

Minutes of a meeting of the Western Health & Social Care Trust Board held on Thursday, 6 July 2023 at 10 am in Lecture Theatre 1, Trust Headquarters

PRESENT

Dr T Frawley, Chair
Mr N Guckian, Chief Executive
Mr S Hegarty, Non-Executive Director
Mrs R Laird, Non-Executive Director
Canon Rev J McGaffin, Non-Executive Director
Dr B Lavery, Medical Director
Mr T Cassidy, Executive Director of Social Work/Director of Women and Children's Services
Mrs D Keenan, Interim Executive Director of Nursing/Director of Primary Care and Older People's Services
Mrs G McKay, Director of Diagnostics, Cancer, Medical Specialities
Ms K O'Brien, Director of Adult Mental Health and Disability
Ms E McCauley, Director of Finance, Contracting and Capital Development
Mr M Gillespie, Interim Director of Planned Care Services

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs R Santiago, Assistant Director of Human Resources
Mr O Kelly, Head of Communications
Miss P McSparron, PA to Director of Performance & Service Improvement
Ms C McLaughlin, Assistant Director Adult Learning Disability (Agenda item 7/23/8)
Ms M Mulligan, Head of Service, Adult Learning Disability (Agenda item 7/23/8)

7/23/1

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

7/23/2

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Prof H McKenna, Non-Executive Director, Dr J McPeake, Non-Executive Director, Mrs T Molloy, Director of Performance & Service Improvement and Mrs K Hargan, Director of Human Resources.

7/23/3

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest expressed.

7/23/4

CHAIR'S WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the public Board meeting of the Trust and thanked Prof McKenna for chairing the Special Trust Board meeting on 22 June 2023, convened to approve the Trust's Final Accounts.

The Chair acknowledged those members of the public who were joining the meeting as observers.

The Chair referring to a report on current issues he had been engaging with highlighted the following:-

- The Chair advised that on 26 June 2023, at the request of the Fermanagh Trust, he met with a delegation of 4 members including its Chair, Mrs Aideen McGinley. He said he found the meeting very helpful, where perspectives were shared on the situation in relation to Health and Social Care in Fermanagh particularly the South West Acute Hospital, as well as Primary Care and Social Care. The Chair advised that it was agreed at the meeting that the Trust and Fermanagh Trust will continue to remain in contact. The Chair also acknowledged the important contribution made to the discussions by Dr Lavery, Medical Director.
- The Chair said that as the Chairs' nominee, he attended a meeting of the Departmental Review of Senior Executive pay on 26 June 2023. He noted that this was the first meeting and he looked forward to progressing the matter as it has now been outstanding for an extended period of time. The Chair also advised that this issue had and was continuing to have a very detrimental effect on the morale of senior leaders in health and social care Trusts across the region.
- On 27 June 2023, the Chair said he was pleased to be able to visit the Homeless Health Hub based at Abbey Street in the City. He advised that the Trust had identified the need for a very specific specialist health service to meet the complex health needs of people experiencing homelessness as early as January 2020. He continued that the provision of the new service located in its own accommodation illustrated how health care transformation can make a real difference to people's health and most importantly their health outcomes. He indicated that the new Health Hub provides a unique focus bringing services out of clinical settings, into the community and onto the streets, to provide wrap around care for people when they need it most, and importantly where they need it. The Chair noted that the services provided include physical and mental health care and addictions management support for those sleeping rough. He continued by reflecting that homelessness is a major challenge and will require ongoing and relentless focus from a range of statutory bodies.
- The Chair said that as Health and Social Care Leaders marked 75 years of the NHS on 5 July 2023, they united in an urgent call for political leadership and support from every section of society for the founding principles of the NHS to be renewed. He took the opportunity to thank Canon Rev McGaffin for representing the Trust Board at the Long Gallery, Stormont for the 75th anniversary of the NHS.

The Chair acknowledged the leadership in Northern Ireland provided by Mr Michael Bloomfield, Chair of the Northern Ireland Confederation of Health and Social Care, who speaking on behalf of Chairs, Chief Executives and Directors of HSC bodies who had said on behalf of Confederation members “Reflection on the long history of the NHS, its many ground-breaking innovations, the compassion and commitment of our staff, we remain deeply committed to the founding principles of the NHS. But we must now do our utmost, to turn this moment of pressure into a moment of possibility. What Professor Rafael Bengoa recognised some years ago still applies: by building on the assets already at our disposal, Northern Ireland could have a world-class health system. To realise this ambition, we must adopt a radically different attitude to health and social care underpinned by proper investment.”

The Chair confirmed that Mr Bloomfield stressed that the HSC in Northern Ireland is not alone in facing pressures. Northern Ireland however has the advantage of being an already integrated health and social care system. It also has a comparatively small population which brings its own challenges when it is distributed across what is primarily a rural population.

The Chair endorsed Mr Bloomfield’s comments and thanked all staff for their commitment to HSC at this time when we are celebrating the 75th anniversary of the creation of the NHS.

- Concluding his report, the Chair advised that on 29 June 2023, he had attended the Improvement through Involvement Committee and was impressed with the innovation and creativity being demonstrated by our staff including the rigorous scrutiny our services are being subjected to.

7/23/5

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 8 JUNE 2023

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 June 2023 were unanimously approved by the Board as a true and accurate record of discussion at the Board’s June meeting.

7/23/6

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

7/23/7

CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S REPORT

Mr Guckian referring members to a report he had tabled asked members to note the following matters.

General Pressure

Mr Guckian advised that the Trust Emergency Departments continued to be under intense pressure, which were reflected in the challenges with patient flow including importantly delayed discharges. He stated that on Tuesday morning, Altnagelvin Emergency Department had 51 patients waiting for beds and as a result of a concentrated effort led by Mr McFetridge, Assistant Director, the number of patients waiting for beds on Wednesday had reduced to 24. Mr Guckian outlined that in SWAH the number of patients waiting for beds remained high at 17 on Wednesday. Mr Guckian offered the Trust's apologies to any patient that had been impacted by these delays particularly those patients waiting for a bed.

