

Minutes of an **Extra Ordinary** meeting of the **Borders NHS Board** held on Thursday 22 October 2020 at 9.00am via MS Teams.

Present:

- Mrs K Hamilton, Chair
- Mrs F Sandford, Vice Chair
- Mr M Dickson, Non Executive
- Ms S Lam, Non Executive
- Mr J McLaren, Non Executive
- Mrs A Wilson, Non Executive
- Cllr D Parker, Non Executive
- Mr R Roberts, Chief Executive
- Mr A Bone, Director of Finance
- Mrs N Berry, Director of Nursing, Midwifery & Acute Services
- Dr L McCallum, Medical Director
- Dr T Patterson, Joint Director of Public Health

In Attendance:

- Miss I Bishop, Board Secretary
- Mrs J Smyth, Director of Strategic Change & Performance
- Mr G Clinkscale, Associate Director of Acute Services
- Mr J Steen, Audit Scotland

1. Apologies and Announcements

Apologies had been received from Mr Tris Taylor, Non Executive, Mr Andy Carter, Director of Workforce, Mr Rob McCulloch-Graham, Chief Officer Health & Social Care, Dr Amanda Cotton, Associate Medical Director, Dr Janet Bennison, Associate Medical Director and Dr Nicola Lowdon, Associate Medical Director

The Chair confirmed the meeting was quorate.

The Chair welcomed Jonny Steen from Audit Scotland to the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chair sought any verbal declarations of interest pertaining to items on the agenda.

Mr Malcolm Dickson declared that his sister-in-law was an executive member of the Board of Northumberland Health Trust.

The **BOARD** noted the verbal declaration.

3. NHS Borders Annual Report & Accounts 2019-20

Mr Andrew Bone advised the Board that an extra ordinary meeting of the Audit Committee had taken place that morning where the Annual Report and Accounts had been scrutinised. The Audit

Committee were content to recommend that the Board approve and adopt the documentation. He further advised that a separate briefing session for Board members on the Annual Report and Accounts had been held earlier in the month to go through the finer detail and address any complex questions.

Mr Malcolm Dickson as Chair of the Audit Committee confirmed that the Committee had looked at a number of sources of assurance including the external audit report. It had received a review of the corporate governance framework which contained the governance statements from all of the Governance Committees. He confirmed that the Audit Committee were content to recommend formal adoption of the Annual Report and Accounts by the Board.

Ms Sonya Lam enquired when the Board would receive an update on the action plan from the audit given there were several deadlines contained within it. Mr Bone reminded the Board that the actions and recommendations from the audit would be addressed and reported to the Audit Committee. As per normal process the Board would receive an update from the audit committee meetings as well as the approved audit committee minutes at the next appropriate public Board meeting so that progress was visible.

The **BOARD** adopted and approved submission to the Scottish Government, of the Annual Report and Accounts 2019/20 for the financial year ended 31st March 2020.

The **BOARD** authorised the Chief Executive to sign the Performance Report.

The **BOARD** authorised the Chief Executive to sign the Statement of Accountable Officer's responsibilities in respect of the Accounts.

The **BOARD** authorised the Chair and Director of Finance to sign the Statement of Health Board Members' responsibilities in respect of the Accounts.

The **BOARD** authorised the Chief Executive to sign the Governance Statement in respect of the Accounts.

The **BOARD** authorised the Chief Executive and Director of Finance to sign the Statement of Financial Position.

4. External Audit Annual Report 2019-20

Mr Jonny Steen provided an overview of the external audit annual report for 2019/20 and highlighted several key messages including: on page 4 the summary of external audit findings for the 2019/20 audit; unqualified opinion of the accounts issued; emphasis on the valuation of land and buildings due to COVID-19; and recognition of a number of financial challenges to be carried forward for the next 3 years.

In terms of recommendations, Mr Steen commented that the auditors were suggesting the Board prioritise the financial turnaround programme and the financial impact of COVID-19 in order to try and restore financial balance. He further commented on a forward looking programme, governance and value for money arrangements, various IT updates and the amount of work that had been required to extend working from home arrangements, cyber resilience and security. He recognised that there had been variable performance in terms of targets and commented on the mainstreaming equalities report.

Mr Andrew Bone commented that some minor clarification amendments to the report had been agreed at the Audit Committee. He further suggested that all of the recommendations within the report were fair and reasonable and should be accepted and he would develop an action plan against her recommendations to be taken forward.

Mr Ralph Roberts echoed Mr Bone's comments that the recommendations were both fair and reasonable and that as Accountable Officer they were an appropriate representation of where the organisation was and the substance within them demonstrated that progress was being made against the underlying financial challenges, as well as recognising the significant challenges ahead. He further reminded the Board that there had been a sustained and relatively good level of performance not withstanding COVID-19 at the end of last year as well as a lower level of brokerage than anticipated being required.

Mr Steen advised the Board of the new electronic sign off process for the Accounts given the situation with COVID-19.

Ms Sonya Lam sought clarification that the Board would be sighted on the recommendations and action plan via a reliance on reading audit committee minutes and update papers. Mr Bone suggested once the action plan had been developed he would make specific reference to the audit report in the update to the next Board meeting.

The **BOARD** noted the Annual Report for 2019/20 from Audit Scotland.

5. NHS Borders Endowment Fund Annual Accounts 2019-20

Mr Andrew Bone introduced the Endowment Fund Annual Accounts and advised that the Board of Trustees had reviewed and approved the accounts on 28 September. He confirmed that the accounts had received an unqualified audit from GEOghans.

The **BOARD** noted the Endowment Fund Annual Accounts for 2019/20.

6. Patient's Private Funds Statement for 2019-20

Mr Andrew Bone introduced the Patient's Private Funds Statement and advised that it had received a clean audit opinion from GEOghans. The final statement had been noted by the Audit Committee earlier that morning and there were no matters to specifically highlight to the Board.

The Chair commented on the reduced balance compared to the previous year, which was mainly due to a reduced long stay patient footprint and would likely reduce further over time.

The **BOARD** adopted and approved the Patient's Private Funds Statement for the financial year ended 31st March 2020.

The **BOARD** authorised the Director of Finance to sign the Patient's Private Funds Statement to certify its accuracy.

The **BOARD** authorised the Chief Executive to sign the Patient's Private Funds Statement to confirm its approval by the Board.

7. Any Other Business

Mr Andrew Bone recorded his thanks to Audit Scotland, their team and his finance team for working through the disrupted programme due to COVID-19. He commented that Mr Steen and his team had been very accommodating to NHS Borders circumstances and wished the Board to formally recognise their assistance.

8. Date and Time of next meeting

The Chair confirmed that the next meeting of Borders NHS Board would take place on Thursday, 3 December 2020 at 9.00am via MS Teams.

The meeting concluded at 11.55am.

Signature:
Chair

DRAFT