



Minutes

Public Council of Governors meeting 14 March 2024

Chair: Martin Barkley

Public Governors: Rukmal Abeysekera, City of York; Michael Reakes, City of York; Sally Light, City of York; Keith Dobbie, East Coast of Yorkshire; Catherine Thompson, Hambleton; Alastair Falconer, Ryedale & EY; Sue Smith, Ryedale & EY; Beth Dale, City of York; Mary Clark, City of York; Wendy Loveday, Selby

Appointed Governors: Elizabeth McPherson, Carers Plus; Gerry Richardson, University of York; Cllr Liz Colling, NYCC; Cllr Jason Rose, CYC

Staff Governors: Abbi Denyer, York; Julie Southwell, York; Franco Villani, Scarborough/Bridlington

Attendance: Simon Morritt, Chief Executive; Claire Hansen, Chief Operating Officer; Lucy Brown, Director of Communications; James Hawkins, Chief Digital Information Officer; Lynne Mellor, NED; Jim Dillon, NED; Lorraine Boyd, NED; Mike Taylor, Assoc. Director of Corporate Governance; Tracy Astley, Governor & Membership Manager

Apologies for Absence: John Brian, Ryedale & EY; Linda Wild, East Coast of Yorkshire; Bernard Chalk, East Coast of Yorkshire; Jill Quinn, Dementia Forward; Cllr Denise Howard; Adnan Faraj, Scarborough/Bridlington; Rebecca Bradley, Community; Matt Morgan, NED; Jenny McAleese, NED; Stephen Holmberg, NED; Dawn Parkes, Chief Nurse

Presenters: Melanie Liley, Chief AHP; Dave Biggins, IBE Lead & Deputy Decontamination Lead; Krishna De, Head of Patient Experience & Involvement

Public: 4 members of the public attended

24/01 Chair's Introduction and Welcome

Mr Barkley welcomed everybody and declared the meeting quorate.

24/02 Declarations of Interest (DOI)

The Council acknowledged the changes to the Declarations of Interest, in particular the resignations of Maria Ibbotson and Andrew Stephenson.

24/03 Minutes of the meeting held on the 14 December 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on the 14 December 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

24/04 Matters arising from the Minutes

Action Log

22/62 Strategy for East Coast – The East Coast Governors met with Simon Cox on 15 December 2023 and were joined by Claire Hansen and Jenny McAleese. On 26 January 2024 the East Coast Governors emailed Simon with their collective view of what they consider should be included in the Bridlington/East Coast ICB Strategy following discussions and consultations with East Coast public/Members. There has been further contact between the Lead Governor and Simon and the next step is a further meeting, which is in the process of being arranged. Action will remain open.

23/49 Constituency meetings – a meeting has been arranged for the Selby constituency on Friday 7 June, 10.00-12.00 at Selby Community Centre. Dates for the other constituencies are currently being arranged. Action will remain open.

23/49 FOI update - The Trust has recently increased its resources to help improve FOI compliance and have also made changes to the internal processes for seeking and collating information in order to improve response times. Generally, there has been an increase in FOI requests for example, Oct 22- Jan 23 208 requests were received and in the same period 23/24 292 were received. Despite these challenges, there has been an improved performance in the response rate compliance from 51% in Q2 to 71% in Q3. Improvements will continue to be made to increase compliance further. Action closed.

24/05 Chief Executive's Update

Mr Morrith gave a summary of his report which had previously been circulated with the agenda and asked for questions.

The Council raised the following points:

- **Change Makers** - is there a fast track method for implementing the good ideas that change makers come up with and if the initiative is successful, will it continue? Mr Morrith confirmed that there is and the Board is kept up to date each month by two of the Change Makers.
- **Nimbus Care** – what criteria are you using to establish whether the partnership has been successful or not? Mr Morrith replied that a procurement process was undertaken and a set criteria developed with Nimbus Care to ensure a robust delivery of out of hours care. The Trust now has full control of the out of hours service and is working in partnership with Nimbus Care.
- **Discharge Issues** – how many patients are in hospital because of discharge issues? Ms Hansen replied that there are around 5-6 wards full of patients across York and Scarborough that are waiting for packages of care to be put in place or a residential place before being discharged. Discussions are ongoing with the Place Directors and local authorities to improve the situation and plans are being created which will be shared with the CoG in due course.
- **Transport** – the travel advice on patient letters has been removed. Can this be reintroduced? Ms Hansen confirmed that this will be reintroduced and until this meeting had been unaware that it had been removed.

