

Council of Governors - Cover Sheet

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| Subject: | Chief Executive's report | | Date: 13 th February 2024 | | |
| Prepared By: | Rich Brown, Head of Communication | | | | |
| Approved By: | Paul Robinson, Chief Executive | | | | |
| Presented By: | Paul Robinson, Chief Executive | | | | |
| Purpose | | | | | |
| An update regarding some of the most noteworthy events and items from November 2023, December 2023 and January 2024 from the Chief Executive's perspective. | | | | Approval | |
| | | | | Assurance | |
| | | | | Update | Y |
| | | | | Consider | |
| Strategic Objectives | | | | | |
| Provide outstanding care in the best place at the right time | Improve health and well-being within our communities | Empower and support our people to be the best they can be | To continuously learn and improve | Sustainable use of resources and estate | Work collaboratively with partners in the community |
| Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Principal Risk | | | | | |
| PR1 | Significant deterioration in standards of safety and care | | | | |
| PR2 | Demand that overwhelms capacity | | | | |
| PR3 | Critical shortage of workforce capacity and capability | | | | |
| PR4 | Failure to achieve the Trust's financial strategy | | | | |
| PR5 | Inability to initiate and implement evidence-based Improvement and innovation | | | | |
| PR6 | Working more closely with local health and care partners does not fully deliver the required benefits | | | | |
| PR7 | Major disruptive incident | | | | |
| PR8 | Failure to deliver sustainable reductions in the Trust's impact on climate change | | | | |
| Committees/groups where this item has been presented before | | | | | |
| Not applicable | | | | | |
| Acronyms | | | | | |
| <p>BSIP = Bus Service Improvement Plan CDC = Community Diagnostics Centre GP = General Practice HSC = Health Scrutiny Committee ICB = Integrated Care Board ICS = Integrated Care System JFP = Joint Forward Plan MNPBP = Mid Nottinghamshire Place-Based Partnership MRI = Magnetic Resonance Imaging UNICEF = United Nations Children's Fund UTC = Urgent Treatment Centre</p> | | | | | |
| Executive Summary | | | | | |
| An update regarding some of the most noteworthy events and items from November 2023, December 2023 and January 2024 from the Chief Executive's perspective. | | | | | |

Operational updates

Facemasks re-introduced in clinical areas of our hospitals following rise in respiratory infections

Facemasks were reintroduced in all clinical areas of our King's Mill Hospital, Newark Hospital and Mansfield Community Hospital sites in January. The decision follows an increase in respiratory conditions – including COVID-19 and flu – among Trust patients and colleagues.

Patients, visitors and employees at the Trust's hospitals are now asked to wear masks at all times in clinical areas and waiting areas to protect themselves and others.

Masks are available free-of-charge from mask stations throughout our hospitals, with those areas requiring people to wear a mask clearly signposted.

People who are preparing to visit are urged not to do so if they have any signs of illness, particularly if they have any cold, flu or Covid-like symptoms, diarrhoea and/or vomiting in the past three days, or if they have been in contact with anyone who has had these types of illness.

It is vital that we take decisive action to protect our most vulnerable patients, visitors and colleagues to ensure we can keep vital services running for all those that need them over the coming weeks.

Rates of infection are kept under constant review and studies indicate that re-introducing the wearing of masks is one of the ways to prevent the spread of infection.

Colleagues, patients and visitors are also encouraged to wash their hands frequently with soap and water and use the alcohol gel provided, in addition to wearing facemasks to help reduce the spread of infections.

The Trust will continue to keep its facemask requirements under regular review.

Industrial action updates

The most recent periods of industrial action in December 2023 and January 2024 brought with them further disruption.

Two periods of industrial action took place during December and January – first from Wednesday 20th to Saturday 23rd December 2023 and then from Wednesday 3rd to Tuesday 9th January 2024.

During the December and January strikes, we were required to postpone over 1,400 outpatient, day case and inpatient appointments, in order to prioritise safe urgent and emergency care during those two periods of industrial action.

Despite that disruption, Trust colleagues still managed to go ahead with over 10,000 similar appointments as planned during that same period, thanks to the commitment and forward planning of our teams across the Trust.

Across all periods of industrial action from the start of 2023 to date, the Trust has postponed a total of 8,326 appointments, procedures and operations.

In addition to the operational impact that industrial action has on our services, the financial cost of this year's industrial action up to and including an estimation of January's impact totals £7.7million. This includes the spend to cover lost shifts, lost income opportunities and missed efficiency saving opportunities. To date, the Trust has received £3.4million of national funding to mitigate the impact of this.

Another significant impact that ongoing industrial action continues to have on our Trust colleagues, who we are continuing to support through an enhanced wellbeing package during each period of industrial action. We remain so grateful to our Trust colleagues for their continued hard work, skill, commitment and forward planning in helping to manage these extraordinary pressures.

