

Executive Summary
Report to the Council of Governors
Held on 3 April 2025

Subject	Council of Governors' Effectiveness Review 2024/25
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Status	For Discussion

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This paper provides for review the results from the 2024/25 Council of Governors' Effectiveness Review and outlines how these will be used to inform the continued development of the Council of Governors.

KEY POINTS

Background

During November 2024 members of the Council of Governors completed an online questionnaire designed to review how the Council discharges its responsibilities, including its impact and effectiveness on:

- holding the non-executive directors individually and collectively to account for the performance of the board of directors
- communicating with their member constituencies and the public and transmitting their views to the board of directors
- contributing to the development of the foundation trust's forward plans.

Undertaking this effectiveness review satisfies the requirement under the NHS Code of Governance for Councils of Governors to periodically assess their collective performance [C, 4.8].

Analysis of responses to shape ongoing Council of Governor (CoG) development work

17 individuals completed the online questionnaire, split by respondent type this comprises of seven Public Governors, six Patient Governors, three Staff Governors and one Appointed / Partner Governors. This represents a 61% response rate and an increase from 52% the previous year. Tenure changes on the Council of Governors at the time the survey was issued is likely to have impacted the response rate and feedback.

A breakdown of responses to each question, together with a list of the verbatim feedback is presented in Appendix A. From a thematic review of these results and comments, the following three priorities for continued Council of Governor development focus are suggested:

- Meeting effectiveness
- Engagement / communication with members and the public
- Exploring opportunities for Governor involvement in Trust forward planning

IMPLICATIONS

AIMS OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Corporate Strategy		Assurances Received
1	Deliver the Best Clinical Outcomes	✓
2	Provide Patient Centred Services	✓
3	Employ Caring and Cared for Staff	✓
4	Spend Public Money Wisely	✓
5	Create a Sustainable Organisation	✓
6	Deliver Excellent Research, Education and Innovation	✓

RECOMMENDATIONS

<p>The Council of Governors is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>REVIEW</u> the results from an effectiveness review of the Council of Governors undertaken during November 2024; and • <u>AGREE</u> the areas for priority focus for the continued development of the Council of Governors.
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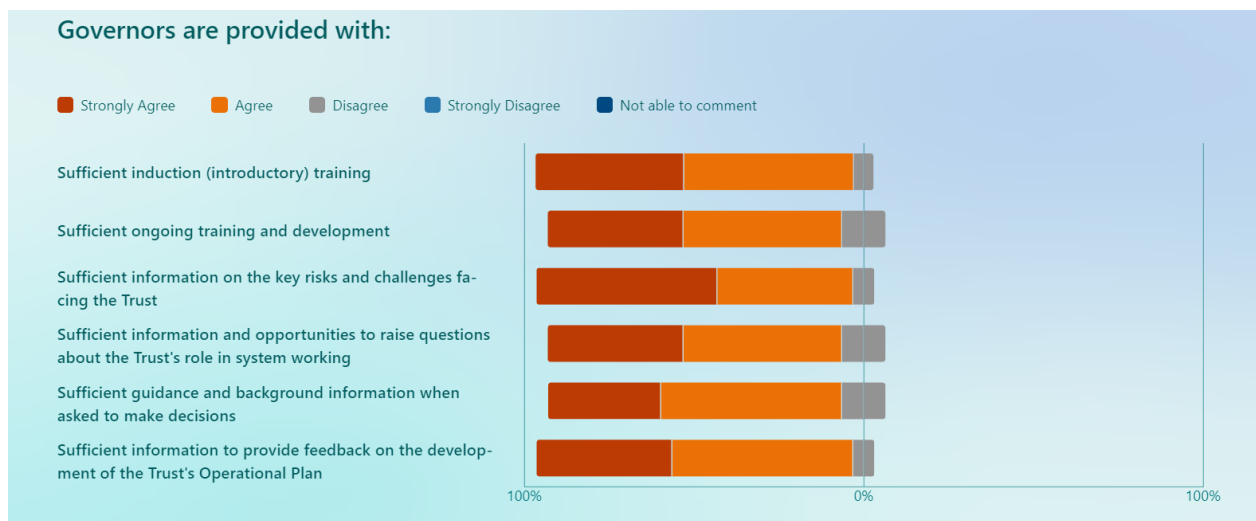
APPROVAL PROCESS

Meeting	Date	Approved Y/N
TEG	19 March 2025	Y
Council of Governors	3 April 2025	

Council of Governors Effectiveness Survey November 2024:

Verbatim responses to prompts for comments (themes to be drawn out for sharing wider).

