

# Report to the Meeting of the

**CoG 10/2022**

(Agenda item: 09)

# Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust

# Council of Governors

**Wednesday 15 June 2022**

**Lead Governor Update**

**For: Information**

**Governor Elections 2022**

I would like firstly to welcome the Governors who have just been elected or re-elected to the Council. This is an exciting, if perhaps daunting moment for you as you contemplate the complexity of the Trust and our responsibilities as Governors. With other Governors, the Trust Chair, and Kerry Rogers’ team, I will do all I can to help you settle and develop in your role.

Governors have been recruited to all vacant elected positions – please see attached chart. We will renew efforts to fill the vacancies for appointed Governors to represent Oxford University Hospitals FT, Oxford Brookes University and Oxfordshire County Council. Of 28 elected and 4 appointed Governors, we are 20 women and 12 men – an appropriate balance which reflects in part the ratios of Trust Members and Trust staff.

This is a propitious moment too as we anticipate our first face to face Council meeting for two years. It’s a sobering fact that only 8 of our total of 32 Governors have yet met each other face to face. I look forward to meeting you all in person.

And lastly, I’d like to thank again the Governors who have just come to the end of their elected terms and have now left the Council. Your contributions and support have been greatly appreciated by all.

**Member and public engagement**

As we emerge hopefully from pandemic restrictions, Governor engagement with our constituents and the wider public is a priority. With the sterling exception of some service user, carer and staff Governors, and although virtual meetings have value, for two years we have been unable to engage directly with the people who use the Trust’s services and who have an interest in how services are commissioned and operated. Bringing new Governors on board, engagement is a high priority for the near future.

**Youth Boards**

I am delighted that members of the Trust’s Oxfordshire Youth Board will give a presentation to this Council meeting, and it’s good to know that a significant number of young people are joining the new Buckinghamshire Youth Board. Plans are afoot also for a Youth Board for a Swindon, Wiltshire, Bath & NE Somerset Youth Board. Governors are keen to engage with young people, to learn from them about their aspirations and concerns – especially at this time when so many young people are experiencing mental ill-health and services are so stretched. In due course, it’s my hope that we will recruit young Governors to the Council, and this prospect will be addressed at the Governance Committee in September.

**Current Governor priorities**

Governors have focussed recently on a number of contentious issues, one of which – the patient vital signs monitoring system **Oxevision** – features on the Council’s agenda. Others include:

1. **International Nurse Recruitment**: Governors welcome the Trust’s recruitment of 75 plus general and mental health nurses to vacant posts in hard-pressed services, but we have raised concern that two thirds of these nurses are from countries from which active recruitment to healthcare posts is banned by the WHO. Although the Trust has provided assurance that active publicity was not undertaken in these countries and the nurses initiated their applications, Governors led by Anna Gardner continue to explore the ethics of recruiting from disadvantaged nations and the ways in which the Trust might offer reciprocal support both to the nurses themselves and their countries of origin.
2. **Service provision for people with neurodevelopmental conditions (NDC, eg autism) and with personality disorders (PD)**: The Trust recognises that provision for people with these conditions is far from optimal, as is the case in many parts of the country. Governors have expressed interest in contributing to workstreams established to address both potential service developments, which are priorities highlighted by the NHS Long Term Plan and Community Mental Health Framework.

**Lead Governor activities**

Over the past months, as we move rapidly towards the establishment in July of Integrated Care Systems (ICS), a few OHFT Governors and I have initiated and contributed to a number of virtual meetings with partner organisations - the central theme of which has been collaboration. These have included the following meetings of:

1. OHFT Oxfordshire Governors with counterparts from **Oxford University Hospitals NHS FT** which explored mutual interests, challenges and the potential for dialogue and collaboration with other organisations within neighbourhoods and across the county more widely. This set the scene for the following engagements.
2. OHFT and OUHFT Governors with **Oxfordshire Healthwatch**, in which our common interest in engaging with and hearing from patients and the public was discussed and the possibility of joint engagement activities explored.
3. OHFT and OUHFT Governors with **Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action** (OCVA), an umbrella organisation for 3rd sector agencies. OCVA is a partner in the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire & Berkshire West Voluntary Sector Health Alliance which has sub-groups addressing health inequalities, mental health, learning disability & autism, and ‘ageing well’. It was agreed there would be significant value in future collaboration both locally and in the ICS structure.
4. Lead Governors from Foundation Trusts across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) with the **Chair designate of the BOB ICS, Javed Khan** – a productive meeting which addressed issues of (1) collaboration between NHS organisations, social care / local government, primary health care and 3rd sector agencies including ‘at place’; and (2) representation and accountability. We envisage further dialogue with Mr Khan.

This summary highlights the need to forge equivalent partnerships in **Buckinghamshire**, and eventually in **Swindon, Wiltshire, Bath & NE Somerset** which is of course in a separate ICS. Governors Andrea McCubbin and Tina Kenny will set up a meeting of Buckinghamshire Governors to develop plans for engagement with partners in this county.

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