Mr Guckian highlighted that all services within the Trust are under pressure including Mental Health Services which are continuing to have to operate beyond commissioned bed levels.

Finance

Mr Guckian confirmed that the Director of Finance will report on the Trust financial position later. He advised that the Trust will work alongside Department of Health colleagues to identify the extent of the gap between funding and current levels of expenditure in the coming weeks.

Mr Guckian outlined that the reduction in income this year is approximately £50m, which would be impossible to achieve in one year, without significant impact on services for patients/clients. He said that the Trust had presented a range of low/medium impact proposals to the DoH which the Trust was committed to implementing in the current financial year.

Off-Contract Nurse Agency

Mr Guckian said that he was pleased to report that this week the Trust had no off-contract nurse agency staff. He confirmed that this was linked to the new Nurse Agency Framework, whereby all Trusts have committed to eliminating recourse to off-contract nurse agency staff.

Mr Guckian reminded all local nurses who are with off-contract agencies that this position would not change and he highlighted that the Trust has open recruitment campaigns which are now ongoing. He pointed out that the Trust offers a fantastic opportunity to become part of the HSC family with a wide range of benefits including pension, life insurance, and sickness cover as well as tremendous professional and organisational development opportunities.

Mr Guckian briefed members that in addition, the Trust is moving to a position where it will have no social work agency staff, which is a key strand of the plan to stabilise the social work workforce.

Independent Review of Children's Social Care

Mr Guckian reported that on 21 June 2023, the Independent Review of Children's Social Care report, led by Professor Ray Jones had been launched. He stated that many of the recommendations had already been considered and the region will consider the totality of the recommendations through a range of project groups.

Leadership Festival

Mr Guckian informed members that the Trust held an extremely successful Leadership Festival which included a range of inspirational speakers. He referred specifically to Professor Mike West, who had highlighted the need for compassionate leadership at this time due to the high level of staff burnout, and Rev Livingstone Thompson, who highlighted the increasingly important role diversity plays in our workforce and the wider society we serve and therefore the need to celebrate and embrace diversity. Mr Guckian said that Mr Jason Smyth and Ms Breda McCague were the 2 keynote speakers for the final day of the festival reminding us all of the importance of focussing on positive results.

Involve Fest

Mr Guckian outlined that this week the Trust had a week focussing on involvement and co-design in the Trust. He advised that the presentation of the Davin Corrigan award for Involvement will take place on 7 July 2023 and emphasised that this occasion gave the Trust the opportunity to remember Davin and importantly the learning from his tragic death.

Opening of Homeless Hub – Labre

On 20 June 2023, Mr Guckian advised that the Trust had held the official opening of the Homeless Health Hub in Abbey Street, Derry. He stated that the Homeless Health Hub has been named Labre, after the Patron Saint of the Homeless and that this name had been chosen by service users. He advised that as the meeting had already been informed by the Chairman, the Hub provides health and social care support for some of the most marginalised in our society while also signposting patient/clients to other services.

75th Anniversary NHS

Mr Guckian noted that Wednesday, 5 July 2023 marked the 75th anniversary of the formation of the NHS. He stated that the Trust had much to be proud while still acknowledging the many challenges facing our services. Mr Guckian placed on record his admiration of everyone who has contributed and to the provision of health and social care in the Western area, throughout the period since the introduction of the NHS in 1948.

7/23/8

PATIENT'S STORY – ADULT MENTAL HEALTH AND DISABILITY SERVICES

The Chair welcomed Ms Christine McLaughlin, Assistant Director Adult Learning Disability and Ms Margaret Mulligan, Head of Service to the meeting to present to members on an Adult Learning Disability Service User Story – “An example of Team Working”.

Ms Mulligan commenced by introducing a Service User, a 32 year old man with a diagnosis of moderate learning disability and autistic spectrum disorder with obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) who has lived in a residential care home in the Trust since 2016. She said that the Service User has limited speech, uses only single words and a few Makaton signs to make some of his needs and wishes known. She said the Service User is unable to understand or explain his emotions which increases his dependence on those around him to be aware of and respond to his needs. Ms Mulligan advised that the Service User can mobilise independently and does not require any aids.

Ms Mulligan highlighted a number of challenges that the Service User is presented with daily which include:

- The use of a daily pictorial schedule which supports the Service User to manage and understand his day as any unexpected changes to his routine can potentially cause distress.
- Importance of the Service User having regular family contact and regular visits to his family home.
- The Service User does not like to have his personal space “invaded” and therefore finds certain medical appointments distressing, complex and challenging e.g. bloods being taken, podiatry and dental treatments.
- The Service User can present with behaviours which others can find challenging to manage and can engage in behaviour that had led to others being injured or he can become self-injurious.

Ms McLaughlin described how and why dental treatment can be a complex and challenging experience for people with learning disability, autism and OCD. She advised that the Service User's last full dental check-up occurred in 2016 and in 2021 residential staff noticed the Service User was holding and pointing to his mouth a lot and formed the view that he was maybe having dental problems. Ms McLaughlin outlined that the Service User had been placed on the dental waiting list and an appointment had been arranged for December 2021 at SWAH. She highlighted that the Dental Department at SWAH offer morning appointments only which was a cause for concern if the Service User could not complete his morning routine prior to attending the dental appointment.

Ms McLaughlin explained the preparations that were undertaken with the Service User to prepare for his dental treatment through the Positive Behaviour Team and the Residential staff by introducing change to the Service User's “pictorial schedule”

and the development of a social story to support the Service User's preparation for his attendance at this appointment. She said however on the morning of the dental appointment the Service User reacted negatively to the carefully developed preparation schedule and did not attend the appointment. She outlined that it was felt that the refusal to attend was due to the Service User's fixed determination to adhere to his morning routine which takes approximately 4 hours to complete and they were unfortunately unable to manage even the smallest of changes to his routine.

