

Council of Governors – Public

UNCONFIRMED Minutes of the meeting of the public Council of Governors held in a hybrid format (in-person at Centre Court and on MS Teams) on 24 April 2025

Governors present in person:

| Name | Designation | Name | Designation |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Ben Duke (BD) | Public SW (Lead Governor) | Julie Marsland (JM) | Appointed - Staff side |
| John Malcomson (JMa) | Service User | Andrea Fox (AF) | Appointed – Sheffield University |
| Billie Critchlow (BC) | Carer | Dave Swindlehurst (DS) | Appointed Sheffield MENCAP |
| Chinyere (Chichi) Ehosiem (CE) | Staff - Allied Health Professionals | | |

Governors present on MS Teams:

| Name | Designation | Name | Designation |
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| Jonathan Hall (JH) | Service User | James Barlow (JB) | Appointed - Sheffield Carer Centre |
| Terry Proudfoot (TP) | Service User | Cllr Sophie Thornton (ST) | Appointed - Sheffield City Council |
| Angelito Esguerra (AE) | Staff -Support worker | Chin Maguire (CM) | Staff – central support Governor |

In attendance in person:

| Name | Designation | Name | Designation |
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| Sharon Mays (SM) | Chair | Anne Dray (AD) | Non-Executive Director |
| Dawn Pearson (DPe) | Associate Director of Communications and Corporate Governance | Amber Wild (AW) | Head of Corporate Assurance |
| Bethan Devonald (BDe) | Senior corporate assurance officer (minutes) | | |

In attendance on teams:

| Name | Designation | Name | Designation |
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| Owen McLellan (OMcL) | Non-Executive Director from item 5 | Heather Smith (HS) | Non-Executive Director (item 7 and 8) |
| Sally Hockey (SH) | Leadership and organisational development partner (item 7) | James Drury | Director of strategy (item11) |

Apologies:

| Name | Designation | Name | Designation |
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| Mohammed Khawja Ziauddin (MKZ) | Public NE | Ross Mallett (RM) | Appointed Sheffield Hallam University |
| Irfan Khan (IK) | Appointed PMC | Alick Bush | Public SW |
| David Palfreyman (DP) | Public Rest of England | Linda Duckenfield (LD) | Service User |
| Celia Jackson Chambers (CJC) | Appointed SACMHA | Kathleen Myrie (KM) | Staff - Nursing |
| Chris Digman (CD) | Public SE | Laura Wiltshire (LW) | Public SE |
| Rebecca Lawlor (RL) | Service User | Olayinka Monisola Fadahunsi-Oluwole (OFO) | Non-Executive Director |
| Brendan Stone (BS) | Associate Non-Executive Director | | |

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| CoG 24/04/2025. Item 1 | <p>Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest</p> <p>The Chair welcomed governors to the meeting. Apologies were noted and there were no declarations of interest.</p> |
| CoG 24/04/2025. Item 2 | <p>Minutes of the public Council of Governors meeting held on 25 February</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record.</p> |
| CoG 24/04/2025. Item 3 | <p>Matters arising and action log.</p> <p>The action log was received, and actions proposed for closure were agreed to be closed.</p> |
| CoG 24/04/2025. Item 4 | <p>Governor Cascade</p> <p>Dawn Pearson (DPe), associate director of communications and corporate governance introduced the governor cascade. The purpose of the cascade is to share the latest information following the staff cascade. The aim is to keep governors up to date, between meetings. Governors will receive the one page cascade each month to maintain updates if this is agreed. This month, the following updates were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The therapeutic environments and Maple ward building work is progressing in preparation for opening in Autumn 2025. • The new values and behaviours framework was launched on 24 April 2025. • The tackling violence and aggression, sexual safety and addressing discrimination and racism campaign launched in April 2025 with a dedicated intranet page, resources for wellbeing, policies to ensure the commitment to safe workplaces and services. • In February, the integrated care board (ICB) provided £1m to cover out of area costs, and the month 11 (February) finance position for 2024-2025 highlighted that the £6m overspend against £6.5m overspend plan was achieved. <p>Owen McLellan (OMcL) noted that the end of year position is in line with where the Trust needed to be and discussions at the finance and performance</p> |

