

**Minutes of the Council of Governors Meeting
held at 2pm on Wednesday 6 December 2023,
MS Teams**

Present:

Helen Taylor	Chair
Helen Rose	Public Governor, Lead Governor
Gemma Bourne	Staff Governor, Ipswich (to 3pm)
Caroline Bowden	Public Governor, Colchester
Trevor Catlow	Public Governor, Rest of Suffolk (from Item 5)
Peter Coleman	Public Governor, Rest of Suffolk
Isaac Ferneyhough	Staff Governor, Colchester
David Guest	Public Governor, Colchester
Rebecca Hopfensperger	Stakeholder Governor, Suffolk County Council
Pride Mukungurutse	Staff Governor, Colchester (from Item 5)
Tim Newton	Public Governor, Ipswich
Martin Nixon	Public Governor, Rest of Essex
Gina Placey	Stakeholder Governor, Tendring District Council
Gillian Orves	Public Governor, Rest of Suffolk
Elizabeth Smith	Public Governor, Rest of Essex
Sara Smith	Stakeholder Governor, Anglia Ruskin University
Jane Young	Public Governor, Rest of Essex (from Item 6)
Allison Weston	Staff Governor, Ipswich (from Item 5)

In attendance:

Dr Angela Tillett	Chief Medical Officer/Deputy Chief Executive
Kate Read	Director of People and Organisational Development
Eddie Bloomfield	Non-Executive Director
John Humpston	Non-Executive Director
Mark Millar	Non-Executive Director/Deputy Chair
Richard Spencer	Non-Executive Director/Senior Independent Director
George Chalkias	Director of Governance
Ann Filby	Trust Secretary
Tom Fleetwood	Freedom to Speak Up Guardian (item 16)
Jonathan Baker	Committee and Membership Secretary (Minutes)

Apologies for absence:

John Alborough	Public Governor, Rest of Suffolk
Abhijit Bose	Staff Governor, Ipswich
Harvey Crane	Public Governor, Ipswich
Noreen Cushen-Brewster	Stakeholder Governor, University of Suffolk
Sam Glover	Stakeholder Governor, Healthwatch Essex
Carlo Guglielmi	Stakeholder Governor, Essex County Council
Mike Ninnmey	Local Authority Governor, East Suffolk Council
Alison Ruffell	Public Governor, Colchester
Daniel Tweed	Stakeholder Governor, Colchester Garrison
Barry Wheatcroft	Public Governor, Rest of Essex

Para no		Action
Section 1 – Chair’s Business		
54/23	1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence The Chair welcomed Governors and members of public to the meeting and apologies were received. The Chair also welcomed Councillor Gina Placey to their first Council since being appointed as a stakeholder Governor.	

55/23	2. Declarations of Interest No further interests were declared.	
56/23	3. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2023 The minutes were approved as an accurate record.	
57/23	4. Matters Arising from the minutes and action log The Trust Secretary provided an update on the action log, providing detail on the three outstanding actions and the updates included within the report.	
58/23	5. Report from the Trust Chair The Trust Chair provided an update on a range of items which included; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ESNEFT Finance Team winning finance team of the year in health at the 2023 Public Finance Awards. The award noted the outstanding contribution, strong teamwork, openness and communication, alongside ethical standards. The Chair acknowledged the work of the Director of Finance and the close working with the Non-Executive Directors. • Dr Muthukumar winning the 2023 Cancer Research Excellence Medical Award at this year's National Institute for Health Research Clinical Research Network East of England Cancer Research Excellence Awards. • International recognition for the work undertaken on the diabetes passport, which has been rolled out to 26 hospitals across the UK to improve care. • Long service celebrations have taken place with a range of colleagues celebrating their time working at the NHS. The Chair thanked the Lead Governor and Staff Governor Isaac Ferneyhough for attending the afternoon tea events. • A range of other activities that were taking place over the festive period, including a free festive lunch for those working on Christmas Day, and all staff receiving a hot meal during the period. In addition to this Combat 2 Coffee, a mobile coffee service run by veterans, will be at the hospital sites. Further to this there has also been an offer of discounted tickets for Jimmy's Farm Winter Wonderland for NHS staff. • Further detail around the Trust Charity and Making Every Contact Count. 	