- **NHS 111** – do you have more control over where NHS 111 is telling patients to go now the Trust has full control? Mr Morrill replied that it was important that patients are directed to the appropriate service. There is work to do around this and improvements have already been made. The 111 service is not provided by this Trust.
- **Metrics** – are there metrics in place to measure the Trust performance on key indicators? Does the Trust benchmark against other Trusts to establish its position within the NHS nationally? Mr Barkley replied that the Trust Performance Report is published each month with the Board papers that everyone has access to. Ms Hansen confirmed that they do benchmark against other Trusts nationally and the Trust currently stands in the bottom third.

Action: Mrs Astley to arrange a meeting with Change Makers and the Governors.

Action: Ms Hansen to share the discharge plans with the CoG once available.

Action: Ms Hansen to re-introduce travel advice on out-patient appt. letters

Action: Mr Barkley to include metrics in the Performance Report on patient status “no right to reside”.

The Council:

- **Received the report and noted its contents.**

24/06 Chair’s Report

Mr Barkley gave an overview of his report which had previously been circulated with the agenda and highlighted the “hot topics” requested by the governors at the recent Governor Forum. One of them was financial pressures relating to cost savings next year which will be very difficult to achieve. The other one is the Staff Annual Survey results which were very disappointing and showed that there was a lot of work to do and will share the improvement plan at the next meeting.

Action: Mr Barkley to provide an improvement plan on the Staff Annual Survey results at the next meeting.

The Council:

- **Received the report and noted its contents.**

24/07 Questions received from the Public

Mr Barkley stated that the questions received from the public have been answered in the agenda pack that was published.

The Council raised the following points:

- Can you give assurance that the revised Public Q&A process will be monitored and scrutinised to ensure it is working as it should? Ms Abeysekera confirmed that she has full oversight of the Q&A process and any questions that come into the Trust for the CoG.

- There are significant questions around where services are placed and how services at Scarborough have been centralised? Despite the current financial situation, are there any plans to restore some services on the East Coast? Ms Hansen replied that location of services will be analysed as part of the development of the Trust Strategy together with workforce, resources and financial constraints when planning to ensure that a Strategy is produced that is deliverable.
- Can we look at producing a public survey again to provide additional feedback from members and the public? Ms Abeysekera replied that there is a membership group meeting taking place in April and the survey will be added to the agenda to discuss.

Action: Mrs Astley to add Membership Survey to the Membership agenda.

The Council:

- **Received the report and noted its contents.**

24/08 Virtual Wards

Ms Liley gave a summary of her report and asked for any questions.

The Council raised the following points: -

- There will be increased burden on carers. How would you be picking this up and are confident that the carers have the experience? Ms Liley replied that there will be General Support Workers who will follow a nursing care plan and will administer treatment over and above what the carers would normally do. Some patients do not have any family or friends to care for them and this is factored into the nursing care plan.
- How is success measured? Will capacity increase going forward? Ms Liley replied that there is a mechanism in place for users to feedback. With regard to capacity, funding from the ICB is only for the current 30 virtual ward places. Further resources are needed to increase capacity.
- Are your wearables sourced from somewhere locally? Ms Liley replied that they are using a company that they already work with. Locality is unknown.

The Council:

- **Received the report and noted its contents.**

24/09 Trust Access Plan

Mr Biggins gave a summary of his report which had previously been circulated with the agenda and asked for any questions.

The Council raised the following points:

- With regard to lack of space for training, can your training packages not be delivered online? Mr Biggins replied that they were currently looking into this but the face-to-face training is quite interactive.
- Is there a plan to make the training mandatory? Mr Biggins replied that they were in negotiations to do this.

- With regard to accessibility, one of the major issues is the written literature that the hospital provides. There are accessibility standards which the Trust adheres to. Do you link in with those? Mr Biggins replied that they do.

The Council:

- **Received the report and noted its contents.**

24/10 Annual Inpatient Survey

Mrs De gave a summary of the report which had previously been circulated with the agenda and asked for any questions.