Ms McLaughlin confirmed that various attempts were made by the Adult Learning Disability Team to arrange a new afternoon dental appointment throughout 2022, the Service User's next dental appointment was arranged for 20 February 2023 at 2.00 pm in Altnagelvin Hospital. She detailed the intensive planning that was undertaken to ensure the appointment took place and was a success and said the planning included Community and Acute Professionals, Acute Liaison Nurse for Learning Disability, Senior Dental Officer and a Consultant Anaesthetist. She said that the Service User's parents had requested that when he was under general anaesthetic that an ECG and bloods would be carried out and this request was supported by the Service User's GP.

Ms McLaughlin advised unfortunately that the appointment scheduled for 20 February 2023 was postponed as guidance had been received from DLS outlining that an application for a Declaratory Order was required in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) in order to secure permission for the dental treatment to be carried out. She reported that extensive work was completed including reports from the Service User's Social Worker, Senior Dental Officer, Consultant Anaesthetist, Consultant Psychiatrist and GP which were presented in the High Court to obtain a Declaratory Order which was awarded and the Judge and Legal Representatives passed comment on the exemplary planning undertaken and the standard of reports presented by Community and Acute Professionals involved in this case.

Ms McLaughlin advised that the Service User's appointment had been scheduled for 3 April 2023 at 2.30 pm in Altnagelvin and a support plan for the day of treatment was developed for the Service User and his family. She indicated that in order to avoid the Service User feeling overwhelmed on arrival at Altnagelvin Hospital, it had been agreed that the bus would drop the Service User and 2 support staff at the hospital main doors and a staff member who followed by car would go into the Hospital to offer additional support if required. She stated that planning involved contingency arrangements that if theatre staff were not ready for the Service User when they arrived on site, then they would circle around until theatre staff were ready, allowing the Service User and their support to walk straight through the hospital into the preparation room.

Ms McLaughlin was pleased to report that the Service User travelled to Altnagelvin Hospital with his mother and residential staff supported their accessing of the Hospital and the treatment proceeded with 6 extractions having been completed. She confirmed that the Service User left the hospital after recovery from the anaesthetic and returned to the residential home and participated in his usual evening schedule. Ms McLaughlin indicated that the process was a challenging intervention which had delivered a successful outcome for the Service User. She

said that the learning from this particular case would be applied to other clients with similar requirements.

The Chair commended the Adult Learning Disability Team and said that the presentation was a very powerful example of team working especially in respect of navigating successfully a number of legal issues and requiring team working from a range of Community and Acute staff.

Mr Guckian noted the exceptional team work required to successfully complete this procedure which involved approximately 24 people who supported the Service User through this challenging process.

Mrs Laird asked if a number of Declaratory Orders had been completed prior to this case or would be required to be completed in the future. Ms McLaughlin outlined that the Declaratory Order process had been relatively untested however, it is clear there will be an increase in the use of Declaratory Orders going forward.

Mr Hegarty queried how the Service User was treated for his pain level until he attended for dental treatment. Ms Mulligan confirmed that pain relief was provided via the Service User's GP including dental visits to the residential home.

Canon Rev McGaffin asked what the Service User's future oral health would involve. Ms Mulligan advised that dental care has been challenging throughout the Service User's life. She said that daily oral care is encouraged as well as his dietary habits however these are restricted by the Service User's challenges and further extractions in the future may be required.

The Chair highlighted that this example demonstrated that all that could possibly be done for the Service User had been done. Ms McLaughlin confirmed that the Service User and staff had been supported by his family in order to provide optimum care and treatment for the Service User. The Chair asked if the same process would be used for other patients. Ms McLaughlin outlined that the process was being taking forward for 1 other patient at the present time.

The Chair commended the commitment of all staff involved who provided a whole system response which clearly made a qualitative difference to the Service User.

7/23/9

OUTCOME REPORT – CONSULTATION ON THE TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF EMERGENCY GENERAL SURGERY IN SOUTH WEST ACUTE HOSPITAL

Mr Guckian advised members that the Consultation Findings Report on the Temporary Suspension of Emergency General Surgery in SWAH was being tabled for Board members to note. He explained that the consultation findings had been grouped into themes and the responses to those themes were summarised in the Report. In concluding his comments Mr Guckian said he wished to acknowledge and thank all of those who had responded to the public consultation process.

Mr Gillespie reminded members that the Trust initiated a Review of General Surgery in September 2021 in order to work towards a sustainable General Surgery service

across its hospitals and to bring forward options for the reform of those services. He said that the Trust's position changed at the beginning of October 2022 when the Trust experienced a number of critical staffing changes which meant that the 24/7 rota for Emergency General Surgery at SWAH could not be sustained after 18 December 2022. He said the Trust temporarily suspended Emergency General Surgery at SWAH from 5 December 2022, with the suspension running in test mode, with full Consultant back up until 19 December 2022, when the temporary change was fully implemented.

Mr Gillespie indicated that from 19 December 2023 to 30 April 2023, 321 patients were admitted to another hospital, 155 patients were treated at SWAH in the newly established Ambulatory Care service and there had also been 90 elective planned reviews.

Mr Gillespie noted that the Trust has a statutory duty to publicly consult on the temporary suspension of Emergency General Surgery at SWAH by adhering to the Department of Health circular "Change or Withdrawal of Services – Guidance on Roles and Responsibilities" published in 2019. He advised that during the pre-consultation stage the Trust engaged with identified stakeholders and hosted a service user webinar, weekly staff engagement sessions led by a Director, along with HR and Trades Unions representatives, held 2 MLA/MP briefing sessions and attended 2 full public meetings with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

Mr Gillespie referred to the 12 week public consultation exercise which commenced on 17 January 2023. He said the Trust briefed its senior staff at a meeting of its Senior Leaders Forum and all relevant documentation had been uploaded to the Trust's website to which the public had access. He confirmed that the Trust held 7 face to face public consultation events across the 7 District Electoral Areas in Fermanagh and Omagh District Council and 2 further online events were scheduled during day time and evening time to offer further options to the public.

