



**MINUTES OF THE GOVERNOR POLICY BOARD (GPB) MEETING
HELD AT ONE BIRDCAGE WALK, LONDON, SW1H 9JJ
ON THURSDAY 22 OCTOBER 2015, 11.00AM – 14.00PM**

Board members present:

Robert Alabaster (RA)	Governor, North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
Hummad Anwar (HA)	Governor, Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
Sheila Barnes (SB)	Governor, Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust
Frances Blunden (FB)	Governor, Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust
Diana Broughton (DB)	Governor, Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Elisabeth Buggins (EB)	Chair, Birmingham Women's Hospital Foundation Trust
Sue Davis (SD)	Chair, Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust
Peta Foxall (PF)	Governor, Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust
Roy Underwood (RU)	Governor, Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

In attendance:

Saffron Cordery (SC)	Director of strategy and policy, NHS Providers
Kim Hutchings (KH)	Head of development and engagement, NHS Providers
Edwin Magombe (EM)	Governor support officer, NHS Providers
Claire Mescia (CM)	Programme manager for GovernWell, NHS Providers
Dame Gill Morgan (GM)	Chair, NHS Providers board

Apologies:

John Coutts (JC)	Governance advisor, NHS Providers
Geoffrey Carleton (GC)	Governor, Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Action log:

Edwin Magombe (EM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EM to send around a poll to confirm the date of the next governor policy board meeting to ensure that the chief executive of NHS Providers, Chris Hopson, can attend• EM to schedule an agenda item for the next meeting around deciding on the governor policy board election
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	process.
Gill Morgan (GM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GM to produce a short film for governors summarising her views on the NHS and how they can make an impact
NHS Providers team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NHS Providers team will think of a better way to communicate directly with governors. • The NHS Providers team will explore the establishment of a governor of the year award. • The NHS Providers team will contact the successor to Geoffrey Carleton to inform them of their election to the board.
Governor policy board members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit feedback on member and public engagement questionnaire by Friday 6 November 2015. • Governor policy board members will feed through any recommendations for GovernWell trainers.

1. WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

- FB welcomed the group to the meeting and informed those in attendance that Geoffrey Carleton will no longer be a member of the governor policy board as his term as an elected governor will conclude on 31 October 2015.
- **Action – It was agreed that the successor identified by Electoral Reform Services will be contacted by NHS Providers to inform them of their election to the board.**

2. WELCOME FROM GILL MORGAN

- GM described her background and explained what her role as chair of the NHS Providers board entailed.
- GM described four key areas of work for her which involves governors:
 1. Articulate the challenges that health providers face
 2. Defend the foundation trust model and encourage good leadership
 3. Support individual trusts and councils of governors which are experiencing a system failure
 4. Propose ways to respond to new models of care, articulating the voice of the community through governors
- GM also proposed that regulators should involve governors more in their processes. PF commented that her council of governors had good engagement with the CQC in a recent inspection. The CQC are working with NHS Providers in regional workshops and producing a guidance document for governors on the inspection process.
- Several in the group suggested that guidance on how governors can support the move towards new models of care would be helpful. This topic has been touched upon in the governor newsletter with an initial briefing for governors on the *Five year forward view*.
- **Action – EB requested that GM produce a film articulating the important of governors and GM agreed to this in principle.**

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

- FB drafted questions for a survey exploring the topic of member and public engagement. FB requested that governor policy members submit their feedback on the draft questions

by Friday 6th November 2015. PF suggested including a question about capturing the ways in which local communities help to shape and influence health services. SB also suggested it would be useful to include a question on geographic coverage.

