

**Annual Members’ Meeting/Annual General Meeting**

**Minutes of the meeting held Thursday, 26 September 2024**

**Held Jubilee Theatre, St Nicholas Hospital, and via Microsoft Teams**

**1.00pm – 3.00pm**

**Present:**

Darren Best, Chair of the Council of Governors and Board of Directors

Anne Carlile, Lead Governor/Carer Governor Adult Services

Claire Keys, Staff Governor – Clinical

Tom Rebair, Service User Governor for Adult Services

Fiona Regan, Carer Governor for Learning Disabilities

Jane Noble, Carer Governor, Adult Services

Neil Newman, Carer Governor, Neuro Disability Services

Russell Bowman, Service User, Neuro Disability Services

Emma Silver Price, Non-Clinical Staff Governor

Bea Groves-McDaniel, Community and Voluntary Sector

Ruth Berkley, Appointed Governor for South Tyneside Council

Shannon Fairhurst, Children and Young People’s Services (Shadow Governor)

Rosie Lawrence, Learning Disability Services (Shadow Governor)

**In attendance:**

David Arthur, Non-Executive Director

Michael Robinson, Non-Executive Director

Brendan Hill, Non-Executive Director

Vikas Kumar, Non-Executive Director

Louise Nelson, Non-Executive Director

Mark Kirkham, Mazars LLP

James Duncan, Chief Executive

Kevin Scollay, Executive Director of Finance

Lynne Shaw, Executive Director of Workforce and OD

Rajesh Nadkarni, Executive Medical Director, Deputy Chief Executive

Ramona Duguid, Chief Operating Officer

Sarah Rushbrooke, Executive Director of Nursing, Therapies and Quality Assurance

Debbie Henderson, Director of Communications and Corporate Affairs

Kirsty Allan, Deputy Trust Secretary / Corporate Governance Manager

**Trust members in attendance**

56 staff and public members were in attendance

**1. Minutes of the Annual Members’ Meeting 26th September 2024**

The minutes of the meeting were considered.

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| **Approved:**   * **The minutes of the meeting held 26th September 2024 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting** |

**2. Chair’s update**

Darren Best welcomed everyone to the Annual Members’ meeting/Annual General meeting. It was noted that the meeting was also being live streamed for those who could not attend in person.

Darren stated that since being appointed as Chair of the Trust in October 2023, it was a privilege to be attending the AMM in the role as Chair for the first time, following his previous appointment as Non-Executive Director for CNTW. Reflecting on his first year in the role, Darren paid tribute to the incredible patients, carers and staff for their dedication, hard work and commitment he has witnessed during his first year. In terms of learning, Darren stated that the richest source of feedback he had experienced came from visiting services.

Last year’s AMM focussed on the launched our new Trust Strategy ‘With you in mind’ which has set the direction of travel of the Trust. It has set the Trusts ambition to be quality and safety driven, supporting people and the communities served by the organisation and keeping those things at the heart of everything we do. As part of this, 2024’s meeting will focus on the re-launch of the Trusts Charity – SHINE.

On 27 September, the Trust will be celebrating the Staff Excellence Awards celebrating the dedication, hard work and achievements of CNTW and NTW Solutions staff who continue to make a real difference every day to service users, carers and work colleagues.

The Trust continues to work in collaboration with health and care partners across the region to achieve and sustain improvements to patient care. The Trust cannot be successful on its own. Other organisations face similar challenges and importantly understand that change is both necessary and desirable if we are going to deliver our stated ambitions.

Darren noted that while demands on Trust services remain high, there is much to be proud but more is needed to improve access to mental health services so that more people of all ages receive the treatment they need, improving flow and length of stay in adult acute wards and supporting improvements in quality and safety of all ages within inpatient care, embedding digital technology and the timeless and quality data. The Trust is also continuing to address issues highlighted in the staff survey to improve staff experience including retention and attendance and working closely with our North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board to plan and deliver a balanced net system financial position.

The Trust is committed and focussed on improving autism diagnostic assessment pathways to reduce the number of people with a learning disability and autistic people in mental health inpatient setting, ensuring action plans accompany annual health checks. This includes developing learning disability and autism workforce plans and ensuring staff training in learning disability and autism.

Darren closed his update with sincere thanks to the Trusts partners, to the 9000+ staff, and to the Board of Directors or their tireless work, insight, challenge and commitment to the Trust. Darren particularly thanked the Council of Governors for their support, energy, interest and challenge.

