

**Minutes of the Wye Valley NHS Trust Annual General Meeting
Held on 8 July 2020 at 5.00 pm
Via Zoom**

Welcome and Introduction

Mr Russell Hardy, Chairman of the Board of Directors (Chairman), welcomed everyone to the Annual General Meeting of Wye Valley NHS Trust which was being held virtually this year due to Covid. He hoped that the public will find this a useful process to engage with the Board of Directors. Questions previously received will be answered at the end of the meeting. Any subsequent questions asked will be responded to within 48 hours of the meeting and posted on our website. During this meeting, we will hear from members of our staff about the amazing things that they are doing.

The Chairman thanked the phenomenal efforts of every single member of staff at the Trust on behalf of the Board of Directors for the care that has been provided to our patients over the last four months. This includes, but is no means exhaustive, our catering, ambulance, community and volunteers – thank you each and every one of you.

The enormous sadness of people affected by Covid was recognised, along the loss of loved ones was recognised by all of the Board of Directors, along with the enormous challenges of being separated from loved ones during this time.

Wye Valley NHS Trust Formal Business

Present:

Russell Hardy	Chairman
Glen Burley	Chief Executive
Andrew Cottom	Non-Executive Director
Lucy Flanagan	Director of Nursing
Christobel Hargraves	Non-Executive Director
Richard Humphries	Non-Executive Director
Jane Ives	Managing Director
David Mowbray	Operational Medical Director
Frank Myers, MBE	Non-Executive Director
Howard Oddy	Director of Finance & Information

In attendance:

Alan Dawson	Director of Strategy and Planning
Geoffrey Etule	Director of Human Resource
Rebecca Gratton	Associate Non-Executive Director
Erica Hermon	Associate Director of Corporate Governance
Grace Quantock	Associate Non-Executive Director
Cathy Seagrove	Consultant Paediatrician
Nicola Twigg	Associate Non-Executive Director

Apologies for Absence

Jon Barnes

Chief Operating Officer

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 11 July 2019

The Chairman proposed approval of the minutes from those present at the Annual General Meeting held on 11 July 2019. Mr Humphries (NED) seconded this.

RESOLUTION: The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2019 were APPROVED as a true and accurate record.

Introduction to the Annual Report 2019/20

The Chief Executive (CEO) advised that the full report was available on the Trust's website. This contains a lot of information on the organisation, governance arrangements and risk. The Annual Accounts and Quality Accounts are also included in this document.

Care Quality Commission Inspection – Our objective was to improve on our last inspection, and we did! We came very close to achieving a “good” rating this time. We have acted immediately on the areas to improve. The Care Quality Commission are working in different circumstances currently, so we are hoping that they will be able to revisit as soon as possible to review our improvements.

#wyevalleyway: Valuing Patients Time – A large number of our staff have engaged with this. We have made huge developments in care, which was noted in our Care Quality Commission Report. We have also improved flow within the hospital, safety and productivity.

Performance against national targets – Improvements have been made on flow and the way we deliver urgent care. Demand has continued to rise over the last few years, with a significant increase pre Covid of the amount of activity coming through the Emergency Department. These are challenging times for the NHS. We are now focusing on how we recover our waiting times, with the main focus on elective waiting times over the coming months. We have ensured that we have managed cancer access throughout.

Mortality rate improvements – Our significant improvements with regards overall mortality rates and performance have been noted nationally. We had been an outlier a few years ago, now we are within the normal range and just below the expected level for our Trust.

Mortality rate improvements (2) – This slide shows how the Trust rates across the NHS. The Trust are performing better than other parts of the Foundation Group, and are able to share best practice within the Group.

Staff Matters – The annual Staff Survey is used to review what staff are telling us about how we are doing and how we benchmark against other Trusts across the country. We have significantly improved this year. There is only one indicator which we did not improve upon, which we are focusing on this year. We have increased our recruitment and retention and are therefore able to use less agency staff. There is both a financial and quality burden using agency staff.

Digital by design – There has been a lot occurring in this area, including expenditure on capital on these projects including Community EPR and integration with our colleagues in Health and

Social Care. We have also made good progress with EPMA and IMS Maxims. We are able to utilise state of the art imaging.

Integration – The Trust continues to support the delivery of Primary Care Networks and places integrated working alongside our system partners at the heart of our priorities. We have strong working relationships with our partners, with Home First a good example of this.

Financial performance review – a successful year! – We have been able to deliver against a challenging financial target. As a consequence, we have earned an extra £18m from the NHS to enable a huge range of improvements.