Please add any comments / suggestions relating to training, information and guidance provided to Governors



Comments

I received a thorough induction training day prior to starting my role as governor, I also attended a full training & development day. I have been provided with a comprehensive list of information and guidance to help me understand my role and that of the trust. Communication, information and support is provided on an ongoing basis. I also feel able to ask any questions if I am unsure about any issue.

A buddy system for new Governors.

Training is limited with regards content and time allocated.

I think all training/ information provided is good about due to the large amount of abbreviations, even if explained these can be forgotten. Also a lot of managements speak which can be hard to interpret.

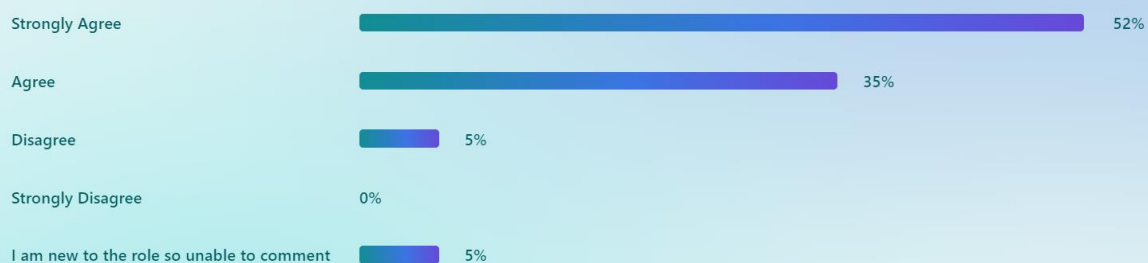
The induction training was in more detail than when I was previously a governor and this I found to be good. Information and guidance is good and relevant.

I would like to see training and development opportunities in engagement, effective relationships with NEDs and understanding the Board Assurance Framework, Risk and data. I hope there will be involvement from the CoG in the Trust's long term strategy.

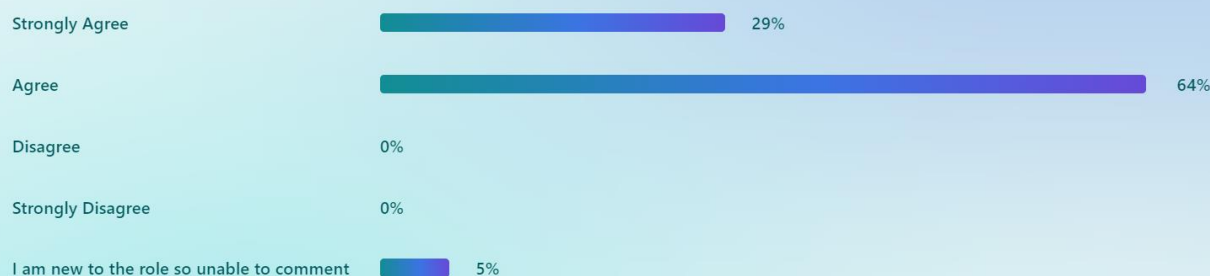
I would welcome training around seeking assurance and the roles and responsibilities of each of the committees alongside the trust's structure. I would also find the role of the trust's integrated care systems, regional NHS teams and national teams.

Please add any comments / suggestions relating to arrangements for supporting the role of Governors in holding NEDs to account for the performance of the Board

I have a good understanding of my role and responsibilities as a Governor in respect of holding NEDs individually and collectively to account for the performance of the Board



Meetings of the Council of Governors support Governors to hold NEDs to account for the performance of the Board



Comments

I would like to see far more opportunities for Governors to interact and question the NEDs rather than the majority of COG taken up with information sharing. We have made a start with the discussion at the end of the meeting but I do feel this needs to be formalised and minuted accordingly.

