

# Governor Focus

February 26, 2024



In this first edition of the Governor Focus we will highlight some of the key issues discussed at the most recent meeting of the Council of Governors on Wednesday, February 21.

A copy of the agenda and minutes of the previous meeting can be downloaded from the Bridgewater website at; [www.bridgewater.nhs.uk/ft](http://www.bridgewater.nhs.uk/ft)

### **Welcome:**

The Council formally approved the appointment of Mr Bob Chadwick as a Non-Executive Director/ Chair of the Audit Committee. Bob will be working alongside Non-Executive Director Linda Chivers, the Trust's current Audit Chair who will be leaving the organisation in May.

Bob has a wealth of experience working in the NHS having retired in 2020 as Executive Director of Finance at Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. Prior to this Bob served as Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services at the Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust spent nine years at The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust holding a number of very senior roles. The Trust is delighted to welcome Bob and pays tribute to Linda who has served as a NED of Bridgewater for almost than six years. Linda was appointed Chair of Audit in 2018 and will be greatly missed by her many colleagues and friends.

Welcome also to Amena Patel who is a member of the aspiring NED development programme. Amena will be observing the work of the Trust for the next 12 months in the hope of securing a Non-Executive Director position within the NHS in the future.

### **Governor Roles:**

Public governor Rita Chapman who represents the Rest of England constituency, has agreed to act as the governor champion for the Trust's Freedom to Speak Up Guardian. Warrington public governor Kevin Goucher will serve as the deputy lead governor and Matt Machin, also a public governor in Warrington will serve as deputy chair of the Halton & Warrington local governors' group.

### **Operational Update:**

Significant pressures in a number of key areas including adult community nursing, dental and children's services. Working extremely closely with colleagues in Acute sector and Local Authorities to support discharge into community settings. Significant improvements in recent weeks to the waiting list in podiatry in Halton. The Trust has submitted a tender for the provision on 0-19 services in Salford.

Work being done across the organisation to interrogate waiting lists, refine/revise patient pathways and promote a more blended approach to support patients being cared for within community settings. Imperative that Bridgewater continues to support and champion the integration of services to better support patients within Place.

Halton Special Educational Needs/ Disabilities -SEND- inspection Report. A joint inspection of Halton Local Area Partnership was undertaken in November 2023 by OFSTED and the CQC. Halton Borough Council and Cheshire & Merseyside Integrated Care Board jointly responsible for the commissioning of services for children and young people with SEND in Halton and Bridgewater provides a number of these services.

The report was published in January 23 and the outcome was that there are “widespread and systematic failings leading to significant concerns about the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEN and disabilities. Governors were assured that the Trust is a key member of the parties developing an action plan to address the concerns.

### **Governor Development**

A programme of development for 2024 has been proposed and agreed upon. Will focus on the key principles supporting the CQC inspection framework. The first of the development sessions will be held on May 15. Details to be confirmed and will focus on the domain of Safe with a review of the new patient Safety Incident Report Programme Framework. Future sessions will focus on the domains of; Responsive, Caring and Effective.

Agreed to develop a more focused and streamlined approach to member engagement and seek the views of all governors regarding the timing of meetings in a bid to improve engagement. There are several vacancies on the Council: Public Governors – Halton – 3 vacancies. Warrington – 1 vacancy. Rest of England – 2 vacancies. Staff Governors – Clinical Support Staff -1 vacancy.

The Trust will set up a working group to look at how it might engender interest in the current vacancies.

Elections for public/staff governors will be held in 2025. Further details will be made available nearer to the date.

For further information about our public / staff governors please visit the Bridgewater website at; [www.bridgewater.nhs.uk](http://www.bridgewater.nhs.uk)

### **Committee Corner:**

Reports from each of the main committees were received and an overview of the main issues/highlights were described by the respective Non-Executive Director Chairs.

In a bid to strengthen the relationship between NEDS/governors, the Trust has governor observers on each of the main committees i.e. Audit, Quality & Safety, Finance & Performance & People.

One of the main duties/responsibilities of governors is to hold their Non-Executive Directors colleagues to account and provide assurance that as NEDs they are holding the Executive Directors of the Trust to account. Governors submit their

opinion on the performance of their NED colleagues and these comments are routinely shared and discussed at the Council of Governors.

Details of the committee meetings can be found in the Council of Governors papers that were circulated on Friday, February 16. If any governor has any questions/queries regarding any element of the meeting they are welcome to contact the respective NED Chair or the governor observer of the committee.

The Chair's report as always contained an overview of the recent Board meetings both public and closed.

### **Strategic Update**

A new reporting framework was shared highlighting how the Trust plans to measure its progress towards implementation of its five-year strategy Communities Matter. The framework provides a clear line of sight between the principles of the strategy, the actions, and outcomes.

### **Engagement Update**

The Council received the draft terms of reference for the Bridgewater Communities Matter Public and Community Engagement (PACE) Group and are asked to provide any comments or questions with Rob Foster. Further work is to be done on confirming the final governance arrangements and financial accountabilities of the group and it was agreed the final Terms of Reference would be shared for approval by e-governance. It is anticipated the Group will report to the Council and reports will be shared at Board. The Group is Chaired by Rob Foster Director of Integration and who in an engagement update presented at the Council highlighted some of the work already done within the organisation to improve its engagement within the communities it serves.

A number of public governors serve on the PACE group, and they will support and contribute to the organisation's ambitions to strengthen its engagements with its patients, partners, members and local communities.

### **People Update**

The work of the People Directorate and the People Operations Delivery Groups was described, and particular focus given to several initiatives to improve staff retention and recruitment. A new recruitment handbook has been developed and a flexible working package has been widely publicised via social media channels.

Praise was given to the Trust's Apprenticeship team. There are more than 100 apprentices working across the organisation supporting a wide range of clinical and support functions. The Trust is proud to report more than 80 per cent of its apprentices' progress on to take up positions within the Trust. A phenomenal achievement.

A Meet the Apprentice day organised to mark National Apprenticeship Week was hailed a great success and provided governors, Non-Executive Directors and others with an opportunity to chat to the Trust's apprentices.

Good News:

Bridgewater is delighted to be part of an exciting new development which is set to open in the heart of Warrington Town Centre in March.

The Living Well Hub sited within the former Contact Centre on Horsemarket Street will provide the people of Warrington with easy access to a wide range of health and social care professionals.

Bridgewater colleagues including clinicians from the bladder and bowel team, health visiting and school nursing services, podiatrists and technicians and therapists from the highly acclaimed Drive Ability Team Northwest will be working alongside colleagues from Warrington Borough Council, Warrington & Halton Hospitals, Merseycare and the voluntary/third sector.

“By working together with our colleagues from the hospital and the council we hope to provide even more help and support to our local community.

“By co-locating services in an easy to reach location we hope to break down the barriers which, in the past, have prevented people accessing the help and support they need,” said Dr Ted Adams, Bridgewater Medical Director.