



# DRAFT Minutes of the Council of Governors

## Public Meeting

Tuesday 16 March 2021 – 15:00 – 16:30 hours

Via MS Teams LIVE

Present:

Rob Hughes	Chairman
Caroline Walker	Chief Executive Officer
Ray Harding	Non-Executive Director
Mark Sanderson	Non-Executive Director
Mike Ellwood	Non-Executive Director
Christine Hill	Non-Executive Director
Mary Dowglass	Non-Executive Director
Bev Shears	Non-Executive Director
Gareth Tipton	Non-Executive Director
Taff Gidi	Company Secretary
Paul Denton	Deputy Company Secretary
Junaid Bhatti	Greater Peterborough
David Evans	Public Governor – Greater Peterborough
Bob Mason	Public Governor - Huntingdonshire
Kevin Burdett	Lead Governor - Huntingdonshire
Rob Gardiner	Public Governor – Huntingdonshire
Kenneth Leafe	Public Governor – Huntingdonshire
Amanda Buckenham	Public Governor – Huntingdonshire
Zbys Fedorowicz	Public Governor - Huntingdonshire
Duncan Lawson	Public Governor – South Lincs & Stamford
Sue Prior	Public Governor – South Lincs & Stamford
Joe Wey	Public Governor – South Lincs & Stamford
Asif Mahmood	Staff Governor – Peterborough
Janice Thompson	Executive Assistant to Company Secretary & Minute Taker
Apologies:	
Rebecca Wade	Public Governor – Greater Peterborough
Roberta Roulstone	Public Governor – South Lincs & Stamford
Bernard Weiss	Public Governor – Greater Peterborough
Steve Reiss	Public Governor – South Lincs & Stamford
Cllr Wayne Fitzgerald	Partner Governor - Peterborough City Council
Dr Nik Johnson	Staff Governor – Hinchingsbrooke
Rebecca Neno	Partner Governor – South Lincs CCG

## 1.0 Welcome, Apologies for Absence & any Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from Rebecca Wade, Roberta Roulstone, Bernard Weiss, Steve Reiss, Cllr Wayne Fitzgerald, Dr Nik Johnson and Rebecca Neno

## 2.0 Minutes from the meeting held on 9 December 2020 – for approval

The Minutes were approved.

## 3.0 Action Tracker – for review

The Action Tracker was updated.

## Trust Overview

### 4.0 Chairman Update – for information

4.1 Rob Hughes emphasised what had been a very challenging time for the Trust. He noted Governors were unable to carry out the usual walkabouts in the Trust therefore stories from patients and staff would be presented at the Council of Governors meetings throughout 2021.

***Action: Paul Denton: Patient/Staff Stories to be included in future Council of Governor meetings in 2021***

4.2 During the pandemic, Rob Hughes confirmed, virtual methods of operating had been introduced. He assured that the Non-Executive Directors were still meeting regularly with all meetings and training being carried out virtually, noting this was being embraced and becoming a familiar and sometimes preferable method of communication and holding of meetings.

4.3 Rob Hughes confirmed the assurance reports to be presented later in the meeting were also used for the Board meetings.

### 5.0 Chief Executive Officer Update – for information

5.1 Caroline Walker advised it had been one year to the day since the first Covid-19 patient had been admitted to the Trust. She confirmed the numbers of cases had reduced in two concurrent weeks. Caroline Walker explained the number of cases had peaked on 28 January, as a result of both the effects of winter and the second wave. She highlighted the fact that East Anglia had only experienced two waves.

