

**Minutes of the Public Meeting of the Council of Governors of the
Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
Thursday 13th June 2024, 10:30 – 12:00
Room CM121 Bath Spa University, Newton Park Campus,
Newton St Loe, Bath, BA2 9BN**

Present:

Alison Ryan, Chair

Public Governors

Anna Beria
Kate Cozens
Viv Harpwood
Nick Gamble
Paul Newman
Vic Pritchard
Anne-Marie Walker
Di Benham

Staff Governors

Craig Jones
Baz Harding-Clark

Stakeholder Governors

None

In attendance:

Antony Durbacz, Non-Executive Director
Paul Fairhurst, Non-Executive Director
Paul Fox, Non-Executive Director
Ian Orpen, Non-Executive Director
Sumita Hutchison, Non-Executive Director
Ashleigh Harvey, Deputy Head of Business Strategy
Roxy Milbourne, Interim Head of Corporate Governance
Lauren McEwan, Corporate Governance Manager
Pete Dixon, Membership & Governance Administrator (*minute taker*)

CG/24/06/01 Chair’s welcome, introduction and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that apologies had been received from Hannah Morley and Nigel Stevens, Non-Executive Directors. Apologies had also been received from the following Governors:

Public Governors

Ian Lafferty

Staff Governors

Beas Bhattacharya
Gary Chamberlain
Narinder Tegally

Stakeholder Governors

Cllr Johnny Kidney
Cllr Alison Born

CG/24/06/02 Declarations of Interest relevant to items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest raised.

CG/24/06/03 Approval of the minutes of the Council of Governors meeting held in public on 14 March 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting subject to the discussed amendment below.

Author: Pete Dixon, Membership & Governance Administrator	Date: 3 rd July 2024
Document Approved by: Alison Ryan, Chair	Version: 1.6
Agenda Item: 3	Page 1 of 7

Remove the section on page 3 which stated “however the Trust had agreed to increase staffing levels in 2019 and did not intend to make reductions”.

CG/24/06/04 Action list and matters arising

The action updates were agreed, and the items listed for closure were approved.

CG/24/06/05 CEO Update Report

The Chief Executive Officer explained that the data provided in her report covered up to the end of the previous financial year, which showcased that the Trust had finished in a significantly better position compared to the forecast in October 2023.

The Chief Executive Officer provided the following key points of her report:

- The Trust has completed more work than it had done pre-pandemic, and was on target to complete 117% for the current financial year.
- The Emergency Department would be funded differently which enables the Trust to be in a more sustainable financial position.
- The Trust has started the process of planning for the next round of Industrial action which Junior Doctors were undertaking in June, this action coincided with the Glastonbury Festival in which NHS England would be placing the South West in enhanced oversight and special incident. The RUH will be the lead Hospital during this period.
- The Trust has seen an increase in the number of staff who have responded to the staff survey, which has seen the Trust rated 18th nationally regarding staff recommending it as a place to work.
- The building extension to Sulis Hospital Bath has commenced, once completed it will service all the acute Hospitals within the Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire System (BSW). The expansion will mean that 95% of Trust patients who require elective knee and hip surgeries can utilise the Sulis Hospital.
- The Maternity Services has retained its outstanding certification from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) following their visit in January.
- The CQC visited the Trust’s Surgical Division in March 2024, the outcome from this visit has yet to be submitted to the Trust.
- The Trust has secured £21 million in funding to aid in becoming net zero by 2030.
- The Intensive Care Unit (ICU) will be moving to a single site footprint, which will enhance the level of care the Trust can offer patients.
- The Lansdown Restaurant has undergone refurbishment recently and is now open. The restaurant has enhanced the food it offers both staff and members of the public.

The Chief Executive Officer wanted to publically thank Ian Orpen for all the hard work he has undertaken as Maternity Safety Champion.

Anne-Marie Walker questioned how the Trust would ensure the new DrDoctor App would not disadvantage patients who do not use technology. The Chief Executive

Author: Pete Dixon, Membership & Governance Administrator	Date: 3 rd July 2024
Document Approved by: Alison Ryan, Chair	Version: 1.6
Agenda Item: 3	Page 2 of 7

Officer confirmed the Trust would continue to support patients who were unable to utilise the App.

Victor Pritchard asked how the figures in the report compared to the other acute Trusts within the BSW system. The Chief Executive Officer explained that all of the Trusts had their own strengths and weaknesses, and for continued improvement it would be critical for all of the acute Trusts to continue to share information and resources.

