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| **Minutes of the formal Council of Governors in Public**  **Thursday, 22 May 2025 at 15:30 – 17:30**  **Oliver Fisher Room, Level 4, Green Zone, Medway NHS Foundation Trust** |

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|  | **Name:** | **Job Title:** |
| **Members:** | David Brake | Lead Governor |
|  | Angela Harrison | Partner Governor |
|  | Becky Bellars | Rest of England and Wales Governor |
|  | Joy Onuoha | Staff Governor |
|  | Karen Fegan | Staff Governor |
|  | Martina Rowe | Medway Governor |
|  | Natasha Turner | Medway Governor |
|  | Tania Islam | Staff Governor |
|  | Teresa Murray | Partner Governor |
|  | William Ruscoe | Medway Governor |
| **Attendees:** | Alana Marie Almond | Deputy Company Secretary (Minutes) |
|  | Abby King | Deputy Director of Communications |
|  | Charlene Hogg | Head of PMO and Efficiencies |
|  | Chris Parokkaran | Divisional Medical Director of Medicine and Emergency Care (left at 17:00) |
|  | Helen Belcher | Partner Governor |
|  | Helen Wiseman | Non-Executive Director |
|  | Gary Lupton | Non-Executive Director |
|  | Jenny Chong | Non-Executive Director/SID |
|  | John Goulston | Trust Chair |
|  | Katie Goodwin | NHSE Improvement Director |
|  | Kim Willsea | Governor and Membership Officer |
|  | Leon Hinton | Chief People Officer |
|  | Lorna Gibson | Director of Strategic Development, Productivity and Efficiency |
|  | Matt Capper | Director of Strategy and Partnership/Company Secretary |
|  | Nick Sinclair | Chief Operating Officer |
|  | Paulette Lewis | Non-Executive Director |
|  | Sarah Vaux | Chief Nursing Officer (Interim) |
|  | Simon Wombwell | Chief Finance Officer (Interim) |
|  | Sophie Cawsey | Communications and Engagement Officer |
| **Apologies:** | Alison Davis | Chief Medical Officer (deputised by Chris Parokkaran) |
|  | Anan Shetty | Medway Governor |
|  | Anna Krzyzanowska | Medway Governor |
|  | Carol O’Meara | Medway Governor |
|  | Christine Palmer | Swale Governor |
|  | Gavin MacDonald | Chief Delivery Officer |
|  | Glynis Alexander | Director of Communications (Deputised by Abby King) |
|  | Hari Aggarwal | Medway Governor |
|  | Jane Perry | Academic Non-Executive Director |
|  | Jay Patel | Swale Governor |
|  | Jon Wade | Chief Executive (Interim) |
|  | Matthew Taiano | Staff Governor |
|  | Mojgan Sani | Non-Executive Director |
|  | Paul Riley | Swale Governor |
|  | Peter Conway | Non-Executive Director |
|  | Stephen Worth | Medway Governor |
|  | Susan Plummer | Partner Governor |
|  | Tess Fenn | Swale Governor |
|  | Yushreen Vadamootoo | Staff Governor |

**1 Preliminary Matters**

**1.1 Chair’s Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed all present. Apologies for absence were noted as recorded above.

Chair gave David Brake his sincere thanks for and on behalf of the Council of Governors and the Trust and his positive approach to everything he has achieved. David gave his thanks to the Trust and the Council of Governors, he stated he felt privileged to be part of the work and is proud of the commitment and achievements for all involved. David wished everyone well for the future.

Chair introduced Teresa Murray as David’s successor as the new Partner Governor from Medway Council.

Kim confirmed the Governor Election is in process that went live on 22 May 2025, to fill vacant seats and for reelections.

**1.2 Quorum**

The meeting was confirmed to be quorate.

**1.3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no conflicts of interest in relation to items on the agenda.

**2 Minutes of the Last Meeting and Action Log**

**2.1 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2025 were **APPROVED** as a true and accurate record, subject to the following amendment.

**2.2 Matters arising and Action Log**

The Action Log was reviewed and updated, the log can be found under separate cover.

The Governors **NOTED** the report

**2.3 Chief Executive Update**

Simon Wombwell presented the update in line with the submitted paper in the absence of Jon Wade.

1. Improving access to diagnostics – bringing down waiting times for tests and scans for patients.
2. Patient First – update to Improvement Priorities.
3. Visiting Charter – visiting times extended from 8am to 8pm on most adult wards.
4. Neonatal Unit Accreditation Success – Oliver Fisher Neonatal Unit has received Level 3 accreditation under the UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI)
5. Star Award Finalists – 35 finalists from 167 nominations.

Check and Challenge

1. Angela – the Communications Team must communicate about the newly purchased MRI machine in Sheppey, this is a huge achievement for the Trust. Abby King confirmed this in the Communication Plan to go out shortly.
2. Angela – raised her concerns around overspending in resourcing. Simon – gave assurances around this and would cover the finance element later in the meeting.

The Council of Governors **NOTED** the update.

**2.4 Communications and Engagement Update**

Abby King presented the update for approval.

Check and Challenge

1. Angela – raised her concerns around the availability of Governors at events. Chair confirmed that engagement events are voluntary, not mandatory
2. Becky – how are they engaging with different groups and engaging with all characteristics in the Visitors Charter. Abby – through staff engagement and ward visits, amongst others.
3. Chair asked that the frequency is considered for the Communication and Engagement Update.

**ACTION NO: FG/2025/006 -** Abby to agree with Matt Capper when it appears on the forward planner, suggestion for a six-monthly report.

The Council of Governors **APPROVED** the update.

**Council of Governors Business**

**3.1 Absolute Diversity Session**

Sylvia Stevenson presented an update for noting, which included the Diversity Board Results and the Council of Governors MOT Update.