- 5.2 Caroline Walker spoke of the benefits felt by the Trust as a result of the reduction in numbers, noting that as of today 79 Covid-19 patients were in the Trust, with half of these being at Peterborough City Hospital and half at Hinchingbrooke Hospital. She noted the intention to keep the actions the same regarding treatment, and to keep the sites segmented. Caroline Walker spoke of the importance of maintaining distancing and social distancing. She highlighted the benefits of being able to think about non-Covid-19 patients during this time, resulting in the recovery of services and the recovery of staff.
- 5.3 The CQC report following their visit to the Emergency Department was now publicly available, Caroline Walker announced. She noted this had recorded a significant improvement in the Emergency Department since previous inspections which had been a welcome progression and indicated that matters were reassuringly progressing in the right direction.
- 5.4 Caroline Walker explained the plan was to bring more patients back to the Trust.
- 5.5 The Trust was keen to return to normal activities Caroline Walker confirmed, with both routine operations and the day-to-day activities that had been put on hold since the pandemic.
- 5.6 Phil Walmsley had commenced as the new Chief Operating Officer, Caroline Walker announced, and had joined from Great Ormond Street Hospital where he had previously worked as Chief Operating Officer.

## Assurance

### **6.0 Quality Assurance Committee**

- 6.1 Mark Sanderson presented the report for the Quality Assurance Committee, and thanked all who worked in the Trust. He noted the huge rise of Covid-19 patients in the trust which was to be expected.
- 6.2 Sue Prior gave feedback as a Governor Observer at the Committee, noting that multiple issues had been raised and these had been well addressed at the meeting.
- 6.3 Rob Hughes noted it was positive to see the reduction in the mortality rate.

### **Finance & Digital Committee**

- 6.4 Ray Harding advised from the Committee meeting held on 22 February 2021 the Committee had been renamed the Finance & Digital Committee.

- 6.5 Ray Harding assured the Trust had not been in danger of missing targets as considerable sums had been directed to the Trust during the pandemic to deal with urgent situations therefore the Trust had not lost sight of management costs as a result. He added that considering the pressure the Trust had been under the financial reporting had been very good.
- 6.6 Rob Hughes asked the Governor Observer for the Committee, Kenneth Leafe, for feedback. Kenneth Leafe report that the meeting had been very professionally conducted and he had gained confidence that the trust funds are being dealt with appropriately.
- 6.7 Sue Prior asked if the Council of Governors could have a summary, she confirmed the benefit of receiving daily reports but felt a summary of outages would be useful.
- 6.8 Ray Harding confirmed he would look at providing this for the next Council of Governors meeting.

***Action: Ray Harding to provide summary of outages for the next Council of Governors meeting.***

#### **Performance & Estates Committee**

- 6.9 Gareth Tipton confirmed the Committee was now entitled the Performance and Estates Committee where it had previously been Performance and People.
- 6.10 Rob Hughes confirmed there had not been a Governor Observer present for this Committee meeting.
- 6.11 The Committee meeting time had been extended, Gareth Tipton explained, which had helped with discussing key issues and had provided a rich discussion on key points. He confirmed the meeting had been very positive.
- 6.12 Sue Prior asked about the reduction in funding in Discharge to Assess and how this had impacted the Trust. Gareth Tipton advised in terms of funding many Trusts shared the views that extra funding as a result of Covid-19 should continue as extra funding in other areas had not been successfully achieved.
- 6.13 Gareth Tipton reported on the positive support received from the Community on the discharge process for patients. He confirmed Sue Priors' points regarding funding would be monitored and assured this would be specifically reviewed by the Executives.

