

Enc 1

**Council of governors' general meeting
29 January 2020
Rooms 1 - 3 Cobalt Conference Centre**

Present: Martin Knowles (Acting Chair), Sir James Mackey (Chief Executive)

Public governors:

Mick McCarthy	Berwick
Barry Allison	Berwick
Pauline Wilson	Berwick
Ken Patterson	Blyth Valley
Bill Dowse	Blyth Valley
John Ostle	Blyth Valley
Sean Fahey	Blyth Valley
Isobel Johnson	Hexham
Janet Shucksmith	Hexham
Stephen Prandle	Hexham
Chris Tolan-Smith	Hexham
Ian McKee	Wallsend
Gill Close	North Shields
John Forsyth	North Shields
Brian Kipling	Wansbeck
Paul Crook	Wansbeck
Heather Carr	Whitley Bay
Pamela Hood	Whitley Bay
Adam Chedburn	Whitley Bay
Tom Millen	Rest of England

Staff governors:

Jackie Lackenby	The Northumbria
Alison Bywater	North Tyneside
Rexie Akwei	North Tyneside
Angela Bandeira	North Tyneside
Callum Brown	North Tyneside
Doreen Davidson	Northumberland

Co-opted governors

Veronica Jones	Northumberland County Council
Richard Dodd	Northumberland County Council
Abi Conway	VCS Assembly

In attendance:

Birju Bartoli	Executive Director of Performance and Improvement
Ann Stringer	Executive Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Daljit Lally	Executive Director of System Leadership and Community
Marion Dickson	Executive Director of Nursing, Midwifery and AHPs
Alistair Blair	Medical Director
Claire Riley	Executive Director of Communications and Corporate Affairs
Annie Laverty	Chief Experience Officer

Debbie Freake	Director of Integration
Julie Danskin	Managing Director of Northumbria Primary Care (NPC)
David Hedgcock	Senior Group Manager of NPC
Jo Forster	PA to Executive Director
Lucy Thomson	Community Engagement Officer
Jennifer Coe	Head of Foundation and Community Engagement
Moira Davison	Non-Executive Director
Bernie McArdle	Non-Executive Director
Malcolm Page	Non-Executive Director
Andrew Besford	Non-Executive Director
Ruth Connorton	Non-Executive Director

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

Martin Knowles, Acting Chair, welcomed everyone to the January council of governors' general meeting. There were no declarations of interest.

Apologies for absence were received from:

Andrew Gray (Berwick), Linda Pepper (Berwick), Karl McLean (Blyth), Tony Turnbull (Wallsend), Carrie Hughes (North Tyneside), Dianne Ford (Co-opted), Muriel Green (Co-opted), David Wilkinson (Wansbeck) and Peter Blair (North Shields).

02/01/2020 Non-executive directors' attendance

Non-executive directors were acknowledged as in attendance including: Moira Davison, Andrew Besford, Malcolm Page, Bernie McArdle and Ruth Connorton.

03/01/2020 Approve the minutes of the council of governors' general meeting dated 23 October 2019 (Enc 1)

The meeting minutes of the general meeting dated 23 October 2019 were approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

04/01/2020 Approve the minutes of the council of governors' extraordinary general meeting dated 27 November 2019 (Enc 2)

The meeting minutes of the extraordinary general meeting dated 27 November 2019 were approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

05/01/2020 Receive the minutes of the board meeting held in public dated 26 September 2019 (Enc 3)

The meeting minutes of the Board held in public dated 26 September 2019 were received and noted.

06/01/2020 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

07/01/2020 Receive the chief executive officer's performance and financial report – Quarter 3 followed by governors' questions on notice

Sir James Mackey, Chief Executive, provided an update on safety and quality priorities, performance, winter, finance, the national picture and Berwick hospital plans.

Jim confirmed that there has been a really strong performance across all Trust priorities, Jeremy Rushmer, Executive Medical Director and Marion Dickson, Executive Director of Nursing, Midwifery and AHPs, have also undertaken a review to determine if winter pressures have had an effect on priority performance with no signs being detected or reported. Jim confirmed that the Trust will continue to focus on bereavement, maternity and making every contact count (MECC). Marion Dickson will provide a more detailed update on the work within maternity at a future meeting.

