

## **SOUTH EASTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST**

### **Minutes of a Governance Assurance Meeting held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021 at 12.00 noon Meeting Platform/Zoom**

**PRESENT:** Dr M Briscoe, Non-Executive Director (Chair)  
Ms R Coulter, Chief Executive  
Mr J Patton, Chairman (Acting)  
Mr N Brady, Non-Executive Director  
Mrs B Campbell, Director of Children's Services & Executive Director of Social Work (left meeting at 13:00)  
Ms N Dunbar, Interim Director of Planning, Performance & Informatics  
Mr C Martyn, Medical Director  
Mr M Mawhinney, Non-Executive Director  
Mrs J O'Hagan, Non-Executive Director  
Mrs M O'Kane, Director of Adult Services & Prison Healthcare  
Ms W Thompson, Director of Finance and Estates

**IN ATTENDANCE :** Mr M Cadden, Executive Support Services Manager (Acting) (Minutes)  
Mrs M McNally, Assistant Director, Risk Management and Governance & Board Secretary  
Ms J English, Trust Board Apprentice

**APOLOGIES:** Ms N Patterson, Director of Primary Care, Older People & Executive Director of Nursing.  
Dr D Robinson, Director of Hospital Services.  
Ms C Smyth, Interim Director of HR and Corporate Affairs

- |            | <b><u>ACTION</u></b>   |
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| <b>1.0</b> | <b><u>OPENING REMARKS</u></b><br>Dr Briscoe extended a warm welcome to everyone attending today's meeting  |
| <b>2.0</b> | <b><u>DECLARATION OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTERESTS WITH ANY BUSINESS ITEMS ON THE AGENDA</u></b><br>There were no declared potential conflicts of interests with any items on the agenda.  |
| <b>3.0</b> | <b><u>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2021</u></b><br>The minutes of the previous Meeting held on the 16 <sup>th</sup> June 2021, were taken as read and agreed as a true and accurate record.   |
| <b>4.0</b> | <b><u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES</u></b><br>Dr Briscoe noted, for information, the contents of the Matters Arising sheet which had been circulated with the papers in advance of the meeting  |
| <b>5.0</b> | <b><u>FOR ACTION/DISCUSSION</u></b>  |
| <b>5.1</b> | <b><u>Board Governance Self-Assessment Tool 2020/21</u></b><br><br>Ms McNally provided members with an update on the Board Governance Self-Assessment Tool (BGSAT) 2020/21 and advised that there was no requirement to complete the BGSAT for 20/21. However the BGSAT will be completed for 2021/22 and would be externally verified by an associate from the Leadership Centre. |
| <b>5.2</b> | <b><u>Update- Risk Management and Governance Review</u></b><br><br>Ms McNally informed members that June Champion has commenced part 2 of  |

the Review and which will be completed end of October 2021 and presented to EMT and then GAC in December 2021.

### **5.3 Update- End-year Report 2020/21 by Chairperson – Corporate Control**

Members received, for consideration, end-year Corporate Control Report 2020/21. **Dr Briscoe** noted the report's format and layout as very helpful highlighting it was easy to follow objectives and observe the impact and challenges impacted from Covid-19.

## **FOR INFORMATION/NOTING**

### **5.4 Update- Covid-19**

#### **Vaccination Programme**

**Ms Coulter** informed members the SSE Vaccine Centre closed on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021 and thanked all those individuals who worked on the Vaccination Programme. She added the Trust was awaiting guidance regarding the Covid-19 Booster Vaccine Programme and the Trust would continue to support the Vaccination Programme. Members were informed the booster vaccine would be offered to over 50's, front line healthcare workers and residents of Community Care homes. 12 to 15 year olds would be offered a single dose of Pfizer Covid-19 vaccine as part of a school Nurse Programme supported by the Trust.

**Dr Briscoe and Mrs O'Hagan** asked if the Flu Vaccination would be offered at the same time as the Covid-19 Booster Vaccine. **Mr Martyn** advised members that the Flu and Covid-19 Booster Vaccine could be administered on the same day but advised using different arms. **Ms Coulter** informed members that over 50's can obtain the vaccines from their GP's and that Community Pharmacies will offer the Covid-19 vaccine and highlighted the key message is to promote uptake of the vaccine outlining the majority of Covid-19 ICU inpatients were unvaccinated. **Dr Briscoe** asked would an alternative Covid-19 vaccine be offered. **Ms Coulter** outlined there was no plans to offer an alternative vaccine and the booster vaccine programme would be Pfizer. Members were informed the Trust offered AstraZeneca and Moderna vaccine to individuals who were medically unsuitable for Pfizer.

**Ms Coulter** informed members that she meets frequently with the other Trusts Chief Executives, CMO and the Minister frequently to discuss Covid-19 challenges. She outlined the Trusts have 476 Covid-19 positive inpatients regionally, which is creating sustained pressures on the system. Members were informed, unlike previous surges, there Covid-19 numbers appeared to be holding steady and the Trust is experiencing sustained numbers around 60. **Ms Coulter** advised the Trust currently has 12 patients in ICU, which would normally have capacity for eight beds. She advised the Trust is expected to double its ICU bed capacity to 16 and also added that 65 Nurse and Medical Staff have been redeployed from Theatres to ICU. Members were informed urgent cancer and other services like emergency life and limb surgeries would be impacted and there is potential the Trust may have to stop all elective surgeries.