Mr Gillespie advised that a total of 101 consultation responses were returned, which had been grouped into 9 key themes. He proceeded to brief members on the 9 key themes as follows:

1. Recruitment and Retention of Staff at South West Acute Hospital

Mr Gillespie advised that the Trust response to the loss of staff included a number of recruitment exercises that were undertaken by the Trust. He also advised that in November 2022, the Trust adjusted its appeal by recruiting for General Surgeons to work in Trust-wide appointments. He said the Trust had now completed 2 recruitment processes for Consultant General Surgeons, based in Altnagelvin with a Trust-wide remit, and a third recruitment process was currently ongoing.

Mr Gillespie advised that the Trust response included Recruitment and Retention initiatives including Incentives (policy and application), International Medical Recruitment and commentaries in support of and the promotion of SWAH in recruitment campaigns.

2. Travel Times Service Users/Carers and Families and Patient Safety Risk to Rural Service Users

Mr Gillespie advised the Trust response included the 'Golden Hour', Road Infrastructure and Transport and financial support available via the hospital Travel Costs Scheme.

3. Department of Health's Review of General Surgery in Northern Ireland

Mr Gillespie said that during the consultation public meetings the Trust was questioned about whether the Regional General Surgery Standards had been consulted on as well as questions about the legality of the decision to temporarily suspend Emergency General Surgery at SWAH without approval from a Health Minister or Health Committee for decision oversight. He stated that the Trust's response to this theme included engagement with and responses from the Department of Health.

4. View of SWAH as a Type 1 Emergency Department and Hospital and the Future of the Acute Status of SWAH

Mr Gillespie said the Trust response confirmed that SWAH is and continues to be a Type 1 Emergency Department and the Department of Health has acknowledged that the definition of a Type 1 Emergency Department should be consistent with that used elsewhere in the UK NHS. He added that the Trust response also included a statement from the DoH on the hospital status of the SWAH as a Type 1 Emergency Department and confirming the acute status of the hospital.

Mr Gillespie advised that the Trust response on this theme included information on the Future of Maternity Services and Delivery of Obstetrics at SWAH and the future of the Acute Status of SWAH. He stated that during the consultation, the DoH announced that SWAH would be Northern Ireland's third Elective Overnight Stay Centre (EOSC). He said that as of June 2023, the Trust was able to deliver 9 to 10 sessions per week in the EOSC.

5. Patient Pathways/By-Pass Protocols

Mr Gillespie reaffirmed the Trust's main priority is to provide a safe, sustainable and effective Emergency General Surgery service for patients in the Western Trust area ensuring safe services and the optimum outcome for all patients. He stated the Trust response included Alternative Patient Pathways, Partnership Working and Assurance, Access to Protected Beds at Altnagelvin and a Discharge Lounge at Altnagelvin.

Mr Gillespie advised that since 19 December 2022 and up until 30 April 2023, 321 people had been transferred to another Hospital due to the temporary suspension of Emergency General Surgery at SWAH. He said that of these 321 people, 296 were admitted to Altnagelvin Hospital and 25 were admitted to Craigavon Hospital. He said 155 patients received care within the newly established ambulatory care services at SWAH. Mr Gillespie advised that these figures were reported regularly to SPPG and monitored on a daily basis by the Trust.

Mr Gillespie emphasised that since the inception of the new pathways for patients, no changes had been made to the pathways and no adverse outcomes for patients had been identified.

6. Decision-marking, Approval and Legality of the Temporary Change

Mr Gillespie confirmed that the temporary change was approved as an emergency measure by Trust Board due to the critical gaps in the Consultant General Surgery workforce of SWAH which had emerged rapidly over a short period in October/November 2022. He advised that the Trust as part of its process took steps to comply with the requirements which are placed on it by the DoH in the relevant Departmental Circular 'Department of Health Policy Guidance Circular – Change or Withdrawal of Services – Guidance on Roles and Responsibilities'.

7. Concerns about Privatisation and the Relevance of the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Funding of the Hospital

Mr Gillespie said that questions were raised at public meetings and during the consultation process in relation to the above issues and said the Trust response had been detailed emphasising that the Trust has no policy or operational processes that would facilitate engaging with the private sector on the running of SWAH, now or in the future, other than the requirement on the Trust to manage the PFI contract to ensure performance, compliance and value for money.

8. Equality Screening, Equality Impact Assessment and Rural Needs Impact

Mr Gillespie confirmed that the Trust completed an equality screening, equality impact assessment and rural needs impact on the temporary change at the outset of the consultation process.

9. Save Our Acute Service – 5 Point Plan

Mr Gillespie outlined that Save Our Acute Service (SOAS) presented the Trust with 30,268 signed one-page leaflets, supporting a 5 point plan for the South West Acute Hospital. He said at the outset the Trust staff had offered to meet SOAS in November 2022, but this was refused by the SOAS secretary and no further requests to meet were received by Trust. Mr Gillespie advised that the signed letters returned to the Trust do not have the same five points within all 30,268 responses, points 2 to 5 are similar across all responses, however, the signed leaflets have 2 different Point 1s. He said that the Trust has provided a response in this section of the Outcome Report for each of the 5 points included in the SOAS leaflet.

In conclusion, Mr Gillespie highlighted that the Trust has completed an extensive and wide ranging public consultation, in line with its consultation scheme, and in accordance with the requirements specified by the Department of Health Circular on 'Department of Health Policy Circular – Change or withdrawal of services – Guidance on role and responsibilities'. He said that the Trust is required under these arrangements to seek out 'viable alternatives' to the temporary pathways which were

put in place, through consultation with the public and staff and the Trust is satisfied that the consultation process has fulfilled this requirement.