Jim provided comparative performance data for the same time the previous year which highlighted significant increases in performance with a 6.5% increase in emergency department attendances and 53% in ambulatory care, all supported successfully by the zoning system introduced at The Northumbria hospital. The Trust delivered on all key metrics with the exception of the emergency department at 92%, referral to treatment (RTT) had a strong performance this quarter and the Trust remains in the top five performing trusts nationally. Winter planning for 2020/21 has begun especially around elective work. In terms of regional performance, Jim stated that all trusts are struggling to deliver the cancer standard with only a third delivering the RTT standard. Winter performance has been stronger due to the more clement weather over the winter period. Jim confirmed that the Trust has had the best performance in the country in January. The council of governors asked that their thanks were noted to all staff for their hard work during the winter period.

Jim provided the quarter 3 financial update highlighting that the Trust is on plan for a £27million surplus through a strong overall performance at business unit level however, surgery business unit remains an area that requires further focus. The Trust remains on plan at month 9 with a cash surplus of £18.7million for the year to date. The Trust is in the process of finalising funding arrangements in respect of winter and closing the funding position for 2019/20. Jim stated that activity within December saw a reduction in elective income (£0.7million) however, this was counter balanced by an increase in non-elective activity which matched the reduction in elective income.

Jim stated that the staff and patient experience performance remains consistently strong in quarter 3 with the patient perspective feedback ratings telling us that 95% of outpatients and 97% of patients receiving day case care rated their experience as very good or excellent. All of the inpatient and outpatient results sit comfortably within the top 20% threshold when compared with national data. Jim provided an analysis of the staff experience programme which provided detailed scoring that demonstrates a consistent improvement year on year and resulted in a top five position in a national survey.

Jim confirmed that the patient experience data shows a consistently strong performance, however, hotspots will be reviewed. Annie Laverty, Chief Experience Officer, confirmed that all of the patient experience surveys free text data has also been analysed to support identification of those areas that need further focus. Annie also confirmed that the team ensure that all the facts are shared from both patient and staff experience with the business units through infographics. The Happiness Survey is working well and can demonstrate significant improvement year on year. Ann Stringer, Executive Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development, will be invited to a future meeting to update on the national survey results.

Sean Fahey, Blyth Valley public governor, asked for clarity on the hotspot figures to identify if the areas are from emergency care or community. Annie confirmed that what matters to people varies and the analysis of this is sophisticated; the team do not only focus on the busiest areas and we will keep governors updated.

Finally, Jim advised governors that discussions continue about national standards such 18 weeks RTT and the four-hour wait target. Jim feels that these standards are important and the Trust will always strive to maintain high standards of care and treatment. Jim also advised governors that the designs for the new Berwick hospital are close to completion and the Trust intends to make an announcement in March, which will be shared with governors.

Stephen Prandle, Hexham public governor, queried the negativity linked to primary care and the national plan. Jim stated that primary care was asked to set up primary care networks (PCNs) and there are ongoing discussions about national expectations; lots of work is happening to nurture and develop these networks.

Ken Patterson, Blyth Valley public governor, raised the issue of transport access if there were a major incident on the A1 and how this would impact on Wansbeck and The Northumbria hospitals. Alistair Blair, medical director, stated that the Trust has robust emergency plans in place that are tested locally and regionally, with complex testing undertaken annually that also involves North East Ambulance Service (NEAS). Non-executive directors, Alistair Blair and Marion Dickson confirmed they feel fully assured regarding the Trust's planning for incidents.

John Forsyth, North Shields public governor, queried how the Trust is reacting to the lack of new nurses coming into the NHS, especially in light of the increased demand on The Northumbria, which seems to be increasing year on year. Ann Stringer responded that the Trust has expanded its whole apprenticeship scheme and have a number of other essential roles that are also open to apprentices across the Trust as well as the plans to focus on nurse recruitment. Jim added that there is still a demand for local services at the base sites, which are seeing a consistent number of attendances. The improved patient flow and the demarcation areas at The Northumbria emergency department was due to a lot of effort by staff and ensuring the communication to staff and patients was timely and effective; this continues to work well to support the system.

Martin Knowles summarised this report by highlighting that the Trust has achieved a very strong performance in both clinical and financial areas to date and passed on thanks to Jim and the Trust Board for their work.

Governor questions on notice

John Ostle, public governor for Blyth Valley, stated that during the general election campaign he received two separate election communications from the Labour candidate for Blyth, both of which were addressed to him. The statements contained the following:

"It is not right that people going to Cramlington Hospital for emergency care recently faced an eight hour wait."

