

**Executive Summary  
Report to the Council of Governors meeting  
held on 30 June 2020**

|                              |                                         |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <b>Subject</b>               | Governor Elections 2020                 |
| <b>Supporting TEG Member</b> | Sandi Carman, Assistant Chief Executive |
| <b>Author</b>                | Jane Pellegrina, Membership Manager     |
| <b>Status</b>                | Debate and Agree                        |

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

This paper describes arrangements to proceed forthwith with governor elections, following their earlier postponement.

**KEY POINTS**

- In light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic the Trust decided to follow national guidance to temporarily postpone the scheduled governor elections. This was ratified at an extraordinary meeting of the Council of Governors on 28 May 2020.
- Proposals to now proceed with governor elections are outlined including:
  - A membership constituency breakdown and details of vacancies.
  - The enhanced digital service offered by Civica Election Services.
  - July 2020 - 55 day election timetable.

**IMPLICATIONS<sup>2</sup>**

| <b>AIM OF THE STHFT CORPORATE STRATEGY 2017-2020</b> |                                                    | <b>TICK AS APPROPRIATE</b> |
|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1                                                    | Deliver the Best Clinical Outcomes                 |                            |
| 2                                                    | Provide Patient Centred Services                   |                            |
| 3                                                    | Employ Caring and Cared for Staff                  |                            |
| 4                                                    | Spend Public Money Wisely                          |                            |
| 5                                                    | Deliver Excellent Research, Education & Innovation |                            |

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Council of Governors is asked to AGREE the arrangements to proceed with governor elections from the 23 July 2020.

**APPROVAL PROCESS**

| <b>Meeting</b>       | <b>Date</b> | <b>Approved Y/N</b> |
|----------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| Council of Governors | 30-06-20    |                     |
|                      |             |                     |

## Proposals for Governor Elections 2020

### 1. Purpose of the paper

The Trust, having postponed governor elections in line with national guidance in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, now proposes to initiate the election process. This paper describes arrangements to proceed with those governor elections.

### 2. Background

In light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic the Trust decided to follow national guidance to temporarily postpone the scheduled governor elections. This was ratified at an extraordinary meeting of the Council of Governors on 28 May 2020.

### 3. Past method of election

Historically, for public and patient members, the primary source of information relating to upcoming elections has been the GoodHealth magazine and contact with the Foundation Trust Office. Seats in the staff constituency were publicised via a range of internal Trust networking arrangements. In both constituencies potential candidates self-nominated and were invited to attend a group awareness/information event prior to submitting a nomination form. At these sessions nomination forms were distributed and the online application process was also promoted. The completed nomination forms were returned by potential candidates direct to the independent election provider, Electoral Reform Services, now Civica Election Services (CES), either by hard copy or via the on-line process. For contested vacancies CES distributed a postal voting pack to members which also provided details of the option to vote online.

### 4. Proceeding with elections

In postponing the upcoming governor elections a number of factors were reviewed. Primarily it was considered that prevailing circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic could reduce the level of engagement in the electoral process. The pressures on the executive team at that phase of the pandemic was also of concern.

The table below provides a breakdown of membership in the constituencies with vacant seats to be elected to.

| Constituency Breakdown |                                |         |        |           |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|--------|-----------|
| Member Type            | Constituency                   | Members | Email  | Vacancies |
| Public                 | North Sheffield                | 2,004   | 815    | 2         |
|                        | South West Sheffield           | 1,925   | 946    | 1         |
|                        | West Sheffield                 | 2,084   | 1,080  | 1         |
| Patient                | Patient                        | 3,594   | 936    | 2         |
| Staff                  | Medical & Dental               | 1,744   | 1,744  | 1         |
|                        | AHP, Scientists & Technicians  | 2,879   | 2,879  | 1         |
|                        | Management, Admin & Clerical   | 2,907   | 2,907  | 1         |
|                        | Ancillary, Works & Maintenance | 1,992   | 1,992  | 1         |
| Total                  |                                | 19,129  | 13,299 | 10        |

#### Notes

1. Membership figures extracted 27 May 2020
2. Staff numbers estimated
3. Some emails are unverified

The following proposal sets out a way forward that introduces an enhanced digital process for members with internet access.

## **5. Election Process**

### **5.1 Trust support for elections**

The Communications Team has indicated their availability and willingness to support the design and production of a GoodHealth magazine for public and patient members and to assist in disseminating relevant information across staff networks.

### **5.2 Independent external election service**

Civica Election Services provide the Trust's independent external support for the elections. In light of the current situation in addition to the regular election service provided CES have enhanced their digital offer:

### **5.3 Nomination stage**

To support this year's elections CES propose an enhanced digital platform which provides a Governor Election Platform (GEP). To view the demonstration site [click here](#). This is a digital space designed to support participation and engagement by hosting all nomination and election related material. Statutory documents can also be hosted on the Trust's own website. Components of the GEP include:

- Separate web address to facilitate all election communication; social media streams etc, hosting
- Statutory published documents eg notice of election, statement of candidates and notice of poll etc.
- Facility to upload any supporting documents such as details about the role and responsibilities of governors.
- Nomination material including a fully online nomination form.
- Nomination/ballot video explainers if required.

CES also offer an online nomination portal that can be hosted on the GEP or as a stand-alone service (demonstration [online form](#))

A nominations dashboard is available allowing the Trust to monitor completed, as well as partially completed, online nomination forms providing real time information on the progress of the nomination process. The online nomination process would be supplementary to the traditional paper version for those members without internet access.

### **5.4 Voting**

For contested vacancies CES would distribute the regular postal voting pack to members containing an option to vote online or by telephone.

### **5.5 Awareness/information event for potential candidates**

Small, group events or one-to-one sessions could be run via Microsoft Teams, hosted by the Membership Manager and a current governor. Alternatively, conference calls for potential candidates without internet access could be arranged.

## 5.6 Proposed 55 day election timetable

| <b>Election Stage</b>                  | <b>Date</b> |
|----------------------------------------|-------------|
| Notice of election/nomination open     | Thu 23 July |
| Nominations deadline                   | Thu 20 Aug  |
| Summary of valid candidates published  | Fri 2 Aug   |
| Final date for candidate withdrawal    | Tue 25 Aug  |
| Electoral data to be provided by Trust | Fri 28 Aug  |
| Notice of Poll published               | Fri 11 Sep  |
| Voting packs despatched                | Mon 14 Sep  |
| Close of election                      | Wed 7 Oct   |
| Declaration of results                 | Thu 8 Oct   |

## 5.7 Governor Induction

In addition to wishing to avoid an unnecessary workload impact on the Trust staff of initiating the governor election process at such a challenging time, another consideration has been the difficulty at this time of conducting a meaningful induction process for newly elected governors. Normally, induction would afford the opportunity for new governors to meet with the Chairman, some Trust staff and some current governors to be briefed on key aspects of the Trust and the role of governors as well as the opportunity to raise any questions and visit some Trust sites. Clearly this is unlikely to be possible in the same format at this time. Hence it is intended to consider revised arrangements to ensure any new governors have the best opportunity to understand the Trust, particularly its performance and values and the role governors can play in working together to support the Board to continue furthering those.

## 6. Recommendation

The Council of Governors is asked to AGREE the arrangements to proceed with governor elections from the 23 July 2020.