

MINUTES OF 2024 ANNUAL MEMBERS' MEETING

Held on Wednesday 18 September 2024

At Haydock Park Racecourse

ATTENDEES

<p>Board of Directors</p> <p>Karen Bliss, Trust Chair Tina Wilkins, Non-Executive Director Lynne Carter, Acting Chief Executive Officer Nick Gallagher, Director of Finance Paula Woods, Director of People and Organisational Development Dr Ted Adams, Medical Director Mark Charman, Acting Chief Operating Officer</p>	<p>Council of Governors</p> <p>Kevin Goucher, Deputy Lead Governor & Public Governor, Warrington Rita Chapman, Public Governor, Rest of England Peter Hollett, Public Governor, Halton Sarah Power, Staff Governor Jillian Wallis, Staff Governor</p> <p>In Attendance Jan McCartney, Director of Corporate Governance Angela Green, Head of Membership</p> <p>Other Attendees Sue Fitzpatrick, WHH Governor</p>
---	---

APOLOGIES

<p>Board of Directors</p> <p>Martyn Taylor, Non-Executive Director Bob Chadwick, Non-Executive Director Gail Briers, Non-Executive Director Elaine Inglesby, Non-Executive Director Abdul Siddique, Non-Executive Director</p>	<p>Governors Christine Stankus, Lead Governor & Public Governor, Rest of England Rachel Game, Partner Governor Nicola Wilson, Staff Governor</p> <p>Members Sally Yeoman, Halton/St Helens CVS Jim Sinnott, Mersey Care Governor</p> <p>Other Apologies Dave Wilson, Healthwatch Halton</p>
---	--

Ref	Content
1	<p>The Trust Chair extended a warm welcome to all attendees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Apologies - Apologies were recorded as above. ▪ Minutes of 2023 Annual Members' Meeting <p>The minutes of the 2023 Annual Members meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ratification of Constitutional Amendments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Executive Directors – Numbers ○ Re-location of Corporate Headquarters <p>The Trust Chair informed the meeting that the Trust Constitution had been updated with the number of Executive Directors and the new address for the Trust Headquarters. These changes were ratified.</p> <p><u>Reflection on the past 12 months and look to the future</u></p> <p>The Trust Chair noted her thanks to the Trust's former Chief Executive Officer, Colin Scales who had left the organisation to move on to pastures new. Colin served as a tireless and diligent ambassador of Bridgewater and community services for the past 12 years - nine of those as its Chief Executive. Colin left the Trust to take up the post of Deputy Chief Executive of NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board. The Trust Chair commended him for the professionalism and resilience and wished him every success in the future.</p> <p>Like all other NHS organisations, the Trust had experienced an unprecedented increase in referrals and rising demand. This situation had caused great concern and we and others in the system were constantly challenged to invest in community, as it is where that the greatest need lay.</p> <p>Much of the past 12 months had been focused on developing new and evolving systems of integrated care at every level - with our GPs, our Local Authorities, hospitals and the voluntary sector. The situation was not unique to Bridgewater and was replicated in many other parts of the region and the country.</p> <p>The Trust was exploring how it might formally work better together with our colleagues in Warrington & Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Both organisations provide health care and support to the residents of Warrington and Halton and for several years we have been developing pathways of care that better support our patients and their families. We are committed to developing seamless systems of care that provide the care and support our patients need. At the same time, we are aware that change can cause anxiety and so we remain committed to ensuring we keep our staff, patients and their families fully informed of all developments.</p> <p>We know how vital our services are to thousands of people and their families and carers. We shall remain diligent and conscientious in ensuring we keep their needs at the forefront of our thinking.</p> <p>The Trust Chair highlighted that Bridgewater staff are fantastic ambassadors of the NHS and it is her pleasure and privilege to continue to serve as Chair.</p>