**Mrs O'Hagan** asked would the Trust start using the Independence Sector for elective surgery. **Ms Coulter** advised the Trust is already using the

independent sector, adding that acutely unwell patients requiring admission would need access to beds which given the current pressures is challenging.

### **Community Services**

Members were informed the Trust has 25 Community Care homes in Covid-19 Outbreak affecting both staff and residents. **Ms Coulter** informed members that the independent and private healthcare sector has also been impacted and the Trust has been asked to provide help.

### **Mental Health**

**Ms Coulter** informed members that Mental Health Services were experiencing significant pressures due to Covid-19. Members were informed there has been a surge in the number of Mental Health cases and referrals. **Ms Coulter** advised the Trust's Chief Executives have written to the Minister highlighting the risk and pressures on services. Members were informed the Minister has released Charitable Funds to support healthcare workers. However, **Ms Coulter** informed members staff are at breaking point and showing signs of feeling frustrated; particularly as a large number of Covid-19 positive inpatients they are caring for are unvaccinated. **Ms Coulter** also expressed concern regarding the number of patients presenting to the Trusts Emergency Departments, highlighting there had been over one hundred patients at the Ulster Hospital ED, which had been risk assessed to hold only 70 patients for social distancing.

### **Winter Plan**

Members were advised there would likely be a peak in Covid-19 in November 2021 and January 2022. **Ms Coulter** informed members, regionally, 1000 beds were estimated to be required to meet the predicated peak's requirement and outlined this would be challenging. She also outlined Dr Robinson was working hard to optimise beds to meet capacity, supported by the Executive Management Team (EMT) and that he was doing a fantastic job. Members were informed the opening of the new Acute Service's Block at the Ulster Hospital could alleviate some of the Covid-19 pressures, however, she cautioned, that it would bring its own challenges, particularly maintaining services, during the transition.

### **Workforce**

**Ms Coulter** informed members there was a Health and Social Care (HSC) Workforce appeal for staff and advised if the appeal was not successful, the Trust would launch their own workforce appeal for staffing. Members were informed the DoH asked the Military for assistance and the Trust would be allocated 20 Medical Military personnel in October 2021 for four to five weeks. **Mrs O'Hagan** asked whether the Trusts would hold weekly meetings to discuss capacity issues and clinical prioritisation of cases, similar to previous surges. **Mr Martyn** advised the Trusts were already holding these meetings and would continue to hold them.

**Ms Coulter** informed members the Trusts have jointly put a request forward to the DoH, requesting that Assembly Questions be paused due to sustained pressures. However, she advised there was no guarantee the request would be accepted and she would update members of the outcome. **Mr Martyn** outlined

the pressures put upon staff would inevitably lead to human error and this could result in incidents including serious adverse incidents. **Ms O’Kane** advised that Health and Wellbeing Support continued to be available to staff including Psychological Services. **Ms Coulter** outlined that Patient Safety remains the Trust priority. **Mr Patton** echoed Ms R Coulter sentiments and added it is important the Trust and its Board stand shoulder to shoulder and support staff.

**Dr Briscoe** asked if the public were aware of the serious impact of covid-19 on healthcare services. **Ms Coulter** informed members the Corporate Communications Team had advised UTV would be filming a Covid-19 update at the Ulster hospital at 6pm Thursday and Friday with the Minister in attendance on Thursday.

## 5.5 Mortality Arrangements during Covid-19

**Mr Martyn** informed members the letter sets out guidance on the regional approach for the review of deaths where a patient death was associated with definite or probable hospital acquired Covid-19 infection. Members were informed the guidance’s mandates the establishment of a Trust Advisory Committee (TAC) to oversee its local implementation and that the Trust’s TAC will be incorporated into the existing Trust Governance Structure and will meet at the end of September 2021. **Mr Martyn** advised there will be a meeting of the Medical Director and CMO in three months to assess the Trust’s progress. **Dr Briscoe** asked if there would be a standardised regional approach adopted. **Mr Martyn** advised that there was a standardised template agreed.

## 6.0 NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

<b>FOR ACTION/DISCUSSION</b>	
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### 6.1 IHRD Update

Members received IHRD update report for information and **Mr Martyn** advised members that the IHRD had been discussed at other meetings including Trust Board and EMT meetings.

### 6.2 Update- HSC Key Learning Report- A Review of Leadership and Governance at Muckamore Abbey Hospital

**Ms O’Kane** provided members with an update on the HSC Key Learning Report for information. Members were informed the DoH commissioned the Review and the Trust had no comparable services. However, the Trust has reviewed the Report to capture learning and this has been shared with EMT and is reflected in the Trust’s People Plan and Quality Strategy.