Mr Gillespie advised that at the outset of the change, the Trust estimated that on average 5 patients per day would have a changed pathway for treatment and have their inpatient Emergency General Surgery treatment undertaken at another hospital. He said that for the period up to 30 April 2023, the evidence showed that on average 2.4 patients per day had been transferred to another hospital. Mr Gillespie confirmed that the alternative clinical pathways for the treatment of Emergency General Surgery patients at SWAH will continue to be carefully monitored by the Trust.

Mr Gillespie indicated that he wished to acknowledge and record the support of all staff in terms of the temporary change of Emergency General Surgery at SWAH.

The Chair said that the Consultation Finding report was for noting at the Board meeting today. Mr Guckian said that it was an important opportunity for Board members to see the issues which were raised during the public consultation, and how the Trust had responded to these. He commended the report to Trust Board for noting.

Mr Hegarty stated that it was interesting that the Consultation Findings report was for noting only. Mr Guckian confirmed that the temporary suspension of Emergency General Surgery at SWAH was taken forward to protect public safety as the Trust was experiencing an acute shortage of Consultant General Surgery Consultants. He said the Trust had complied with the Department of Health Policy Circular – ‘Change or withdrawal of services – Guidance on roles and responsibilities’ and the public consultation was to seek out viable alternatives to the temporary pathways which were put in place. He outlined that no viable alternatives have been identified through the public consultation process.

Mrs Laird stated that lobby groups such as SOAS may bring forward alternative proposals. Mr Guckian said that no alternative proposals have been received however, the Trust welcomed correspondence at any time on alternative proposals which will be reviewed and considered appropriately.

The Chair said that any communication containing alternative proposals will be reviewed with urgency and due diligence. He confirmed that the temporary suspension of Emergency General Surgery would be kept under ongoing review.

Canon Rev McGaffin asked for an up to date position on the recruitment of General Surgery Consultants. Dr Lavery responded that recruitment exercises are continuing and 2 Consultants who have been appointed following a recent recruitment exercise had delayed their start dates until August 2024 due to their commitment to completing Fellowship Programmes. He said that further Consultant General Surgeon interviews will also be held shortly.

Mrs McKay sought an update on elective treatments undertaken through the EOSC at SWAH. Mr Gillespie outlined that the Trust currently has 10 theatre sessions committed out of 11 theatre sessions available for EOSC at SWAH and advised that

over 600 patients have been treated at the EOSC since January 2023. He advised the Trust is currently commissioned for 19.5 theatre sessions and if the present trajectory is maintained, that these will be delivered by November 2023.

The Chair noted the Consultation Findings report and stated that the Trust will continue to actively review the temporary suspension of Emergency General Surgery and requested a further report be presented to Trust Board mid-autumn – October 2023.

7/23/10

INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL UPDATE

Dr Lavery referred to the circulated briefing paper and outlined 2022/23 performance in the following areas:

C. difficile Performance 2022/23

Dr Lavery advised that a total of 81 cases of *C. difficile* were reported in 2022/23, with 49 of the cases classified as healthcare acquired or associated as they occurred more than 72 hours after admission to hospital. He outlined that the remaining 32 cases were classified as community acquired as the patients presented with symptoms within a 72 hour period after admission.

MRSA Bacteraemia Performance 2023

Dr Lavery stated that a total of 7 MRSA bacteraemia cases were reported in 2022/23, with 3 categorised as community associated and 4 categorised as healthcare associated.

GNB Performance 2022/23

Dr Lavery confirmed that a total of 42 healthcare associated GNB cases were reported in 2022/23, which is 3 fewer cases than in the previous year. He said that the new reduction target for 2023/24 has not yet been issued, however as of 27 June 2023, 14 healthcare associated GNB cases had been reported.

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Dr Lavery reported that between March and late June 2023 a total of 38 outbreaks occurred and in all outbreaks the Infection Prevention and Control Team led on the management of the incidents.

Infection Prevention & Control Induction and Mandatory Training

Dr Lavery advised that Infection Prevention and Control Induction and Mandatory Training is delivered online via an e-learning programme. He outlined that the e-learning programme comprised of two tiers – Tier 1 and Tier 2, with staff only completing one of the tiers. He said e-learning included a short assessment to test understanding and awareness with a printable certificate available after successful

completion. He confirmed that training must be completed every 2 years. Dr Lavery advised that the content of the e-learning is currently being reviewed by the Regional Infection Prevention and Control Lead Nurses Forum to develop a shorter, more bespoke version for medical staff. He concluded by advising that a total of 3,729 staff completed the training in 2022/23, which is 30.83%.

The Chair asked Dr Lavery if in his judgement the report represented a good performance for the Trust in 2022/23. Dr Lavery stated that in his view this was a very good performance. The Chair sought assurance that there was a high level of staff awareness of cross infection i.e. mask wearing etc. Dr Lavery said that in his experience all staff follow the current Infection Prevention and Control guidance however, in some instances mask wearing would not have an impact i.e. *C. difficile*.

7/23/11

CORPORATE RISK REGISTER AND BOARD ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

Dr Lavery referred members to the Trust's Corporate Risk Register and Assurance Framework for approval. He said there were 22 corporate risks as agreed at Trust Board on 8 June 2023.

Dr Lavery shared with members a proposed material change to ID1334 – Sustainability of surgical services in Southern Sector of Trust due to recruitment & retention difficulties at Consultant and middle tier level in South West Acute Hospital.

Members were advised that the proposal was to amend the risk grading based on a review by the Directorate. Dr Lavery said the Trust had developed bypass protocols in advance of the temporary change on 19 December 2022 in conjunction with NIAS, NI Trauma Network, SPPG and the Southern Trust. He confirmed that no changes to the bypass protocols had been required since commencement and these were monitored through the Project Board and the Programme Board. Dr Lavery advised that there had been no issues that had affected patient safety or clinical outcome. He advised that the current risk grading was “extreme” however, following review of the risk grading it was proposed to amend this to “high”.

