

Enc 1

**Council of governors' general meeting
22 July 2020
Rooms 1 - 4 Cobalt Conference Centre**

Present: Alan Richardson (Chair), Sir James Mackey (Chief Executive)

Public governors:

Tom Millen	Rest of England
Brian Kipling	Wansbeck
David Wilkinson	Wansbeck
Peter Blair	North Shields
Gill Close	North Shields
John Forsyth	North Shields
Ken Patterson	Blyth
Bill Dowse	Blyth
John Ostle	Blyth
Sean Fahey	Blyth
Mick McCarthy	Berwick
Linda Pepper	Berwick
Pauline Wilson	Berwick
Andrew Gray	Berwick
Adam Chedburn	Whitley Bay
Heather Carr	Whitley Bay
Pamela Hood	Whitley Bay
Stephen Prandle	Hexham
Janet Shucksmith	Hexham
Ian McKee	Wallsend

Staff governors:

Lucy Thompson	Hexham General Hospital
Carrie Hughes	North Tyneside community
Doreen Davidson	Northumberland community
Alison Bywater	North Tyneside General Hospital / Cobalt
Rexie Akwei	North Tyneside General Hospital / Cobalt

Co-opted governors:

Richard Dodd	Northumberland County Council
Ed Hutton	North East Ambulance Service
Muriel Green	North Tyneside Council

In attendance:

Malcolm Page	Non-Executive Director
Roger Barton	Non-Executive Director
Andrew Besford	Non-Executive Director
Prof Sir Alan Craft	Non-Executive Director
Ruth Connorton	Non-Executive Director
Daljit Lally	Executive Director of System Leadership and Community
Alistair Blair	Medical Director
Debbie Freake	Director of Integration
Claire Riley	Executive Director of Communications and Corporate Affairs
Ann Stringer	Executive Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development

Birju Bartoli	Executive Director of Performance and Improvement
Marion Dickson	Executive Director of Nursing, Midwifery and AHPs
Jeremy Rushmer	Executive Medical Director
Annie Laverty	Chief Experience Officer
Laura Olsson	Acting Company Secretary
Joanne Forster	PA to Executive Director
Jennifer Coe	Head of Foundation and Community Engagement
Lucy Thomson	Community Engagement Officer
Alex Carruthers	Video Conferencing Technician

01/07/2020 Welcome, apologies for absence and declarations of interest

Alan Richardson, Chair, welcomed everyone to the July council of governors' general meeting. There were no declarations of interest.

Alan Richardson explained the meeting etiquette and also the process for asking questions from attendees joining virtually. The formal approval process was agreed by the meeting attendees; for those who disagreed or abstaining to show or speak their names for the record. Alan highlighted the importance of paying attention to governance across the Trust as work returned to normal and thanked everyone for their support during this transition period.

Apologies for absence were received from:

Paul Crook	Wansbeck public governor
Moira Davison	Non-Executive Director
Bernie McCardle	Non-Executive Director
Dianne Ford	Co-opted governor
Martin Knowles	Non-Executive Director
Margaret Hall	Co-opted governor
Barry Allison	Berwick public governor
Chris Tolan-Smith	Hexham public governor
Isobel Johnson	Hexham public governor
David Elliott	Director of IT
Callum Brown	Staff governor
Jackie Lackenby	Staff governor

02/07/2020 Non-executive directors' attendance

Non-executive directors were acknowledged as in attendance including: Malcolm Page, Andrew Besford, Ruth Connorton, Roger Barton and Prof Sir Alan Craft.

03/07/2020 Approve the minutes of the council of governors' general meeting dated 29 January 2020 (Enc 1)

Following a query from Ken Patterson, Blyth public governor, regarding the question he raised at the last meeting about the potential impact on The Northumbria and how the system would cope with a major incident during these challenging times; Sir James Mackey, chief executive, responded that the Trust has robust emergency plans in place, which are tested locally and confirmed a major incident could be supported by planning and capacity, even though the Trust was busy. The meeting minutes of the general meeting dated 29 January 2020 were approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

04/07/2020 Approve the minutes of the council of governors' extraordinary general meeting dated 26 February 2020 (Enc 2)

The meeting minutes of the extraordinary general meeting dated 26 February 2020 to approve the re-appointment of Malcom Page and Moira Davison as non-executive directors were approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

05/07/2020 Receive the minutes of the board meeting held in public dated 30 January 2020 (Enc 3)

The meeting minutes of the Board meeting held in public dated 30 January 2020 were received and noted.

