South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Paper No: SET/95/26	
Trust Board Meeting: 24 June 2026	
Public Agenda Item 7.2	

Title of Paper: Promoting Accessibility at Trust Board Meetings			
For Decision	**For Assurance**	**For Information**	**For Discussion**

1.0	**Background:**
	The Trust is committed to promoting accessibility to all of our services, facilities and public meetings. At the Chair's request in order to test our arrangements for public attendances at Trust Board Meetings, the Trust has identified the following accessibility best practice actions to support members of the public who may require additional assistance including but not limited to those with a disability, mobility challenges, a visual or hearing impairment.
2.0	**Key Issues:**
	Best Practice for Trust Board Meetings • Ask potential attendees what would help them to be able to access the meeting. • Consider how everyone will access the Meeting room, eg level access, and the location of toilet facilities • Consider the location and timing of the Meeting, and think about the time of day to ensure participants can get there. • If attendees are potentially using public transport, think about any restrictions on use of concessionary fares/special rates/ passes which are only valid at certain times • Consider public transport timetables to the location • Consider parking availability at the location • Consider what time may suit those with caring responsibilities eg school collection times • Consider those who have work responsibilities during the day and are unable to attend at certain times • Consider the end time of the meeting, participants are likely to want to return home before it is dark in winter, and to avoid school closing times so they are not competing with traffic, public transport etc • Some participants may need lifts to be able to attend, and others may need help to get back to transport • Ask attendees if they will be bringing someone with them, and find out whether the helper needs to be part of the meeting, or is only helping the participant to get around. • If someone wishes to bring an assistance dog, ensure sure there is room for it to sit near its owner, or that someone is available to take it out, if needed. • For someone attending for the first time, consider assigning a 'buddy' to explain how the meeting works, make sure they know their way around the building, and generally to help answer any practical questions that come up on the day. Ideally, ask the buddy to contact the participant in

advance to go through any questions they have, and provide background to the meeting.

- Consider communication strategy with our service users regarding when meetings will be held, how to request attendance, and what assistance the Trust can make available.

Communication Support

- Provide qualified alternate language Interpreters, sign language interpreters, lip speakers, and a loop system.
- Make sure communication support staff are positioned in appropriate positions so everyone can access their chosen communication method.
- Always communicate directly to the person you want to communicate with and do not communicate primarily with the person employed to give communication support.
- Be aware that communication support staff will usually try and interpret/relay information into other communication methods as the presentation is given. However, there will be a time lag, so interpretation may be a sentence behind the presenter. Communication support staff should not be included as participants in the meeting.
- Participants may not be able to read documents or information on a screen at the same time as using their preferred communication method e.g. some participants may not be able to read a document at the same time as watching an interpreter.
- Communication support staff, along with other participants at the meeting, will need regular breaks. It is advisable to have 5 – 10-minute breaks every 30 – 45 minutes.
- Ensure PA system will enable a number of different people to contribute to the meeting & advise all participants only to speak one at a time.
- Make sure personal equipment, such as mobile phones, have been turned off as they can cause interference to hearing-aid users. Mobile phones on ‘silent’ are not off. Phones should be turned off completely.

Print materials

- Any agendas or papers should be made available be in an accessible format, on request or if a need is identified, for everyone at the meeting. Larger print size, clear font and14 point are recommended. Ensure that spacing is even and words not split on two lines, avoid italics or whole sentences written in capitals, use matt paper rather than glossy paper.
- Use plain language within documents – avoid jargon and acronyms, or explain them clearly.
- Visual elements within printed materials should be simple and clearly labelled. Provide text descriptions alongside visuals.
- Break down the content into smaller handouts, if possible, avoid giving large volumes of text at once.
- Ask participants what they would like.

Refreshments

- Check with delegates to see if they have any special dietary requirements. They will be able to tell you what sort of food to provide or avoid.

	After the Meeting • Follow up with participants to check if what was put in place met their needs and what would be of assistance going forward. Consider the Guidance in 'Making Communication Accessible for All'. The recommendation to Members is to (1) seek your feedback and (2) support a review of current operating procedures to more closely align with best practice.
3.0	**Link to Strategic Objectives:**
	Our People ☐ Population Health & Health Inequalities ☐ Delivering Care Closer to Home ☐ Hospital Care ☐ Safety, Quality and Experience of Care ☒
4.0	**Resource Implications (inc Organisational, Financial, Human Resources):**
	1. Organisational
	None identified at this stage.
	2. Financial
	There are no additional financial implications at this time though it is possible there may be implications in the future with regard to provision of some of the best practice actions noted above. This may include provision of qualitied interpreters, provision of alternate format or provision of specific dietary requirements.
	3. Human Resources
	None identified at this stage.
	4. Environmental Factors? Yes ☐ No ☐
5.0	**Impact on Safety, Quality and Experience (SQE):**
	1. Safety
	None identified at this stage.
	2. Quality
	Consideration of these best practice actions to promote accessibility will support the safety and quality of experience for those who attend Trust Board.
	3. Experience
	Consideration of these best practice actions to promote accessibility will support the safety and quality of experience for those who attend Trust Board.

6.0	**Key Risks and Proposals to Mitigate:**
	1. Key Risks
	Consideration of the above best practice actions, will contribute to and support the Trusts responsibilities under the NI Act 1998, Section 75 legislation and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
	2. Proposals to Mitigate
	There should be an annual review of accessibility best practice.
7.0	**Risk Register:**
	It is listed on BAF? Yes ☐ No ☒ Is it listed on CRR? Yes ☐ No ☒

Lead Director:	**Claire Smyth, Director of People & Organisational Development**
Date:	**19 June 2026**

Reasons for Paper Presentation

Approval	*Used when an item requires a formal agreement or endorsement by the meeting / committee members. Examples are approving minutes, budgets, proposals or policies.*
Assurance	*Used when an item can be measured against a certain criteria / standard. Examples are a project is on course with delivery or financial targets are being met.*
Information	*Used when an item is presented for the purpose of updating or informing the attendees without requiring a decision or action, such as reports, updates, or announcements.*
Discussion	*Used when an item is listed primarily for open discussion, brainstorming or gathering input from the members without requiring an immediate decision.*