Dr Lavery advised that there were no proposed new risks and at the time of reporting however 2 action plans required an update in respect of risks ID1320 and ID1216.

Following consideration, the proposal to amend the risk grading of risk ID1334 was unanimously approved.

7/23/12

DELEGATED STATUTORY FUNCTIONS REPORT FOR 1 APRIL 2022 – 31 MARCH 2023

Mr Cassidy presented to members the sixteenth report prepared by the Executive Director of Social Work, in relation to the Western Trust's Discharge of its Delegated Statutory Functions (DSF) and Corporate Parenting. He outlined that the Annual

Report combined the discharge of Statutory Functions and the 6 monthly Corporate Parenting Report, which had been shared with SPPG.

Mr Cassidy proceeded by informing members that the annual meeting with SPPG took place on 27 June 2023 and the Trust's annual report had been generally very positive across all Directorates. He outlined that the key challenges were linked to workforce, increased demands and lack of commissioning.

In relation to DSF Overview in Adult services, Mr Cassidy said there had been an improvement in Carers Assessments in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22, including information on both offered and completed carer assessments within PCOP and Adult Mental Health. He outlined the ongoing challenges within Adult Mental Health particularly in relation to increasing demand to access Adult Mental Health services including bed pressures, local Approved Social Work pressures and Regional Emergency Approved Social Work service and the capacity and ability to deliver this service regionally. Mr Cassidy advised that the challenges across both PCOP and Adult Mental Health included young people transitioning to adult services, expensive care packages, psychiatric cover in Lakeview, complex placements and commissioning pathway for Alcohol Related Brain Injury (ARBI), Hospital Social Work and workforce issues.

Mr Cassidy shared the DSF Overview in Children's Services and advised that 2022/23 had been an extremely challenging year with ongoing work continuing to innovate and respond to challenges across Children's Services in the Trust, which had been fully acknowledged by SPPG. He referred members to the outturn in Children's Services at 31 March 2023 and highlighted that the CAMHS waiting list mirrored the challenges in Adult Mental Health. Members noted that the Children's Service Board had been established within the Trust which reports to the Strategic Change Management Board.

Mr Cassidy updated members on 3 key areas as follows:

Unallocated Cases

Mr Cassidy outlined that the number of unallocated cases per month and unallocated children per month continued to fluctuate at certain periods throughout the year.

Workforce

Mr Cassidy provided members with an update on the number of vacant/unoccupied posts within social work across the Trust and regionally. He confirmed that 32 students were due to commence in Family and Childcare from June to September 2023.

Living Arrangements & Increase in Children Looked After (CLA)

Mr Cassidy referred to the graphs included in the report and stated that the number of Children/Young People on the CLA Register in March 2018 was 627 and in March 2023 there were 701. He said in 2022/23 there had been 87 new CLA cases and 73 children discharged. In relation to Care Orders, he advised in 2022/23 there were 41

children/young people at home on a care order and 26 care orders had been discharged.

Moving on to challenges with separated Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, Mr Cassidy confirmed that the Trust had seen an increasing demand since 2021, and in June 2023, there are 30 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children arrivals to the Trust. He said that there continued to be an increased demand from indigenous children requiring care which also brought workforce and accommodation challenges.

Members were provided with a short overview of the key messages from the Ray Jones Report on Children's Social Care Services Northern Ireland – An Independent Review.

In concluding, Mr Cassidy outlined the next steps which included an updated action plan for areas of improvement issued after 27 June 2023. He said he provides an update on DSF at the bi-monthly meetings of the Social Work Leadership Forum and SPPG plans to meet with the Trust's Chief Executives and Executive Directors of Social Work in September 2023, focusing on regional DSF and Trust specific issues.

Mr Cassidy commended the DSF Annual Report to Trust Board.

The Chair thanked Mr Cassidy for his comprehensive presentation and stated that it was vitally important that children have the best start in life however the political and financial position within Northern Ireland will have a direct impact on the Trust's ability to support service interventions. He referred to the budget cuts announced in Education and the number of children with special needs who do not have an allocated school place, which will have an impact on the health and social care system therefore it is critical that there is joined up thinking in relation to how public services respond to the challenging circumstances created by the cuts.

The Chair acknowledged the positive and critical contributions by foster parents which impacts on young people as they transition into adult life. Mr Cassidy advised that the Trust has a 16+ programme for young people up to age 25 which helps to support these young people transitioning to adulthood. He outlined the current challenges especially in relation to accommodation for that age group as effectively these young people are classed as an adult and therefore it is the responsibility of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) to provide accommodation for them. He said that the Trust has raised its concerns by letter with NIHE on this issue.

The Chair commended the DSF Annual Report and noted the complex, multi-faceted work detailed in the report which would require significant financial support to address especially with Northern Ireland's additional "Toxic Trio" that is detailed in the Ray Jones report. Mr Guckian stated that this was one of the most important reports for Trust Board to consider, which highlights the dedication and commitment of staff within the Trust. He said it was important to remember that Northern Ireland is one of the most socially deprived areas within the European Union.

Canon Rev McGaffin noted the new issues/challenges regarding "unaccompanied minors" and queried the funding for same. Mr Cassidy advised funding had been

allocated, however, he said that unaccompanied minors arriving into the Trust's area will already have had a traumatic life impact which commonly has an adverse effect on their general health and social care which in turn they may carry with them into adulthood with implications for Adult Mental Health services. Ms O'Brien outlined that within Adult Mental Health services, there can be repetitive attendances at Emergency Departments and said it was important that people are not labelled as 'too emotional' as it is often how people deal with trauma. Mr Cassidy agreed that labelling people is not helpful and the overall picture requires to be recognised and dealt with appropriately.

Mrs Laird endorsed Mr Guckian's comments and proposed through the Chair, if it would be beneficial for Trust Board to have a workshop to review the Ray Jones Report. The Chair advised that he was supportive of this approach and agreed to consider this with Mr Guckian and Mr Cassidy as to when would be the most appropriate time for a workshop on the Jones Report.