Di Benham sought clarification on what the biggest challenge would be moving forwards. The Chief Executive Officer explained that the delivery of the Trust's financial position and the current financial year in regards to the recovery plan would be the biggest challenge to the Trust.

Paul Fairhurst asked if the Trust and the BSW System held data which shows the amount of appointments that individuals attend each year. The Chief Executive Officer explained that she had not seen the data for the system, but presumed it would be similar to the Trust's, and explained that the current transformation programme presented an opportunity for the Trust to improve its outpatient experience for individuals.

Anne- Marie Walker shared feedback from members of her constituency who felt that people are being sent home too quickly after surgery without proper resources within the community to help care for them. The Chair explained that the Trust was measured on the length of stay of a patient and if they were readmitted as an emergency. Ian Orpen felt that unfortunately the level of community services varied depending on the area that the individual lived in.

The Council of Governors noted the report

The Chief Executive Officer left the meeting at 11:00

CG/24/06/06 Business Planning Update

The Chair welcomed the Deputy Head of Business Strategy to the meeting, who provided the Council of Governors with an overview of the Trust's Business Plan for the 2024/25 financial year.

Anna Beria enquired why the demand on services has kept increasing. The Deputy Head of Business Strategy felt this was due to an aging population and local health inequalities, however the Trust would continue to work closely with community and system partners to improve this position. Sumita Hutchison felt the two main factors for the increase were health inequalities in the local community and environmental sustainability.

Anne-Marie Walker asked if the Trust would receive any money from the Government to help support the Hospital during the planned industrial action and if it would have an effect on planned care. The Chair was unable to confirm if additional funding would be

Author: Pete Dixon, Membership & Governance Administrator	Date: 3 rd July 2024
Document Approved by: Alison Ryan, Chair	Version: 1.6
Agenda Item: 3	Page 3 of 7

received from the Government. The Deputy Head of Business Strategy confirmed that it could have an impact on care, but plans were in place to reduce this risk.

Nick Gamble wanted assurance that the business plan would take staff burnout into account. The Deputy Head of Business Strategy confirmed that it had done and that that the People Team would be working with the teams most at risk of staff burnout.

Victor Pritchard sought clarification regarding the bed occupancy figures. The Deputy Head of Business Strategy confirmed the figure was the Trust’s target for March 2025. The Chair confirmed that the Trust would reach this figure by working with partners in the local community.

Victor Pritchard enquired if the Trust’s targets would be the same as the other two acute Hospitals within the BSW system. The Chair confirmed this would not be the case.

The Council of Governors noted the Business Plan.

CG/24/06/07 RUHX- the Trust Charity

Sumita Hutchison presented an overview of the RUHX Trust Charity.

Paul Fox asked who appointed members of the Charities Committee. The Chair confirmed the Trust was a corporate Trustee of the Charity and was responsible for appointing the members.

Anna Beria enquired how the Charity continued to attract large donations. Sumita Hutchison explained that the team continues to maintain and improve upon the long term relationships it has established whilst also trying to develop and nurture new relationships. She also highlighted that the geographical area in which the Hospital was situated aided in this.

The Chair highlighted that the Charity had added value to the services which the Trust provides patients and gave a number of examples, one of which included the Trust’s new Dyson Cancer Centre.

The Council of Governors noted the Briefing.

CG/24/06/08 NED Presentation – Sumita Hutchison

Sumita Hutchison, Non-Executive Director provided the Council of Governors with an overview of her personal and professional background, as well as the committees she attends in her role as a NED.

Nick Gamble questioned if the Non-Clinical Governance Committee was on the Governor Observer rota. The Membership and Governance Administrator confirmed it was.

The Council of Govenors noted the presentation.

Author: Pete Dixon, Membership & Governance Administrator	Date: 3 rd July 2024
Document Approved by: Alison Ryan, Chair	Version: 1.6
Agenda Item: 3	Page 4 of 7

CG/24/06/09 Council of Governors Terms of Reference

The Corporate Governance Manager provided the Council of Governors with an overview of the Council of Governors Terms of Reference.

Di Benham sought clarification on why Governors observing Board of Directors Sub-Committees had been removed from the Terms of Reference. The Corporate Governance Manager confirmed this had been done to bring the Trust in-line with the majority of NHS Foundation Trusts in the country. She explained that the Trust was one of the few Foundation Trusts who allowed Governors to observe Sub-Committees. Both the Chair and the Corporate Governance Manager stressed that at the current time there would be no change regarding Governors attending Sub-Committee meetings as observers.