No quantum on the number of people was given, and the period referred to as "recent" was unspecified. For the sake of clarity, and for the purpose of this question, John suggested "recently" to be between 6th October 2019 and 6th November 2019, which were the dates that Parliament was dissolved pending the election.

John asked what the figure was of people going to The Northumbria for emergency care between the 6th October and the 6th November 2019 who faced an eight hour wait, and also the reasons why.

Jim Mackey confirmed that during the recent general election some local politicians used unfounded information of long waiting times at hospitals of around eight hours as part of their campaign material. A review was undertaken for this time and it was confirmed that only 0.9% of patients waited longer than the four-hour target during short spikes in attendances to the emergency department. Ambulance arrival numbers have also been reviewed with Newcastle Hospitals receiving 94 patients and The Northumbria receiving 135 patients on the same day. Jim highlighted that there will always be days when hospitals have a small number of patients waiting longer than anyone wished, however, the Trust tries very hard to ensure this is not a regular pattern.

John asked for further reassurance that this issue is being dealt with. Martin Knowles responded that the Trust has a strong safety and quality assurance system that reports into Trust Board via Jeremy Rushmer and the Board are assured regarding this work. Marion Dickson added that reports are provided with details of each incident via the Datix system. There are weekly governance meetings that follow up on all incidents at an operational level as well as reporting to safety and quality committee and Trust Board, Marion confirmed that incidents are dealt with very well through a robust governance structure and all incidents are then used for staff learning at all levels. The Acting Chair was asked why there is no comparison table looking at ambulance diverts. Martin confirmed that the finance, investment and performance committee receive

reports in relation to this item, these reports provide detail and assurance to the committee members which includes a number of non-executive directors. Birju Bartoli, Executive Director of Performance and Improvement, stated that during February an in-depth review of the data is planned to provide a focus for improvements. At present, the Trust is receiving more ambulances than anywhere else in the region. Collaboration work with NEAS is on-going as part of this review to look at allocation.

A further question was asked regarding Trust car parking and whether it is felt there will be an impact following the Queen's recent speech.

Claire Riley, Executive Director of Communications and Corporate Affairs, responded that the government is looking at further measures linked to NHS car parking; the Trust is still awaiting further guidance but assume there will be minimal impact, however, there is still an outstanding issue in relation to overnight parking. Claire assured the governors that the Trust is in a good place in relation to national guidance. She stated there is some additional staff parking due to open in March at Wansbeck General Hospital and there continues to be additional facilities a five-minute walk from North Tyneside General Hospital, which remains underused at this time. A permit review will be undertaken in February/March by the estates and facilities team. This is a huge task with many staff and variables to consider; when complete the report will be fed into the executive management team for further action.

John Forsyth, North Shields public governor, stated that he had heard from some staff that the offer of Foxhunters car park was not viable due to the poor lighting and lack of security in the car park and that some staff felt unsafe. Claire stated that she hadn't had any concerns raised regarding this issue.

Following a query from Sean Fahey, Blyth Valley public governor, in relation to additional electric charging points at The Northumbria, Claire stated that there are some practical issues which have delayed this work. Claire added that further work is being planned to review all outpatient clinics and patient visiting times to reduce the amount of car parking spaces needed at the same time, further information will follow.

08/01/20 Approval of reports Membership strategy committee Enc 4

The membership strategy committee report was received and approved.

Nominations, remuneration and development committee Enc 5

The nominations, remuneration and development committee report was received and approved. Martin Knowles confirmed that the report outlines the process for the non-executive director appraisal process following best practice. The report provided assurance that the Trust is working to the national guidance recommendations by NHS England in relation to the role and remuneration for non-executive directors and is aligned with other local and national providers.

The council of governors was asked to consider and approve the continuation of Alan Richardson's sick pay, equivalent to the national NHS terms and conditions during his period of absence. The council of governors agreed the request as above with a majority in favour, none against and two abstentions.

09/01/20 Assurance committee update

Moira Davison, Non-Executive Director, has been chair of the assurance committee for two years and was able to provide a detailed update on the terms of reference, membership, business cycle, structure, planning, governance and work of the assurance committee. This is to provide assurance to the Board regarding compliance with standards, policies and procedures relating to clinical governance, corporate governance and risk management.

Moira confirmed that business units and subsidiaries all provide reports on their high risks and anything that requires escalating to Trust Board is forwarded via this committee. Moira went on to highlight key areas of work, areas of focus and the work linked to the recent Care Quality Commission (CQC) rating.

