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

COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

9th September 2013

TITLE	**Chairman's Report**
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The paper provides a short summary of the themes from the Governor and Chairman one to one meetings which have been held over the spring and summer.
The Council is asked to:	Note the summary.
Submitted by:	Aileen McLeish, Chairman
Date:	August 2013
Decision:	For Noting

Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS
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Chairman's Report

Summary of the themes from one to one meetings with the Chairman and Governors

Following a general invitation in April, 11 Governors took up the opportunity to have one to one meetings with the Chairman. The meetings were designed to obtain feedback on how things are, to explore areas of concern and to consider areas for improvement.

Overall there was positive feedback on the progress we have made in the relationships between the Council and the Board.

Some of the newer Governors commented on the time it has taken for them to understand the specifics of the Governor role; we could usefully involve them in the planning of the induction of any newly elected Governors later this year. All existing and reelected Governors could also help the newly elected colleagues settle into their new roles.

Specific Areas for change/comment:

- The meeting of Non-Executive Directors and Governors was judged to be a great success and it is proposed that this is repeated at least annually.
- There was a general desire for unannounced Governor visits to the hospitals. These have now been set up with the first visit taking place on 9th August. Further unannounced visits have been scheduled for October. These are being reported back to the Council via the Patient Experience Group.
- A request was made for a meeting between Governors and Clinicians. A meeting with the Clinical Directors has been scheduled for 11th October.
- A more detailed briefing on the Francis report was requested. This took place at a Governor 'coffee morning' meeting on 21st May, with a briefing and discussion led by Chief Nurse Suzanne Rankin. Details of our response to the Francis report will also be shared with Governors once it is available.
- Agendas and summary minutes of private Board meetings. These have been shared with Governors since April 2013. Recent comments by Governors regarding the content of the private Board meetings is being considered and will be responded to separately.
- PLACE assessments - congratulated by those who have participated in them.
- Charitable Funds Committee has not yet met – this has been held up as we work out our preferred theme for fundraising with a plan to meet in the Autumn.
- Annual Members Meeting – Consideration as to whether the Trust would get greater attendance if the meeting was held at St. Peter's Hospital. Location will be reconsidered for 2014.
- Ashford Outpatients Dept. – Seen as been a very positive development and a model for Governor involvement. Consider for future major projects.
- Partnership with Royal Surrey County – the arguments for doing this have been presented well with positive debate around this.

In addition to these areas there was quite a lot of discussion about current strategic issues and the specific points made have been summarised below:

1. **Improving staff morale** – empowering; making heroes of people who bend the system to the Trust Values; praising staff who demonstrate the values; supporting multi-disciplinary teamwork particularly on wards; applause for the Chief Executive's Innovation fund; *To be looked at by the Workforce and OD Committee*.

2. **Patient safety** – maintain focus on reducing harm. Have we got the right staffing on the wards and are Doctors following up on patients in a timely manner? How do we know? Do we need to do more for Healthcare Assistant training?; Is our Whistle blowing policy up to date and fit for purpose? *To be looked at by the Integrated Governance and Assurance Committee.*

3. **Improving the patient experience** - outpatients and appointment letters seen as being a continuing issue; scale of appointment cancellations; a sense that clinical nursing and other front line staff are doing well in engaging with patients and carers/families but a more patient focused culture could be developed among support staff; Is PALS providing a good service to patients and their families? Have we got the response to complaints right? Chaplaincy team praised for its supportive role; *To be looked at by the Governors Patient Experience Group.*

4. **Engaging with members** - could we have publicised the changes to the Peterbus earlier? The challenge for Governors finding out and representing the views of the public. *To be looked at by the Governors Membership and Community Engagement Group.*