusions: Preparation for clerks – Monday 13th January 2020

This course is aimed at clerks of governing boards who wish to know more about their role with regards to permanent hearings. This one off session will give you an in-depth understanding of the process.

Answers to the Governance Acronyms Quiz

1	EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
2	SDP	School Development Plan
3	NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
4	DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
5	UIFSM	Universal Infant Free School Meals
6	GDC	Governors Disciplinary Committee
7	PAN	Published Admissions Number
8	PSHE	Personal Social and Health Education
9	GIAS	Get Information About Schools
10	PPA	Planning Preparation and Assessment
11	RSE	Relationships and Sex Education
12	SBM	School Business Manager
13	SFVS	Schools Financial Values Standard
14	HLTA	Higher Level Teaching Assistant
15	URN	Unique Reference Number