

GOVERNOR'S CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Governors' Consultative Council held at Heartlands Hospital on 6 March 2006

PPRESENT:	Mr C Wilkinson	(Chairman)	
	Mrs S Blomer		Prof S Buchanan
	Mrs O Cargill		Mr A Chughtai
	Mr A Clements		Mr M Collard
	Dr P Dodson		Mrs V Egan
	Dr Q Fazil		Mr J Foster
	Mrs M Garland		Mr R Gillard
	Mr P Grace		Prof C Ham
	Dr S Hussain		Mr J Jebbett
	Mrs J Keogh		Mr M Z Khan
	Alderman D Lewis		Mrs F Linn
	Mr D O'Leary		Mrs J Prior
	Mr R Shields		Mrs P Sumner
	Mrs J Walford		Mr A Weight
Mrs J Weight		Mr T Whittle	
Mrs I Wright			

IIIN ATTENDANCE:	Mr M Goldman	(Chief Executive)	Mrs L Dunn
	Mrs N Rabjohns		Mr A Stokes
	Mr M Pye	(Company Secretary)	Mrs L Cartwright
	Mr B Spittle		

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mrs C Wilson and Cllr R Sleigh. It was agreed that they both had reasonable cause for attendance.

2. PRESENTATION FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND FINANCE DIRECTOR

Mr Goldman and Mr Stokes presented their Quarter 3 reports which gave clear indications that the Trust has met financial targets. The principal items of discussion arising from the presentations were:

2.1 *Infection Control*

The question was asked whether non-essential operations/treatments are being delayed because of MRSA incidents. Referring to in-house targets, Mr Goldman believed that such delays are not occurring. How Governors are invited to bring matters of this nature to the Trust's attention should anything cause concern. It was noted that the "Working Together for Health" scheme is showing positive results, and all hospitals need to work in conjunction with their local community to promote infection control.

2.2	<i>Good Hope Hospital</i>
	The anticipated benefits of a combined service with Good Hope were discussed. Mr Goldman emphasised that the result must be a surplus rather than just achieving financial balance. Good Hope's massive structural debt must be

	resolved before HEFT commit to this project, with any costs incurred by HEFT as a result of this undertaking being met by Good Hope. The potential for economies of scale are an obvious possibility. Mr Goldman emphasised that this is not a potential merger and, therefore, there are no anticipated job losses or loss of management expertise from HEFT. The Chairman confirmed that HEFT will only take Good Hope on board on the basis of having already satisfied itself that it has the resources and momentum to carry this forward to a positive conclusion. It was emphasised that this project is still under review and if it appears not to be financially viable then it will not proceed.
2.3	<i>New GP Contracts</i>
	In response to a question raised, Mr Goldman commented that there are no indications, and no definitive way of assessing, whether the new GP contracts are causing any increase in the number of A&E cases.
3.	PRESENTATION FROM THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF NURSING
	Mrs Rabjohns gave her presentation on “Operation Quality” which had also recently been received by the Trust Board. This highlighted successful results in that all targets have been met (as set by the Government, the Trust and Monitor). The principal items of discussion arising from this presentation were:
3.1	<i>“Redcoats” Pilot Study</i>
	It was explained that this pilot study comprises 6 full-time staff who provide non medical assistance to patients and relatives to enable nurses to focus on their skilled care work. It was recognised that the recruitment of sufficient numbers of skilled nurses remains a key issue and that the use of the “Redcoats” must be seen to be both cost-effective and labour-efficient before the scheme could be introduced permanently or more widely.
3.2	<i>Independence of Patients/Discharge Policy</i>
	It was noted that whilst the Discharge Policy encourages the independence of patients, both in hospital and after being discharged, certain patient groups (e.g. Alzheimer’s/Dementia/Stroke patients) still need additional assistance, particularly at mealtimes, despite the policy that mealtimes should be free of staff intervention. It was emphasised that no policy precludes patients/relatives from requesting assistance wherever and whenever it is needed. The Trust encourages strong communication between staff/patients/relatives/carers to ensure the best possible service to patients.
4.	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING
	The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2005 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record of the meeting.
5.	APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN
	The Chairman presented his paper (Appendix 2 to the Agenda) recommending the appointment of Mr Bernard Spittle as Vice Chairman. The Governors approved this appointment.

(Messrs Wilkinson, Goldman and Spittle absented themselves from the meeting whilst items 6 and 7 were discussed)

6. APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Professor Ham presented the Report of the Appointments Committee (Appendix 3 to the Agenda) which covered the following issues:

6.1 Appointment of Chairman and Non-Executive Director

The recommendations of the Appointments Committee to appoint Mr Clive Wilkinson as Chair of the Trust and Professor John Perry as Non-Executive Director (for a period of four years and two years respectively) with effect from 1 April 2006 were unanimously approved.