Assurance and Accountability

59/23	6. Chief Executive's Briefing on Trust Activities The Chief Medical Officer/Deputy Chief Executive provided the briefing on Trust activities, including the following information. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Trust is enacting the seasonal variation plan as it is experiencing high levels of activity, as is expected, alongside an added level of patient complexity. Additional Government funding had been received, with funds being used wisely to support additional beds. The discharge lounge at Ipswich hospital has been used well, alongside virtual wards, where patients are transferred home with a high degree of oversight. • Further information regarding the upcoming industrial action taking place in January that had recently been announced, including the preparation for this which had already started. • Detail around the national getting it right first-time programme (GIRFT) and the focus on caring for cancer patients. The team at ESNEFT has been commended by Professor Biggs on the good practice in place. • Since the date of the last Council meeting the Trust had received the Care Quality Commission final report on Clacton maternity services. • There had been an external review regarding ionising external radiation with much positive initial feedback. The importance of peer reviews and listening, learning and recognising good practice was highlighted. • Information around the staff survey which had received a 52.5% response rate and the aim to achieve higher. • Launch of the ESNEFT clinical strategy and recognition regarding the work to reduce health inequalities. 	
-------	---	--

	<p>In response to a question regarding the staff survey and engagement, the Deputy Chief Executive stated that this had improved with staff having access to paper versions of the survey and views were encouraged on the Trust and the programme of work in place. The aim was to achieve a 60% response rate which is ambitious.</p> <p>In response to another question around winter capacity and care on elderly wards, the Deputy Chief Executive highlighted that there had been some delay with the transfer of care, however, there is a new multi-agency approach which includes social care colleagues. In terms of those patients cared for in corridors, there is an operational policy to maintain patients if they are being transferred however further communications could be produced given the possible perception of some visitors.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Chief Executive's Briefing be noted.</p>	AT/ RD
60/23	<p>7. Board Proceedings Report</p> <p>The Director of Governance outlined the key matters considered at the November 2023 Board meeting. In addition to receiving the regular reports, the Board received detail on the following areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maternity Transformation • Learning from Deaths • Clinical Strategy • The Freedom to Speak Up Guardian • Further detail with regards to the fit and proper persons framework. • Detail on the well led review, and progress on the actions to date, with most actions having been implemented. <p>The report was welcomed, with the Chair highlighting that this provides the opportunity to close the loop with Governors around those items discussed at the Board.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Board Proceedings Report be noted.</p>	
61/23	<p>8. Verbal Reports from Board Committees</p> <p>a) Performance and Finance Committee</p> <p>Gemma Bourne provided a summary of her observation at this Committee, stating that she was confident in the Chair, with papers received in advance of the meeting and views from Governor observers welcome at the end of the meeting. The Committee was productive with challenge from the Non-Executive Directors, however, there are a lot of acronyms used.</p> <p>Caroline Bowden added that the meetings are topical with those issues in the news brought into discussions, with the Chair doing a good job in managing the meeting.</p>	
	<p>b) Quality and Patient Safety Committee</p> <p>Gillian Orves noted that the meetings are chaired well by Hussein Khatib, and she had observed both challenge and support from Non-Executive Directors on the Committee. At the last meeting good work was commended, alongside insightful questions to obtain more information or clarity. Discussions at Committee meetings were both interesting and constructive.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the update and noted that the Committee has a full agenda and that it is possible that in future it would be meeting more regularly.</p>	
	<p>c) People and Organisational Development Committee</p> <p>Tim Newton informed the Council that the Committee works well, discussing a range of HR and organisational issues. The Committee also looks at a range of</p>	

	<p>matters in a joined up an integrated way with Non-Executive Directors keen to triangulate reports from different sources. The agenda is significant in size and the Chair finds a balance between those presenting and questions. The Committee also frequently looks forward in terms of next steps and is good at recognising success alongside suggestions for improvement. There was also comment about the new workforce report, alongside other important discussions, that took place at the recent meeting.</p>	
	<p>d) Audit and Risk Committee David Guest highlighted how critical the Committee is for reaching different areas of the organisation through internal and external audit, as well as wider governance through the Board Assurance Framework. The agendas are significant, the Committee is excellently chaired and the there is reassurance provided that the checks and balances are working well.</p>	
	<p>e) Charitable Funds Committee Peter Coleman highlighted that the meetings are now bi-monthly, and in the recent meeting in September there was an effective discussion, and Non-Executive Directors explore all the items on the agenda. There was the need to improve access to the papers for Governors prior to the meeting. Elizabeth Smith echoed the comments regard access the papers and noted that members of the Committee are compassionate and thoughtful towards the donors and those presenting.</p> <p>The Trust Secretary confirmed that the issues with regards to paper access would be taken forward, and this related to the new solution in place.</p>	AF
62/23	<p>8. Report from Lead Governor A written report had been provided detailing the issues considered since the previous meeting of the Council.</p> <p>The Lead Governor highlighted recent attendance at the accessible information group, which was organised by the ICB. Several interesting things emerged from this including how patients access information, alongside different languages and terminology usage. The Lead Governor stated that the group does not include a representative from ESNEFT however more information would be included as part of an ICB report.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Lead Governors for the report and stated that the Head of Patient Experience leads in this area with many people feeding into the information. The Chair also noted that there could be further discussion regarding Board papers and accessibility.</p> <p>The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that this was part of the Head of Patient Experience's sphere of work, and that there is regular work undertaken to establish how communication with patients is undertaken, and highlighted the work around Making Every Contact count alongside welcoming further feedback.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Lead Governor report be noted.</p>	
63/23	<p>10. Trust Constitution The Director of Governance advised that during the well-led review, it was identified that the Trust had not reviewed its constitution for some time and therefore this should be updated. The review process had included formal and informal discussions, with a view to strengthening links with groups. The key proposed changes were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make one single staff constituency covering ESNEFT, as it is five years since the merger. In addition, the number of staff governors would increase to reflect the incorporation of community services in North East Essex. • That the voting system used to elect governors be changed to Single Transferable Vote, from the current first past the post, which brings the Trust in 	