Following further consideration the Delegated Statutory Functions Annual Report – 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, was proposed by Mrs Laird, seconded by Canon Rev McGaffin and was unanimously approved by members.

7/23/13

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

13.1 Minutes from meeting held on 15 March 2023

Canon Rev McGaffin referred members to the formal minutes of the Governance Committee held on 15 March 2023.

13.2 Verbal update from meeting held on 7 June 2023

Canon Rev McGaffin advised that she was providing the verbal update on behalf of the Chair of Governance Committee, Dr McPeake from the meeting held on 7 June 2023. She reported that there were no exceptional issues for escalation. She highlighted the key issue for noting was that there had been an ongoing high number of controlled drugs incidents, which all have action plans in place and are being managed through the Trust's governance structure. She noted that a new risk was being developed to identify an alternative approach to managing this.

Canon Rev McGaffin advised that a number of workforce issues had been highlighted in the reports to the Governance Committee from Directorate Governance Groups.

The Chair noted that there had been a number of whistleblowing concerns raised regarding the Adult Safeguarding Service. Mr Cassidy confirmed that all concerns are being proactively addressed.

7/23/14

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR MONTH 2

Ms McCauley advised that members would be aware that the Trust's first financial performance report in any new financial year tended to deliver a set of figures which were at best an early draft based on a set of assumptions around budgets and financial planning requirements and therefore subject to much change. She stated that the Trust faced a very complex and challenging financial landscape and a great deal of work was ongoing in engaging with SPPG in order to confirm the financial plan for 2023/24.

Ms McCauley said that she was taking the report as read and members would note the absence of performance charts and graphs which were under development to reflect 2023/24 key performance indicators. Ms McCauley said she would provide members with some highlights with a commitment to provide a fuller report at the next Trust Board meeting.

Ms McCauley outlined that the Trust had an opening deficit of £3.3m, which was an excellent opening position for the Trust as it faced into a very challenging 2023/24 financial outlook. She highlighted that the Trust had started with a strong performance in the achievement of the Prompt Payment Target of 95% of suppliers paid within 30 days achieving 96.26% at the end of May 2023.

Ms McCauley reported that the Trust was reporting a deficit of £8m as at 31 May 2023, which included the application of funding confirmed by SPPG against the Trust deficit and pressures. She noted that planned savings were profiled for delivery from June 2023. Ms McCauley confirmed that the Trust had been advised of an indicative allocation of £8.1m for the delivery of elective care across a range of specialties for in-house and independent sector activity and was reporting expenditure of £1.1m at 31 May 2023.

Ms McCauley referred to Table 2 which summarised financial performance by Directorate and said that Directorates were reporting an overspend of 4.9% for the period against the restated prior year reported budget variance of 2.9%. She confirmed that budget roll-forward, budgets and run rates had been aligned to the new CMT structure for the purposes of reporting.

In relation to flexible staffing expenditure, Ms McCauley said that in recent years this had been a significant factor for the Trust and outlined that total expenditure in 2023/24 to date had been £14.5m. She said that expenditure in medical agency had increased by 6.6%, nursing agency had decreased by 2.7% and other agency had decreased by 4.6%.

Ms McCauley confirmed that the Trust had received a total capital allocation of £19.35m from the DoH, with expenditure of £1.3m at the end of April 2023. Ms McCauley in concluding, referred to the key messages within the Financial Performance report as at 31 May 2023.

The Chair thanked Ms McCauley for her informative briefing.

7/23/15

SCHEME OF DELEGATION 2023/2024

Ms McCauley informed members that the Scheme of Delegation for 2023/24 had been reviewed and updated to reflect Circular HSC (F) 23-2023. She outlined that the main changes were in relation to the delegated limit of the Chief Executive for capital expenditure and in the delegated limit for Foreign Exchange and EU expenditure over £5m.

Following consideration the Trust's Scheme of Delegation 2023/24, was proposed by Mr Hegarty, seconded by Canon Rev McGaffin and was unanimously approved by members.

7/23/16

ENDOWMENT AND GIFTS COMMITTEE

16.1 Minutes of meeting held on 9 May 2023

Canon Rev McGaffin referred members to the formal minutes of the Endowment & Gifts Committee held on 9 May 2023. She said a full briefing had been previously provided to the June Trust Board meeting.

16.2 Verbal Update from meeting held on 12 June 2023

Canon Rev McGaffin confirmed that she had provided a verbal update from the Endowment and Gifts Committee meeting on 12 June 2023 to the Special Trust Board meeting held on 22 June 2023.

7/23/17

AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

17.1 Annual Report 2022/2023

Mr Hegarty advised that he had presented the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Annual Report for 2022/2023 to the Special Trust Board meeting held on 22 June 2023.

The Chair said the Annual Report from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee is a very important report for the Trust. He thanked Mr Hegarty and colleagues on the development of the report and advised that he was assured that appropriate governance is in place.

Mr Hegarty referred members to the last paragraph of the Annual Report and stated "the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee received assurances during 2022/23 from Management, Internal and External Audit and from other Assurance Committees on Risk Management process and based on this the Audit and Risk Assurance

Committee is satisfied that the Trust's system of governance and internal control arrangements were adequate and satisfactory".

17.2 Minutes of meeting held on 15 May 2023

Mr Hegarty referred to the formal minutes of an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting held on 15 May 2023. He said a full briefing had been previously provided to the Trust Board meeting held on 8 June 2023.

7/23/18

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION – EXCEPTION REPORT

Mr Guckian referred to the Performance Management Information report within papers for the meeting and noted that the report provided an update on the Trust's position as at end of May 2023, against the performance trajectories set out in the 2023/24 HSC Service Delivery Plan for Acute and Community Services.

Mr Guckian advised that the assessment for April and May 2023 remained in draft and was subject to validation between SPPG and the Trust. He said the next full update on performance would be made to members at September Trust Board, however today's paper provided a high level view of performance in the early months of the financial year. He said that the 2023/24 Service Delivery Plan monitoring included additional metrics across a number of services, with a small number of 2023/24 targets remaining to be confirmed.

