

Questions for the Council of Governors meeting – 9 June 2021

Bridlington Health Forum (Jean Wormwell)

With reference to the “Healthy Bridlington Conversation” with Bridlington’s community, will;

Question 1:

YFT please detail in full how they intend to support Bridlington’s Governors (see Q2)?

Answer:

The 2 Bridlington Governors will be supported in the same way as all other members of the governing body:

People:

The Bridlington Governors will have access the Assistant to the FT Secretary at all times, who manages all communications and meetings with and for the CoG. They will also be supported by the Trust Secretary, the Lead Governor and the Chair for any other issues which cannot be resolved by the Assistant to the Trust Secretariat.

Information:

The Bridlington Governors will receive the weekly communication bulletins provided by the trust.

The Bridlington governors will be invited to the regular meetings held for the governing body including Quarterly Council of Governor meetings, twice yearly Board to Council of Governors meeting and informal Governor Forum meetings with the Lead Governor.

Development:

The Bridlington Governors will have access to training as required or requested provided internally or externally.

The Bridlington Governors will be encouraged to observe trust board meetings as well as attend other meetings and events- for example regular Members Meetings focusing on clinical activity in the trust.

The Bridlington Governors will benefit from an annual review with the Chair.

Question 2:

YFT’s Bridlington’s Governors please detail in full their community engagement plans?

Answer:

Individual Governors make their own decisions about how to engage with the trust membership and how they may wish to engage with service users in their constituency. There is no standard way of doing this- all governors do what is right for them. Some governors are happy to wait to be approached by members of their

communities- and some like to be much more proactive.

We have been unable to make contact with the 2 Bridlington Governors to date, to speak with them about their own plans. When we are able to contact them, we will discuss their plans and any help or support they may need.

Question 3:

Bridlington's Governors please contact Bridlington Health Forum for our support?
Contact email is; bridlingtonhealthforum@btinternet.com

Answer:

I have no doubt the Bridlington Governors will seek to make contact with the Bridlington Health Forum in due course. This is at their discretion.

Cllr Rich Maw

One of the most important actions delivering good outcomes in stroke care is getting patients as quickly as possible to a properly configured Hyper-Acute Stroke Unit. NICE guidelines states that admission to these units should be within four hours. What percentage of Scarborough General Hospital patients are admitted onto HASU within this time frame please (latest figures)?

Answer:

The latest available data is in the table below. The current average travel time from post codes that would have previously accessed Scarborough Hospital is 52 minutes.

	National average	York Trust 2018-2019	York Trust 2020 (April – September 2020)
Scan in under 1 hour (%)	54.8%	53%	58%
Median time to scan (minutes)	51	56	51
% to HASU in under 4 hours	55.5%	57%	69.8%
Median time to HASU (minutes)	234	223	105
Thrombolysis treatment in under 60 mins (%)	62%	53%	69%
Median time to thrombolysis (minutes)	52	58	49

Save Our Scarborough Hospital (John Wane)

Question 1a:

The official Government Statutory Guidance to Trust Governors, whilst covering the full range of their duties also states three “Key Principles to inform how Governors decide to represent the interests of the members and the public and some suggested methods”. Leaving aside all the other duties of Governors, to which all previous responses from Trust management divert to when writing your responses and in fact even redacted reference to that guidance submitted in our questions to your March meeting. We are of course also aware that the pandemic has become an additional excuse used by Trust management in avoiding answering questions posed to you, but as proved in so many walks of life, it has NOT stopped more innovative approaches to holding meetings or having discussions.

Please can the Governors inform us why you allow the Trust to control your activities and thus stop you meeting those “key principles”?

Answer:

The Trust does not control governor activities. The trust seeks to support the governors in their role, given that they are volunteers and not executive members of the trust and that many work full time in roles outside of the trust.

Governors are free to gather views from their local communities however they wish. Governors have in the past held various drop-in sessions to meet the public however these have been poorly attended.

The membership development group considers ways to improve how governors can engage with their constituents.

The activities of the governors, including the groups they are members of within the trust, are detailed each year in the annual report. The trust’s Code of Governance also explains how we comply with our duties and obligations.

Question 1b:

“Key principle” number one in the Government Guidance to you states “Governors should seek the views of members of the public on material issues or changes being discussed by the Trust”. Long before and throughout the Pandemic we can find virtually no evidence of genuine attempts to meet that principle.

Given the long standing serious and significant cuts and changes to local east coast services, please can you as Governors provide full details of when and how and on what subjects, over the last three years, you have attempted to meet that principle in your guidance, and please can you also inform us of what future events you have already planned?

Answer:

Governors provide the trust with feedback from their constituents in different ways- informally through email or a phone call and less frequently formally at governor meetings.

Primarily however it is the Governors responsibility to hold the non-executive directors to account. The Executive Team are responsible for the operational

functioning of the Trust.

Question 1c:

“Key principle” number two in the Government Guidance to you states “**Governors should feedback to members of the public information about the Trust, its vision, performance and material strategic proposals made by the Trust Board**”. Please can you as Governors provide us with full details of when and how, over the last three years, and on what subjects you have attempted to meet that key principle in your guidance and what future events you have already planned?