***Action: Rob Gardiner to be invited as the Committee Observer to the next Performance & Estates Committee meeting.***

## **People & Culture Committee**

- 6.14 Bev Shears announced the revised name from People & Performance Committee to People & Culture Committee.
- 6.15 The reinstatement of the Staff Satisfaction Survey was planned, assured Bev Shears.
- 6.16 The Governor Observer for the Committee, Kevin Burdett, advised this had been a new Committee with a new Committee Chairman. Kevin Burdett noted congratulations were due on the way the Committee had been prepared and run and confirmed it had been well Chaired.
- 6.17 Rob Hughes asked Mark Sanderson for feedback on his work as the NED Wellness Guardian. Mark Sanderson advised he had been asked to be a guardian for the Trust, and he had witnessed how staff are tired after a long year. He advised he had been in a Webinar with other Non-Executive Directors from across the country, and involved in carrying out review work of the national policy which included a short video. Mark Sanderson commented on the importance of the HR Director in supporting staff. Rob Hughes thanked Mark Sanderson for his feedback.
- 6.18 Rob Hughes spoke of the challenges ensuring the well-being of staff and assured this was a main point of focus for the Trust.
- 6.19 Rob Gardiner asked if there were common themes in the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) in relation to the staff deaths. Bev Shears advised the HSE had not reported on the third death to date, but confirmed measures had been put in place although the full range of measures had not yet been implemented, noting that consideration would need to be given to all the points HSE made.
- 6.20 Rob Gardiner asked if reports were received from occupational health regarding staff mental health referrals and cases of long Covid-19.
- 6.21 Bev Shears explained these were diverse strands, confirming the happiness of staff was being looked at which was an unusual term for the NHS to use. Bev Shears noted patient care was the priority and this could only be achieved with energised staff who feel safe in their place of work, equipping them to do their role. She acknowledged the referrals to mental health advised to the Committee along with information from NHS partners about how they had dealt with staff mental health difficulties. Bev Shears confirmed the two Deputies currently dealing with the most important issues were Jack Stevens and Denise McMurray.

- 6.22 Rob Hughes confirmed his awareness of issues regarding long Covid-19 and how systems were being looked at regarding dealing with this in the region.
- 6.23 Bob Mason asked how the well-being services were being communicated to every member of staff and asked if it was essential for them to go via their line manager to access the services. Bev Shears explained that as a Non-Executive Director assurance was sought on staff well-being offerings and feedback was sought on this. She confirmed staff do not need to access these services via their line manager as self-referral was an option. Bev Shears also advised that line managers were able to refer if they saw the need.
- 6.24 Rob Hughes thanked Bob Mason for the valid question.

### **Audit Committee**

- 6.25 Gareth Tipton confirmed he had Chaired the meeting on behalf of Mike Ellwood on 18 January 2021. Gareth Tipton confirmed the three main issues for focus were risk, which was a standing item on this committee and is a continuing process.
- 6.26 Secondly, Gareth Tipton advised the internal audit plan was on schedule despite the pressures faced. He confirmed the overall feedback was positive.
- 6.27 Thirdly, Gareth Tipton confirmed the Annual Report & Accounts process was underway with the intention of sign off in June 2021 and issue in September.
- 6.28 Sue Prior asked if with the closing of the Risk Task & Finish Group that the Audit Committee are assured that this matter is being taken on board. Mike Ellwood confirmed this is beginning to happen, he advised he had been on the sub-committee where the timing of risks on the register were being scrutinised to see if the risks were the same, and these were being rescheduled where necessary.
- 6.29 Taff Gidi confirmed Paul Denton continued to work on the risks, so a good picture had been formed of the current status, he confirmed there was work to be done on the low and moderate risks and that these needed to be embedded. Sue Prior confirmed this was a positive work in progress.

Caroline Walker left the meeting.

### **Charitable Funds Committee**

- 6.30 Mary Dowglass confirmed both Joe Wey and Kenneth Leafe had been the Governor Observers at the Committee meeting.

- 6.31 Mary Dowglass advised regular meetings had been scheduled at fixed points. She noted her appreciation of the team in finance who had supported the work carried out within the Charitable Funds Committee.
- 6.32 The effects of the pandemic had delayed progress in the management of the Charitable Funds Committee, Mary Dowglass notified. She explained that the money being received into the fund had been considerable as a result of Covid-19 however the ability of staff had been limited due to their involvement in clinical and operational work, resulting in expenditure in the last year remaining the same as the previous year, despite the increase in funds.
- 6.33 Mary Dowglass defined the improvement in accessibility of information being provided on how the Trust uses the Charitable Funds for staff to gain an understanding.
- 6.34 Kenneth Leafe, Governor Observer, commended Mary Dowglass on the professionalism he saw in how the meeting was conducted. He added that reassurance had been provided throughout the meeting in how Charitable Funds were used.