The Council raised the following points:

- Regarding the introduction of serving of food in A&E for waiting patients, how is that done? Mrs De replied that disposable containers/cutlery is used. Patients eat where they are sat.
- One common theme in the staff survey is around staff attitudes and how information is communicated. Do you have any influence in implementing changes there? Mrs De replied that whilst her department does not have any influence in that area it will be picked up either through Complaints & Concerns or through the Changemakers and a discussion will take place with the department, or the member of staff concerned.
- Is it not the medical staff who decide whether the patient is ready for discharge rather than the patient? Ms Hansen replied that this is around the clinician signing off for discharge as the patient is medically fit to go home. However, the patient may not want to leave until they are given their preferred choice of where they want to move to. The Patient Choice Policy has been produced from national guidelines that gives the Trust authority to discharge the patient to another location whilst they wait for their preferred choice.
- How are we doing with Friends & Family Test and the QR codes? Mrs De replied that the team have had to redirect their efforts in other areas, but it is still on the agenda to move to a single QR code. There is definitely a push to get more people to complete the Friends & Family Test. We have just completed a deep dive and results are available to all departments.

The Council:

- **Received the report and noted its contents.**

24/11 Performance Report

Mr Barkley gave a summary of the report which had previously been circulated with the agenda and asked for any questions.

The Council raised the following points:

- The number of complaints received in January was 50% higher than in December and the highest monthly total for the last 2 years. Have you looked into why? Ms Coulthard replied that there were a number of reasons, one being winter pressures

and the number of beds available. Mrs De added that the majority of complaints were about Emergency Department because of the significant pressures they are under.

- Regarding diagnostics, how much can the Trust improve the situation given the financial constraints? Ms Hansen replied that because diagnostic centres are coming online over the next year, that aligns the Trust to shifting its planned diagnostics to the community and free up the facilities onsite to do the urgent and acute work.
- Regarding Performance Report Key Metrics, which are informative, are you able to simplify with infographics? Mr Barkley agreed to look into this for the next CoG meeting.

CQC Report

- What is different about the new regulatory CQC assessment approach? Mr Barkley replied that the Board was due to receive a briefing about the changes and will report back at the next meeting of the CoG.

Maternity Report

- Do you have the ability to increase student midwives to train and make provision for the future? Ms Coulthard replied that population and workforce statistics inform how many midwives need to be trained. Mr Barkley added that there is steady improvement in Maternity but more to do. Mrs Boyd added that she is confident that maternity is moving in the right direction. Ms De added that there have been a few very good events to obtain feedback which will be fed into the improvement plans.

Finance Report

- To what extent do you actually believe that next year's savings are actually achievable? Can you offer any assurance that patient safety and appropriate clinical care will trump financial balance? Mr Bertram replied that patient safety will always trump finance.
- With regard to meeting next year's savings, what plans are in place to achieve this? Mr Bertram replied that the Trust has not yet received the figure for next year but will collaborate with the ICB and its partners to negotiate how the system will meet the target.
- Who decides how the funding is allocated to each Trust and on to each department within? Mr Bertram replied that there are a range of factors that give the ICB their allocation. That distribution is then allocated to each Trust based largely on historical factors.
- Is the £3.3 billion cash boost for NHS England new money? Mr Bertram replied that some of it is and some of it has been recycled from elsewhere. It will benefit the Trust but that is yet to be discussed.

Action: Mr Barkley to provide simplified infographics of the key metrics in the Performance Report Key Metrics for the next CoG meeting.

The Council:

- **Received the reports and noted their contents.**

24/12 NED Assurance Questions

Q: Given the current bed pressures in the Trust what assurances can the NEDs give that discharge policies safely and effectively identify the medical and other care needs of patients? At recent CoG meetings governors have raised concerns about the pressures placed on carers following some “early” discharges.

A: Mr Barkley stated that NHS England has issued new guidance on discharge arrangements and Mr Morrill and his team are benchmarking this against current processes. Once this has been completed the CoG will receive assurance that the Trust is following best practice. Mrs Boyd added that the Quality Committee review various data to ensure the NEDs are assured that the Trust is working as it should.

Q: The East Coast governors have had a meeting with Simon Cox regarding plans for the East Coast, especially Bridlington, and submitted a letter to him. What is the outcome or the plans to accomplish this?