Finally, Darren thanked Anne Carlile, current Lead Governor for her dedication to the role for the last nine years who will be standing down at the end of November as her tenure as Governor comes to an end.

**3. Lead Governor update**

Anne Carlile provided an update on her journey describing her background working in family support in mental Health, drug and alcohol services and the criminal justice system.

Anne talked about her time as a Governor following her appointment in 2015 and latterly as Lead Governor since 2023, her role as member of the National Governor Advisory Committee with NHS Providers and chair the Trusts Governors’ Quality Group.

Anne reflected on her involvement in the development of Triangle of Care and attending a Carer Together Advisory Group as well as attending a Carers Conference this year, which shared learning, good practice and promoted partnership working.

During her nine years as Governor, Anne talked about the positive change within CNTW which has gone from strength to strength. Governors recognise the areas of challenge and recognise there is more to do which includes tackling high waiting times for some services, challenges within crisis services and eliminating restrictive practice and minimising the use of restraint. Anne shared her view that the Trust is truly a person-centred organisation ensuring that service user and carers are at the heart of everything the Trust does. The Trust Strategy ‘With you in mind’ sets out five ambitions that will ensure the Trusts focus remains on improving services for the community. Governors are excited about the future and about the improvements that closer working with others will bring to services for the benefit of all who need it.

Throughout the year, the Governors have continued to observe Board meetings, and this has provided the Council with the assurance that Board scrutiny and oversight has continued.

As Anne stands down from her role as Governor, the Trust is embarking on Governor elections and she encouraged anybody who is able to give their time, energy and thought to helping the Trust be the best it can be for patients and staff and are passionate about the NHS, to consider standing for election.

Finally, Anne expressed her thanks to her Governor colleagues, her admiration and respect for everyone working for and within CNTW and across the wider health and social care system.

**4. Annual Magazine 2024**

Darren Best referred to the Trust magazine which this year celebrates SHINE, the Trust charity. SHINE exists to support people who are current or previous service users, their families and the

community of care. The Charity is an important part of the Trusts work and the magazine highlights some of the great work of the Charity and the positive impact it has on people's lives.

**5. Annual Report and Annual Accounts 2023/24 (including External Audit Management Letter)**

Kevin Scollay, Director of Finance presented the Trusts Annual Report and Accounts for 2023/24 which included updates on income and expenditure, capital expenditure and financial planning for 2024/25. In terms of financial performance, the Trust met its control total, stayed within the Capital Departmental Expenditure Limit (CDEL) allocation, ended the year with a positive cash balance, and received an unqualified opinion from the External Auditors.

There were no issues of concern highlighted by the Trust Auditors Mazars who were also in attendance.

**6. Forward view**

James Duncan provided an update on the forward view for the Trust for the coming year. Following the General Election in early July, we now have a new Labour Government and a new Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Wes Streeting. Since the election, the Government have announced an independent investigation of NHS performance, which will be led by Lord Darzi and will report in September 2024. The review findings will provide the starting point for developing a 10-year plan for health. The development of the plan will be led by Sally Warren, Director of Policy at the King’s Fund, with support from teams at the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) and NHS England. Plans for how NHS staff and leaders, patients and the community will be able to contribute to both phases of this work are being developed.

The King’s Speech was held on 17th July, marking the beginning of the first session of the new parliament since the general election. The King’s Speech included several priorities linked to mental health, learning disabilities and autistic people. The Mental Health Bill was included in the 2024 King’s Speech, demonstrating commitment from the Labour Government to modernise and reform current mental health legislation. The speech included a commitment that the Government will ensure mental health is given the same attention and focus as physical health. There was significant focus on children and young people’s health and wellbeing including a commitment to improving mental health provision for young people, and the introduction of a Children’s Wellbeing Bill which will be introduced to raise standards in education and promote children’s wellbeing.

In the context of this, James advised of the need to make sure that time is spent on focusing on the things that are the most important, and to achieve this, the Trust will continue to focus on delivering its Trust Strategic Ambitions of With You in Mind.

Feedback to the Trust during 2024 from Health and Safety Executive and the Care Quality Commission has shone a light on the Trusts approach to use of restrictive practices. James referred to the Trusts commitment in terms of providing care to the some of the most vulnerable in society, and to those people who care for these service users and work in those services. Those staff members continue to do a remarkable job under remarkable circumstances and actions are being developed to improve further the support to those service users and staff in line with the Trust strategy, values and commitments. The Trust have also included reducing violence and aggression, improving physical healthcare, and reducing restrictive practice.