2	<p>Bridgewater: Our Year - animation</p> <p>The Chair, Karen Bliss, introduced a short animation which focused on description of exceptional care, innovative ways, collaborations and key achievements in various Trust areas.</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-J-fK8JIHrY</p> <p>Children’s Services – including focus on Health Visiting and Family Hubs. In Health Visiting, for example, the staff go above and beyond to support the would-be-parent by understanding also their support network, their homes and individual circumstances. Family Hubs and Children’s Centres deliver exceptional care to some of the most vulnerable.</p> <p>Adults Services – including focus on Wheelchair Services, Nursing Teams, therapists and End of Life care. Virtual Frailty Ward was highlighted as an achievement in collaboration with local partners as well as Advice and Guidance Service in Dermatology to improve waiting times. Contribution to the Living Well Hub was another example of collaborative care, which provides essential support to patients in convenient location.</p> <p>Systems and processes underpin the successful delivery of clinical care. In the last 12 months we have upgraded and refined clinical systems within dental and community nursing. The Trust also improved and enhanced the estate, successfully transferring the corporate staff to the new Headquarters and Spencer House. We continue with ambition to replace old gas boilers with more efficient models and replace all vehicles with more modern hybrid/electric model. With regards to workforce development, the Trust has successfully increased the number of apprenticeships and has been recognised by Riverside College as an Employer of the Year. The staff also celebrated the 75th anniversary of NHS and in July 2023 a number of our staff attended a ceremony at Westminster Abbey, which was a huge privilege.</p> <p>Dental services highlighted introduction of a new integrated patient information system that better supports the delivery of care across our extensive community dental network. The services also continued to improve the wait times by interrogating the waiting lists and introducing a more rigorous approach to clinic times. The service continues with groundbreaking therapeutic programme.</p> <p>Community nursing teams had an extremely busy year and worked tirelessly to improve their services to provide better support to patients and their families. The Frailty Ward is now fully staffed and receives excellent feedback from patients and their families.</p> <p>Halton teams reported collaborative approach, which enhances the quality of care and strengthens the overall care in community.</p> <p>Thank you to all the Bridgewater Staff.</p>
3	<p>2023/24 Annual Accounts: Auditor’s Opinion</p> <p>Nick Gallagher, Executive Director of Finance welcomed all and observed that every year he is overwhelmed by the diligence and conscientious approach of our corporate colleagues in supporting the delivery of front-line care; therefore, he offered a special thanks and recognition to the myriad corporate services who support the staff, systems and processes that underpin our work.</p> <p>He highlighted the fantastic and tireless work of IT/Digital who work with our own systems, which is challenging enough, but also work with the systems of external agencies, making sure they speak to each other and deliver seamless systems of care.</p>

	<p>The Director of Finance commended all colleagues who work in our corporate teams, who are committed to the delivery of excellent patient care and who are an integral part of the communities we serve.</p> <p>With regards to the Annual Accounts, the Director was very pleased to be able to deliver a stellar set of annual accounts, which once again has been given the unqualified opinion from our External Auditors. He reported that the Trust achieved all targets, small surplus and capital spend in line with plans. Accounts as well as Auditor's Report with all details, would be available on the public Trust Website: https://bridgewater.nhs.uk/aboutus/publications/</p> <p>The Director offered a special thanks to the Finance and HR teams, who every year undergo a pressured and stressful process to provide all information on time.</p> <p>He recommended that all members review the Annual Report, which is a good and comprehensive document.</p> <p>Next year will be challenging again, and we all have a part to play in achieving another successful financial year.</p>
4	<p>Council of Governors Overview</p> <p>Kevin Goucher, Deputy Lead Governor, presented the COG overview, on behalf of Christine Stankus, Lead Governor.</p> <p>It was noted that words of thanks were given to Colin Scales for all his support to the Council of Governors, who wish him all the best for the future.</p> <p>It is the role of Governors to hold the Non-Executive Directors to account, and therefore the Governors serve as observers on the Trust Board and Committees. This year, the Lead Governor and other Governors, had a privilege to observe a number of meetings.</p> <p>The overview of feedback was very positive, including such examples: People Committee – very interesting, great reports; Q&S Committee – well attended, chaired well, great contributions to discussion.</p> <p>It was observed that the NEDs fulfil their roles in accordance with requirements and regulations.</p> <p>The Governors also worked hard to further develop communication with staff and participated in a number of service visits, then providing appropriate feedback. The Governors met individual staff and teams committed to delivery of high quality of care.</p> <p>There is a number of vacancies in public constituencies, and everyone was encouraged to consider any recommendations.</p> <p>Tribute and thanks were given to all the Governors, who offer their time and support in these voluntary roles.</p>
5	<p>Reflections & Looking Ahead</p> <p>Lynne Carter, Acting Chief Executive welcomed all and noted that this was her first engagement on the role of Acting chief Executive Officer, following Colin Scales' departure.</p> <p>She placed on record her thanks to Colin Scales our Chief Executive who has served as a tireless ambassador of the NHS and of community services in particular.</p> <p>She was pleased to present the overview of the year as it brings home some of the quite remarkable achievements of the teams and individuals who work for this organisation.</p>