Anna Beria felt that the Governors had not had enough time to properly review the document to be able to approve it. The Corporate Governance Manager stated that the Terms of Reference would be added to the Council of Governor's September agenda for approval, she asked that Governors review the draft TOR and provide their feedback to the Corporate Governance Manager.

Action: Council of Governors.

Di Benham asked if the Terms of Reference reflected those of the other acute Trusts within the BSW system. The Corporate Governance Manager confirmed the Terms of Reference reflected the majority of NHS Foundation Trusts.

Victor Pritchard enquired what the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference were. The Corporate Governance Manager confirmed that the coversheet of the document explained this and that the document had track changes.

Anna Beria questioned why the Terms of Reference needed to be reviewed. The Chair confirmed it was standard practice for Terms of Reference to be reviewed annually.

Paul Fairhurst queried if NED's attendance at the Working Group should be left as "If requested" in the respective Terms of Reference. Di Benham highlighted that this question had been asked at the Strategy and Business Planning Working Group. She personally felt that having a NED in attendance was beneficial for the Governors and more engagement between the Chair and the Membership Team regarding the creation of Working Group Agenda's was required. The Corporate Governance Manager felt that a closer collaboration between the Membership Team and the Chairs would provide clarification regarding NED's attendance at specific Working Group meetings.

The Chair highlighted that the Terms of Reference for the Working Groups was in the Governors gift and NED's attendance would be down to the Governors.

Author: Pete Dixon, Membership & Governance Administrator	Date: 3 rd July 2024
Document Approved by: Alison Ryan, Chair	Version: 1.6
Agenda Item: 3	Page 5 of 7

The Interim Head of Corporate Governance explained that NHS Providers highlighted that the Trust had a high number of Working Groups compared to other Trusts. She suggested that the Governors established a Task and Finish Working Group to review the Working Group Structure and how NED's are used. She further highlighted that NHS Providers suggested that there were Council of Governors who had two working groups rather than the four. One Working Group would look at the patient experience, and a second looking at NED assurance from the Sub-Committees.

Action: Council of Governors

The Council of Governors agreed that the Terms of Reference would be brought to September's meeting for approval.

CG/24/06/10 NED Update on Questions from Governors

The Corporate Governance Manager presented the Governor Assurance questions for the Non-Executive Directors, she provided an overview of all the questions.

Ian Orpen provided the Council of Governors with a response to the question which had been raised regarding the Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF). He confirmed that the new process had gone live in April 2024 and would take time to fully imbed into teams and would shift away from a blame culture and focus on learning from incidents.

The Corporate Governance Manager confirmed that the Council of Governors Effectiveness evaluation questionnaire was being drafted and would be sent out shortly. The results of the questionnaire would be brought to September's Council of Governors meeting for Approval.

Action: The Corporate Governance Manager.

Vivienne Harpwood enquired the format which the questions would take. The Corporate Governance Manager confirmed the Governors would be asked a question and then provide an answer valued 1-5. 1= Individual strongly disagreed with the statement, 5= Individual Strongly agreed with the statement.

The Council of Governors agreed to close all of the remaining assurance questions which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Ian Orpen left the meeting at 11:10

CG/24/06/11 Governor Working Group Updates

The Council of Governors took this item as read, and approved the update the Terms of Reference for the Strategy and Business Planning Working Group and the People Working Group.

CG/24/06/12 Lead Governor Report

Vivienne Harpwood provided the Lead Governor report and highlighted that the Council of Governors had recently undertaken a collaborative focused training sessions with NHS Providers which she had found insightful. She fed back that the facilitators had

Author: Pete Dixon, Membership & Governance Administrator	Date: 3 rd July 2024
Document Approved by: Alison Ryan, Chair	Version: 1.6
Agenda Item: 3	Page 6 of 7

found the Governors in attendance the most conscientious and engaged group they had worked with.

The Council of Governors noted the report.

CG/24/06/13 Stakeholder Governor Feedback

No Stakeholder Governors Feedback was provided due to Purdah.

CG/24/06/14 Items for Future Work Plan / Any Other Business

No items were identified for the future work plan.

The meeting closed at 12:25.

Author: Pete Dixon, Membership & Governance Administrator	Date: 3 rd July 2024
Document Approved by: Alison Ryan, Chair	Version: 1.6
Agenda Item: 3	Page 7 of 7