- Kim reported that she had met the chief executive of Electoral Reform Services to discuss the governor policy board election process. They presented KH with various options which the group agreed to review at the next governor policy board meeting.
- RU and HA were unable to attend the Monitor Governor Support Group meeting on 13 October but committed to attending the next meeting to feed back to the group.
- FB commented that some information from NHS Providers was not filtering down to governors. SC said that this is a complex issue as NHS Providers cannot currently store a database of governor contact details.
- **Action – The NHS Providers team will take this away to think of a better way to communicate directly with governors.**
- **Action – Governor policy board members to submit feedback on member and public engagement questionnaire by Friday 6 November 2015.**
- **Action – EM to schedule an agenda item for the next meeting around deciding on the governor policy board election process.**

4. PROGRESS REPORT

- CM updated the group on the work of the NHS Providers governor support team between July and October 2015.
- The induction toolkit will be published by the end of the calendar year and will be available on the new NHS Providers corporate website. The team will allow online bookings for GovernWell and the new website will be a dynamic resource of case studies and guidance for governors. The e-learning platform is in its final design stages.
- The team had received positive feedback on the quarterly newsletter for governors and had received a higher than average click rate. A training impact survey was conducted and the results would be reported at the next meeting.
- There was an opportunity to collaborate with the National Council for Voluntary Organisations to raise the profile of governors as volunteers. EB suggested that the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service could be a good way to recognise the achievements of governors at a national level.
- The team were developing various guidance documents on topics such as effective meetings, using the trust's constitution and feeding into CQC guidance for governors on their inspection process.
- The first regional governor development workshop took place in Durham and RA who attended the event said that he found the content good and welcomed the opportunity to network with governors in the region.
- The governor focus conference venue has been confirmed as the Congress Centre in London and will take place on 20 April 2016.
- The team are refreshing GovernWell course content and are looking for new trainers particularly in the area of finance. The governor policy board was asked to feed through any recommendations for GovernWell trainers.
- **Action – Governor policy board members will feed through any recommendations for GovernWell trainers.**

- **Action – The NHS Providers team will explore the establishment of a governor of the year award.**

5. SHARING LOCAL INTELLIGENCE

- Members of the governor policy board used this session to identify the key issues facing their respective trusts and councils of governors at the moment.
- RA reported that finance and performance was currently an issue as well as how governors can best reach out to their wide membership base. RA was also interested in connecting with the wider ambulance constituency and would like to explore this at future meetings.
- RU reported that his trust was currently dealing with an unexpected financial gap. They had also received their CQC inspection results and will be feeding into the CQC inspection consultation at the upcoming NHS Providers governor workshop in Doncaster.
- SB reported that her council of governors are keeping an eye on trust finances and currently putting services out to tender. The trust has experienced a squeeze on finance due to efficiency savings as well the costs of their CQC inspection and well-led governance review. It is important to ensure that these costs do not impact on the needs of patients. In a broader context, SB was also concerned about PFIs draining trust finances. SC said NHS Providers will be doing some work on this.
- HA reported that his trust had a positive experience with their CQC inspection, and that their CEO had been shortlisted for an award by the HSJ. The trust similarly had concerns with finances, with some indicators sliding from green to yellow. This was the third year of 5% efficiency savings, but it was unclear exactly where these savings will be coming from. They are also being commissioned to provide new services and work with an acute trust.
- DB reported that having a deficit for the first time was a new experience. The trust has a new chair which has led to new ways of working. The trust has a CQC inspection at the end of November.
- PF reported that while finances are an issue the CEO has been open so there have been no surprises. Cancer referral to treatment waiting times was highlighted as an issue, and picked up by local press. The trust has also introduced an electronic patient records system and had initiatives in transforming community services.
- SD reported that things are moving at a very fast pace so sometimes it was difficult for governors to stay on top of what was happening. Birmingham has several examples of using new care models. It is important for governors to understand the dynamics of this and think through the worst case finance scenarios. It is important to be conscious of the pressure felt by lead governors, so meeting with them regularly was very useful.
- EB reported that it was important to keep governors in the loop on issues. The trust has just started forecasting a deficit and has a new finance team in place.
- FB reported that at her trust had a CQC inspection February. The trust is acquiring Chase Farm Hospital and currently have three big capital projects on-going. The trust has recently achieved vanguard status but more is needed to inform their governors on what this means and how governors can be involved.
- FB summarised the common themes emerging from the group discussions: finances, CQC inspections, quality assurance and performance monitoring. The balance between finance and quality was highlighted as particularly important.

