

# Report to the Meeting of the

# Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust

**BOD 73/2021**

(Agenda item: 5)

# Board of Directors

**30 November 2021**

**Trust Chair’s report and system update**

**For: Information/Discussion**

A high point of recent weeks for me was the opening of Saffron House, our new hub for mental health services in High Wycombe. I say ‘new’: here is a fine example of giving a rather tired municipal block a fresh purpose and look. All tribute to colleagues from estates and IT who did the behind-the-scenes work to fit out the building and its surrounds.

We invited Sir Steve Redgrave, the much-decorated oarsman, to do the honours and staff gave him an enthusiastic tour and reception. He is local, born and raised in and still a resident of Marlow and, to validate the connexion, met at least one member of staff who had gone to his school. I am hoping next month to show off the refurbishment to the Wycombe MP Steve Baker and the leader of Buckinghamshire Council Martin Tett.

Another recent visit was to a building in a much less fit state – the one that houses our children and young people’s services in Salisbury. I know directors are on the case but it was hard not to contrast the enthusiasm and dedication of staff to their patients with the miserable surroundings in which they work, cramped and not at all conducive to the wellbeing of children and their families. It is not an isolated example, either within our services or within the NHS at large: the Warneford Hospital confronts us with the scale and urgency of the case for capital investment – and, yes, for hard thinking about parking and access and how in a Trust such as ours we can make staff and patient journeys shorter and more sustainable despite our geography.

We have been busy with interviews lately. The governors have been choosing new Non-Executive Directors (**NEDs**) to succeed Aroop Mozumder, who left us in September, Bernard Galton, who leaves at the end of next month and Sir John Allison, whose term ends in March next year. The Council of Governors agreed that Lucy Weston will enter a new three-year term as NED from February. The new NEDs are subject to the usual checks but, pending their outcome, they will be Sir Philip Rutnam, former permanent secretary at the Home Office, Andrea Young, former chief executive of North Bristol NHS Trust and Geraldine Cumberbatch, a lawyer at the Port of London Authority. A fourth NED appointment will be announced shortly. The quality of these candidates along with that of the field from which they stood out illuminate the reputation and potential of the Trust.

The Council of Governors last week approved my appointment to a second three-year term as Chair of the Trust. I am grateful for their and your support and, especially, for the regular privilege of being able to visit our services and see frontline NHS staff in action. A recent visit to Whiteleaf along with Charmaine DeSouza and Ben Riley was lit by the enthusiasm of the team in the ECT suite, their appetite for research, new knowledge and empirical validation of innovative techniques for helping patients recover.

Nick Broughton will discuss Executive appointments including Karl Marlowe’s welcome strengthening of our medical leadership cadre. One new appointment – the Director of Strategy and Partnerships – takes the Board in a new direction, offering us capacity to manage the multiple external connexions of the Trust, especially with the emergent Integrated Care Systems in which we operate. There is no concealing the hiccups and delay that have marked the creation of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West system but we stand ready to play an active part as, we hope, its board and the accompanying partnership structure are formed, as we will also in Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire.

**Recommendation**

The Board is asked to note the report.

**Author and Title: David Walker, Trust Chair**

1. *A risk assessment has been undertaken around the legal issues that this report presents and there are no issues that need to be referred to the Trust Solicitors*
2. ***Strategic Objectives/Priorities*** *– this report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:*

*1) Quality - Deliver the best possible care and health outcomes*

*2) People - Be a great place to work*

*3) Sustainability – Make best use of our resources and protect the environment*

*4) Research and Education – Become a leader in healthcare research and education*