

## **Minutes of the Board Open Session meeting held on 19 June 2024 at Millbank Tower**

### **CHAIR:**

Rebecca Hilsenrath, Acting Ombudsman

### **NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS:**

John Ainsworth

Polly Curtis

Anne Davies

Dean Fathers

Michael Parsons

Anu Singh

### **EXECUTIVE MEMBERS:**

Gill Kilpatrick, Interim Chief Executive Officer

### **ATTENDEES**

Karl Banister, Director, Operations, Legal and Clinical

Scott Stevenson, Director of Strategy

John Owen, Chief Digital Information Officer (CDIO)

Maria Mansfeld, Chief of Staff

Roz Pedersen, Assistant Director, Finance (Item 14, *via MS Teams*)

Hazel Waddington, Assistant Director, Transformation

Neil Brook, Deputy Director of Operations (*via MS Teams*)

Scott Laughton, Freedom to Speak Up Guardian (Item 11, *via MS Teams*)

Faridah Newman, Governance Officer (minutes)

### **APOLOGIES**

Amerdeep Somal, *Ex-Officio* Member

Sir Alex Allan KCB, (Senior) Non-Executive Member

Kiran Bhourlay, Freedom to Speak Up Guardian (Item 11)

## **6. Chair's Introduction and Welcome**

- 6.1 The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting, congratulating Sir Robert Behrens on his knighthood announced last week.
- 6.2 The Chair noted that Anu Singh would be leaving the meeting slightly early with her agreement and that this would be noted in the minutes.
- 6.3 The Chair highlighted the below priority themes for this meeting:
  - Governance
  - Maximising the strategic impact of casework

**7. Declarations of Interest**

- 7.1 The Chair noted Dean Fathers' new Board appointment announced in the prior meeting which will be added to the Board Register of Interests by Governance.

**8. Minutes and Matters Arising from the previous meeting held on 20 March 2024**

- 8.1 Members noted and approved the minutes.  
8.2 Members noted that all actions are complete.

**Strategy - Dean Fathers in the Chair****9. Chief Executive's Report to the Board**

- 9.1 The Chair congratulated the Ombudsman and CEO on their new appointments.  
9.2 Members noted an update from the CEO, including congratulations to the Director and Deputy Director of Operations and the wider team for maintaining high performance in the context of sustained demand increases.  
9.3 Members noted recent organisational changes.

**Action: Governance to share Interim Organogram with Board members.**

- 9.4 Members noted the report.

**10. Ombudsman's Report to the Board**

- 10.1 Members noted an update from the Ombudsman.  
10.2 The Chair highlighted significant stakeholder engagement building on the Ombudsman's previous role as CEO.  
10.3 Members noted the report.

**11. Freedom to Speak Up Guardian (FtSUG) Annual Report**

- 11.1 The Chair welcomed Scott Loughton to the meeting, noting apologies from Kiran Bhourlay.  
11.2 The Guardian outlined their priorities:
  - Equality, diversity and inclusion
  - Exploring and mitigating barriers to engagement
  - Following up on Staff Survey results  
11.3 The CDIO highlighted that he is now Executive Lead on FtSUG (previously the COO).  
11.4 Members discussed the update with the Guardian including:
  - Congratulating the Guardians on their new role;
  - The benefits of mutual signposting with the Unions;
  - Awareness-raising activities.

11.5 Members noted the report.

11.6 The Chair thanked the Guardian for the report.

## **12. Public Value Model**

12.1 The Ombudsman explained that this links to the update at item 17 and the wider strategic framework. The Executive Team are considering them holistically.

12.2 Members noted a presentation from the Deputy Director of Operations.

12.3 Members discussed the report, including the distinction of the model as a tool to enable intelligent decision-making rather than the decision itself.

12.4 Members noted the report.

## **13. Strategic Risk Report & Register 2023/24 EOY**

13.1 Members noted an update from the AD Transformation, including:

- The current strategic risks;
- Mitigations;
- Current corporate issues being managed.

13.2 Members noted the report, and **agreed** the current strategic risks as outlined.

## **14. Financial Management Report 2023-24 EOY**

14.1 Members noted an update from the AD Finance, including:

- Expenditure (Revenue and Capital);
- Cash;
- Control totals;
- Risks.

14.2 Members noted the report.

## **15. Operations and Corporate Performance Report 2023/24 EOY**

15.1 Members noted an update from the Deputy Director of Operations.

15.2 Members discussed the report, noting continued high performance in the context of sustained demand increases.

15.3 Members noted the report.

## **16. Business Plan and Strategy Delivery 2023/24 EOY**

16.1 Members noted an update from the AD Finance.

16.2 Members discussed the report, noting that all RAG ratings for progress against the Business Plan and Peer Review recommendations are green, except for one on page 70 of the papers pack which was paused due to resource constraints

but is expected to resume shortly following recruitment to the Engagement Team.

16.3 Members noted the report.

## **Governance**

### **17. Digital Data and Technology Update (DDAT)**

17.1 Members noted a presentation from the Chief Digital Information Officer (CDIO), updating on the new DDAT directorate including:

- Strategy and programme outcomes;
- Key risks;
- Critical Success Factors;
- Organisational structure.

17.2 The CDIO thanked John Ainsworth for their support in acting as a critical friend.

17.3 Members noted the report.

### **18. Annual Report and Accounts 2023/24**

18.1 Members noted an update from the Chief of Staff: the draft has been reviewed and approved by the Ombudsman and CEO and the project group is on track to lay before Parliament within deadline. Members discussed the draft report, thanking the Chief of Staff and project team for their work in producing it.

18.2 The Chair of Quality Committee suggested an addition to the description of the committee's work on page 162, which members agreed:

**Action: Annual Report Project Group to amend draft Annual Report page 162 to build in a focus on Complaints Standards Framework and driving a learning culture in organisations we investigate.**

18.3 Members noted the report.

18.4 Anu Singh left the meeting

### **19. Audit and Risk Assurance Committee - Strategic Update**

19.1 Members noted an update from Michael Parsons.

### **20. Quality Committee - Strategic Update**

20.1 Members noted a verbal update from Dean Fathers.

### **21. Inclusion & Wellbeing Committee - Strategic Update**

21.1 Members noted a verbal update from Dean Fathers, in Anu Singh's absence.

**22. Review of the Board and Committee Structure**

- 22.1 Members noted an update from the Chief of Staff on the recent review which was conducted to support effective governance and leadership of the organisation.
- 22.2 Members discussed the continued focus on increasing Board diversity.
- 22.3 Members **agreed** the new structure as proposed.

**23. Board Effectiveness Review 2023/24**

- 23.1 Members noted an update from the Chief of Staff.
- 23.2 Members noted the positive results of the review and that an action plan will follow in September.

**Other Business****24. Forward Plan and Date of Next Meeting**

- 24.1 Members noted the forward plan and the next meeting as 3 July 2024, via MS Teams.

**25. Review of the meeting**

- 25.1 Members and attendees discussed their reflections on today's meeting.

**The meeting ended at 15:09**