Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

**TRUST BOARD**
**31st March 2011**

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| **TITLE** | **Trust Board Meeting Cycle** |
| **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** | The Trust Board currently meets formally 12 times each year.<br><br>Following a review of the formal business needed to be transacted it is now considered that 9 meetings would be more efficient.<br><br>It is also recommended that the Integrated Governance and Assurance Committee cycle be changed to quarterly. |
| **BOARD ASSURANCE (RISK)/ IMPLICATIONS** | The role of the Board is to formulate strategy, ensure accountability and to shape culture. The Board must ensure compliance with the Terms of Authorisation which includes delivery of mandatory services, meeting national standards and safeguarding quality. The Board needs appropriate assurance that systems of control are robust and reliable. |
| **STAKEHOLDER/ PATIENT IMPACT AND VIEWS** | The Trust will continue to meet in public. In addition, the Council of Governors also meets in public and holds the Board to account for the performance of the Trust. |
| **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES** | None known |
| **LEGAL ISSUES** | Meets with requirements of the NHS Act 2006 and the Constitution. |
| **The Trust Board is asked to:** | Consider the proposal to reduce the number of Board and IGAC meetings. |
| **Submitted by:** | Andrew Liles<br>Chief Executive |
| **Date:** | 13 March 2011 |
| **Decision:** | For Approving |

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**TRUST BOARD**
**31st March 2011**

**Trust Board Meeting Cycle**

## 1 Introduction

The Board moved from meeting formally on alternate months to meeting formally every month with effect from January 2010.

This was appropriate with the need to drive forward the Foundation Trust application, but the time is now opportune to review the frequency of Board meetings.

## 2 Foundation Trust Regime

The Trust falls under the Monitor Compliance Framework which is underpinned by a cycle of quarterly reporting. The Board is accountable for compliance with the Terms of Authorisation and it is fundamental that the Board scrutinises performance carefully.

A review of the formal submissions and statutory approvals has been undertaken and is given as Appendix A. This indicates that 8 formal meetings per year are required to complete statutory business. However the Board should meet at least bi monthly and it is therefore recommended to have 9 meetings i.e. to include September after the August break.

In the months where there is no Trust Board meeting the Performance Report and Balanced Scorecard would still be produced and circulated to Board members.

The Board would continue to meet in public; excluding the public from the discussion on a limited number of confidential matters as is current practice.

## 3 Sub Committee Cycle

Within the Trust's integrated governance approach the Audit Committee and the Integrated Governance and Assurance Committee (IGAC) have particular responsibility for providing assurance to the Board. The Audit Committee meets 4 times each year, IGAC currently meets bi monthly.

IGAC's main remit is :-

> The Integrated Governance Assurance Committee has a duty to ensure that the Trust's governance systems, behaviours and processes relating to risk management, clinical and non-clinical governance, and the achievement of organisational objectives are effective, and provide the Board with the assurance required to govern effectively.

It is recommended that IGAC moves to a quarterly reporting cycle linked to Board meetings. One of the key assurance functions will be to consider elements of the basis for the Board's self certification against the Annual Plan submission to Monitor and therefore the cycle needs to incorporate an April or May meeting.

It would be important to link any change in frequency of meetings to a review of processes in order for the Committee to maintain its effectiveness..

## 4 Recommendation

It is recommended

- That the Board move to a cycle of 9 meetings per year (plus AGM) with no meeting being held in February, August or December.
- IGAC move to a quarterly meeting cycle
- The position be further reviewed in one year

**TRUST BOARD MEETING CYCLE**

| | | **PROPOSAL** |
|---|---|---|
| | **Formal submissions** | **Board meets 9 times** |
| January | Monitor Q3 submission<br><br>Charitable Trust Fund accounts | ✔ |
| February | | No meeting |
| March | Budget approval (with Corporate Plan) | ✔ |
| April | Monitor Q4 submission | ✔ |
| May | Monitor Annual Plan approval (31 May) | ✔ |
| June | Annual Accounts approval | ✔ |
| July | Monitor Q1 submission | ✔ |
| August | | No meeting |
| September | | ✔ |
| October | Monitor Q2 submission | ✔ |
| November | Mid Year Re forecast | ✔ |
| December | | No meeting |

✔ meeting to be held

Plus AGM