**Public Council of Governors, Minutes of the meeting held via Microsoft Teams on 6 August 2020, 10am.**

**Attended**

**Helen Taylor**, Chair of ESNEFT (Chair)

**Chris Hall,** Public Governor, Colchester

**Joanna Kirchner**, Public Governor, Colchester

**Paul Ellis**, Public Governor, Colchester

**Ron Llewellyn,** Public Governor Ipswich

**Janet Brazier**, Public Governor, Rest of Essex

**David Gronland**, Public Governor, Rest of Essex

**Gillian Orves**, Public Governor, Rest of Suffolk

**Gordon Scopes**, Public Governor, Rest of Suffolk

**David Welbourn**, Public Governor, Rest of Suffolk and Lead Governor

**Isaac Ferneyhough**, Staff Governor, Colchester

**Sharmila Gupta**, Staff Governor, Colchester

**Helen Chuah,** Stakeholder Governor, Colchester Borough Council

**Carlo Guglielmi,** Stakeholder Governor, Essex County Council

**Neil MacDonald,** Stakeholder Governor, IBC/SCC

**Gordon Jones,** Stakeholder Governor, SCC

**Vikki Jo Scott**, Stakeholder Governor, University of Essex

**Zoe Dawson-Couper**, Stakeholder Governor, Colchester Garrison

**Also in Attendance**

**Tammy Hughes**, Head of Corporate Governance

**Nick Hulme,** Chief Executive

**Neil Moloney,** Deputy Chief Executive andManaging Director

**Shane Gordon,** Director of Strategy, Research and Innovation

**Angela Tillett,** Medical Director

**Paul Fenton,** Director of Estates and Facilities

**Melissa Dowdeswell,** Director of Nursing

**Adrian Marr**, Director of Finance

**Paul Fenton,** Director of Estates

**Leigh Howlett**, Deputy Director of HR

**Jan Ingle,** Deputy Director of Communications and Engagement

**Elaine Noske,** Non-Executive Director

**Diane Leacock**, Non-Executive Director

**Eddie Bloomfield**, Non-Executive Director

**Richard Spencer**, Non-Executive Director

**Richard Youngs**, Non-Executive Director

**Luke Mussett**, Membership and Engagement Officer (Scribe)

**Apologies**

**Ian Marsh**, Public Governor, Ipswich

**Elizabeth Smith**, Public Governor, Rest of Essex

**Jane Young**, Public Governor, Rest of Essex

**John Alborough**, Public Governor, Rest of Suffolk

**Louise Palmer**, Staff Governor, Ipswich

**Denver Greenhalgh**, Director of Governance

**Rebecca Driver**, Director of Communications and Engagement

**Mike Meers**, Director of ICT

**Paul Little,** Director of Operations

**Carole Taylor-Brown**, Deputy Chair and Senior Independent Director

**Hussein Khatib,** Non-Executive Director

***Items were not necessarily discussed in order of the agenda***

1. **Welcome and Apologies** 
   1. Helen Taylor (HT), Chair, welcomed all of those in attendance via Microsoft Teams. Meeting this way would allow the Council of Governors (COG) and public to meet safely and remotely in respects to shielding and social distancing. She hoped no one found it too difficult to access the meeting.
   2. HT noted the apologies for the meeting.

1. **Governors’ Declarations and Register of Interests**
   1. There were new declarations of interest made by the COG.
   2. Chris Hall, Public Governor for Colchester, requested to have ‘No Declarations of Interest’ to be added to his section.
   3. Gill Orves and Gordon Scopes, Public Governors for Rest of Suffolk, requested that their membership with Ipswich Hospital User Group (IHUG) be removed now the group no longer operated.
   4. HT noted that the Patient Experience team should attend a future meeting to present to the COG what work had being carried out following the end of IHUG.

**Action: Luke Mussett (LM), Membership Officer, to make updates**

1. **Previous minutes from the 4 June 2020 Public Council of Governors meeting**
   1. Cllr Helen Chuah, asked for her apologies to be added to the minutes.