6. GOAL SETTING EXERCISE

- The group carried out a goal setting exercise to identify what would support councils of governors to be most effective. This was categorised into supporting the council as a whole, individual governors as well as measures that could be taken in the short and long term.
- Below are transcripts of the brainstormed ideas which resulted from the session:

Support for entire council of governors

- Support in dealing with relationship breakdown with the board and conflicts
- Making sure that everyone on a council of governors has a voice and is seen to use it
- Creating an electronic forum for governors to exchange news and discuss issues
- Exploring accountability for governors
- Support in understanding how to effectively engage with members and the public
- Support in understanding and scrutinising the finances and the under context, especially in the context of mental health and the new pays of paying for services
- Creating cohesion around a council of governors – working together as a group
- Support in accurately assessing the effectiveness of the board when things begin unravelling like financial balance
- Support in working effectively as a group e.g. effective meetings, questions
- Inclusively representing governors as a governor policy board
- Understanding how to engage with diverse large areas of membership
- Identifying effective ways of working/examples of practice
- Defining what quality training looks like and ensuring it is well-led
- Need for clarity on CQC inspection, the governor role and communication process
- Understanding of NHS England's role and connection with governors
- Understanding significant transactions
- Ensuring that governors are actions in their trust fulfil their statutory duties
- Structured ways for councils of governors to work in partnership, and for vanguards to jointly scrutinise and influence projects
- Identifying the governor role in new models of care
- Clarifying governor role and how to execute the various duties
- Definitely how to really hold NEDs to account

Individuals

- Recognition of skills within a council of governors. Knowing what governors bring and how they use their skills
- Supporting governors with learning disabilities
- Creating a higher profile for staff governors
- Understanding how to really engage with members and committees
- Definitely what is realistic from the trust in terms of information and support for governors
- Supporting governors to be more proactive
- Understanding the role of the governor: internally and externally
- Understanding how can governors assess their own contribution vis-à-vis others?

- Supporting induction and mentoring/buddying schemes for new governors
- Providing sources of information in the beginning and training
- Encourage a system of identifying and using individual governor skills appropriately e.g. finance
- Supporting governors in understanding how to hold to account in practice
- Training and supporting for new governors. Adopt a buddying system with experienced governors
- Understanding the need to retain individuality of governors versus training requirements and the standardisations of skills
- Training and information that gives governors confidence to raise questions
- Better ways to link together and communicate between meetings
- Understanding how to ask questions and get the answers you need
- Defining the relationship between lead governor and other governors

Long term support

- Creating a governor voice and sense of community which can influence
- Helping governors to get underneath the trust's financial controls to be able to ask for the right information and be assured that it's accurate
- Creating regional and constituency governor support networks
- Ensuring sustainability of the governor role and not letting governors be too burdened so that they can make an impact
- Create a national voice for governor frustrations
- Supporting governors to reach out to their membership
- Making what governors do known externally and nationally

Short term support

- Website and e-learning
- Outline local networks and support
- Keeping abreast of NHS changes
- Guidance documents and case studies covering key topics

Other

- Development of lead governor role

7. ROUND UP OF DISCUSSION AND WAY FORWARD

- The group agreed to summarise their discussions which will feed into the NHS Providers business planning for governor support in 2016.

8. AOB

- There was no other business.

9. CONFIRMATION OF NEXT MEETING DATE AND VENUE

Minutes ratified at meeting on 21 January 2016

- The group confirmed having meetings in London was the best and that Chris Hopson will be in attendance for the next meeting.
- **EM to send around a poll to confirm the date of the next governor policy board meeting to ensure that the chief executive of NHS Providers, Chris Hopson, can attend**

Minutes ratified by governor policy board on 21 January 2016