	<p>to line with other areas of the country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To strengthen the voice of stakeholders on the Council with the addition of a representative of the Integrated Care System Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise assembly and further discussions with the Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equality. <p>The Trust Secretary highlighted that she had previously worked with the election provider to ensure adequate guidance is placed on the voting paper on the STV due to it being a different system and quite complex. However, it did enable every vote to be used and encouraged more diversity.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Council of Governors approved the revised Trust Constitution for presentation to the Board of Directors for approval.</p>	AF
64/23	<p>11. Council of Governors' Elections 2024</p> <p>The Trust Secretary provided a brief update about the Council of Governors elections for 2024. Discussions around the timetable have taken place with the provider.</p> <p>The Trust Secretary highlighted that the nomination process is undertaken by the election provider rather than the Trust. If the Board agrees the revised Constitution those staff that are required to stand will do so in the ESNEFT constituency, however, those Staff Governors remaining would still represent the constituency to which they were elected, until all governors represented ESNEFT from November 2025.</p> <p>Once the timetable has been fully developed the Trust will ensure that this is in place with the provider. Civica is currently contracted for the 2024 elections.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Council of Governors Elections 2024 report be noted.</p>	
65/23	<p>12. Future Meetings: format</p> <p>The Chair provided a brief introduction to the report, which reviews the format and location of Council meetings going forward.</p> <p>The Trust Secretary provided further detail highlighting that a survey was circulated prior on the future format, with 12 responses. The proposal was for Council of Governors meetings to take place face to face alternating between Ipswich and Colchester, with other meetings of the Council remaining virtual.</p> <p>The Lead Governor was pleased that more face-to-face meetings would take place providing the benefit of Governors getting to know each other.</p> <p>The Chair stated that conversations would continue with the Trust Secretary and Director of Governance regarding setting up development days informally across the year. The Trust Secretary commented that a development day or induction would take place in late June or early July to ensure that the paperwork is completed following the elections.</p> <p>RESOLVED that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The four scheduled meetings of the Council of Governors held each year take place face to face, alternating in location between Ipswich and Colchester. That other Council Committees and working group meetings are held virtually. 	
Appointments and Performance		
66/23	<p>13. Non-Executive Director Appointment</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Council noted the decision made on the Non-Executive Director Appointment.</p>	

Membership and Engagement		
67/23	<p>14. Membership Engagement Plan update</p> <p>Martin Nixon, the Chair of the Membership and Engagement Working Group, provided an update regarding the most recent meeting. This included a report on the Trust Membership, the items for inclusion in the Quarterly Briefing and detail on the latest Get Involved newsletter. The group also discussed the new Membership Plan which had been produced and will form the basis of future meetings.</p> <p>The Chair of the Group highlighted that all Governors are welcome to attend the meeting.</p> <p>The Council also heard from the Trust Secretary, highlighting that the membership plan would be brought to the next meeting providing updates on the level of engagement. In addition, the quarterly briefing had been sent to all Governors to provide high level messaging around key issues to support their engagement with members and local people. The latest version included detail around the seasonal pressures, recent industrial action, the big builds and the staff survey. The Trust Secretary stated that the feedback on the briefing note would be welcome and all were asked to provide this to the FT membership inbox.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Membership Engagement Plan update be noted.</p>	All
68/23	<p>15. Governor Activities Update</p> <p>Further detail was provided on the range of activities undertaken since the previous meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caroline Bowden had taken part in two recent 15 Steps visits. Reflection on the first visit was that staff were appropriate and friendly with the area being clean and bright with comfortable seating and information provided. Work is underway to improve the colposcopy rooms, and comfortable chairs had been provided for birthing partners. The second visit to the Ipswich Hospital kitchen restaurant and portering services provided detail on food preparation, catering for different dietary requirements and the distribution methods of food. This was alongside information around the approach to providing food for patients, and potentially providing food for birthing partners. Those on the visit were also shown a computer programme which assisted in the tasks for portering. In reflection Caroline advised that there was good communication within the department and a no blame culture within the team. • Martin Nixon provided detail of a recent visit undertaken to Harwich alongside the Non-Executive Directors, which provided a greater level of understanding of the facilities that are available. • Councillor Hopfensperger had attended an event at Felixstowe Academy in September, aimed at Year 10 students, at which ESNEFT was represented. <p>The Director of People and Organisational Development welcomed the comments from Councillor Hopfensperger and noted that the team put a significant amount of effort into those events. The Trust also undertakes work experience placements with 1,000 taking place each year. The Trust Secretary highlighted that a work experience placement would be supported in Trust Offices in March 2024.</p> <p>The Lead Governor reported on the Get Well Bus that is currently placed in Felixstowe and that she would be visiting this in the days after the meeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Governor Activities update be noted.</p>	
	Briefing	
69/23	<p>16. Freedom to Speak Up and Raising Concerns</p> <p>The Director of People and Organisational Development introduced the presentation. This included the vision for the Trust in this area, alongside a range of other information.</p>	

