

Report to:	Council of Governors
Date of Meeting:	14 September 2023
Subject:	Chief Executive's Update
Director Sponsor:	Simon Morritt, Chief Executive
Author:	Simon Morritt, Chief Executive

Status of the Report (please click on the appropriate box)

Approve Discuss Assurance Information A Regulatory Requirement

<p>Trust Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Our People <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality and Safety <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elective Recovery <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acute Flow 	<p>Board Assurance Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality Standards <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Workforce <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Safety Standards <input type="checkbox"/> Financial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance Targets <input type="checkbox"/> DIS Service Standards <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Integrated Care System
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Summary of Report and Key Points to highlight:
To provide an update to the Council of Governors from the Chief Executive in relation to the Trust priorities. Key points include: Industrial action, COVID-19 cases, Care Quality Commission (CQC) update, Lucy Letby case, York emergency department opening, modernising cancer waiting time standards, free bus trial for staff, and trust events.

Recommendation:
To note and discuss the report.

Report History Council of Governors only.		
Meeting	Date	Outcome/Recommendation
Council of Governors	14 September 2023	

Chief Executive's Update (14.09.23)

1. Industrial action

Industrial action for the medical workforce continues across the NHS, with action planned for consultants on 19 September, junior doctors on 21 and 22 September, and both juniors and consultants on 20 September and 2-4 October.

As these strikes continue without resolution, it is putting increasing pressure on our services and has inevitably had an impact on our ability to deliver maximum levels of activity and continue to reduce the backlog of patients who have the longest waits to be seen and treated. This is likely to be further compounded by the consultant and junior doctor strikes taking place simultaneously, as we will need to plan to provide 'Christmas day' levels of service during these periods of action.

We continue to manage and plan for the strikes through our command and control structures, and I must thank everyone for their efforts during all of these strikes, including those responsible for planning our response to the action, and those who are working differently and stepping up to cover colleagues so that they can exercise their right to strike.

2. COVID-19 cases

Cases of COVID-19 have been increasing in recent weeks, with a 40% increase in the number of patients admitted to hospital across England with the infection in early August.

After a period of time where we have seen low numbers of cases, we have been reminding staff of processes and procedures around testing and PPE, as well as best practice such as hand hygiene and practical measures such as ensuring good ventilation.

We will also be beginning our staff vaccination campaign for flu and COVID-19 next month, which remains one of our most effective tools in managing these viruses.

3. Care Quality Commission (CQC) update

Since the last meeting of the Council of Governors we have seen the publication of our CQC report, following inspections which took place between October 2022 and March 2023.

During this inspection period the CQC inspected Emergency and Urgent Care, Medicine and Maternity in both York and Scarborough hospitals, and looked at the 'well-led' key question for the Trust overall.

It is important that we accept the report as a reflection of a particular point in time, and focus on using the recommendations to prioritise where we need to take action.

I am encouraged that the CQC found positive improvements against some of the areas of concern that were identified in their previous visit in March 2022. This includes improvements in systems related to nutrition and hydration for patients on medical wards on both sites.

They also talked positively about the systems in place to manage demand within the emergency department in Scarborough, and it is fantastic to see that the overall rating for urgent and emergency care at Scarborough has been lifted to requires improvement.

Their feedback also highlights some significant concerns and areas for improvement, some of which we were asked to respond to quickly.

In response to the report we are required to produce an action plan, which has now been submitted to the CQC. As is normal practice we can expect a follow-up inspection in a few months' time to look at progress against this action plan. We are therefore providing focused support, not just to the areas inspected this time but across all our key quality and safety priorities, to ensure that collectively we can demonstrate ongoing, positive progress and that we are ultimately improving patient care.

4. Lucy Letby case

You will no doubt be aware of the case of Lucy Letby, who was found guilty of the murder of seven babies and the attempted murder of six more while working as a nurse.

This is an incredibly difficult and distressing case, and we are already beginning to see the potential impact on the wider NHS as a result. What is clear is the importance of all staff being able to speak up and freely raise questions or concerns. This is fundamental to patient safety, and I have taken the opportunity to remind everyone to raise issues and speak up through any of the available routes that exist in our organisation, whatever your role.

I also recognise that some colleagues may find this case and the ongoing coverage upsetting, both personally and professionally, and we have continued to support staff and raise awareness of the range of wellbeing and staff support services we have available at the trust.

5. York's new emergency department now open

I was delighted to be joined by colleagues from across the trust to celebrate the official opening of York Hospital's expanded and redesigned emergency department in July.

The two-storey expansion, which took just 20 months to complete, includes a new eight-bedded resuscitation area and twelve new assessment and treatment cubicles. There is also a newly remodelled waiting area which contains a separate children's area and supporting facilities.

Upstairs in the extension there is a spacious area for same-day emergency care where patients will be treated in the department and then discharged without the need to be admitted as an inpatient.

The environment for care is vastly improved and we are hoping to reduce the time patients must wait, as well as improving the quality and timeliness of urgent treatment and reducing ambulance handovers.

This expansion is long overdue, so it is with great satisfaction and pride that we were finally able to officially mark the occasion in the week the NHS celebrated its 75th birthday.

6. Modernising cancer waiting time standards

From October the standard waiting times measures for cancer diagnosis and treatment are being modernised and simplified.

There are currently ten different standards in place to measure waiting times for cancer diagnostics and treatment. Following a consultation last year, the NHS is modernising and simplifying these standards to focus on fewer standards, which are focused on outcomes, rather than processes.

The proposals have been put forward by leading cancer experts. By making sure more patients are diagnosed and treated as early as possible following a referral, and replacing the two-week wait target with the faster diagnosis standard, patients waiting to have cancer ruled out or diagnosed could receive this news faster. The proposals also remove the need for unnecessary outpatient appointments in order to comply with waiting times rules, allowing more patients to be referred straight to test.

There will be no change to how GPs refer patients onto a suspected cancer pathway, all changes will be made in the reporting of the standard. Faster Diagnosis is also already in place and remains unchanged.

7. Free bus travel for staff to continue

Following the successful trial, we are pleased to announce that the offer of free bus travel for trust staff will continue for a further two months in September and October while discussions take place with the bus service providers around options for a long-term staff travel offer from November onwards. All the First York network (including the Park and Ride services), and the Number 10 Service run by East Yorkshire Buses in Scarborough are included.

8. Events

8.1. Cultural Awareness Day

Our second East Coast Cultural Awareness Day took place on Scarborough beach at the start of September, a joy-filled event which really showcased the diversity of our Trust. My thanks go to everyone who organised the event or took time out to support the day.

8.2. Celebration of Achievement

We are about to close the nomination period for our annual celebration of achievement awards, where we can celebrate and recognise our staff for their achievements over the past 12 months.

This is one of the most important events in our calendar as we take the time to thank colleagues across a range of categories, and it is always a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

This year's event, which is generously funded through sponsorship, will take place on 9 November in Scarborough and I am looking forward to hearing the inspiring stories from staff from across the organisation.

8.3. NHS Carol Concert at York Minster - save the date

This year the much-loved NHS Carol Concert at York Minster takes place on the evening of Wednesday 29 November, and heralds the start of Christmas for many. It features a choir of NHS staff from across the region and once again will be conducted by Dr Andrew Padmore in his 20th year. The concert is back to full capacity and like last year, tickets are not required. The event is free of charge and open to all.