**Action: LM to add apology to previous set of minutes**

1. **Chair’s Report**
   1. HT began her report with an update on the Elective Care Centre gaining approval to be built in Colchester. This was significant as it would allow for fewer cancelled operations, a design to cater to a growing population and an opportunity to deliver better care for our patients.
   2. She continued that she was aware of concerns in our Suffolk region about additional travel times. She has been assured that these would be looked into as the Trust moves into developing a more detailed service design.
   3. HT continued on capital development plans at the Ipswich Hospital with planning permission being granted and works due to begin in autumn. This included essential work to the northern Victorian end and services currently based there would be moving to other areas on the site.
   4. EMBRACE had now launched, a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff network across all Trust acute and community settings.
   5. HT shared the news that Leigh Howlett, Deputy Director of HR had been invited by the national team to share in how we have succeeded with our final figure for completion of COVID-19 risk assessments for all staff that were 93% overall, and 91% for black and minority ethnic staff.
   6. There was a new wall display at the Colchester site, which displayed the different staff groups in the Trust. HT commented how powerful they were to look at and that they were something that governors should go out of their way to see when they are next back on site.
   7. The Annual Members Meeting was to be held on the 23 September and the meeting like the last two Council of Governor meetings would be held virtually. Invitations would be going out in the next month.
   8. HT then handed over to LM for an update on the elections. LM started by saying that elections would last for a period of 55 days this autumn. He explained he would give a run through now of key dates but would send the exact schedule after the meeting to the governors.

**Action: LM to send election timetable to COG**

* 1. The process would start on the 1 September with the nominations opening. These would close on the 29 September. The ballot packs would then be despatched on the 21 October. Polls would close on the 13 November. Results would be announced on the 16 November. The election agency would not be contacting governors to remind them to stand again if their terms were ending.
  2. David Welbourn (DW), Rest of Suffolk and Lead Governor, asked that all governors receive an email on term limits. LM agreed to send a group email and then individual emails with term limits to each governor for clarification.
  3. HC asked that as stakeholder governors are appointed could they also have a term limit reminder. LM agreed to send these out as well.

**Action: LM to send term limits to COG**

* 1. DW then asked for term limits and photos of governors be added to the Trust website. HT said this was a good idea and that it would be arranged.

**Action: LM to supply materials to be uploaded to the website**

1. **COVID19 Update**
   1. Nick Hulme (NH), Chief Executive, gave a verbal update. He opened that though he had used the phrase frequently it was true that these had been unprecedented times. He felt that as an organisation the Trust had prepared extraordinarily well with the crisis with the right decisions made early on.
   2. NH gave enormous credit to the staff and their flexibility to train and work in new areas. He also thanked those staff that supported the Trust by agreeing to be flexible and work from home when needed. He then gave special acknowledgement to the amazing work done by the procurement team. Working with the PPE champions and the finance team, they had made the process of managing PPE successful.
   3. NH was mindful of a second phase. There was to be a massive legacy of those who should and would have been seen during this time. Helping them have access to healthcare would now be a big piece of work for the communications team.
   4. Reforming services would mean the Trust would be accelerating its ambitions and that the philosophy of Time Matters was very important. It would be about moving forward with new opportunities created at this time. One example of this would be telephone/video follow up appointments where appropriate and can be done safely.
   5. NH then asked Neil Moloney (NM), Deputy Chief Executive and Managing Director for a systems update. NM started by saying that activity had been consistent. Ambulance and the Ipswich site had returned to normal activity and Colchester was still slightly lower than normal. He continued that from learning from previous experiences they were delivering good performance. Cancer referral numbers had been more encouraging and they would prioritise the urgent level backlog.
   6. NM explained for routine waiting times in the early days that it had been what we could do within the constraints of the situation. Now it was a case of how to overcome these constraints. He elaborated patients wanted an indication of treatment times and it was now a case of how best to inform those that might be anxious.
   7. HC noted the work being carried out by the antenatal clinic at Harwich that had alleviated those coming in to the acute sites. NH agreed actions taken by teams like this were good and we should continue to work with them.
   8. David Gronland (DG), Public Governor for Rest of Essex, asked NH his thoughts on the Care Home situation that had been reported at a national level. NH said that there was in a situation like this the need to balance the level of risk and the right decisions were made at the time. NM added that it was important to note that they had followed national advice consistently. He added part of the system was to protect care homes with advice from the infection control teams and working with the community services.
   9. DW asked if there had been any guidance issued in how to avoid reverting to past approaches following the NHS being stood down from level 4 to level 3. NH said that there would be training issues for staff and that they needed to understand the pressures to staff undertaking new ways of working. However, he was encouraged by the level 3 status and that this would bring emphasis on new, cancer and urgent patients. He expanded that the system working was embedded and this would be about doing more to engage with the public and being mindful of inequalities. HT added the Board looked at the innovations created during this time.
   10. Joanna Kirchner, Public Governor for Colchester, asked if COVID19 and Brexit were affecting staff recruitment. NH noted that there had previously been a reliance on non-UK clinically trained workers and Brexit would be a factor on this. However, ESNEFT currently had its lowest vacancy factor. They were looking at a workforce plan and would have a system in place by the end of the year. Because of the pandemic, interest in working for the NHS had also gone up 400%. NM also noted that in the last few months there had been a higher amount of enquiries from people interested in taking up roles such as nursing so they would be looking at ways to accommodate this.
   11. Carlo Guglielmi, Stakeholder Governor for Essex County Council, praised the work of the trust during the pandemic. He then asked what was being done in terms of information on waiting times. He used the example of General Practitioners he knew that were looking for times on referrals. NH said that he was not in a position to comment on waits for individual procedures. However, he said the communications team had work to do on letting those patients know they had not been forgotten and to inform on how long those waits would be. He was also due to have talks that afternoon with the local systems team.
   12. DG asked following the question on lowest vacancies what the agency rates were like and how finances were doing generally. NH said that finances were where they were supposed to be. He then invited Adrian Marr (AM), Director of Finance for any additional comments. AM said that they had broken even each month of the year so far but discussions with the treasury were still on going for finances for the second half from September to March. NM added that there was a reduction of half of the requirements of agency staff.
   13. Janet Brazier, enquired about the opening of clinical departments that were not suitable to have follow ups via phone or video. NH made clear that any face-to-face appointments that were required would still be going ahead. HT reminded JB that they had already discussed how video and phone appointments were being assessed for suitability for different teams.
2. **ESNEFT Constitution Update**
   1. Tammy Hughes (TH), Head of Corporate Governance, took the report as read but went through the major changes.
   2. HT highlighted the governor term limits were clearly stated. DW asked for the term limits for appointed governors (nine years) and elected governors (seven years) to be aligned. HT agreed these could be changed to both read as nine years.