The Director highlighted that there are a further four Assistant Freedom to Speak Up Guardians being inducted shortly. The Trust is on the right track, however, the data to confirm this progress would not be available until February 2024. Two peer reviews had taken place reviewing policies and approaches, with a significant amount of learning undertaken from the conversations. A range of sessions had been set up with the guardians to promote speaking up and to encourage leaders to set the right culture and the right tone for their staff. The next steps included looking at a clearer way of collecting data. The Council was also provided with a copy of the speak up poster which provides a QR code and ways in which staff can raise concerns.

The Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, Tom Fleetwood, provided a further presentation highlighting that the support he receives from the Board is very good, and important. One of the most significant elements is the cultural shift and ensuring that all leaders and managers recognise the need to support staff and listen and make sure they know where to raise a concern. The three key areas includes protecting patients, improving the experience for those who work for the NHS and promoting the cultural shift that is needed. Part of the FTSU Guardian role is to support those who speak up.

It was acknowledged that generating a positive culture is difficult, however, the support of the Board and the initiative is assisting this. Going forward the Trust needs to recognise the learning opportunity as part of FTSU. Raising concerns does include patient safety but also may include other areas, which are equally important. Governors were informed that the FTSU Guardians can be contacted by anyone at anytime through a variety of communication methods, and for those who are raising concerns they may be accompanied by a friend or colleague. Tom Fleetwood also acknowledged that there can be fear for those raising concerns, and if issues are escalated then confidentiality can be difficult to achieve. Feedback is provided to the individual to confirm how their issue will proceed.

Richard Spencer, Non-Executive Director, noted that it was an honest and reflective view of what needed to be done and that there are actions that still have to be put in place. These actions are both realistic and ambitious. In terms of the assistance from the Non-Executive Directors, meetings take place with the FTSU Guardian every few months to discuss cases anonymously and to raise questions around those areas where things should be flagged. In terms of the process the steering group has been reformed, which meets twice a year, with formal submissions to the People and Organisational Development Committee and then to Board. The steering group provides an opportunity to discuss the wider channels that staff can use to raise concerns and there is a plan for improving this in November.

Regarding Junior Doctors, there is progress, and bringing in triangulation around concerns around longer working hours which can come out of the annual staff survey and benchmarking this against other Trusts and by working with the Guardians of Safe Working. Other ways in which Non-Executive Directors are involved is around visits that can provide information about the mood and culture across departments. There is a significant amount of work underway to improve the process and the culture in the organisation to allow staff to speak up. It is also agreed that in terms of the direction concerns need to be raised early through the range of routes available, with FTSU acting as the back stop.

The Chair and the Lead Governor thanked those involved for the detail included. A further point about the previously disappointing data was raised, however, there is a positive way forward being established. The Director of People and Organisational Development stated that the data included was from 2021/22 and that a significant amount of work has been undertaken. It is hoped that there is a marked shift in the response as demonstrated in the staff survey results.

Public Questions		
70/23	<p>15. Questions from members of the public present</p> <p>Janet Brazier firstly thanked the Trust for the treatment received as patients and raised a question regarding improving the information provided on the website and across the hospital. Chris Brazier raised a query with regards to whether there were public notices in the hospital about Board and Council meetings taking place and whether the press were invited.</p> <p>In response, the Trust Secretary thanked them for their questions and stated that the Trust is currently looking into improving the information provided on the website and across the hospital alongside the importance of meeting the requirements of the accessible information standard. With regard to posters displaying the upcoming meeting dates this will be looked at as it wasn't in place currently. It was confirmed that the press is notified about the Council and Board meetings.</p>	AF
71/23	<p>16. Date of next meeting</p> <p>The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 13 March 2024 at 2pm.</p>	

Signed Date

Name
Chair

Disclaimer: The minutes do not necessarily reflect the order of business as it was considered.