06/07/2020 Receive the minutes of the board meeting held in public dated 28 May 2020 (Enc 4)

The meeting minutes of the Board held in public dated 28 May 2020 were received and noted.

07/07/2020 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

08/07/2020 Governors' questions on notice

There were no questions on notice however, governors asked a number of questions relating to the presentation shared ahead of this meeting. Jim confirmed that the written responses to the questions would be shared with all governors.

09/07/2020 Receive the chief executive officer's performance and financial report – quarter one

Sir James Mackey, chief executive, provided a detailed update to the meeting on the following areas: safety and quality priorities, the Covid-19 local and national picture, performance and finance, staff and patient experience and priorities for the next three months. Jim highlighted that although some quarter one targets had not been met, primarily due to the challenges of Covid, governors should be assured that the Trust board and non-executive directors had met consistently throughout this period and now had an enhanced focus on improving the challenged areas.

The national and regional update provided information that there is continuing debate regarding the future structure of the NHS. Regionally, there are ongoing discussions regarding capital bids to invest, which the Trust is influencing, whilst also preparing for the challenges of winter and a possible second wave of the pandemic. The Trust's focus will always be prioritising its own strategic plans and principles; the council of governors will be kept up to date with the evolving situation.

Jim updated the meeting on the number of patients with Covid-19 in the Trust and how this geographic area has seen a low prevalence with 3/100,000 with 198 confirmed Covid-19 related deaths. There were 589 discharges of confirmed Covid-19 patients between 18 March to 5 July 2020. Jim stated there were no current critical care patients with Covid-19 in the Trust as of 22 July 2020. Jim also confirmed a massive reduction in A&E attendances during the same period with mechanisms introduced to support patients returning to A&E. Jim highlighted that the Trust's position post Covid-19 remains better than some trusts pre Covid-19 position.

Jim provided the update relating to performance targets highlighting the improvements in cancer at 85% for July with referral to treatment (RTT) and diagnostics picking up from June at 71.4% and 75% respectively. Emergency department achievement is a nationally recognised position due to a fall in attendances. The national picture is dominated by failures to meet targets with the exception of Northumbria's achievements in 62 day referrals to treatment at 87.2% and A&E at 99.6%. Jim referred to the need to refresh the NHS benchmarks nationally, which is an ongoing discussion.

Jim highlighted the key financial reporting metrics, which shows the Trust slightly behind plan at month 3 with a surplus of £2.85m for the year to date following national settlement. Activity is currently running at £33m below the block contract value due to Covid implications (with income bolstered by Covid block arrangements).

Fleet income impacted on finances due to the close down of car dealerships and manufacturers, which resulted in very limited deliveries in April extending into May and June. There are now good signs of strong and rapid recovery in July.

In terms of capital and cash flow, the cash position is strong due to the pending VAT reclaim receipt appeal if successful; the cash balance at month 3 is currently £152.5m. Capital spend is below plan by £12.6m due to planned project delays due to the pandemic.

David Wilkinson, Wansbeck public governor, queried the timescales linked to the pending outcome from the VAT appeal; Jim confirmed that it is almost certain the appeal will be successful with an outcome due early August.

Jim summarised the financial headlines as the current block arrangements will extend to September, Covid-19 related costs will reduce dramatically and there are ongoing discussions regarding the next stage of the financial regime productivity and addressing the backlogs.

Jim provided detail of the Patient Perspective (external) feedback for quarter 1 with over 2,000 patients providing feedback: 97% of inpatients, 97% emergency care, 98% outpatients and 99% of patients receiving day case care rated their experience as good, very good or excellent. Overall Patient Perspective results for inpatients were recorded at 86%, outpatients at 90% and emergency at 86% (all sitting comfortably within the top 20% threshold when compared with national data).