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| | <p>committee (FPC) will now be focusing on plans for the next financial year. OMCL acknowledged the hard work from all staff in contributing to this achievement.</p> <p>Governors agreed that the cascade was helpful. The Chair also added that this was also in response to governor feedback, which is to ensure information is clear and accessible. The corporate governance team will provide monthly updates for all governors, and any further feedback on the approach or format would be gratefully received.</p> |
| CoG 24/04/2025. Item 5 | <p>Chair Report to the Council of Governors</p> <p>The Chair provided an update on the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helen Smart (HSm) has joined Trust as the interim director of operations, and interviews for the substantive post are taking place on Friday 25 April 2025. HSm will stay in post until the substantive post for the director of operations starts. • Gulnaz Akhtar (GA) is staying on as interim director of performance and delivery until March 2026. • Recruitment for the vacant non-executive director (NED) post will commence in the next few months. • The electronic patient record (EPR) system launched in March 2025, and the significant contributions from staff and teams were acknowledged. • Nominations for the Governor elections are ongoing until 29 April 2025, and governors were thanked for their support in promoting the elections. • The Trust values were launched in April 2025, following Trust-wide engagement during 2024. It was agreed an update on this would be provided to the CoG. Action: BDe to note for the work programme • The Trust research and evidence showcase was held on 19 March 2025 which highlighted key research studies, latest evidence and the invaluable contributions of service users from across the Trust. • The Trust supported by the Board of Directors (in full) are building on the work we have been doing to drive sexual safety, reducing violence and aggression and becoming anti racist. We have developed a robust plan that will connect all this work into a whole system approach, which will strengthen our collective focus and ensure we embed an approach which is coproduced with our staff and networks. Key elements of our approach build on learning from serious incidents (including a serious incident last Summer with one of our staff on an inpatient ward involving a service user and the subsequent HSE investigation). This includes strengthening our policies and the introduction of a new policy for new and expectant mothers has been launched, developing mandatory training over and above respect training to ensure implementation and strengthen use of risk assessments and risk management to help keep staff safe and well, supported by a visible communication campaign. All of this will build on the work we are already doing jointly with the police to address incidents or hate and racism. • Governors were reminded about the Mental Health Learning Disability and Autism (MHLDA) provider collaborative development session taking place on 21 May 2025. <p>The Chair noted that there have been some significant announcements regarding leadership changes in national, regional and system NHS roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chief executive of NHS England (NHSE) has left and there is a transition team in place. • The government announced the abolishment of NHS England (NHSE). • Fiona Edwards will be welcomed as the new NHSE regional director for northeast Yorkshire, taking on the role previously held by Richard Barker. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated Care Board (ICB) have been asked by the government to make significant cost reductions. <p>Chin Maguire (CM) asked if the changes to NHSE would have an impact on the provider collaborative. The Chair explained that there is no update on this yet, and governors would be updated when more information is available.</p> <p>Approvals, recommendations, and actions: The Chair noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was agreed an update on the Trust values were launched in April 2025 would be provided to the CoG. Action: corporate assurance team to note for the work programme |
| CoG 24/04/2025. Item 6 | <p>Nomination and Remuneration Committee (NRC) report The Chair provided an update the Council of Governors (CoG) on the activity of the NRC, including the proposed process for both the Chair and the non-executive director (NED) appraisals for performance over the review period of 2024-2025 and the NRC review of effectiveness.</p> <p>Chair appraisal It was noted that the NRC received recommendations in respect of the annual appraisal process for the Chair, which will be conducted in line with the national Leadership Competency Framework launched in February 2024. New guidance for all Board members was published on 1 April 2025 by NHS England (NHSE) after the process was agreed at the NRC meeting. Following a review of this guidance, it has been confirmed that no changes are required to the process agreed by the NRC, as the agreed process complies with the new guidance.</p> <p>Dave Swindlehurst (DS) asked if the guidance would change next year with the abolishment of NHSE. The Chair noted that this was unknown at this time, and any updates will be provided to the NRC and the CoG.</p> <p>In the meeting it was agreed that a dedicated section on the form to be able to provide comments would be added to the front of the questionnaire for governors who are unable to fill in the whole form. Action: BDe</p> <p>Governors approved the proposed questions for CoG in the Chair's 360 assessment, subject to the minor amendment and approved the Chair appraisal process.</p> <p>Non-Executive Director (NED) appraisals It was noted that the NRC received recommendations in respect of the annual appraisal process for the NEDs. Following a review of the new Board member appraisal guidance (April 2025), it has been confirmed that only two minor changes are required to the process agreed by the NRC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 360 feedback for all Board members has been updated to reflect both the values and the NHSE leadership competency domains. An overall performance rating is required for NEDs and a section at the end of the NED appraisal reflection form has been added to accommodate this. <p>Governors approved the NED appraisal process including the proposed questions for the CoG in the NED assessment.</p> <p>The Nominations and Remuneration Committee annual self-assessment</p> |

