Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS
21st October 2021 via MS Teams

PRESENT:	Mark Adams	Appointed Governor, Runnymede Borough Council	**MA**
	Edwin Addis	Public Governor, Hounslow, Kingston and Richmond-upon-Thames	**EA**
	Derek Barnes	Public Governor, Spelthorne	**DB**
	Lilly Evans	Public Governor, Runnymede, Surrey Heath, Windsor & Maidenhead	**LE**
	Andy Field	Chairman	**AF**
	Shirley Holmes	Public Governor, Woking and Guildford	**SH**
	Colin Hood	Public Governor, Spelthorne	**CH**
	Chris Howorth	Appointed Governor, Royal Holloway University	**CH**
	Michael Smith	Public Governor, Woking and Guildford	**MS**
	Danny Sparkes	Public Governor, Runnymede, Surrey Heath, Windsor & Maidenhead	**DSp**
APOLOGIES:	Miranda Alcock	Public Governor, Woking and Guildford	**MA**
	Tracey Bradshaw	Staff Governor, Nursing and Midwifery	**TB**
	David Carpenter	Public Governor, Elmbridge	**DC**
	Melaine Coward	Appointed Governor, University of Surrey	**MC**
	Óscar Garcia-Casas	Staff Governor, Medical and Dental	**OGC**
	Deborah Hughes	Appointed Governor, Woking Borough Council	**DH**
	Hina Malik	Public Governor, Hounslow, Kingston and Richmond-upon-Thames	**HM**
	Chris Marks	Public Governor, Runnymede, Surrey Heath, Windsor & Maidenhead	**CM**
	Helen Pernelet	Public Governor, Elmbridge	**HP**
	Julian Ruse	Staff Governor, Ancillary, Admin, Clerical and Managerial	**JR**
	Denise Saliagopoulos	Public Governor, Spelthorne	**DS**
	Matthew Stevenson	Staff Governor, Allied Health Professionals	**MS**
IN ATTENDANCE:	David Fluck	Medical Director	**DF**
	Simon Marshall	Director of Finance and Information	**SM**
	Sal Maughan	Associate Director of Corporate Affairs and Governance	
Item COGS-02/21 only	Lucy Nutley	Director, Public Services Audit, Mazars	**LN**
	Anu Sehdev	Membership and Engagement Manager	**AS**
	Marcine Waterman	Non-Executive Director	**MW**

Minute		Action

The Chairman welcomed the Governors highlighting that this was a special single topic meeting for the Council of Governors to be presented with the Annual Report and Accounts 2020/21 prior to the Annual Members' Meeting taking place on 3rd November 2021.

COGS-01/21 **Declarations of Interests in the Proceedings**

There were no declarations of interest in the proceedings.

COGS-02/21 **2020/21 External Audit Presentation**

Lucy Nutley, Director for Public Services Audit at Mazars, introduced her presentation by advising Mazars' responsibilities as the Trust external auditors were set out in the National Audit Office (NAO) Code of Audit Practice and included:

- Giving an opinion on the Trust's financial accounts
- Reporting to the National Audit office on the Trust's consolidation schedules.
- Reviewing evidence on the Trust's arrangements to deliver economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Lucy advised that Mazars issued their audit report on 15th June 2021 and their opinion on the financial statements was unqualified. In line with group audit instructions issued by the NAO, on 15th June 2021 Mazars reported that the Trust's consolidation schedules were consistent with the audited financial statements.

Under value for money arrangements Mazars reported that they had not completed work on the Trust's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources and had not issued recommendations in relation to identified significant weaknesses in those arrangements at the time of reporting. An extension was offered by the NAO which was taken up by Mazars.

Lucy advised that audit work identified no significant weaknesses in the Trust's arrangements for securing value for money.

Lucy advised that in previous years Mazars had reported on the Quality Accounts but last year and this year, this segment had been removed as a requirement.

Edwin Addis was pleased to hear of the audit arrangements in place and queried whether there were any minor improvements highlighted. Lucy advised that the focus was on financial security and there were no improvements needed in this area.

Lilly Evans queried when the Quality Accounts would be included in the audit and Lucy advised that a decision had not yet been made in this regard.

The Council of Governors NOTED receipt of the Annual Audit Report.