Mr Guckian reported that overall activity levels in May 2023 had improved in a number of service areas compared to previous months, however performance remained below the expected target. It was noted that a contributing factor for this is the enhanced targets for 2023/24.

Members noted the Performance Management Information.

7/23/19

LEADERSHIP FESTIVAL UPDATE

Mrs Santiago informed members that traditionally the Trust had held a one day leadership conference, catering only for senior staff at Band 8a and above. She said that feedback from previous years showed the desire to open the event to staff at all levels and to hear experience from Trust staff including front line staff. Mrs Santiago stated the 2023 'We are West' Leadership Festival programme was co-produced by colleagues in Communications, Quality, Health Promotion, Occupational Health and EDI Group and was led by the Organisation and Workforce Development Team.

Mrs Santiago confirmed that the Leadership Festival was a week-long event held on 12-16 June 2023, which was open to staff from all grades and professions delivered via a hybrid approach. She said that 13 independent speakers and 17 internal speakers took part in the event.

Mrs Santiago stated that as part of Day 5 'Do one Thing', each day participants were asked to consider what one thing they could do to apply what they had learned as a result of the event. She highlighted that as part of CMT's commitment to 'Do one Thing' the 'We are West Mission Cup' was launched and the first Mission Cup recipients will be a Team chosen by CMT, after which it will be up to that Team to pass the Cup on to another Team outside their Directorate in recognition of a Team they believe has lived the Trust Mission – "We are West, Caring Together, Committed to Better".

Members noted that feedback from the Leadership Festival event has been very positive and had been valued by staff that had attended.

Mrs Santiago advised that a debrief session has been organised and a report will be provided to CMT on learning/actions to be incorporated within the Western Trust's Organisation Development plan. She said that Trust coaching and mentoring network will be developed including discussion and consideration of the focus of Leadership Festival for 2024/25.

The Chair commended Mrs Santiago and Trust colleagues on the very significant and bold initiative of the Leadership Festival. Mr Guckian confirmed that there was real 'buzz' from staff around the event and the relevance of the speakers was excellent. The Chair acknowledged that the Leadership Festival provided staff with some space for 'time out' and the fact that it was inclusive to all staff was an excellent initiative. Mrs Laird agreed that the Leadership Festival had been a real opportunity for staff and commended Mrs Santiago and Trust colleagues on delivering a successful week-long event. Canon Rev McGaffin asked if there were any plans to share information from the Leadership Festival with staff especially those that had been unable to attend. Mrs Santiago confirmed that information will be available on the HR Hub for staff.

7/23/20

PEOPLE COMMITTEE

20.1 Minutes from meeting held on 14 March 2023

Mrs Laird referred to the minutes of the People Committee held on 14 March 2023. She advised that a full briefing had been previously provided to Trust Board at the April meeting.

20.2 Verbal Update from meeting held on 13 June 2023

Mrs Laird proceeded to provide a verbal update from the People Committee held on 13 June 2023. She said that the Chief Executive had attended the meeting and the theme of the meeting was 'Belonging to the Western Trust'. She highlighted the following points from the meeting:

- Just and Learning Culture which has been readily adopted by the Trust.

- 60% reduction in the number of disciplinary cases.
- Flexible Working Policy is 1 year old and is essential to recruitment and retention. She confirmed that 80% of flexible working requests had been approved with 85% of all requests received from staff with a disability or caring responsibility.
- 46% of Consultants currently have a job plan. Mrs Laird confirmed that Mrs Hargan and Dr Lavery will review and provide an update to the next People Committee.
- Mrs Laird and Mrs Hargan to discuss the Workforce Strategy.
- The number of disciplinary cases at 31 March 2023 is 23 cases with 17 cases relating to fraud, theft and criminal offences.
- Staff absence is increasing and there is an 80/20 split in long term and short term absence. Mrs Laird confirmed that “anxiety” is the top reason for sickness absence.
- Mrs Laird commended the HR Team on their governance plan which achieved 94% in control assurance.

The Chair commended the HR Team and thanked Mrs Laird for the insightful update.

7/23/21

IMPROVEMENT THROUGH INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

21.1 Minutes of meeting held on 22 March 2023

Mrs Laird referred to the formal minutes of the Improvement through Involvement Committee held on 22 March 2023. She said an update had been provided to a previous Trust Board meeting.

21.2 Verbal update from meeting held on 29 June 2023

Mrs Laird advised that the Chair attended the Improvement through Involvement Committee held on 29 June 2023. She provided a verbal update from the meeting highlighting the main points:

- The involvement dashboard presented to the Committee on 29 June 2023 had the largest growth increase in projects recorded and underway within the Trust.
- Business in the Community continues with ongoing work offline on Service User Panel and ICS.
- The Committee received an outstanding presentation on co-production relating to Addiction Services, which has the potential to be transferrable throughout the region. Mrs Laird commended the staff involved in preparing and delivering the presentation. Mr Cassidy confirmed that he would share Mrs Laird’s feedback and comments with the staff concerned.

7/23/22

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

75th Anniversary NHS – Long Gallery, Stormont

Canon Rev McGaffin took the opportunity to thank Arts Care and all Trust staff that attended the 75th Anniversary NHS event in the Long Gallery, Stormont on 5 July 2023. She said Arts Care had presented a piece called 'In your Shoes' which showed tremendous innovation and was a very powerful piece.

The Chair agreed that he would write to Arts Care, Trust staff and service user who attended the event on 5 July 2023.

In concluding the meeting, the Chair thanked members for their contributions and also those members of the public who attended.

7/23/23

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Western Health and Social Care Trust Board will take place on Thursday 7 September 2023 at 11 am in Boardroom, South West Acute Hospital, Enniskillen.

**Dr T Frawley CBE
Chair
7 September 2023**