

**CG 11/2016**

(Agenda item: 17)

# Report to the Meeting of the Council of Governors

**09 March 2016**

**Governor Election Strategy**

**For: Information and assurance**

1. **Introduction**

In preparation for the forthcoming Governor Elections in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, the Director of Corporate Affairs & Company Secretary commissioned the development of a Communications and Engagement Strategy in order to safeguard the optimum success of the Trust’s Governor Election process for 2016. This is currently being rolled out to raise awareness of the elections and to encourage the public, patients, carers, and staff to become a member of the Trust, and stand for election.

1. **Election Administration**

Electoral Reform Services (ERS) will be responsible for the administration of the elections, with support from Membership Engagement Services. An election website has been set up with information on the elections, and additional functionality to enable on-line nominations and voting. There is also an animated video explaining the role of a governor.

Nomination data was sent to ERS who sent nomination emails / letters to Trust members across constituencies on March 2nd. Nominations will close on March 17th, and a summary of valid nominated candidates will be published and put on the website platform. The final date for candidate withdrawal is March 22nd. A notice of the poll will be published on the website platform on April 7th, and voting packs will be dispatched on April 8th. The election closes on April 28th, with the **declaration of results April 29th**.

1. **Election profile**

The vacancies are in the following Governor constituencies:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Constituency** | **Class** | **Vacancies** |
| Patient | Service Users: Buckinghamshire & Other CountiesCarers | 12 |
| Public | OxfordshireBuckinghamshire | 32 |
| Staff | Older People’s ServicesAdult Services | 12 |

1. **Promotional activities**

**4.1 Local radio**

Chris Roberts and Judy Young spoke on BBC Radio Oxford about their experiences of mental and community health care services, and also promoted the Governor Awareness events. This was part of a two week BBC campaign in February to raise awareness of mental health called “In the mind”. Other Oxford Health FT services were also covered over the two weeks.

**4.2 Printed & local press**

A press release on the elections was sent out to the media. There was interest from the Oxford Mail, which also includes the Bicester Advertiser and the Witney Gazette, as well as interest from the Bucks Herald and Thame Gazette.

Insight has been dedicating space regularly to the Foundation Trust, and has featured a double page spread on the Governor Elections. MIND will also feature the elections in their newsletter.

A flyer has been created and has been sent out to GP surgeries, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Libraries, Daily Info, Healthwatch, City and District Council noticeboards, Parish Council noticeboards and newsletters, Carers Oxfordshire, as well as other community and voluntary sector organisations.

**4.3 Online/social media**

A social media campaign using Facebook and Twitter has been launched to draw attention to the elections. Soundbites of a video of Chris Roberts and Judy Young talking on what it means to be a Governor are being featured. In addition, the elections are featured on the Oxford Health FT website, and emails have been sent to staff, via the weekly email update, as well as to FT members.

**4.4 Public engagement events**

Maureen Ghirelli will be supporting engagement activities along with Margaret Eaglestone, attending Witney, Abingdon, and Wallingford Community Hospitals. Margaret Eaglestone is also working with the Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership to engage with staff and service users to raise awareness of membership, and the elections, and to explore communication opportunities.

Two Aspirant Governor Awareness Days will be held in Oxfordshire on March 7th at 6.30pm at Jury’s Inn, Wolvercote, and in Buckinghamshire on March 14th at 6:30pm at Adams Park Conference Centre, High Wycombe led by the Chairman and Director of Corporate Affairs.

The communications and engagement strategy will be flexible and responsive in order to meet the needs of the campaign and ensure that it targets the public, patients, carers, and staff across all constituencies so that a range of quality candidates fill the current vacancies.

**Recommendation**

The Council of Governors is invited to note the extensive effort that is taking place in order to promote the role of Governor and to deliver contested elections. Each Governor is invited to support the Trust in promoting the election and the role of Governor.

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