

**Minutes of the Council of Governors meeting**  
**Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

**Present:** Michael Cassidy (Chair)  
Geoffrey Rivett (public governor)  
Doug Hiza (public governor)  
John Bootes (public governor)  
Clyde Baker (public governor)  
Christopher Sills (public governor)  
Sarah Weiss (public governor)  
Suri Freedman (public governor)  
Patricia Bennett (public governor)  
Robert Duke (staff governor)  
Marion Goodrich (partner governor)

**In attendance:** Nancy Hallett, Chief Executive  
Charlie Sheldon, Chief Nurse & Director of Governance  
Dr John Coakley, Medical Director  
David Bridger, Head of Governance (minutes)

**1. Chairman's welcome**

Michael Cassidy Chair of the Council of Governors and Chairman of the hospital welcomed the Governors to the meeting.

**2. Apologies:** Val Dimmock (staff governor)  
Sarah Horsfield (public governor)  
Dr Helen Cugnoni (Staff Governor)  
Dr Lesley Mountford (partner governor)  
Professor Stanton Newman (partner governor)  
Deborah James (partner governor)

### **3. Minutes of the Council of Governors meeting 17<sup>th</sup> February 2011**

The minutes of the previous Council of Governors meeting were agreed the following points were noted.

- Questions from the public were taken as an addendum outside of the formal minutes
- Item 7 – it was confirmed that the Senior Independent Non-Executive Director also has a role in the appraisal of the Chairman

### **4. NED Appraisal Process**

David Bridger informed the Council that the appraisal of Non-Executive Directors was underway. Appraisals for the two NED's subject to reappointment was almost complete and a meeting of the Non-Executive Nomination Committee was scheduled to take place in April. The Council agreed for the Vice Chair of the Council of Governors to take chairs action to approve reappointment subject to satisfactory appraisal. The outcome of this meeting will be fed back to the Governors at the Council of Governors meeting in May.

#### Governor Development

Charlie Sheldon provided the Governors with an update regarding progress with the Governor handbook which include opportunities available regarding Governor development. He had been in contact with the Foundation Trust network and other Foundation Trusts regarding processes in place elsewhere. It is anticipated that a draft will be available for Governors to review in June.

The Governors discussed the implications of the new Health Bill which may extend the role of the Governor. Any changes as a result of the Bill will need to be taken into account when identifying Governor development needs.

### **5. Patient Experience & Quality Report**

Charlie Sheldon presented the patient experience and quality report to the Governors including an update on Serious Incidents. He provided a summary of the information in the report and stated that the Trust had reported a total of 33 Serious Incidents, this increase from previous years was partly the result changes in reporting guidance and improved awareness of reporting across the Trust. Governors requested further detail regarding the consequences of serious incidents to be included in future reports.

He informed that Governors that the Trust had been subject to an unannounced inspection by the Care Quality Commission on 16<sup>th</sup> March. Four assessors had visited the Trust and reviewed the Trust's arrangements for privacy, dignity and nutrition. They visited two wards and as well as observing practice, interviewed staff and patients. Informal feedback indicated that they had identified no major concerns but provided suggestions on how some issues could be better addressed such as provision of adaptive feeding tools and the use of beakers for patients.

The Trust has recently received the results of the 2010 inpatient survey. He explained that the Trust continues to receive very low response rates to the survey. He provided a summary of the findings of the survey and explained that the Trust is likely to run the survey again in year.

The Governors discussed a number of the findings of the report and the actions the Trust has put in place to improve patient experience including noise at night and cleanliness

Nancy Hallett notified the Governors that the Trust had also recently received the results of the 2010 Staff Survey. The Trust had received a response rate of approximately 50%. She provided a summary of the initial findings and informed Governors that a more detailed report would be provided for Governors at a future meeting.

The Governors noted the contents of the report.

## **6. Changing Governor Role**

Geoffrey Rivett provided the Governors with feedback from the Foundation Trust Governors Association National Development day that he and a number of Governors had recently attended. At the day they had received a presentation from Monitor outlining potential changes to their role and function under the proposed new Health and Social Care Bill. This had made explicit reference to the changing role of the Governor and how Foundation Trusts will be responsible for supporting Governors in this revised role. It was agreed that a copy of the Monitor presentation will be circulated to all Governors. The Governors discussed implications of the changing role and agreed that further information and clarification will be required when the Bill is confirmed. It was agreed that the Governors should use some of their allocated seminar time to receive presentations from legal experts on the changing role.

## **7. Hospital Briefing**

Nancy Hallett provided the Governors with a verbal report on the following:

- Financial Planning

Work is continuing with regard to the cost savings the Trust is required to make and the Trust has not reached the target previously set however the level of savings required are now less than previously stated.

- Community Health Services

The Trust is working hard to finalise the transfer of Community Health services to Homerton The Trust is prepared for the safe transfer of services on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011.

- National and Regional Strategic Changes

She provided the Governors with an update on regional and national changes to the NHS. Nationally the new Governments Health and Social Care Bill is yet to be finalised and the Trust will need to consider and respond to the changes that this will bring. She informed the Governors that the Boards of Newham, Whipps Cross and Barts and the London Hospitals had agreed to progress the development of a plan to merge the three organisations having one year to formulate a case for merger. The Trust will need to consider the possible risks to the Trust if this goes ahead. The Governors discussed and raised a number of questions regarding the potential merger and how this may affect services provided by Homerton.

- Annual Plan 2011/12

Nancy Hallett tabled a paper outlining the development of the Trusts Annual Plan for 2011/12. She provided the Governors with the context for its development including the change in Government and national financial difficulties.

She described the Trusts draft principles and three corporate objectives for 2011/12 which had been identified by the Trust executive team with input from senior staff within the Trust.

The Governors discussed the proposed principles and objectives and provided suggestions, comment and feedback. Nancy Hallett thanked the Governors for their input into the development of the plan which will now be drafted and presented to a small group of Governors for further review and discussion. A final draft of the Annual Plan will be presented to governors at their meeting in May.

The Governors thanked her for her report.

## **8. Any other business**

### **Patient and Public Involvement**

Sarah Weis tabled a paper providing the Governors with an update from the Patient and Public Involvement Committee held in March. She stated that the role of committee is being significantly reviewed in light of the newly Patient Experience Committee to ensure there is no overlap. She summarised the key points of the proposal and rationale which is currently being drafted. It has been suggested that the new committee would benefit from either an NED or Governor chair and this will be considered as part of the proposal. It is anticipated that the proposal will be presented to the Governors at a future meeting.

As this was her last meeting the Council of Governors thanked Marion Goodrich for her hard work and valued contribution as a Partner Governor.

## **9. Date and time of next meeting**

The next meeting will be a meeting of the Joint Council of Governors Board of directors on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2011.