

**TRUST BOARD**  
**29<sup>th</sup> May 2014**

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Chairman's Report</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	The report presents highlights of recent activities.
<b>BOARD ASSURANCE (Risk) / IMPLICATIONS</b>	N/a
<b>STAKEHOLDER / PATIENT IMPACT AND VIEWS</b>	The report refers to meetings with external stakeholders.
<b>LINK TO STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE/BAF</b>	Report encompasses reference to all Trust Strategic Objectives.
<b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES</b>	N/a
<b>LEGAL ISSUES</b>	None known.
<b>The Trust Board is asked to:</b>	Receive the report.
<b>Submitted by:</b>	Aileen McLeish, Chairman
<b>Date:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> May 2014
<b>Decision:</b>	To Receive

## Chairman's Report

### Merger with Royal Surrey County Hospital Foundation Trust

In the last month the Boards of both Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals FT and the Royal Surrey County Hospital FT have announced our intention to merge the two organisations. Both Boards are unanimous in agreeing that a merger offers the best route to continue to provide sustainable high quality services for the populations we serve. At the same time we do not underestimate the challenge of merging the two organisations.

Both organisations had done a lot of preparation as we approached the decisions to merge; talking to stakeholders across the communities. Since the proposed merger was announced there has been limited reaction. Largely comment has been positive including a supportive editorial in the Surrey Herald. However, understandably, there have been concerns from our members and staff about the need to travel between the three sites in future. We have started to have discussions with staff at all the hospitals and public meetings have been arranged for next month, so that we can explore the rationale for the merger. In the meantime work is starting on preparing the full business case and submitting the merger proposal to the Markets and Competition Authority (MCA).

The Governors of both trusts have a key role to play in the transition to a merged organisation. We held the first joint meeting of Governors to update them on the merger plans and consider their role in the process. No one has ever merged two successful Foundation Trusts before, so we will be pioneers. The merger will require the dissolution of both trusts and a new Trust being formed. The current Governors will be approving the constitution, the appointment of the new Chairman and Non-Executive Directors and endorsing the appointment of the new Chief Executive of the new combined Trust. In addition a majority of current Governors will need to approve the merger. Both Peter Dunt, Chairman of Royal Surrey, and I will be working with our Governors supporting them through these key decisions.

### Staff

#### Recruitment of Chief Executive

I am pleased to report there has been a lot of interest in the vacancy of Chief Executive. At the time of writing we are at long listing stage and a range of candidates have emerged. I have had early conversations with the majority of these candidates. Shortlisting takes place next week and the Nominations Committee (comprising all the Non-Executive Directors) hope to have a preferred candidate for approval by the Governors at the Council of Governors meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> June.

#### Year-end Accounts

I would like to take this opportunity to commend everyone from the Finance, Quality, Corporate Affairs and Communications teams who have worked so diligently to complete our year-end

report and accounts. Every year the deadlines get shorter and the requirements get more complex; so well done to everyone for a job well done.

### **Nursing Recruitment**

Well done to our Nursing and Human Resources team who held an open day on 17<sup>th</sup> May to recruit new nurses to the Trust.

### **Quality of care**

The Abbey Birth Centre, our new midwifery led unit at St Peter's Hospital, opened at the start of the month. We had a ceremony over lunchtime that day to thank everyone who had been involved in the planning and construction of the new centre. At the same time our first baby, Evie Olivia Allen, was being born in the unit. Congratulations to the proud new parents and welcome to Evie. We are seeing a lot of interest in the new unit from expectant mothers in the area, so expect Evie to be the first of many.

### **CHKS Top 40 Awards**

We are all delighted that Ashford and St Peter's has been recognised again as a top 40 hospital by CHKS, one of the main quality monitoring organisations for the health sector. This is the third time we have received this award and it is recognition of the overall quality of care provided by the organisation. In addition this year the Trust was shortlisted for awards for the quality of care and data quality.

### **BMJ Award**

Congratulations to our orthogeriatric team who were shortlisted for a BMJ award for the work they have done to reduce lengths of stays for patients who suffered a neck of femur fracture.

### **Other**

I am very sad to report the passing of Rocana our Buddhist Chaplain. She was a quiet and calm presence among our chaplaincy team and will be much missed across the Trust.

I regret to announce that Susan Lockwood, Public Governor for Runnymede, will be stepping down as Governor at the end of June as she will be moving away from the locality. Susan has been an energetic and supportive member of the Council of Governors and I would like to thank her for all her hard work for the Trust.

I met with Dominic Raab, MP for Elmbridge, to brief him on our plans for the merger with Royal Surrey County Hospital. I also participated in a joint Board meeting with North West Surrey Clinical Commissioning Group where we discussed the proposed merger as well as reviewing our future.

I was delighted to again address the AGM NHS Retirement Fellowship for North West Surrey.

I was delighted to help welcome the Bishop of Kensington, The Rt Reverend Paul Williams, for a service of blessing of the newly restored stained glass window which has been installed in the Ashford Multi Faith Centre. The window had been rescued from the original Ashford Hospital Chapel when it was demolished. For the last few years it had been installed in one of the courtyards at Ashford Hospital and had been deteriorating over time. Now fully restored, it looks

resplendent in its new home. Thank you to the Ashford Hospital League of Friends for their financial contribution to this project

Many congratulations to our associate Hashim Welfare Hospital whose UK fundraising charity held their AGM this month. Staff from the Trust continue to provide advice and support for the hospital.