Answer:

- *The Lead Governor provides feedback to members at the Annual General Meeting/Annual Members Meeting and provides an overview of the year gone by. The AGM will take place in September of this year.*
- *Membership Matters (membership newsletter) provides regular updates to the membership on behalf of the trust (including the Council of Governors) and in addition the trust provides Membership Engagement Meetings attended by governors where members and governors can communicate. Council of Governor Meeting are held in public x4 each year providing the public with an opportunity to understand more about the trust, its governance and the work of the Council of Governors.*

Information on the trust’s vision, performance and future plans is readily made available to the public through a number of routes, and is discussed in multiple public forums, including:

- *Board of Directors (held in public)*
- *Overview and Scrutiny Committees*
- *Health and Wellbeing Boards*
- *Trust open days*

Governors have in the past held various drop-in sessions to meet the public however these have been poorly attended.

The membership development group considers ways to improve how governors can engage with their constituents.

The activities of the governors, including the groups they are members of within the trust, are detailed each year in the annual report. The trust’s Code of Governance also explains how we comply with our duties and obligations.

Question 1d:

“Key principle number three in the Government Guidance to you states “**Governors should try to make sure when communicating with directors of the Trust that they represent the interests of members of the public rather than just their own personal views**”.

Please can you explain how you ensure that you meet that key principle?

Answer:

Governors are elected from within the communities they serve by the wider trust

membership, and as a result bring a breadth of views and experience to the Council of Governors as a whole. Governors are free to seek views however they wish, and the public can contact any of the governors via the details on the trust website.

Governors have access to board members through multiple routes, not least through board attendance at quarterly governor meetings and twice yearly Board to CoG meetings where the governors design the agenda based on the issues which they wish to raise.

Question 2a:

The Government guidance to you suggests four possible methods for Governors to “**seek the views of members and the public and feedback information to them**”. Not all those have been possible during the pandemic but they are given as examples thus giving opportunities for you to consider and use other methods and initiatives as appropriate to the circumstances and particular issues.

Please can you tell us what initiatives you have considered, undertaken and in fact planned for the future to begin to “seek views” and “feed information back” to the public on “key topics”?

Answer:

See 1c above. In the past the governors have also hosted a number of talks and presentations for members on a range of topics, and the membership development group is considering how it can reintroduce these once the rules regarding gatherings are relaxed.

Question 3a:

As an example of strategic changes being made by the Trust, the recent changes and cuts to Nuclear Medicine provision locally, have already resulted in difficulties being expressed to us by members of the public, being able to access and travel to and from appointments. Please can you inform us of how you obtained the views of the public on these latest changes by the Trust and also what consideration was given to the guidance on side effects, distancing, etc during the extensive journeys now faced by even more members of the public.

Answer:

Due to a significant shortage in specialist pharmacy staff who are needed to support radiopharmacy provision at Scarborough, we have been required to make some immediate changes to how nuclear medicine services are provided on our York and Scarborough sites.

With immediate effect, and until we have a solution which resolves the workforce constraints, patients who have normally attended at Scarborough for some nuclear medicine imaging will now be offered appointments at York or Leeds. This has been done in order to manage the risk to patients and to ensure they are able to access radiopharmacy services. We are looking at options for how this service will be delivered in the future.

This is not a ‘strategic change’, but one that had to be made immediately for safety reasons until a solution is found.

Question 4a:

Every time questions are directly asked of yourselves as Governors, the Trust replies repeatedly informing us about other responsibilities you hold as Governors of which we are well aware, but always ignoring those statutory duties you have to represent and seek the views of the public and feedback to them. The Trust has a long track record of avoiding 'engagement' with the public while pursuing their agenda of cuts in services and we see no evidence of yourselves as Governors attempting to meet your obligations to the public but instead appear complicit in it. Even today, the day before the deadline for questions, the ONLY papers available on your website for 2021 is the agenda for your March meeting and NO reports or minutes! The pandemic excuse does not impact on online meetings, discussion or the production and posting of documents. Please can you explain to us why you tolerate such total control of your activities, even to the point of allowing the Trust to 'screen' any attempt to contact you privately as 'our' representatives and only to post papers relevant to each of your meetings AFTER the deadline for questions has passed, seemingly to avoid any private or topical questions being posed?

Answer:

We post the agenda and papers online before the meeting, in line with our constitution and standing orders. Any questions that are submitted for the governors are shared with them, however it is usually the case that the questions relate to the operational management of the trust, which is not the responsibility of the governors and they are therefore unable to answer.

The Trust does not control governor activities. The trust seeks to support the governors in their role, given that they are volunteers and not executive members of the trust and that many work full time in roles outside of the trust.

Question 4b:

The Governors section of the Trust website states that “the Council of Governors are the voice of the community, ensuring that local people have a say in the running of their hospital”. In view of that claim, in addition to your statutory duties, please can you inform us whether you have any plans to ensure that you actually begin to communicate effectively with the people you allegedly “represent”?

Should we be given the usual obfuscation and avoidance of detail in the responses to these questions, we will be considering a number of FOI requests.

Answer:

As covered in 1c above, the trust and its governors have a wide range of methods for sharing information and seeking views. As well as the methods mentioned in 1c above, the trust also communicates with its communities via local media, the trust's website, and the trust's social media channels. We also work closely with partner organisations to engage on local priorities and developments.