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| | <p>The CoG were informed that the NRC completed their annual review of effectiveness. This assessment did not suggest a need to change the terms of reference (TOR). Therefore, only minor changes are required, to update job titles and ensure the document fits with current working practice.</p> <p>Approvals, recommendations, and actions: The Chair noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CoG received the NRC self-assessment and approved the changes to the TORs. <p>[Sally Hockey leadership and organisational development partner joined the meeting]</p> |
| CoG 24/04/2025. Item 7 | <p>Staff survey results</p> <p>Sally Hockey (SH), leadership and organisational development partner shared an update on the staff survey results. The presentation provided assurance that actions are being developed in response to the results. SH explained that NHS England (NHSE) released the results of the national staff survey 2024 on 13 March 2025 and gave an overview of the feedback received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There has been an uptake in engagement in staff taking part in the staff survey for 2024-2025. Overall results are comparable with 2023, with marginal improvements across 66 questions (of 108 questions). SHSC advocacy scores are the highest results for five years. More staff would recommend SHSC as a place to work. Bank workers have scored advocacy questions higher than substantive staff for the second year in a row. Staff would refer to friends and family for care with the Trust. Care for service users is still the top priority. Staff feel supported by managers. Further work to support diverse teams is required. Additional work on rewarding and recognising staff is required. <p>SH noted that Trust wide action is taking place to communicate the key actions to staff. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting staff safety and wellbeing. Supporting teams to deliver quality care and lead improvements. Delivering the values into behaviours transformation programme with the aim of making the Trust a great place to work. <p>Heather Smith (HS) noted that although there have been positive incremental improvements, the Trust remains behind the average compared with other Trusts in the national comparator group of 51 Mental Health Learning Disability Community Trusts. HS added that commitment to putting the work in to respond to the results continues and organisational and local action planning will help deliver further improvements.</p> <p>Ben Duke (BD) asked if there were differences in staff survey responses for people from protected characteristics. SH confirmed that staff completing the survey from ethnically diverse backgrounds has increased to 15%, and that work is ongoing with the equality and diversity inclusion group to further improve this.</p> <p>James Barlow (JB) noted that experience of discrimination from any source has increased from 13% in 2023 to 16% from all staff responding in 2024 and asked whether the detail of this is understood. SH confirmed that the highest reported discrimination was for ethnicity and disability groups predominantly</p> |

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| | <p>from service users and tackling discrimination was one of the key areas of focus for the action plan.</p> <p>The Chair added that this is a priority area for the Board of directors who receive information on tackling discrimination in several different reports. The Chair added that work is underway with South Yorkshire Police and the staff network groups on a zero-tolerance approach. This will include a clear framework for action to support the Trust aim to be an anti-racist organisation and sexual safety in healthcare charter. The Chair advised that the non-executives have asked for this to be pulled together as a further update to the Board.</p> <p>DPe advised that a campaign to eradicate violence, aggression and racism, and to ensure sexual safety across our Trust has been launched in April 2025, overseen by the reducing violence and aggression steering group. DPe noted that the staff intranet has been updated for staff to access information and policies as well as health and wellbeing support. The Chair thanked the staff governors for their active role in giving feedback and working with the Trust to help in this area.</p> <p>Julie Marsland (JM) noted that front-line staff have difficulty accessing information on the intranet and DPe agreed that this is important to note, and that the intranet page is just one aspect of the campaign.</p> <p>Chinyere Ehosiem (CE) advised that the ethnically diverse staff network group have considered the steps in reporting discrimination. This has meant further work is recommended to connect managers with the person who has experienced discrimination and to look at the psychological and emotional impact. The Chair thanked CE for her feedback from the ethnically diverse staff group, and it was noted that this would be captured as formal governor feedback. To note and take forward BDe.</p> <p>Anne Dray (AD) noted that the Board hears stories from staff, service users and carers experiences and this allows the Board to get closer to hearing real time issues on discrimination.</p> <p>CM reflected on the work to reduce discrimination by service users and queried if the focus is mainly on supporting staff who experience this discrimination. The Chair noted that work is being done to focus on reducing discrimination across the Trust, including people who use services , which was a focus at the working together conference, with an acknowledgement that more can be done.</p> <p>HS concluded that the staff survey is a crucial way of hearing about staff working experiences and is a key indicator of the standard of care provided. Adding that this is aligned to the NHS People Promise, and the values into behaviours framework of making the Trust a great place to work.</p> <p>Approvals, recommendations, and actions: The Chair noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from the ethnically diverse staff group would be captured as formal governor feedback. To note and take forward corporate assurance team. <p>[Sally Hockey leadership and organisational development partner left the meeting]</p> |