I enjoy the table discussions at the COG meetings and welcome the opportunity to speak to the NEDs on a one-to-one basis, the sessions after the COG meetings where the governors and NEDs meeting to have an informal discussion is also useful. However, I feel this should be more structured and have a formal agenda or planned discussion so governors can challenge the NEDs on matters of importance. I have also enjoyed the individual sessions arranged with the Trust Executives, this has been very informative and provided me with an opportunity to learn about each individual's role and challenges.

More interaction with NEDS on a relaxed basis.

Its a difficult requirement to fulfil. I think we have good mechanisms in place, but we do regularly discuss how to do it better.

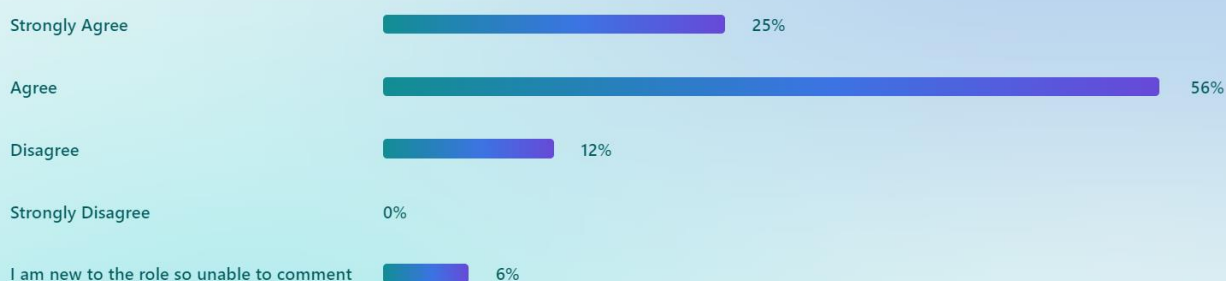
Governors lack a unified approach in holding the NEDs to account.

Getting to know more about individual NEDs is good.

I would like to see the CoG agenda more reflective of the governors' collective concerns and an opportunity for governors to present annually to NEDs on the issues they have prioritised from their networking, engagement activities and visits.

Please add any comments / suggestions relating to arrangements for supporting the role of Governors in representing members and the public at large

I have a good understanding of my role and responsibilities as a Governor, and I feel confident in representing and communicating with member constituencies and the public and transmitting their views to the Board



Comments

The key issue is that I am not allowed to know who my members are and so interaction with them is difficult at best. However, this is being addressed by the Membership and Engagement group.

I have found it difficult to ask questions during open meetings (CoG) mainly because other governors seem more con than myself, I have enjoyed the table discussions more and feel more relaxed asking questions during this session.

Another key responsibility thats not easy to carry out. Its up to governors both individually and as a group, to develop ways to do this.

It is more about feedback from members and public in general.

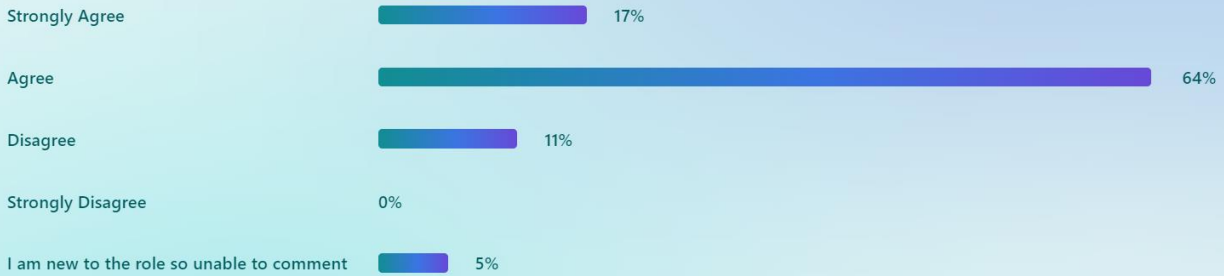
This is a difficult one and there is insufficient communication with constituents currently but this has been a problem for a long time & hard to know how to resolve.

Being now away from Sheffield I find this more difficult due to the distance from Sheffield.