	<p>Bridgewater is an organisation that gets community, that understands what our patients and their families need, we not only serve those communities, but we are a part of them.</p> <p>Our staff already built a reputation as experts in their respective fields and are extremely well regarded by their peers. As we develop more integrated systems and pathways of care, the staff commitment to community will remain steadfast.</p> <p>We are faced locally, regionally and nationally with a health system that is struggling to cope with an increase in demand, a shortage of staff- particularly in the specialised areas of care and a system that all too often finds itself at breaking point in trying to address these increased pressures.</p> <p>We must look at doing things differently, at bringing together health, social care and the voluntary/community sectors for the greater good of the communities we serve.</p> <p>Integration is not new for Bridgewater and the relationships we built over the years have enabled us to develop pathways of care that have the patient very much at their centre. We are all part of a health and social care system that supports the most vulnerable to lead more independent lives in their local communities.</p> <p>No doubt, as the national focus shifts from acute to primary and community care, staff here in Bridgewater will be at the forefront of raising the understanding and awareness of the care they provide and the valuable role they undertake in supporting some of our most vulnerable patients to lead happier, healthier and independent lives.</p> <p>The Acting Chief Executive felt it was a privilege to be a part of Bridgewater and extended her personal heartfelt thanks to all staff for the difference they make every day. We've had a great year and we're looking forward to the future.</p>
6	<p>Questions from the floor</p> <p>Kevin Goucher, Public Governor, observed that indeed integration is vital for the future of healthcare provision. He referred to another part of NHS patchwork, the Primary Care Networks (PCNs). The primary care is most often the first port of call to a person in need of healthcare. We hear a lot about integration between hospital and community care but how far are we in our collaboration with the Primary Care?</p> <p>Dr Ted Adams, Medical Director responded to this query. He advised that we work closely with the five local PCNs and we have some good examples of this collaboration, such as community healthcare worker programme. He acknowledged that as a system we need to ensure we join up all parts and engage with the PCNs and the work continues to do so, however, engaging with individual general practices has been a challenge.</p> <p>Kevin Goucher, Public Governor, offered to support the engagement process and to act as a link between the Trust and PCNs as a Chair of local PPG. He advised that the PPG received very little information about the Bridgewater services and integration. As the Chair of PPG, Kevin could get these messages out.</p> <p>Dr Ted Adams, Medical Director welcomed this suggestion and advised that although there were various workstreams in place with Primary Care, it would have to be more joined up and more visible. There is a vision forward on greater use of technology as well.</p> <p>Rita Chapman, Public Governor, advised that as the Chair of PPG in St Helens, she was aware of staff shortages in primary practice. She enquired whether the integration process in the system, including PCNs, would increase the opportunities of the recruitment of staff into primary care?</p>

	<p>Dr Ted Adams, Medical Director advised that there were no plans for formal employment, but informally it helps through widening of skill mix and collaboration. Our priority lies in community, and we must not lose opportunities for community care.</p> <p>Acting Chief Executive Director, Lynne Carter added that practice nurse staff see the same patients as our community nurses do and there are plans on how to complement the practice workforce, however there is a lot to be done to reduce the gaps.</p> <p>Kevin Goucher, Public Governor, noted that the PCNs budgets are very tightly controlled by NHSE.</p> <p>Karen Bliss, Trust Chair, thanked the Governors for the very pertinent questions. She advised that integration is overseen by the steering group at ICB including representatives from PCNs and Local Authority. As a Trust we are on an integration journey with the Warrington and Halton Hospital but of course we are mindful that we operate in a much wider NHS “ecosystem”.</p>
7	<p>Close – Karen Bliss, Chair</p> <p>The Trust Chair thanked all for attendance and wished everybody a pleasant afternoon.</p> <p>The Annual Members Meeting was followed by Trust Staff Awards.</p>