Minute **Action**

Lucy Nutley from Mazars left the meeting at this point

COGS-03/21 **Annual Report and Accounts 2020/21**

Marcine Waterman, Non-Executive Director, introduced the Annual Report and Accounts by advising that there had been issues with audit work not being completed on time by Mazars. It was advised that their contract would be coming to an end and that the Trust would be going out to tender for the external auditors contract.

Marcine added that there had been a delay in laying the Annual Report and Accounts before Parliament due to the delay in Mazars completing their audit and subsequently due to a recess in the House of Commons and Lords during 23rd September to 18th October 2021. Marcine advised that she was assured with the work undertaken by Mazars and was very pleased with the Annual Report and Accounts.

The Director of Finance and Information went through his presentation highlighting that 2020 had been the first full year of Covid-19 and the country had experienced several waves since. Operational activity had to reinvented during this time and staff had risen to the challenge of working more flexibly. The Annual Report highlighted the work undertaken by teams.

During the year focus had been on the new build, Ashford Hospital being the green site and St Peter's the emergency site. Recruitment had improved and there had been greater working with partners, for example BMI, Woking Nuffield, Central Surrey Health, Woking Community Hospital and primary care.

The Director of Finance and Information ran through the financial performance headlines advising the Trust broke even in 2020 and this was helped with the additional financial support provided to all trusts by central Government.

The Director of Finance and Information provided a breakdown of where income had been generated from and the areas where money had been spent. The majority (62%) of monies went on staffing which was comparable to other trusts. Additional costs for PPE had been incurred which was to be expected during a pandemic.

The Director of Finance and Information reminded Governors that elective work had had to be curtailed during the pandemic and the pattern of spend was very different to previous years.

The Director of Finance and Information turned to capital spend to deliver service transformation across the system which highlighted work on staff car parks, Ashford theatres, Surrey Safe Care, a pop up ITU facility and the Clinical Assessment Unit. It was advised that work on the Optivo staff accommodation was also moving at pace. More investment would be going into the Emergency Department refurbishment, Ashford theatres and maternity. An additional £16-17m would be spent on backlog maintenance, health and safety, fire, electrical resilience works rolling equipment

replacements (including Imaging Service) IT refresh, PACS, and cyber resilience to ensure a stronger infrastructure.

The Chairman considered it was useful to end on capital expenditure and how Ashford and St Peter's, as well as Woking Hospital, were being developed.

Colin Hood referred to the Trust's clinical negligence insurance premium and queried how many claims and the sums were involved. The Director of Finance and Information advised that the insurance premium was set to settle clinical negligence claims and that there were £14m in historic claims. The total value was highlighted in the Annual Report and Accounts. There were a small number of serious claims. All clinical negligence claims were investigated to ensure patients were compensated appropriately. The Chairman added that litigation relating to children were for large amounts as support was needed throughout their lives. The Director of Finance and Information expressed the importance of learning from complaints and gave a positive example whereby the Medical Director had put surgical site infections on the agenda and many improvements had resulted. There was also better monitoring of mothers during childbirth as a result of the Ockenden report.

Colin Hood queried the comparison with the previous year and advised that premium was up by £2.5million. The Director of Finance and Information stated that the Trust had been a low contributor but was now catching up with other similar acute trusts.

The Medical Director reiterated that concerns were investigated and stressed the importance of improvements being taken forward.

In response to Michael Smith, the Director of Finance and Information advised that the clinical negligence premium was calculated by actuaries primarily by looking at potential future liabilities; although there were a wide range of factors including the payment profile over the previous few years. The Director of Finance and Information advised that 10% growth was normal in trusts and an increase in litigation was to be expected. The Medical Director stressed that the burden was on the public purse and it was important that improvements were made. The GIRFT (Getting It Right First Time) initiative focused on this.

The Chairman advised that the Government had recently looked at how claims were calculated and this review had resulted in the doubling of some payments. The Trust's values clearly stated putting Patients First and it was important to minimise harm to patients.

The Chairman thanked the Associate Director of Corporate Affairs and Governance and her team; as well as Marcine Waterman, on the production of the Annual Report and Accounts. A huge amount of work had been undertaken to produce the report.

The Council of Governors NOTED receipt of the Annual Report and Accounts 2020/21.

Minute		**Action**
COGS-04/21	**Any Other Business** None **Date of Next Meeting** Wednesday 8th December 2021, 4.00 – 6.30 pm via MS Teams	