Objectives 2020/21 – There are a number of key objectives set out. Previously we had a 10-point plan which included a range of areas to cover. This included improving our estate with the positive news that we are able to replace the Huttred Wards. We have delivered on all these areas and it is positive to be able to review the progress that we have made.

The CEO thanked all the staff working in the Trust. We have all been tested with Covid over the last few months and staff have all worked incredibly hard in different roles due to this. There has also been support from our Community. The CEO thanked everyone for the “clapping” evenings and donations received along with our volunteers, League of Friends and partner organisations.

The Chairman noted that this was a real year of progress for the Trust, community and welfare of the people of Herefordshire.

Extracts from the Annual Accounts 2019/20

The Director of Finance and Information (DFI) presented the Annual Accounts for 2019/20 and the following key points were noted:

- Due to the current conditions, we have had to produce our accounts in a different way this year. It is unusual having to produce the Annual Accounts with the entire Finance Department working at home along with the Auditors working from home whilst conducting their audit. The DFI thanked all the Finance Team for producing the accounts which were received with minimal comments. They are available in full on the Trust's website.
- 2019/20 Financial outturn position – We have achieved a large number of the targets. We were set a challenging £17.2m control total and we have achieved this. Compared to our deficit last year of £45m, we have demonstrated a huge improvement. Included in this total was £18m incentive funding as we achieved the external financing and capital resource limit. We also delivered a £6.2m CPIP against our target of £6m.
- 2019/20 Revenue outturn position – We received income from our Commissioners of £193m and other operating income of £38.6m. Our total expenditure was £250.3m with an adjusted deficit of £17.2m in line with the control total set by NHSI.
- Borrowing and Capital – The Trust borrowed £45.7m in order to ensure that we kept sufficient cash flow. Of this, £34.7m related to revenue, ie the running costs of the organisation. Total borrowing reached £193.2m excluding our PFI debt. The Trust spent £15.3m on capital which included estates, medical equipment (including state of the art

radiology equipment) and IT schemes.

- Looking Ahead – There are changes to the financial regime in 2020/21. Centrally, the block contracts are in place until October 2020 and possibly until the end of March 2021. We are awaiting further guidance on this. NHSI are funding Trusts to enable them to break even.
- The Chairman noted that the £17.2m deficit is the best financial performance that the Trust has achieved in the last seven years. This, along with the CPIP, is an extraordinary achievement.
- The Chairman highlighted the improvement in our mortality figures, which provided assurance of the programme of improvements we are delivering.

Introduction to the Quality Account 2019/20

The Director of Nursing (DON) and the Consultant Paediatrician (CP) presented the Quality Account for 2019/20 and the following key points were noted:

- The national requirements for the Quality Account this year have been relaxed due to the pandemic and Trusts have therefore been given until December 2019 to produce them. It was felt that it was still important to produce them in line with the Annual Accounts and Annual Report, and therefore they have been presented and approved by the Board of Directors and reviewed by external organisations. The plan is now to publish them on NHS Choices by the end of July.
- #wyevalleyway – The approach to our quality improvement journey has been to use QUSA. This provides methodology tips, tools and the technique to drive quality improvements at a local level. The teams develop their own approach and improvements to services. All our Quality Improvements are designed to improve patients' time. Many of the team's innovative ideas last year were around improving the discharge process.
- The CP described the parent led rounds on the Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU) that incorporated patients more actively whilst with us on the Unit.
- Family Integrated Care – This recognises that the baby is part of a family unit. This ensured increased parent participation which has a number of improvements for both the baby and family.
- The CP advised of the benefits of parent led rounds which enables them to provide the details around their baby's care and health and helps them feel part of the team. This is undertaken twice a week to ensure that parents are kept informed of the plans for their baby's care.
- Next steps – I-Pads have been received from the Local Maternity and Neonatal System which has enabled interactive communication between SCBU and Maternity/Labour Wards including ward rounds. There is the potential for these "remote ward rounds" to be undertaken at home in the future. The "baby diary" feature on the Badgernet computer system is also being explored.
- The Chairman noted how frightening it can be for parents taking their baby home for the first time and felt that the use of interactive technology was a fantastic idea with very positive feedback received. He went on to thank all the team for enabling this innovation

to be put into place.

Proposal to adopt the Annual Report 2019/20 and Quality Account 2019/20

The Chairman proposed adoption of the Annual Report and this was seconded by Mr Cottom (Chair of the Audit Committee and NED).

