

Minutes of the Council of Governors Meeting

Thursday 6th December 2012

Present:	Imelda Redmond	Non-Executive Director/Deputy Chair
	Jo Lobenstein	Public Governor
	Clyde Baker	Public Governor
	Sarah Weiss	Public Governor
	Suri Freedman	Public Governor
	Patricia Bennett	Public Governor
	John Bootes	Public Governor
	Eric Sorensen	Public Governor
	Geoffrey Rivett	Public Governor
	Stuart Maxwell	Public Governor
	Jude Williams	Public Governor
	Katherine Coyne	Staff Governor
	Ros Constable	Staff Governor
	Val Dimmock	Staff Governor
	Robert Duke	Staff Governor
	Andrew Ezsias	Staff Governor
	Jonathon McShane	Partner Governor

In Attendance:

Tracey Fletcher	Chief Operating Officer
Charlie Sheldon	Chief Nurse & Director of Governance
David Bridger	Head of Governance (minutes)
Vincent Buscemi	Partner Bevan Brittan Solicitors

1. Chairman's welcome

Imelda Redmond welcomed the Governors to the meeting.

2. Apologies:

Talaat Qureshi	Public Governor
Julia Bennett	Public Governor
Eli Kernkraut	Public Governor
Henry Muss	Staff Governor
Dr Lesley Mountford	Partner Governor
Prof. Stanton Newman	Partner Governor
Nancy Hallett	Chief Executive Officer

One member of the public was in attendance.

3. Minutes of the Council of Governors meeting 25th October 2012

The minutes from the previous Council of Governors meeting were agreed. Charlie Sheldon provided feedback on the following:

Time to Care Boards - The Senior Nurses have been asked to remove the headers saying time to care. The Sisters and Charge Nurses want to use the boards to display information from the patient surveys – The “You said, we did” concept where we display the feedback and show the actions that have been taken. The work is being carried out through the Sister/ Charge Nurse forum that meets monthly.

Patient on Ward - Charlie Sheldon has met with Governor PB to discuss the case and has looked into it. This is not a regular occurrence on the ward. Through the patient experience committee we will look at further awareness for ward staff on the quality of end of life care including managing large groups of relatives.

Geoffrey Rivett provided feedback to the Governors from the recent informal meeting of a number of Governors. The Governors were in agreement that these should continue and discussed the need to ensure that timing of meetings made it easy for all governors to attend. Geoffrey Rivett suggested that greater advance warning should be give and that, perhaps, in the next 6 months there might be one meeting in the evening and one in the morning. Governors felt that this would be helpful.

4. Minutes of the Council of Governors meeting 17th September 2012

The minutes of the Council of Governors meeting held on 17th September to approve the appointment of the new Chief Executive. The minutes of the meeting were approved. Andrew Ezsias questioned the accuracy of the list of attendees at the meeting. Clarification was sought regarding the list of attendees. Those Governors present who attended the meeting confirmed their attendance.

5. Chairman Appointment Update

Imelda Redmond provided the Governors with an update regarding the recruitment process for the new Chair of the Trust. The Trust has received a large amount of interest in the post from potential candidates who have a wide range of experience. She updated the Governors regarding the timetable for the long listing, short listing and interviews. A selection panel of four Governors (three public and one staff) from the nomination committee members has been identified to take the process forward. The majority of Governors present approved the process outlined however concern was raised regarding the process for identifying members of the selection panel. It was felt that the wider nomination committee could have been involved in the decision making process. It was noted that there was no explicit guidance on selection of the panel and that the Terms of Reference for the nomination committee should be reviewed to take account of this point.

6. The Role of the Governor

Vincent Buscemi of Bevan Britton solicitors provided the Governors with a presentation on the role of the Governor and how this will be affected by the new Health and Social Care Act.

Following the presentation Governors discussed the presentation and raised a number of questions.

Are Board meetings to open to Governors?

The act requires all board meetings to be held in public, therefore Governors will not be excluded, there will however need to be private sections of meeting to which all except the Board members will be excluded. Governors will expect to be provided

with agendas for Board meetings in advance as well as copies of the minutes after the meetings.

There does not seem to be many references to patients in the Act and hence the presentation?

This may be how things come across however you can be assured that patients are at the heart of everything the Trust does.

Improving the knowledge and skills of Governors, how will this be delivered?

The aim will be to treat Governors as staff who will have access to the full range training as development opportunities in the Trust. There will need to be targeted training based upon Governor need plus Governors will have access to the training provided by the Foundation Trust Governors Association (FTGA) to which the Trust subscribes.

With regard to mergers and acquisitions could it be clarified what constitutes a majority of governors approving and what will happen if Governors do not approve a decision?

Constitutionally this states the majority of Governors present and voting at a public meeting. Regarding not approving, the Act is not entirely clear and further clarification on this point will be required.

What can be done regarding Non-Executive attendance at meetings?

The new regime gives Governors the power to compel attendance at meetings which will be reported in the annual report. It needs to be considered whether there should be protected time for Governors to meet with Board members to ensure collaborative working.

Will staff Governors be given protected time for Governor duties?

Staff should be given time through study leave to attend any Governor training events.

Is it possible to define what is meant by acting in the best interest of the Trust?

This will depend in part upon whose interest a Governor is representing be that public, staff or partner organisation. It should be emphasised that in acting in the best interest of the Trust, Governors, as a corporate body, should aim to seek a consensus over decisions and not act in isolation whilst ensuring all Governors have any opportunity to express their opinion.

Governors thanked Vincent for attending the meeting and providing an interesting and informative presentation.

7. A Little History of the Homerton

This item was not presented owing to Nancy Hallett not being in attendance.

8. Vote of thanks to Chief Executive

Geoffrey Rivett read out a message he had received from Nancy Hallett who was unable to attend the meeting as a result of a bereavement.

On behalf of the Governors he thanked Nancy Hallett for her dedication and loyal contribution to the Trust as Chief Executive and wished her well in her retirement.

Governors agreed that she should be invited back to a future Governors meeting to give her planned presentation and be thanked in person.

9. AOB

None

10. Question from the public

Questions from the members of public present were taken.

What are the reasons for the increasing birth rate and is the Trust able to cope with demand?

The Trust has recently agreed to take on extra births from the Waltham Forest area. The Trust is receiving additional funding for this work and is ensuring there is adequate staffing and physical capacity to meet demand.