

Meeting of the Board of Directors Wednesday 25th June 2008

Present:

Michael Cassidy	-	Chairman
Nancy Hallett	-	Chief Executive
Tracey Fletcher	-	Chief Operating Officer
Pauline Brown	-	Director of Corporate Development
Dr John Coakley	-	Medical Director
Guy Young	-	Director of Nursing and Quality
Andrew Panniker	-	Director of HR & Environment
Stephen Hay	-	Non-Executive Director
Professor Michael Keith	-	Non-Executive Director
Professor Chris Griffith	-	Non-Executive Director

In attendance: Peter Walsh - Deputy Director of Finance

Minutes: James McQuillan - Strategic Development Manager

1.0 Chairman's Welcome and Introduction

Michael Cassidy, Chairman, opened the meeting

2.0 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from:

Anna Anderson	-	Director of Finance
Ian Luder	-	Non-Executive Director
Eric Sorenson	-	Non-Executive Director

3.0 Declaration of interests regarding items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest.

4.0 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 28.05.08 and matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record with the following amendment. Professor Kate Costeloe and Jessica Crowe were recorded as attending the meeting within the previous minutes. It was noted that this was an error in the minutes and neither Professor Costeloe nor Ms Crowe had attended the meeting.

5.0 Chairman's Report

Mr Cassidy, Chairman, gave a brief report on the Council of Governors seminar and discussion highlighting the positive response of the Governors to the patient survey action plan. The next joint Board and Governors meeting is scheduled for 17th July from 5.30pm.

6.0 Chief Executive's Report

Nancy Hallett, Chief Executive, reported a successful visit by Lord Howarth who has an interest in art in hospitals.

Ms Hallett also reported on the preparations for the 60th anniversary of the founding of the NHS. She noted that there was to be a BBC programme on the evening of the 5th July in which Geoffrey Rivett, a Homerton governor, would speak. Other events planned include a barbecue for staff and a photographic exhibition.

Ms Hallett also reported that Newham hospital had appointed a new chief executive, Andrew Woodhead formerly of the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital.

7.0 Corporate Governance

7.1 Annual report and Accounts

Pauline Brown, Director of Corporate Development, reported that the Annual Report and Accounts will go before Parliament on 8th July and back to Monitor on 16th July after which they will be presented to the Council of Governors in September.

7.2 Q4 Monitor Report

Ms Brown presented the Q4 Monitor Report as a positive profile. Ms Brown noted that the report stated that the trust had poor results from the staff survey, and that this was being contested: the results were not poor overall, the response rate was low.

8.0 Business Planning and Performance Management

8.1 Finance and Activity Report – month two position

Peter Walsh, Deputy Director of Finance, presented the month two position shown in the Finance and Activity Report [Note: Two pages of the report were replaced].

Mr Walsh explained that the end of May position was £704k in surplus which was ahead of plan. Mr Walsh went on to state that there had been a number of unfavourable variances during May. These related to a downturn in income (Obstetrics & Gynaecology and Gastroenterology) and cost increases (temporary staff, band and agency staff, medical locums and drugs).

Tracey Fletcher, Chief Operating Officer, explained that the downturn in income was being investigated and was possibly due to changes in the method of reporting and the start of a new consultant (Gastroenterologist).

Mr Walsh also spoke of the cash balance which is healthy and the capital expenditure programme in which there is some slippage. He also outlined the Cost Improvement Programme where there remains a gap of unidentified savings to meet the target of £3.7m.

8.2 Performance Report

Ms Brown presented the Performance Report and noted that there were no areas of concern. Ms Brown went on to explain that the format of the balance score care and performance report was being reviewed in order to make it more useful.

Stephen Hay, Non-Executive Director, queried the high vacancy rate in the Corporate Directorate. Andrew Panniker, Director of HR & Environment, explained that this was the result of relatively low numbers of staff in this directorate and a high vacancy rate.

8.3 Perinatal and Fertility Developments

Mr Panniker presented a paper on the current state of the Perinatal contract. Further discussion was taken under Reserved Business.

Mr Panniker requested that the board delegate authority to the Chair and Chief Executive for the appointment of a contractor. This was agreed by the board.

Mr Panniker also verbally reported on the Fertility development which is on track and is due to open in early September.

9.0 Clinical Presentation: TB Services

Dr Graham Bothamley gave a presentation on the TB service offered by the trust outlining the key issues, challenges and complexities of the service. The presentation generated lively discussion.

Mr Cassidy thanked Dr Bothamley on behalf of the board.

10.0 Clinical Governance

10.1 SUI Reports

This item was discussed under reserved business

10.2 Patient Experience

10.2a Patient Survey Action Plan

Guy Young, Director of Nursing and Quality, presented the Patient Survey Action Plan. It was noted that the key issues were: mixed sex wards, cleanliness, privacy & dignity, and communications with staff. Mr Young explained that actions would be complete by July/August.

The Board was alerted to the problem of vandalism and theft of hand gel dispensers and agreed future preventative methods.

10.2b Strategic Response

Ms Hallett reported that the trust may struggle to improve its rating because of population factors. Ms Hallett went on to explain that several London acute trusts had made representations to this effect to the Healthcare Commission and the Department of Health.

Ms Hallett went on to report that Ipsos Mori was to be commissioned to undertake some qualitative work to help the trust understand the drivers for dissatisfaction.

Chris Griffith, Non-Executive Director, asked why the top performing London trusts could achieve such a high status if this trust could not. Dr John Coakley, Medical Director, explained that, as well as the inherent dissatisfaction of the local population, satisfaction levels generally found to be inversely correlated to the level of emergency admissions – the higher the percentage of emergency admissions the lower the level of satisfaction.

11.0 Human Resource Governance

11.1 Employee Relations

No report

11.2 Ratification of Consultant Appointment

The board ratified the appointment of Dr Emma Goldstraw, Consultant Radiologist, and Dr Santanu Mukhopadhyay, Consultant Anaesthetist.

12.0 Strategy and Policy

12.1 Strategic Update

Ms Hallett presented a verbal strategy update. Ms Hallett noted that at the NHS Confederation last week there had been a strong expectation that Lord Darzi's Next Stage Review will inform much of the national agenda and publication is expected within the next few weeks.

Ms Hallett also noted that there was increasing activity in terms of the number and range of specialist services being put out to tender. This both increased the trust's workload and the stress level significantly.

12.2 Strategic Decision to Invest: Elective Pathway Service Improvement Programme

Ms Fletcher spoke about the elective service improvement pathway and the rationale behind this investment. Ms Fletcher noted that the trust had been successful with the 18 week target to date, and had secured non-recurring funds for service improvement staff to embed in the operational teams. The focus is on managing the patient pathway particularly through theatres where significant improvements in efficiency are expected. The objective is to understand how every patient moves through the system and therefore where and when the trust needs to flex capacity.

13.0 Committee Reports

Stephen Hay, Non-Executive Director, gave a verbal report on the work of the Audit Committee.

14.0 Papers for Information Only

None

15.0 Any Other Business

Ms Brown confirmed that the Board of Directors and Council of Governors would be meeting on 17th July from 5.30pm to 7.30pm.

ACTIONS

7.2	Monitor Staff survey
8.3	Perinatal Contract