Jim highlighted the excellent feedback received via the Corona Voice staff engagement tool, where real time staff experience was recorded from over 10,000 responses. This acted as an excellent thermometer on how staff were feeling between April and July and also captured feedback from staff at home.

Jim advised governors that the Trust achieved its highest ever level of public satisfaction at 94% (up 10% on last year public perception research results) with an overwhelming increase in confidence in an improved service over the past five years. In addition, 86% of people think Northumbria has handled the pandemic either good or very good.

Finally, Jim provided an outline of the Trust's priorities and summarised the quarter; including the huge effort required to restore services to normal levels of activity and improve productivity; retain the Trust's focus on cost improvement; continuous vigilance and management of Covid-19 and associated risks. Other areas of focus will be the restarting of core activities e.g. real time patient experience programme, 15 steps, reinvigorate place-based relationships across the Trust and working with Bain & Co on Beyond Outstanding in terms of improvement and preparing winter planning – this will include a 'Talk before you walk' mechanism to reduce A&E walk-ins.

10/07/2020 Recommendations from the governor effectiveness working group (Enc 5)

Alan Richardson and Stephen Prandle, Hexham public governor, presented the report to inform the council of governors about the discussions and recommendations of the governors' working group, which was set up to look at the results of the council of governors' effectiveness survey that took place over summer 2019.

The report highlighted the roles and responsibilities, action plans and effective use of processes through two main duties: 1) To hold the non-executive directors to account, individually and collectively, for the performance of the board of directors. 2) To represent the interests of members of the Trust as a whole and the interests of the public.

The meeting was asked to agree and formally approve the recommendations from the governors' working group. The paper was approved with no objections and no abstentions.

11/07/2020 Annual plan and quality account

Jeremy Rushmer, Executive Medical Director, provided detail behind the annual planning process as well as the quality account. Due to Covid-19, the reporting requirements for the

quality accounts 2019/20 were amended in order to reduce the burden on trusts, as such no external audit assurance work will be completed this year. Furthermore, trusts have been given longer to present their quality accounts.

The safety and quality objectives for 2019/20 were summarised with supporting information around how these objectives will be achieved. Jeremy went on to provide a summary of the Trust's seven safety and quality priorities for 2020/21 including: flow/discharge; management of acutely unwell patients; supply and administration of medicines; children and young people's emotional well-being and mental health; end of life care and bereavement; patient experience and staff experience.

Following a query from David Wilkinson, Wansbeck public governor, regarding independent medical examiners; Jeremy Rushmer confirmed that the role and Sarah Robinson, consultant surgeon at the Trust, is part of a national pilot which came out of the Gosport enquiry into patient deaths.

Stephen Prandle, Hexham public governor, queried if medical examiners were doctors. Jeremy Rushmer responded by confirming, yes, they are doctors and the Trust currently employs eight medical examiners working one day a week.

Sean Fahey, Blyth public governor, queried discharge of patients to care homes and if this was linked to care home outbreaks. Jeremy Rushmer responded that there was no testing at the beginning of the pandemic in the region, however, the Trust and region are now in control and everyone is tested; there has been a lot of learning. Sean further queried the supply and administration of medicines and asked for some clarity. Jeremy Rushmer confirmed that there is no ward medication hand over by nursing staff, this is undertaken by trained staff only. There are mechanisms in place for sending medicines to community sites and little or no distribution in outpatients, emergency medicines remain with the GP.

Ken Patterson, Blyth public governor, queried if the Trust medical examiners work elsewhere in the Trust. Jeremy Rushmer confirmed that the medical examiners are skilled clinicians and fulfil this role. They are employed by the Trust and paid for their work as medical examiners but are independent of all the cases they service and will not have been involved directly in the patients' care, which is in line with formal process and guidelines.

12/07/20 Any other business

There was no further business. Alan Richardson thanked everyone for attending the July general meeting of the council of governors.

Meeting close

The next council of governors' general meeting will be on Wednesday 23 September 2020.