**8. Introduction to Charity ‘SHINE’**

Vikas Kumar, Chair of the Trust Charitable Funds Committee provided an overview of the work of the Charity during the past 12 months. As Chair of our Trust's Charity Committee, Vikas expressed his pride to present the Annual Magazine and introduce the focus on this year’s celebration event. 2024 has seen a remarkable transformation of the charity, driven by an unwavering commitment to supporting patients and carers.

The Charity relaunch marked the beginning of a new chapter for SHINE, characterised by a renewed energy, innovative programmes, and a deeper connection with the communities we serve. Vikas gave thanks for the Marketing and Charity team for their hard work and dedication to the Charity, and to the volunteers and fundraisers with whom, the charity could not exist.

**9. Celebration Event - ‘Voyage to Recovery’**

Staff and service users provided a presentation detailing their experiences and feedback from the "Voyage to Recovery" sailing expedition. The presentation commenced with an outline of the expedition. A cohort comprising ten young people in recovery from psychosis, along with NHS staff members, participated in a sailing journey from Whitehaven to Glasgow. This initiative forms part of the "Voyage to Recovery" programme, which is available to service users engaged with the Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIP) services at Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW). The EIP service is dedicated to supporting individuals experiencing a first episode of psychosis.

During the voyage, service users and staff collaboratively managed both sailing operations and daily living tasks, including cooking and cleaning. The crew embarked from Whitehaven, crossed the Irish Sea to Belfast, visited several Scottish islands, and completed their journey in Glasgow. The event marked CNTW’s second consecutive year of participation, facilitated by the Cirdan Sailing Trust a non-profit organisation providing young people across the UK with access to adventure therapy through sailing. The expedition was made possible through the generous support of the Sir James Knott Fund and CNTW’s charity, SHINE.

Feedback from participants was shared. For the majority, this was their first experience of sailing, and many expressed initial uncertainty regarding what to expect. One service user described the experience as “the best time they’d had in a long time.” Another participant highlighted the unique sensation of “waking up in a new country after journeying there in a sailing boat,” reflecting on the opportunity to explore new locations both on land and at sea. The team encountered challenging and choppy seas during the voyage. As one young person noted, “There’s nothing like a bit of rough sea on a boat to make one realise how truly fragile us humans can be against forces of nature.” Another participant commented on the emotional impact, stating, “I cannot begin to describe all the emotions felt on the voyage. The thrill, joy, accomplishment and pride, fear and anxiety, serenity and bliss, closeness and vulnerability. It truly was a remarkable adventure.” Additional feedback described the journey as an “unforgettable experience,” blending challenge, adventure, teamwork, and camaraderie, and providing “a unique opportunity to gain insight, broaden perspectives, and to connect with both people and nature.”

The presentation also addressed the impact of the voyage on social connection. Participants reported that the expedition fostered a sense of connection among individuals who have experienced psychosis, a condition that is often isolating. One service user remarked, “It was lovely to get to spend time with other people who have experienced psychosis. We were able to share our stories and could really relate to each other and what we’ve been through.”

Plans for future participation were discussed. Thanks to ongoing support from funders, CNTW will again take part in the Voyage to Recovery in 2025, with another group of ten service users and five staff members set to embark on this experience.

The presentation further noted the inspiring journey of Shawn, a previous service user and participant in 2023, who returned this year as a peer support staff member and is currently volunteering with the Cirdan Sailing Trust. Shawn aspires to become a professional crew member for future voyages, demonstrating the transformative potential of the programme. He commented: “The biggest thing that I took away from the ship is I don’t have to be isolated. You go onto the boat, and you meet all these ‘normal’ people that are all really cool and it’s like you’re all like me. You’re all feeling the same way I’m feeling but what I’m seeing is someone I want to be pals with. It’s so big inside your head, this looming thing of psychosis, that you forget that to other people it’s fine, you’re allowed to live your story and you’re allowed to own it.”

In conclusion, the presentation expressed gratitude to all funders and partners, emphasising the lasting positive impact of the "Voyage to Recovery" on the participants and the wider CNTW community.

**9. Questions from the Public**

There were no further questions from the public.

**10. Meeting Close**

There being no further business, the meeting was formally closed.