We have received excellent EDI training sessions in the past year but it is very important that EDI is revisited on a regular (annual) basis

Please add any comments / suggestions relating to arrangements for supporting the role of Governors in contributing to the development of the Trust's Operational Plan

I have a good understanding of my role and responsibilities as a Governor in respect of contributing to the development of the Trust's Operational Plan, and arrangements are in place to support me to do this



Comments

I do not have sufficient knowledge to contribute to this and I am unaware of any plans to support this.

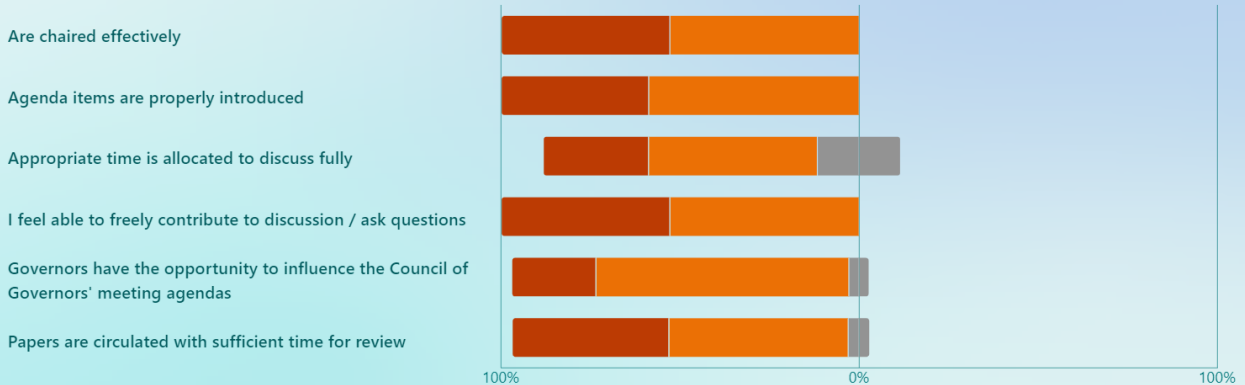
Governors have an important role here. Our diverse experiences and connections with the local community should be used to complement the OP. For instance, yesterday's session with on developing the 10 year plan for the new government was excellent. I think our contributions and perspectives were well received by Mark. More of this type of session would be good.

This has been highlighted previously, and recent steps have been taken to increase our involvement but there needs to be more

The effectiveness of the Council of Governor meetings

With respect to Council of Governor meetings:

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree Not able to comment



Please add any final comments or reflections about this survey or the contents

Despite [*the lead governor*] excellent presentation at Governors Forum today, I am increasingly worried about the growth and membership of the so called Governors Liaison group. I am unable to find any TOR's for this group and it does appear that we have a sub group of Governors not formally elected to this group but who are afforded access to the Chair, over and above the Governors who are not afforded this opportunity. I fully understand the role of Lead Governor in their roles key liaison person for NHS England in the case of issues relating to the Board, but Governors not party to this group are not afforded feedback from these meetings. It does seem that we have and continue to grow a sub cultural committee of Governors, whilst not formally recognised, and with no TOR's are able to have some influence that the rest of Governors do not have the opportunity to contribute towards.

I found the survey easy to understand and feel it had detailed content regarding the governor role. I have just completed my first full year but feel I am still learning my role. I have received excellent, training, support and detailed information to help me fulfill my responsibilities.

It is great to be able to give feedback and comments.

Content fine. The opportunity to make additional comments is welcome - but I think that can extend the time required to complete - maybe this should be explained better. As I found, its not possible to go back to a part completed version! But its a good thing. Be useful to know what, if anything will be changed as a result of the survey findings?

My first term as a Governor and has been an awkward road to travel. The deliverance of reports for discussion prior to various meetings makes it extremely difficult to assess and provide comprehensible feedback. Volume of meetings makes for difficult decisions in terms of one's own social life.

The Trust is huge and complex so we can feel somewhat lost trying to understand it. As a governor I sometimes feel our point of view needs to be given more serious consideration

The survey was relevant to all areas of the governors role and adds to the means of communication which has to be good.

This has been a good opportunity for me to reflect on where I am in terms of developing my role as a governor and think about what need to improve my knowledge and understanding.

The Council of Governors is currently functioning well, with a strong and responsive chair. Training of Governors and 'holding NEDs to account' are both important issues for our current group of Governors and its Lead Governor Steve Barks