Although we are yet to learn of any announcements of further industrial action, we remain disappointed about the continuing lack of progress over the negotiations that are happening to help bring this continuing industrial action to a close.

We continue to hope for a resolution to be found to this national issue that continues that cause real pain locally for our Trust colleagues and patients alike.

Partnership updates

Friends of Vision West Notts College

The Trust was represented at the launch of this new network during January.

During the launch, the College paid tribute to the support of partners over the last two years, explaining that the organisation had moved in positive ways as a result of inputs from those in the room, who included councils, voluntary organisations and Sherwood Forest Hospitals.

Our work to inspire young people and to provide career opportunities for people living locally were recognised by the college as significant steps to make a difference in our area.

Review of the Integrated Care Strategy for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (2023-2027)

The Trust has been asked to feedback on proposals to review the JFP (Joint Forward Plan), as part of the role we play in the wider Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System (ICS).

That plan sets out how the Integrated Care Strategy will be delivered through the NHS Joint Forward Plan and the Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategies. It was proposed that a simple review of the Integrated Care Strategy is conducted at the end of the financial year.

The Trust's feedback will be considered by the Trust's Partnerships and Communities Committee and fed back to the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICB, as per their request.

Partnership updates

Meetings with Newark and Sherwood District Council

Newark and Sherwood District Council visited King's Mill Hospital during December as part of our quarterly partnership meetings.

During the meeting, it was agreed to bring together the three local authorities into the Trust in February to explore solutions to the problems we face as an organisation, such as housing and health challenges that delay the timely discharge of patients to home.

Meetings with Ashfield District Council

The Trust's Chief Executive, Chair and Director of Strategy and Partnerships, David Ainsworth, met with representatives from Ashfield District Council during December to introduce the Council's new Executive Director for Place.

A 'memorandum of understanding' is being developed with the Council that will include some annual priorities for the two organisations to sign up. Board will be appraised on the progress.

Mid Nottinghamshire Place-Based Partnerships (MNPBP) update

The Mid Nottinghamshire Place-Based Partnerships Executive met during December to review place plans and the group's progress.

Progress was reported against all workstreams and the group recognised that longer-term initiatives around prevention will become increasingly challenging as financial constraints begin to be felt in the short-term.

Updates from Newark Hospital

Update on the NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board's (ICB) review of the overnight opening hours of Newark Hospital's Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC)

In 2023, the NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) led a number of public engagement events to discuss the best permanent opening hours for the UTC, enabling local people to feedback via an online survey that was available on the ICB website and promoted at a number of public engagement events.

The UTC, which is run by Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, provides urgent care and non-life-threatening treatment for injuries or conditions, such as cuts, simple broken bones, wounds, minor burns and minor head, eye and back injuries.

The UTC is currently open for 13 hours a day between 9am to 10pm, slightly exceeding the national minimum standard of 12 hours per day. Those opening hours were put in place in March 2020 as a temporary measure to address ongoing staffing issues made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Prior to the pandemic, the UTC was often closed overnight at short notice due to lack of staff availability. Typically, when the UTC was open overnight, it would treat, on average, one patient per hour, in contrast to between 4-6 patients per hour during the daytime.

As a Trust, we remain committed to working alongside our Integrated Care Board colleagues to provide a safe, sustainable urgent treatment centre at Newark Hospital, operating at least 12 hours per day, in line with the specification for urgent treatment centres across England.

As part of that engagement period, we worked alongside ICB and NHS England colleagues to host a 'clinical senate' to give credibility to these discussions around the longer-term opening hours of the facility. The senate saw a collective set of independent clinical advisors receive a presentation about the proposals, as well as allowing the independent experts to visit and talk to several Newark Hospital colleagues about their experiences.

The outcomes of the listening exercise and Clinical Senate review – along with the process followed by the Options Appraisal Panel – were considered by the Nottinghamshire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee (HSC) at its meeting on Tuesday 12th December 2023.

Options for the future opening hours of the Centre are now being worked up and will be discussed by the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) through relevant governance routes in due course at a date still to be confirmed.

The ICB has indicated that it expects a permanent decision to be made on the site's overnight opening hours in spring 2024.

Additional health tests introduced at Newark Hospital, as 'accelerated' Community Diagnostics Centre activity is rolled-out

It is our pleasure to bring you exciting news of the latest developments in our efforts to bring Nottinghamshire's first Community Diagnostics Centre (CDC) to our area, with the benefits of those tests now boasting a physical presence at Newark Hospital.