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| CoG 24/04/2025. Item 8 | <p>Board update report</p> <p>The Board update report from March 2025 was presented to the Council of Governors (COG) highlighting the key issues the Board discussed and to highlight those that relate to or require the attention of Governors.</p> <p>Approvals, recommendations, and actions: The Chair noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council of Governors received and noted the information and update from Board. • It was agreed that the summary format slide would be positioned at the front of the Board update report for future reporting – to note and take forward corporate assurance team |
| CoG 24/04/2025. Item 9 | <p>Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) Chair of Committee Presentation</p> <p>Anne Dray (AD) advised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee is made of three non-executive director members and is supported by executive colleagues. • The committee's terms of reference are in line with the national guidance to provide an independent and objective review of internal controls and processes to manage risk. • Oversight of independent support is given from external and internal auditors and counter fraud services. <p>AD gave an overview of the role and work of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) during 2024-2025, noting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External and internal audit reports to ensure value for money and to receive updates on the good progress made with a large number of internal audits. • Emergency Preparedness Resilience & Response (EPRR) –Improving figures on the progress against standards with compliance at October 2025 submission at 65%. • Counter Fraud – A cross-committee referral was made to People Committee to receive the counter fraud case tracker to ensure oversight on the issues on delays. • Monitoring of the Board Assurance framework and corporate risk registers. <p>AD noted that there has been one governor observation to the committee during the year and reminded the governors to volunteer if they would be interested in observing the committee.</p> <p>Approvals, recommendations, and actions: The Chair noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor observers to the Board assurance committees to volunteer if they are interested – all to note. <p>[James Drury, director of strategy joined the meeting]</p> |
| CoG 24/04/2025. Item 10 | <p>Feedback from Governors from constituencies and any key meetings attended</p> <p>The Chair welcomed feedback from governors from any activities taking place within their communities and constituencies.</p> <p>Billie Critchlow (BC) advised of the artists gathering taking place on the third Wednesday of the month at Haggles corner, which is an opportunity for anyone who wants to perform live poetry or music. The Artist's Gathering is supported by creative arts support team (CAST) and open-door music which are two groups of</p> |

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| | <p>mental health service users, volunteers and workers who use arts and music for mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>It was agreed that this information would be shared with the engagement team to share with their service user and carer groups. Action: corporate assurance team.</p> <p>James Drury(JD) noted that the Trust works in partnership with the creative arts support team at Sheffield Flourish and governors would be welcome to attend their creative forums.</p> <p>CE noted that the Sheffield's first autism friendly festival took place in April 2025, organised by the local authority with the aim to improve understanding of autism, and inspire action to make Sheffield a more autism friendly city. CE had presented a talk on breaking barriers and addressing the challenges of accessing health, education and social care for young autistic persons and their families. It was noted that promotion of the event had not been obvious, and it was agreed to promote this to the Council of Governors for future events via the governor calendar – CE/ corporate assurance team to note and take forward.</p> <p>CM noted that staff from central support have enquired about the progress of the Good Governance Institute (GGI) review, which they were interviewed for. The Chair noted that the final report has been recently received, and the Board will be looking at an action plan at the Board strategy, planning and development session in April 2025.</p> <p>DS highlighted the work underway with Sheffield Mencap and the national Mencap team relating to changes in disability benefits and advised that campaigns are being held to share the concerns of people with a learning disability with the government.</p> <p>BD asked for assurance that the Board of directors are addressing the high waiting lists for autism. The Chair noted that work is being done with the provider collaborative, and that growth in demand for assessments has led to longer waiting lists nationally.</p> <p>AD suggested that an in-depth view on progress and actions relating to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and autism waiting lists in the Trust could be brought back to the CoG. The Chair agreed and recommended that this is brought back to the CoG in June 2025. Action: corporate assurance team to note for the work programme. Sophie Thornton (ST) noted that the health scrutiny council was given assurance that assessments have recommenced. The Chair confirmed that this is the case but highlighted that the waiting lists are still too long.</p> <p>BD and BC gave feedback from constituents who had tried to access the crisis service via the 111-telephone service and were diverted to online support. They noted that this is not a suitable response for those who are not digitally literate or who are unable to access internet. The Chair agreed that it would be helpful to give this feedback to the interim director of operations, and it was agreed that a meeting would be set up with the lead governor, and feedback on the outcome will be given to the Council of Governors. Action: corporate assurance team.</p> <p>JMa highlighted the recent supreme court ruling on the equality act and asked how this might impact on service users and staff. DPe confirmed that the chief executive had sent a message to staff to recognise that this decision may raise concern, confusion and deep emotion, particularly for transgender colleagues</p> |

