South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Paper No. SET/63/26
Trust Board: 27 May 2026
Public Agenda Item 7.1

Title of Paper: Board Assurance Framework (BAF) Risk Document & Corporate Risk Register Q4 2025/26		
For Decision Requires majority decision prior to implementation or action	~~**For Discussion**~~ ~~Requires consideration and debate.~~	~~**For Noting**~~ ~~Contains information Members should be made aware~~

1.0 Background

As part of improving the maturity of the Trust's approach to Risk Management a Risk Appetite Statement is included within its Board Assurance Framework (BAF). This forms part of the Trust's Governance Statement, which requires Trust Board (the Board) to receive regular updates on the measures in place to manage key corporate risks, including defining risk appetite and ensuring risks are effectively managed in line with the Trust's strategic objectives.

The Board receives the BAF Risk Document bi-annually, in May and November, for approval.

The BAF Risk Document brings together all key risks aligned to the Trust's strategic objectives, alongside the controls and assurances in place, enabling the Board to assess the effectiveness of risk management arrangements and identify any gaps or duplication in assurance.

2.0 Key Issues

There were no new risks added to or closed during Quarter 4, and overall risk scores remain largely consistent with the previous quarter.

One risk, **Inability to achieve recurrent financial stability**, has achieved its target score; however, it remains on the BAF, with a rationale provided to support continued inclusion and Board oversight.

An Assurance Heat Map has been developed and incorporated into the BAF Risk Document to strengthen oversight. Work is ongoing to embed the heat map and a workshop arranged. This provides a comprehensive visual representation of assurance coverage across all BAF risks; supporting identification of assurance gaps, duplication, priority areas for action, and enabling more coordinated, risk-based decision-making.

On the Corporate Risk Register (CRR), two new risks were opened during Quarter 4:

- **Risk of non-compliance with the Gender Identity and Expression Employment Policy**
- **Inability to successfully implement Equip**

In addition, one corporate risk, Inability to maintain a satisfactory linen decontamination service, saw a reduction in score during the quarter, with all other risks remaining stable.

At Directorate level, 11 new risks were opened, and 7 risks were closed during the quarter, with 156 risks currently recorded on Directorate Risk Registers across strategic and operational areas.

The BAF continues to provide assurance to the Board that key strategic risks are being actively managed, with a clearer focus emerging on:

- risks that remain above appetite or tolerance.
- risks where target scores have been achieved but require continued oversight; and
- areas where assurance requires strengthening through improved visibility and coordination.

Trust Board is requested to approve the Board Assurance Framework Risk Document and Corporate Risk Register for Quarter 4 2025/26 and the opening position for 2026/27

3.0 Resources Implications (inc. Organisational, Financial, Human Resources)

Not applicable.

4.0 Impact on Safety, Quality and Experience (SQE)

A robust BAF supports the proactive identification and management of strategic risks impacting on patient safety, quality of care and experience.

Failure to maintain a comprehensive and effective risk management framework may expose the Trust to unrecognised or unmanaged risks, potentially resulting in harm to patients, regulatory or legal challenge, and financial or reputational consequences.

5.0 Key Risks and Proposals to Mitigate

The Trust's Risk Appetite Statement provides a clear framework to guide risk-based decision-making, ensuring that risks are assessed and managed consistently across the organisation.

The application of risk appetite supports mitigation through:

- clarifying acceptable levels of risk in pursuit of strategic objectives.
- supporting prioritisation of action and resource allocation.
- enabling timely escalation where risks exceed tolerance; and
- strengthening the alignment between risk, control and assurance.

The introduction of the Assurance Heat Map further enhances mitigation by improving visibility of assurance coverage and highlighting areas requiring strengthened controls or additional assurance mechanisms.

Lead Director: Professor Stephen Kirk, Medical Director

Date: 22 May 2026