Sean Fahey, Blyth Valley public governor, asked for clarity around the process if a business unit is not achieving and asked how the committee gets its assurance. Moira responded that, as an example, the medicine business unit failed to achieve its cost improvement target (CIP), the deputy directors are asked to attend a committee meeting and following this review mitigation plans put in place. Moira stated that there is not normally a need for escalation to Trust Board but this would be the process. Governors play an excellent role in challenging during the committee meetings.

Sean also asked for further clarity in relation to the CQC reports, where areas that require improvement, such as 'minor surgery' at Wansbeck General Hospital, are reported and how are these addressed. Malcolm Page, Non-Executive Director, responded that the CQC work is monitored through the safety and quality committee of the Trust, which reports to Trust Board. Malcolm confirmed that there is regular reporting on progress to the CQC on a quarterly basis and declarations against standards must be made; this committee also works to a CQC action plan following on from the formal inspection.

Moira Davison paid tribute to Tony Stapleton, Berwick public governor, who was a member of the assurance committee until his recent passing and stated that he will be greatly missed.

10/01/20 Northumbria Primary Care (NPC) update

Julie Danskin, Managing Director of Northumbria Primary Care and David Hedgcock, Senior Group Manager, provided a detailed update on the work of NPC over the last 12 months. Julie provided context, structure, governance and progress updates on the work of the group to transform GP services and remodel the link between primary and secondary care.

Julie presented the improvements achieved by the group in the last 12 months and how the plan of work is based on a five-year strategy, setting out its mission and vision and highlighting where significant progress has been made with the seven practices, clinical support unit and collaboration arrangements. Julie also highlighted the challenges the group faces, including finances, workforce and property issues.

David Hedgcock provided detail of the subsidiary achievements for 2019, with all practices achieving a minimum of a 'good' rating from CQC with lots of learning achieved along the way; access to 15-minute appointments has been received positively as has new ways of working to support recruitment and retention of the best staff. NPC has also moved to offer more digital appointments whilst adapting to expand the range of services provided to the population through innovation and efficiencies. David summarised that there has been success in collaboration and co-location with other services and also highlighted the importance of patient and public engagement, which is central to the way NPC work and is tracked by monthly patient surveys, engagement activities, website refreshments, social media awareness and improving telephone access.

Following a query from Stephen Prandle, Hexham public governor, regarding relationships and the types of practices that are asking to join NPC, Stephen queried if they are mainly failing practices. Julie Danskin responded that practices are interested in joining NPC based on the support packages on offer for the back-office services and in some cases other support through service level agreements.

Mick McCarthy, Berwick public governor, asked for clarity around the service offered by the clinical support unit, Julie Danskin responded that a practice in Alnwick had one particular issue

that they could not resolve themselves however by working in collaboration with NPC they have managed to provide the service seamlessly to patients.

Following a query from John Forsyth, North Shields public governor, regarding why only seven practices had joined NPC so far when there is a shortage of GPs. Julie Danskin responded that this was a good question and went on to clarify that GP practices are in themselves, their own small business and some do not wish to be managed by what is deemed a formal management arrangement with its own governance.

Sean Fahey, Blyth Valley public governor, asked what are the risks to taking on more practices. Julie stated that there are risks in that resources are not limitless therefore robust conversations take place with any interested practices before taking the next steps.

11/01/20 Governors' responses to safety and quality survey and selected external audit measure

Debbie Freake, Director of Integration, provided an update on the process for the stakeholder survey, which was sent out in January 2020 and sets out the Trust's safety and quality priorities and rationale. Governors were specifically asked for their selected indicator for external audit. 'Staff experience' was the proposed indicator and a survey was sent to all governors for their opinions. Out of 49 surveys, 31 were received, which was a good result, broken down into: 27 public, 2 staff and 2 co-opted responses; the feedback was useful with some excellent comments.

Following a query from John Forsyth, public governor for North Shields, Debbie confirmed that whilst sepsis is no longer an indicator there is still focus on this through the safety and quality committee and is embedded into standard business reporting.

Debbie asked the council of governors to confirm their chosen indicator was 'staff experience'; the council of governors agreed as a majority, no-one against and no abstentions.

12/01/20 Any other business

There was no other business.

The Acting Chair highlighted that the Board meeting held in public was on Thursday 30 January and welcomed governors to attend.

Meeting close

The next council of governors' general meeting will be on Wednesday 22 July 2020.