A: The East Coast Governors met with Mr Simon Cox ICB Place Director East Riding on 15 December 2023 and were joined by Mrs Claire Hansen and Mrs Jenny McAleese. On 26 January 2024 the East Coast Governors emailed Mr Cox with their collective view of what they consider should be included in the Bridlington/East Coast ICB Strategy following discussions and consultations with East Coast public/Members. There has been further contact between Ms Abeysekera and Mr Cox and the next step is a further meeting, which is in the process of being arranged.

Q: The public are indirectly encouraged to use the independent sector instead of Bridlington. Can the Trust explain what has been done about reversing this please?

A: I am assuming that this relates to surgery, in particular orthopaedic surgery. Having consulted with both Ms Hansen and Ms Liley, I can confirm that patients are given choice of location, which may include Ramsey Hospital, which is NHS. Ramsey is part of the Trust’s current delivery plan for elective orthopaedic surgery. Ms Hansen has encouraged clinicians to flag if they witness colleagues suggesting / promoting that private provision is an option.

Q: What top three specific issues have the NEDs challenged at Board Meetings that they think could have been handled better within the last 3 months? Please explain each issue, which NED has challenged, why they challenged, and whether the challenge has resulted in any improvement?

A: Mrs Boyd explained they challenge at Board meetings to gain assurance that improvement is being made in areas of concern. It is a continuous process. Mr Dillon added that most issues are picked up through the Board committees and collectively they decide what issues to escalate to the Board.

Q: Staff Governors continue to hear of behaviours which are not in line with our Trust values. What is the appetite of the Board to deliver real consequences for inappropriate behaviour?

A: Mr Dillon explained that there is zero tolerance to inappropriate behaviour.

Q: What measures are in place to monitor mental health of the trust leadership and their cohorts?

A: Mr Barkley said that both he and the NEDs check in with the executives on a regular basis. At appraisals wellbeing is a priority and is always discussed. Mr Morrith added that with the current work pressures it is common practice for him to ensure that he checks in with each executive director just to see how they are coping. Ms Hansen added that since arriving at the trust six months ago she has had exemplary support. Mrs Boyd added that there is internal support such as psychologists, counsellors, and wellbeing advice available to all staff including the senior team

24/13 Reports from Board Committee Chairs

Quality Committee

The Council raised the following points:

- Regarding concerns around Paediatrics at Scarborough, do they get support from the York team? Mrs Boyd replied that they have discussed this with the Scarborough General Hospital Paediatrics team and were assured that support was being given by the York team.

Resources Committee

The Council raised the following points:

- What is the purpose of the Committee? Mr Dillon replied that the committee is there to seek assurance around Trust performance, to challenge about the adequacy of improvement plans when necessary and escalate issues to the Board.

Audit Committee

The Council raised the following points:

- What is the purpose the Committee? Mr Barkley replied that the committee receives audits from Internal Audit each quarter and receives an audit report from External Audit once per year. To date, Internal Audit have carried out around 30 audits. They typically audit the adequacy of controls, procedures, compliance, information security, systems etc. as well as checking that the accepted recommendations have been actioned. Internal Audit make recommendations from the audits to address the opportunities for improvement that the audit has revealed. The outcome of each audit is rated regarding the level of Assurance. The audits are discussed at the Audit Committee. The External Audit report comes to CoG and is publicly available.

The Council:

- **Received the report and noted its contents.**

24/14 Governors Activities Report

Ms Abeysekera gave a summary of the Lead Governor report and highlighted that the Membership Strategy is currently being reviewed and would like all the governors to take part in its review. A Membership Development Meeting is taking place in April which she encouraged everyone to attend.

The Council:

- **Received the report and noted its contents.**

24/15 Holding NEDs to account

Mr Barkley gave a summary of his report, and no questions were asked.

The Council:

- **Received the report and noted its contents.**

24/16 Constitution update

Mr Barkley gave a summary of the report, supported by Mr Reakes, Chair of the Constitution Review Group, and asked the CoG to approve the changes to the Trust Constitution.

The Council:

- **Received the report and noted its contents.**
- **Approved the changes to the Trust Constitution by all governors who attended the meeting.**

24/17 Items to Note

The Council noted the following items:

- CoG Attendance Register

24/18 Time and Date of the next meeting

The next meeting is on Wednesday 12 June 2024, time and venue TBA