The Chairman then proposed adoption of the Quality Account and this was seconded Mr Cottom (Chair of the Audit Committee and NED).

RESOLUTION: The Board **ADOPTED** the Annual Report 2019/20 and the Quality Account 2019/20.

Questions from the Public on the formal business of Wye Valley NHS Trust

Q. From Healthwatch Herefordshire – “We note Glen Burley’s remarks in the media recently when he stated “it will take four years to return to normal” (Observer). We sincerely hope not. The Trust worked intelligently and swiftly to reconfigure the services for the treatment of the Covid-19 virus, where Clinicians worked tirelessly to make changes in days that normally take years. We hope that the Trust can take advantage of new technology and the impetus demonstrated to work with patients whose conditions have deteriorated and diagnosis have suffered during lockdown. We noted that Mr Burley stated that extra bed capacity at the County Hospital will be provided. We ask that the community is kept well informed of how the Trust proposes to tackle the backlog of patients waiting for referral and treatment. We ask that the Trust keep Healthwatch and the public informed.

A. The CEO advised that the time required to restore services was due to the complexities of restarting services whilst maintaining staff and patient safety and therefore this could take years rather than months as we are not yet out of the Covid crisis. We still expect to see further spikes in parts of the country along with the challenges of flu during winter. We have seen decreases in service requirements in some areas due to Covid. Staff also require more time for PPE, social distancing causing constraints along with more space required between beds. All these factors combined will cause these delays. We are all taking this issue very seriously and will continue to tackle our waiting times, some of which are higher than other parts of the NHS. We will continue to keep our Healthwatch colleagues updated along with working with other parts of the system to utilise capacity in the wider NHS.

The Chairman noted the complexity and turmoil caused by this mammoth logistical challenge and asked that everyone continue to socially distance and wear a mask, wash their hands more frequently to try to prevent this disease spreading as it is likely that there will be a second wave. The Chairman also urged everyone eligible to have their flu vaccination.

Q. From Clive Thomas, Mayor of Leominster - “I am the Mayor of Leominster and was on the ambulance service for 40 years, 20 years as a paramedic. Why do you close the MIU's at Christmas and what do you intend to do during the rest of the year? A suggestion is to employ a paramedic who has had some experience – they can even write prescriptions these days. This could help solve the overcrowding at A&E Hereford”.

A. The Managing Director advised that the MIUs have remained closed due to Covid. For the last few years, we have closed the MIUs at Christmas as part of our planned strategy to ensure that we provide sufficient experienced staff in A&E as we have more sick patients coming through more frequently during this period. A review of how minor injury care is delivered across the County was commenced and is being led by the Clinical Commissioning Group. This has been suspended currently due to Covid. We need to review how we deliver care in the future which will include discussions with the public. Paramedics are employed in the Emergency Department but they do not remain in post for long – this does not appear to be a role that is popular. So far, this has not been shown to be a solution for the gaps in our Emergency Department workforce.

Q. Jennifer Shutt – Constituent in the Central Ward – “WVT, qualified nursing staff have requested to cover many a short fall of qualified nursing staff on shifts. They have been told that they cannot because agency staff are filling any expected or unexpected temporary vacancies. As a tax payer, I do not understand why this is happening when agency staff are paid approximately three times more than that of WVT nurses’ hours rate (excluding agency fees on top). This must be a colossal amount of extra money out of the hospitals budget! The conversation I overheard also said agency staff are unable to do certain nursing procedures and so WVT staff have to be found to do them instead. As they are WVT employees their accountability is easier to address than agency nurses. Some years ago the government told the Board of Directors and the hospital management to greatly reduce the use of agency staff. Why then is this still happening when WVT have dedicated WVT nurses offering to do overtime? Is engaging all these agency nurses a method of fragmenting the NHS? WVT nurses could be given extra financial incentives if they covered extra shifts instead of paying such exorbitantly large fees to agencies.

A. The DON advised that we use our own nurses to work overtime or from our Bank where possible. It has been our ambition to reduce agency spend and ultimately eliminate completely the use of agency staff for the past four years. Our agency costs last year were £200k less than on the previous year – we are on trajectory to reduce this further this year. Using our Master Vend for agency nurses also keeps the costs down. Our aim is to recruit to substantive staff, with vacancies down to around 30WTE in our workforce. Regarding the question around competitive bank rates, we reviewed this around a year ago and in the summer of last year, we introduced an incentive bonus scheme to make working on the Bank more attractive. This ensures that we are competitive across the Herefordshire and Worcestershire NHS. Prior to the launch of this scheme, we had about 10WTE registered nurses on the Bank each week, now we have in excess of 35WTE.