### **Strategy & Transformation Committee**

- 6.35 Kevin Burdett, Lead Governor, observed this Committee. He explained that confidential issues were often discussed at this meeting meaning he was not able to report publicly, however he advised he had been assured at the effort and diligence displayed by the Executives and Non-Executives during the discussions.
- 6.36 Sue Prior emphasised the transparency shown in the creation of the Strategy & Transformation Committee, which was a very welcome assurance for Governors.
- 6.37 Rob Hughes thanked Sue Prior for the comment, reinforcing the aim for the Trust was to be open and share information when appropriate.
- 6.38 Christine Hill stated since joining the Trust as a Non-Executive Director she had been impressed by the enormous amount of work that had gone into the Committees she had been allocated to. She explained that collating the data that is presented to the Committee was challenging in the face of Covid-19. Christine Hill advised the staff had been dedicated to ensure quality standards were maintained whilst battling a pandemic. Overall she noted she was currently getting up to speed with the various issues but noted with what was going on strategically across the region she had been very impressed with the work of the Trust.
- 6.39 Rob Hughes concurred the Trust was a complex organisation to join and become familiar with and thanked Christine Hill for her contributions to date.

### 7.0 Lead Governor Update

7.1 Kevin Burdett explained that agenda planning was currently taking place with the aim to develop expertise amongst the Governors. He advised that Sue Prior had attended the Regional Lead Governors' meeting on his behalf.

7.2 At the Regional Lead Governors' meeting Mike Moore had outlined the process of the Integrated Care System (ICS), Kevin Burdett confirmed, with good questions raised. He advised he would provide the Governors with the PowerPoint presentation slides from the meeting. Rob Hughes advised he would action this.

***Action: Kevin Burdett to provide PowerPoint slides from the Regional Governor's meeting.***

7.3 Kevin Burdett thanked Mary Dowglass for her contribution and work for the last few years in her role as a Non-Executive Director.

7.4 Sue Prior gave an update from the Regional Lead Governors' meeting. She reminded the Governors that the meeting covered East Anglia, and also Suffolk, Kent and Milton Keynes. Sue Prior advised the topic of discussion had been about providers and collaborative pathways, eating disorders and autism amongst other issues. She noted the meeting had been interesting but also that the role of Lead Governors varied considerably.

7.5 Sue Prior noted her concern over the lack of patient representation and Governor involvement in the Integrated Care System and she advised the consensus was that Lead Governors should have more representation.

7.6 The White Paper highlighted concerns over the lack of patient references, Sue Prior advised. One of the Lead Governors was to report on this and she had volunteered to read and run through this report which would then go before Taff Gidi, Paul Denton and Keving Burdett.

7.7 Rob Hughes declared the Integrated Care System was about more than health providers and involved other bodies seeking assurance. He advised careful thinking was also needed regarding the role of HealthWatch, volunteers within the ICS which resulted in a complicated system, but one that would work well once implemented.

7.8 Paul Denton provided an update on the Governor Elections, noting that a delay had been experienced to the original start date for Staff Elections. He advised the election process would begin on 26 March 2021.

7.9 Rob Hughes noted the importance of having Staff Governors and affirmed he would be happy to talk to anyone considering applying.

## **8.0 AOB**

8.1 Rob Hughes asked for opinion on the Board Sub-Committee assurance reports that had been presented in the meeting. Sue Prior confirmed in her four years at the Trust that the reports were now clearer and showed how the Non-Executive Directors were providing assurance and challenging the performance of the Board. Bob Mason agreed with this.

8.2 Taff Gidi advised the Trust was recognising the difference of having Foundation Trusts and Non-Foundation Trusts in the system which involved looking at services with a whole system approach with consideration of Trusts that do not have members. He confirmed the aim of having all the systems and the community involved.

## **9.0 Questions Received from the Public**

No questions were submitted from the Public.

***Action: Rob Hughes to ask Deputy Medical Director to define respect forms and if these involve respect for everyone, able-bodied or elderly.***

Rob Hughes closed the meeting at 16:26 hours.

Next Council of Governors Public Meeting:

Tuesday 17 August 2021  
14:00 to 16:30 hours