**Action: Amendment to constitution term limits to be made**

* 1. HT added there would be an opportunity for future discussions on modifying the staff groupings for future elections in 2021.

**Constitutional amendments were agreed by the Council of Governors**

1. **Verbal Report from the Integrated Assurance Committee**
   1. DW had attended the committee meetings on behalf of the COG and gave a verbal feedback report. He opened with commending all those involved. He noted it was hard to differentiate between Directors and Non- Executive Directors as they worked so freely and efficiently with one and another.
   2. HT added that she had also attended her first meeting of the group and echoed what DW had said. She too had been impressed with how there had been complex but joining up of all agendas. There was even talk of continuing this method and seeing if there was capacity for deep dive opportunities.
2. **Membership and Engagement Strategy** 
   1. Jan Ingle, Deputy Director of Communications and Engagement took the strategy as read. She then gave a run through of its creation process with the Strategy and Engagement group. She noted the contents listing the five priorities outlined in the document. She noted they were high level but the next steps would be an implementation plan lead by the Strategy and Engagement group.
   2. Vikki Jo Scott, Stakeholder Governor for University of Essex, said that working with the group there was an important part of staff side engagement to be undertaken with those that might be overlooked such as agency, fixed term and student staff groups. HT noted the importance of this and how it might play a part in constitutional changes to staff categories of governors.
   3. Dr Shane Gordon, Director of Strategy, Research and Innovation praised the strategy but asked the governors to be aware that the Board were making changes to the Trust Strategy that would need to be considered at a later date.

**Membership and Engagement Strategy was approved with provision of a detailed implementation plan being produced.**

1. **Lead Governor Report** 
   1. DW took the report as read but added the emphasis of supporting the Trust and our Black and Ethnic minorities. He also added working with regional lead governors he was always pleased to see how well ESNEFT was doing in comparison when sharing what the COG was doing.
   2. Elaine Noske, Non-Executive Director, commented that when discussing with NEDs in other Trusts their relationship with governors sounded to be kept at arm’s length. She was pleased to see that was not the case here and the relationship at ESNEFT was healthy and collaborative.
   3. Sharmila Gupta, Staff Governor for Colchester, highlighted the importance raised by DW that diversity in the widest sense of the governors and membership must be addressed going forwards.
2. **Questions from Members of the Public**
   1. There were no questions.
3. **Any Other Business**
   1. The next meeting would be the annual members meeting taking place on the 23 September and will be 6pm to 8pm.The meeting will be held virtually.
   2. No other business.

**Meeting ended at 11:22am**