The Chairman advised that the monthly spend on agency nurses is available on our website in our Public Board of Directors papers. A deep dive into agency spend is also discussed at our Board of Directors meetings.

The Chairman noted that the team at Wye Valley Trust are doing a phenomenal job regarding nurse recruitment. They are in fact, the most successful Trust within the Foundation Group for recruiting international nurses. With the improved waiting times and the Emergency Department

becoming busier, the need for nurses has increased substantially over the last four years.

Q. Summary of questions from Cllr Diana Toynbee and Maggie Setterfield – “Do we have an up to date Sustainable Development Plan? What sustainable transport initiatives are being developed to promote cycling to work etc and what example are the Board Members setting in this respect?”

A. It was noted that both the Chairman and Chief Executive both live near Warwick which would mean that cycling to Wye Valley Trust was not an option but they both drive electric cars.

The Director of Strategy and Planning advised that the Sustainability Development Management Plan was presented to a Board of Directors meeting a few months ago and approved. This is our blue print for moving forward and will be published on our website in the near future.

Sustainability is one of our corporate objectives for this year. We are working with our partners with regards an integrated energy centre. Reduced travel with virtual meetings (this was planned prior to Covid but this has hastened our plans) is also part of our plan. Regards our new ward environment, we are aiming to achieve an excellent classification for this. We are also working closely with Sodexo to reduce the use of single plastic and are replacing lighting in a number of buildings with LED lighting.

Bike racks have been moved not removed. Car parking on the Orchard Site is a temporary facility whilst we are building our Acute Medical Unit and the new wards. A review of car parking will be undertaken as we are looking to provide green space around the new wards.

Regarding travel plans as an organisation, we are encouraging all staff and patients to use public transport where possible, reduce business travel as a Trust and cycle and car share.

The Chairman noted that we recognised our role as an anchor institution in the community with eco sustainability incredibly important for us to recognise.

These were all the questions raised before the meeting. If member of the public wish to ask any subsequent questions, this can be done through our website.

Recognising achievements of our staff

The Managing Director advised that the Annual General Meeting enables the Board of Directors to recognise the achievements of staff and public over the past year.

Each month we recognise the Employee and Team of the Month. We have received over two hundred nominations so far for these awards. Anyone can nominate a member of staff or department. The Board of Directors are now having to virtually present staff with their awards due to Covid.

There has been fantastic support from our residents in Herefordshire and Powys. This support has meant a lot to staff with donations of pizzas and Easter eggs to name but a few. Volunteers have used motorbikes to deliver medicines to patients and volunteers have made scrubs for our staff. The Managing Director thanked the public for their compliance during the lockdown. So far

we have lost one hundred and twenty two people to Covid in Herefordshire but this number could have been a lot higher.

Almost all our staff have had to work differently during the last four months. The Managing Director went on to read out a list of teams who are working differently to the pandemic, also thanking the Nuffield Hospital for enabling us to operating on our patients with cancer.

Our Associate Director of Corporate Governance has been working in the logistics for the Trust ensuring that we do not run out of supplies. This has included testing and retesting our staff on PPE as availability of equipment is ever changing.

Our Patient Experience Team worked seven days a week. Visiting has not been possible for most patients and we have enabled them to stay in touch via the use of I-Pads where possible. Our Communications Team have been exceptional, providing daily communication to our staff along with the latest guidelines.

The Managing Director recognised the work of our Executive Team, senior doctors and nurses, thanking the Medical Director, DON, Chief Operating Officer and Associate Medical Director, Medical Division in particular.

Five teams have been particularly creative and innovative with their services. They were asked to put together a short video to tell their stories on their own words. The video was played to the meeting.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Board of Directors, noted how grateful we all are for the super human efforts of everyone involved in coping and dealing with this awful disease. Covid may have abated but it has not gone away, and he went on to reiterate to members of the public the need to continue to practice social distancing, wear a mask, regularly wash their hands and have the flu jab. He went on to thank all the Board of Directors, who have achieved a phenomenal year of progress, and thanked the Non- Executive Directors who have been led by the Deputy Chair, Richard Humphries.

The Chairman hoped that when we hold the Annual General Meeting next year we will be in a different situation and able to meet up in person.