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| | <p>and the communities served by the Trust. DPe advised that further guidance from NHS England on how this ruling will be interpreted and applied across the wider NHS is awaited, and Governors will be updated as it progresses. To note and take forward – corporate assurance team.</p> <p>Approvals, recommendations, and actions: The Chair noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on the artists gathering taking place on the third Wednesday of the month at Hagglers corner, would be shared with the engagement team to share with their service user and carer groups. Action: corporate assurance team An update on progress and actions relating to ADHD and autism waiting lists in the Trust to be brought back to the CoG in June 2025 Action: corporate assurance team to note for the work programme. It was agreed that a meeting would be set up with the lead governor and the interim director of operations regarding the 111-telephone service and an update of the outcome will be given to the Council of Governors. Action: corporate assurance team. Further guidance from NHS England on how the equality ruling will be interpreted and applied across the wider NHS is awaited, and Governors will be updated on this as it progresses to note and take forward – corporate assurance team. |
| CoG 24/04/2025 Item 11 | <p>PLACE assessment James Drury (JD), director of strategy provided an update on the results of the 2024 PLACE (patient led assessment of the care environment) programme, which is a nationally benchmarked, annual process that all NHS Trusts participate in, and which looks at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleanliness Food (combined score, plus 'organisation' and 'ward' elements) Privacy Dignity and Wellbeing Condition Appearance and Maintenance Dementia Disability <p>JD explained that the 2024 results show an improvement, and the Trust is close to reaching the national average demonstrating the progress made over the previous year. JD added that improvements have been made in every category except for food and disability, therefore these will be a focus for action, the following year. JD advised that the Board of Directors have asked the team to expand the focus on disability access, which includes reviewing the suitability of Trust environments for people who are neuro diverse. Adding that this will not be part of PLACE but will be reported alongside the PLACE results in 2025-2026. JD advised that Governors may wish to consider volunteering to become a PLACE assessor in Autmn 2025.</p> <p>The Chair noted that that the PLACE assessments are a good opportunity for governors to take part in a structured, purposeful way.</p> <p>Approvals, recommendations, and actions: The Chair noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governors to consider volunteering to become a PLACE assessor in Autmn 2025 The PLACE report was received and noted. <p>[James Drury (JD), director of strategy left the meeting]</p> |

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| CoG 24/04/2025 Item 12 | <p>Governance report</p> <p>Dawn Pearson (DP), associate director of communications and corporate Governance provided an update on key governance matters for reporting to the Council of Governors noting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report provided an update on the annual process for receiving declarations of interests, gifts and hospitality. Governors were reminded to submit any outstanding declarations by 30 April 2025. • An update on the annual self-assessment for 2024- 2025 noting that the findings were presented for consideration and discussion in the confidential session of the meeting. • An update on the Governor election process for 2025 -2026. • An update on the Trust's new values and behaviours framework launch which has been discussed during the Chair update report. <p>Approvals, recommendations, and actions:</p> <p>The Chair noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CoG noted the key updates from the governance report. • Governors were reminded to submit any outstanding declarations by 30 April 2025. |
| CoG 24/04/2025 Item 13 | <p>Any other business and meeting effectiveness</p> <p>BD asked for an update on governor parking at the Trust headquarters for Council of Governors meetings. It was confirmed that a process has been put in place to reserve places on meeting and development days which was implemented for this meeting, and this is being done on a trial basis.</p> <p>Consideration was given to any preferences or unconscious bias that could have influenced our decisions/discussions and any key issues the Council of Governors. There were no reflections noted.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Governors for their good discussion and good challenge and closed the meeting.</p> |
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The next meeting of the Council of Governors will be held on 19 June 2025.