

Strategy and Governance Group - Annual Report

The Group has met four times since the last AGM. The key issues discussed over the past year are:

- The Governor's Code of Conduct was reviewed and submitted for approval at the December 2015 COG meeting.
- Annual self –assessment forms were issued to all Governors in the Group and 5 returns received. The vast majority of comments were positive. There were 5 comments 'below average' that were discussed by the Group.
- Geoff Stokes went through the key issues in the Annual Governance Statement. This is part of the Trust Annual Report. The report concluded that there was a significant risk around the Trust Financial performance. It also recognised that risks for the coming year were staffing issues and difficulties arising from the local health economy, the ability of local CCG's to meet their obligations, legacy issues arising from an aging estate and being part of the Mid and South Essex Success Regime. At the same time it believes that the Trust has a generally sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of its policies, aims and objectives.
- Jenny Galpin updated the Group on the 2016/17 Annual Operating Plan giving the highlights including the medical model. There is also a new model for mental health assessment in A&E, an independent review of the emergency pathway by Monitor and other highlights from last year. A summary of the key issues for the coming year included improvements in the 18 week pathway, surgery out of house, the treatment of cancer patients and the refreshing of the Trust's values. The financial element of the plan will be challenging because it shows a planned deficit for 2016/17. It was noted that measures have been put in place to deliver the Financial Improvement Programme including the appointment of a Turnaround Director and the engagement of Grant Thornton to support the Trust.
- Dates for the 2016 Governor elections were discussed and agreed. They would be deferred to August/September because of a clash with the June European Referendum. ERS was approved as the service provider. The Group also discussed the timing of the 2017 Governor elections to ascertain if they would return to the 'usual' June/July date. It was suggested that, if the Governor elections continue to be August/September, the AGM should be deferred to late October. (This may lead to a timing issue for the Governors to approve the Trust Annual Accounts.)
- There has also been some concern among the Group around the apparent differences of constituency boundaries between the local councils and the Trust system. It was agreed we would undertake a review to see if they could be coordinated.

Les Catley
Chair