**Dr Briscoe** asked about the patients in Muckamore Abbey Hospital. **Ms O’Kane** informed members one patient was on course for discharge; however staffing issues were causing a delay for the other patients discharge. Members were informed a significant number of staffing was required to move the patient to a new scheme (around 100 staff to six patients ratio). **Mr Brady** asked why there was a requirement for 100 staff to 6 patients and asked how this compared to the Muckamore Abbey staff to patient ratio. **Ms O’Kane** informed members the new scheme was bespoke and advised that she did not hold this information but agreed to follow up and share with Mr N Brady.

**MOK**

### 6.3 Nicholl Report on RQIA Board Governance

Members received the Independent Review into the Circumstances of Board Members Resignations in the RQIA Nicholl Report for information which had been circulated in advance of today's meeting. **Dr Briscoe** asked if learning from the Nicholl Report, Muckamore Abbey, IHRD and the ALB Handbook would be included in the Trust Board Development Days. **Mr Patton** informed members the report had central themes and that the Trust Development Day would focus on these themes. Members were informed there was a requirement the Chair to sign and authorise that each Board member had been made aware of the ALB Handbook. **Dr Briscoe** enquired regarding the date of the next Trust Board Development Day. After discussion the date was advised as the 21<sup>st</sup> of October 2021. **Mrs O'Hagan** outlined she was confident the Trust would embrace the required recommendation for the Nicholl Report and outlined that it was equally important that the DoH shared their intended actions. **Dr Briscoe** echoed Mrs O'Hagan sentiments and highlighted the importance of working in partnership.

Ms B Campbell left the meeting at 13:00

## **FOR INFORMATION/NOTING**

### 6.4 Restart of DOH Governance and Sponsorship Activities

**Dr Briscoe** informed members DoH Sponsor Branches will reinstate normal governance and sponsorship process for the 2021/22 financial year. Members were informed Ms McNally was working closely with Ms Campbell to provide the Mid-Year Assurance Statement.

### 6.5 SEHSCT Annual Report on Information Governance

Members received, for noting, the SEHSCT Annual Report on Information Governance for 2021. **Ms McNally** advised members that the Report would be tabled for approval at Trust Board in September 2021.

### 6.6 Minutes of the Safety, Quality and Innovation Committee held on 04<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Members received minutes of the Safety, Quality and Innovation Committee meeting held on 04<sup>th</sup> June 2021 for information. Members were informed, moving forward it was proposed only finally approved minutes will be tabled at future GAC meetings.

## **7.0 STANDING AGENDA ITEMS**

## **FOR ACTION/DISCUSSION**

### 7.1 Update on the Corporate Risk Register 2021/22 (1<sup>st</sup> quarter position

Members received, for noting, a verbal update from Ms McNally and Briefing papers on the Corporate Risk Register 2021/22 which had been circulated in advance of today's meeting.

**Dr Briscoe** noted the papers focus on high level 13 risks identified and asked for an update regarding Lakewood. **Ms Coulter** informed members that Ms Campbell left the meeting at 13:00. She outlined that there was no escalation at that time.

### 7.2 Organisational Controls Assurance Group- Update Report on 2021/22

**Ms McNally** advised members that the next meeting of the Organisational Controls Assurance Group will take place in October 2021.

### **7.3 Schedule of Dates for the Governance Assurance Committee for 2022**

Members received for approval schedules of dates for the GAC for 2022. These were approved.

### **7.4 Minutes of the Corporate Control Committee held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021**

**Dr Briscoe** informed members the finally approved minutes held at the July meeting will be tabled at the December Governance Assurance Committee Meeting.

### **7.5 Minutes of the Safety, Quality and Innovation Committee held on 03<sup>rd</sup> September 2021**

**Dr Briscoe** informed members the finally approved minutes of the September meeting will be presented at the next Governance Assurance Committee Meeting in December 2021.

### **7.6 Third Party Report Register as at 10<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

Members received for information, a copy of the Third Party Report Register as at 10<sup>th</sup> September 2021, which had been circulated prior to the meeting. **Ms McNally** briefly outlined the key aspects and there being no questions from Members, it was agreed to note the contents of the Register.

### **7.7 Items of Escalation**

None

## **8.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Assembly Questions and Complaints**

**Mrs O'Hagan** asked what assurances were in place for the proposed pause on response to Assembly Questions and Complaints. **Ms Coulter** informed members the request was going to HSCB, and that it may not be approved. **Ms McNally** informed members, if the Trust request was approved, complaints would continue to be risk assessed and triaged and at all times the complainant would be updated regarding their complaint and

### **Trust Board Apprentice**

**Dr Briscoe** asked Ms J English, Trust Board Apprentice if she had any comments or feedback. **Ms English** thanked members and outlined that she found her first GAC to be interesting and informative.

### **GAC Presentation**

**Dr Briscoe** advised members that for the next GAC meeting there would be a presentation on Governance Assurance Reporting - Quality Improvement Pilot in Prison Healthcare.

## **9.0 DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Dr Briscoe** confirmed that the next Governance Assurance Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday 15 December 2021 at 12 noon via Zoom hosted from the Meeting Room, Trust Headquarters, Ulster Hospital, Dundonald.