Check and Challenge

1. Becky raised whether patients, ICS and local Government are engaged with. Chair – has raised it with other Chairs at the ICB, an action was taken to address this. KMPT have offered learning from them as Sylvia has been there for two years and they are now going out to the Community.

**ACTION NO: FG/2025/007 -** Learning from KMPT on how to engage with the community.

**ACTION NO: FG/2025/008 -** Communication Team will action the development and production of information signage on site.

1. Teresa – the rise in discrimination against staff. Teresa asked around the red and yellow card system. Sarah – red and yellow card system is in place and liaison with the Police, they are used across the hospital. This process does restrict what treatment patients can get at hospital. There has been learning from KMPT. It is not the answer and more work needed to be done around how the Trust protects its staff. Paulette – the community has a number and variety of groups, community leaders need to engage and support outside of the Trust. This will help the Trust. William – what part of the community does this involve. Sylvia – this includes everyone in the community.
2. Will the reports be published after June? Chair – the reports will be submitted to the July Board meeting and published. Teresa – would like to take the reports to the Council when published to share at events.

**ACTION NO: FG/2025/009 -** will present again to the Governors, Sylvia to work with Chair and Matt to confirm when and how.

The Governors **NOTED** the update

**3.2 CQC Feedback Letter and ED Improvement Planning**

Sarah Vaux presented the report for assurance.

Check and Challenge

1. William – was not aware of the Mental Health Department at the Trust. Sarah – gave information around mental health patients presenting at the Emergency Department and the support that the Trust provide working alongside KMPT.
2. Becky – raised her concerns around long waits and areas of improvements. Sarah – gave assurance, next steps and that the pressure will increase over the winter period. Chair – noted that the report will be submitted in the next few months.

**ACTION NO: FG/2025/010 -** Sarah to present an update to the August Governor meeting.

The Governors **NOTED** the update and were **ASSURED**.

**3.3 Executive Portfolio Summaries.**

Chair - this agenda item should be changed to ‘Committee Chair Updates’.

**3.3a Quality Assurance Committee**

Paulette Lewis and Sarah Vaux presented the report for assurance. The following was highlighted:

1. Potential impact on quality and safety of the Trust’s financial position, including risk related to estate and equipment and staffing budgets/workforce was an area of focus for the committee and escalation the Trust Board.

The Governors were **ASSURED** by the report

**3.3b People Committee**

Jenny Chong presented the report for assurance. The following was highlighted:

1. Curiosity for addressing ‘did not attend’ in StatMand courses
2. Review of employee relations and organisational development capacity to support a speaking up culture and sufficient resource to ensure investigations are completed in a timely manner
3. The positive improvement to staff engagement reported via the staff survey and its quartile improvement
4. Request for a people promise closure report to provide learning and next steps
5. Accessibility to Q-Pulse for policies needs addressing for all members of staff
6. Neurodiversity in the Workforce
7. Safety and Security of Staff in the Work Place
8. Change fatigue

Check and Challenge

1. Becky - what practical actions will be taken and what are next steps? Jenny – there will be actions on staff survey and WRES and WDES reports and the emerging actions from these results.

**3.3b Audit and Risk Committee**

Simon Wombwell presented the report for assurance. The following was highlighted:

1. A new NED Committee Chair started
2. There was a review of the Annual Accounts
3. Standing Financial Instructions were reviewed

**3.3c Finance Planning and Performance Committee**

Gary Lupton presented the report for assurance. The following was highlighted:

1. Challenges and pace around changing the financial position
2. Reviewing the financial function
3. Length of stay and no criteria to reside, the impact on performance and quality
4. Business Planning assurance and risk

Check and Challenge

1. Angela – with cancer; is there a trajectory around savings that could be made at an earlier stage?
2. Angela – collaborations between the Trust and DGT. Chair – updated the Governors on the collaborative work that has started across all providers and what can be expected.

The Governors were **ASSURED** by the reports

**3.4 Financial Recovery Plan – Update**

Simon Wombwell presented the update for assurance.

Check and Challenge

1. The Governors questions focused on how the Trust can save money and efficiency. Simon – gave assurance around what the Trust is currently progressing and next steps
2. Becky – commented that the wellbeing work will be crucial if services are cut
3. Becky - is there anything governors can do to support? Chair - commented that this will be taken away to consider. Sarah – there is a piece around digital solutions such as Reducing DNA In Outpatients and using Artificial intelligence.

**ACTION NO: FG/2025/011 –** Sarah Vaux to report back on this – decide with Matt when to expect this.

The Governors were **ASSURED** by the report

**3.5 Business Planning Update**

The paper was taken as read

**3.6 Cost Improvement Programme – Session on Efficiency and Productivity Opportunities**

Lorna Gibson presented to the Governors for feedback.

Check and Challenge

1. Teresa – raised the Trust position on cyber and data.
2. William – costs around transport when appointments have been cancelled. Lorna will take this back to Outpatients
3. David – added his concerns around the ambulance service and Patient Transport Service and timings around pick up. There will be savings here in money and times. Chair – stated that contract management needs reviewing.

The Governors thanked Lorna for the opportunity to share ideas on opportunities

**4 Closing Matters**

**4.1 Reflection**

No reflections to record at this meeting

**4.2 Escalations to the Trust Board**

No escalations to raise to Trust Board from this meeting.

**4.3 Any Other Business**

There were no matters of any other business.

**4.4 Date of next meeting:**

Thursday, 26 August 2025, venue to be confirmed.

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| These minutes are agreed to be a correct record of the Informal Council of Governors Meeting of Medway NHS Foundation Trust held on Thursday, 22 May 2025  Signed by Chair: Martina Rowe (Interim Lead Governor). Date 26.08.25 |