6.2 *Committee Terms of Reference*

This subject was taken with Agenda Item 9.

6.3 *Review of Committee Performance*

The Governors endorsed the Committee's view that it is operating at full effectiveness.

6.4 *Performance Evaluation of the Chairman*

It was noted and approved that the Chairmen of both the Appointments Committee and the Remuneration Committee, on behalf of their respective Committees, would be meeting with the Deputy Chairman for the purpose of this evaluation, the outcome of which will be presented to Governors in due course.

7. REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

Professor Buchanan summarised his report (Appendix 4 to the Agenda), which covered the following issues:

7.1 *Review of the Non-Executive Directors' Remuneration*

Professor Buchanan outlined the details of his report emphasising particularly that:

- (i) existing rates of pay had been set at a time when very little comparative information was available;
- (ii) recent and detailed comparative information makes it clear that the NEDs are underpaid;
- (iii) NED are working considerably more time than had been initially anticipated and that the financial and reputational risks involved need to be taken into account;
- (iv) future increases would likely have to take into account only inflation unless there were major changes in workload to consider; and
- (v) the discussions within the Remuneration Committee were long and rigorous and that it was the Committee that had proposed the figures – it was not responding to a proposal from the Trust Executive.

Concern was expressed that the proposed increases were too large and ought properly to be staged over two to three years, although everyone else who expressed a view was fully supportive of the proposed figures.

The recommendations of the Remuneration Committee to increase the remuneration levels of Chair of the Trust (£45,000), Chair of Audit Committee (£16,000) and all other Non-Executive Directors (£13,000), with effect from 1 April 2006, were accordingly approved.

7.2 *Committee Terms of Reference*

This subject was taken with Agenda Item 9.

7.3 *Review of Committee Performance.*

The Committee's view that it is operating at maximum effectiveness was endorsed by the GCC.

7.4 *Performance Evaluation of the Chairman*

This discussion was included in 6.4 above.

8. CONSTITUTION

The meeting was informed that, in accordance with Clause 9.7.10 of the Constitution, the Trust Board has conducted a review of the Constitution so as to determine if any proposals should be put to the GCC for its amendment. A copy of the Constitution showing all the changes proposed by the Trust Board was presented to the meeting (Appendix 5 to the Agenda).

It was unanimously resolved that the proposed changes to the Constitution, as presented to the meeting, be and are hereby approved and that the revised Constitution be adopted subject to the approval of Monitor.

In response to a question raised, it was confirmed that once the draft GCC meeting minutes have been circulated to Governors, they may, if a Governor so wishes, be discussed with their constituents even though the Minutes would not, at that point, have been approved and adopted by the full GCC.

9. COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Mr Pye presented his report (incorporating Appendices 6 – 8 of the Agenda), detailing the recommended changes to the Terms of Reference of all three GCC Committees. These changes were approved.

10. GOOD HOPE HOSPITAL

10.1 *Verbal Update*

This was included in the discussions which took place at Item 2.

10.2 *PricewaterhouseCoopers*

It was noted that the existing cap on expenditure for non-audit work may have to be reviewed in the future to take account of Good Hope, but that this is not necessary at the moment.

11.	GOVERNORS' ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS	
	Mr Pye summarised his paper (Appendix 9 to the Agenda). It was agreed that the non-attendance of Prof Ham, Mrs Keogh and Mrs Walford were due to reasonable cause. It was noted that one of the approved amendments to the Constitution addressed a new criteria for attendance records of Governors.	
12.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
	12.1	<i>Cystic Fibrosis Trust</i>
	Mr Khan presented a letter from the Cystic Fibrosis Trust (Appendix 10 to the Agenda) with a view to raising hospital awareness to the benefits of neonatal screening for Cystic Fibrosis. The Chairman confirmed that a letter has already been despatched to bring this to the attention of PCTs to encourage immediate action.	
	12.2	<i>Update on Governors' National Forum</i>
	Mr Whittle and Mrs Egan, this Trust's representatives on the Forum Steering Committees, gave a verbal update and feedback from recent meetings. Mr Pye agreed to liaise with them both in order to provide to Governors further information on the establishment of a National Forum as and when it became available.	
13.	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS	

	Consultation on Annual Plan	- 15 May 2006
	Annual General Meeting	- September 2006
	Staff Recognition Awards	- September 2006
	Half Year Update	- November 2006

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Chairman

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