

Council of Governors' meeting, 19th September 2013

Agenda item 50/13: Governor Training – mandatory and optional elements

As Governors are now aware, the Trust is under a *statutory* obligation to “take such steps to secure that the governors are equipped with the skills and knowledge they require in their capacity as such.” (Health and Social Care Act 2012, §151(5)).

The Trust feels that it is imperative that **all** Governors receive some annual training with regard to their role. Governors too have concluded that this be the case; almost two years ago, the Education and Training Group, under the Chairmanship of former Governor Frank Haysom, began to look at this issue. As a result, the Group have produced a series of power-point presentations which are available for all, and any, Governors to access (via the Secretary). Each presentation provides an enormous amount of information suitable for both new Governors, and more experienced Governors who feel that they would benefit from a ‘refresher’.

About a year ago, a tender went out for an organisation to provide a national training course for FT Governors. The tender was won by the Foundation Trust Network, which now provides a series of courses under the title of ‘GovernWell’, which include the following titles:

- Governor core skills
- The role of the Governor in non-executive director appointments
- Effective Questioning and Challenge
- Accountability
- NHS Finance and Business Skills

Our Trust – whose obligation it is to ensure that appropriate training is provided to Governors – has taken the decision to send its own professional trainers to the national training sessions. The information provided will then be enhanced to include Southend values and input specifically tailored for Southend Governor training. It is considered that both Governors and the Trust will benefit from the content of the national training programme being professionally delivered by those who are qualified experienced to teach the material. Training sessions will be interactive and the trainers will use their skills to ensure that Governors retain the training that they receive,

The Governance Committee has recommended that there be an element of mandatory training (see next agenda item) and the outcome of the training process described above will form the mandatory training element that it is proposed that all Governors will undertake.

It is proposed that mandatory training will comprise of the following:

Either:

- A two hour training session on a bi-monthly basis
- or
- A three hour training session on a quarterly basis.

Thus, meaning that approx. 12 hours of mandatory training per annum, will be required to be undertaken by each Governor

. This compares to *at least* 12 days of annual training that each member of the Board of Directors has to attend.

It is recognised that some Governors may need to have slightly different skills from others. For example, the appointment of Non-Executive Directors requires particular skills. It is therefore proposed that those who serve on the Search and Appointments Committee, and those wishing to take up a position on that Committee, undertake mandatory training on the role of the Governor regarding non-executive director appointments. It is proposed that this training will form part of the 12 hours of mandatory training (and will not be in addition).

Notwithstanding that some Governors will have qualifications or experience already gained where they might anticipate that further training would not be required, the role of a Governor requires specialist and up to date skills and knowledge. To ensure that the Trust provides up to date and appropriate training, Governors may nevertheless, be required to undertake such training. In any event, ALL Governors will be required to undertake the Core Skills training on an annual basis.

Exemptions may be provided in exceptional circumstances, on application to the Secretary. The reasons for exemptions have not yet been decided upon and it is proposed that, until this has been looked at in more detail, the discretion of the Chairman and Vice Chairman together is appropriate. It is proposed that the Education and Training Group consider any reasons for exemption from mandatory Governor training, and this will be discussed with the Trust thereafter for agreement.

It is proposed that the first mandatory training session will take place on Wednesday 20th November 2013 at Saxon Hall. The training will take place in the morning, followed by lunch and a short Council of Governors' meeting in the afternoon. The session will include the Core Skills required of a Governor and will incorporate some items which are already included in the induction presentations that have been provided over the last three years. If Governors are unable to attend this session, please inform the Secretary as soon as possible.

Thereafter, it is proposed that the training dates for 2014 be provided to Governors by 20th November 2013 so that those dates may be diarised as soon as possible. Where possible, training will be provided on the main hospital site.

Governors are asked to bear in mind that this will be the first year that mandatory Governor training has been provided at the Trust. As such, and like any new enterprise, some tweaks and adjustments may be required as we undertake the first part of this journey, and Governors will be informed in a timely manner.

To summarise, Governors are today asked to consider the following proposals:

- 1) The Trust's professional trainers should provide training to the Governors on a set timetable basis, details of which should be provided annually, and as soon as possible;

- 2) Twelve hours mandatory training / education per annum would appear to be an appropriate amount;
- 3) The proposed 12 hours training be provided on either
 - a) bi-monthly (early evening) sessions of two hours, or
 - b) quarterly by a three hour session (most likely afternoon).
- 4) The Education and Training Group will consider circumstances in which some Governors may be exempt from some mandatory training?
- 5) Until a formal decision is made, after input from the Education and Training Group, the Chairman / Vice Chairman's discretion will be acceptable, and considered final judgement, should any Governor consider that they should be exempt from any mandatory training.

Anna Milanec
Trust Secretary

10 September 2013