Community Diagnostics Centres are being developed across the country to create 'one-stop shops' for patients to access the health tests and investigations they need in a single visit. The Centres will also help to reduce waiting times for these vital tests, in-turn helping patients to receive an 'all clear' or diagnosis sooner.

The new Centre will be built alongside Mansfield Community Hospital in Stockwell Gate, Mansfield. Once open, it is expected to benefit tens of thousands of patients each year to help them get the answers they need to their health concerns sooner.

That work is continuing at pace and, rather than waiting for the full Centre to open in spring 2025, we are delighted to confirm that hundreds of additional health checks and scans are already being made available across mid-Nottinghamshire.

And while these essential health checks and scans are available to every patient in the Mid Nottinghamshire area and beyond, that accelerated activity had previously been delivered from the Mansfield area until recently.

In November, we began offering up to 275 additional blood tests at Newark Hospital each week as part of a new drop-in service that makes it even more convenient for patients to access the vital tests they need – all without the need to book.

The tests are available at the Eastwood Centre at Newark Hospital every weekday between 11.30am and 3.30pm and we have been reaching-out to local General Practice teams to encourage them to refer in as many of their patients into the clinic as possible.

We are proud of the work that is going on to bring Nottinghamshire's first Community Diagnostics Centre (CDC) to Mansfield and we look forward to bringing you the latest developments about this exciting work over the coming months.

Praise for audiology services at Newark Hospital



Newark resident Lynn Roulstone has praised the Audiology department at Newark Hospital after being fitted with Bluetooth hearing aids which she felt gave her a new 'lease of life'.

Lynn, 70, has struggled with her hearing since contracting a nasty bout of measles as a child. Her hearing worsened as she got older and she began to wear hearing aids in her forties.

She moved to Newark from Kingston in 2021 at a time when she was struggling with hearing aids she'd had fitted at a previous hospital and, as a result, she was struggling to hear and communicate with people.

By the time Lynn booked an appointment to see the audiologist at Newark Hospital, she had stopped going out and become very withdrawn due to her inability to participate in conversations. Upon learning her situation, the audiology team booked her in for an emergency appointment where they immediately offered to fit her with Bluetooth hearing aids.

Bluetooth hearing aids come with a range of features and can be connected to a mobile phone so users can adjust the volume, connect to a hearing loop system and even select a restaurant setting which drowns out external noise, allowing them to focus on the conversation in front of them.

The hearing aids were introduced to the department in 2021 and the team have received really good feedback from patients about the Bluetooth hearing aids.

The state-of-the-art audiology facility at Newark Hospital became operational early in 2022 and was introduced as part of our Trust's continuing programme of works to expand and improve the range of services available at Newark Hospital.

The facility provides a service Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 5.30pm, offering appointments for hearing assessments, hearing aid fittings and follow-ups, tinnitus management, paediatric assessment and hearing rehabilitation. New patients will need a referral from their GP to access the service.

Patients are encouraged to 'Ask for Newark' and speak to their GP when being referred for any hospital treatment to see if they can benefit from the ever-increasing range of outpatient appointments, procedures and operations available at Newark Hospital.

Other Trust updates

Open for business: Thousands access extra health checks provided at new Community Diagnostics Centre

More than 8,000 patients have now accessed a range of additional health checks that have been introduced across Mansfield and Newark, as part of work that has seen us bring Nottinghamshire's first Community Diagnostics Centre to our area.

Since the additional tests began being offered at the beginning of October, the Trust has now delivered over 8,000 blood tests, heart scans (echo), MRI and ultrasound scans since our first Community Diagnostics Centre services opened their doors to the public.

That programme is now proudly offering hundreds more health checks to patients each week – with many, many more tests to be introduced as the project continues to grow towards the full range of services being made available.

A programme of blood tests are also being offered on Saturdays during February and March to utilise as many tests as possible during that time.

While the full Community Diagnostics Centre is not expected to open its doors in its new home until March 2025, Sherwood Forest Hospitals has been proactive in making many of the vital health checks it will offer sooner – long before the ‘bricks and mortar’ of the full Centre are in place.

Those tests and checks are now being offered from a number of locations across the area, including Mansfield Community Hospital, Newark Hospital and the Nottingham Road Clinic in Mansfield.

A number of Saturday sessions are now also being offered as part of this programme of tests, making it more convenient than ever for our local communities to access the tests and health checks that they need.

A new building will eventually be built to house the new services alongside Mansfield Community Hospital in Stockwell Gate, with work due to begin at the site in spring 2024 ahead of opening its doors in its new home in 2025.

For more information about the Trust’s work to bring Nottinghamshire’s first CDC to our area, please visit our dedicated CDC webpage at www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/cdc

A ‘thank you’ to our Vaccination Centre team

After opening its doors on the first day of the nation’s vaccination programme in December 2020, December saw the final COVID vaccine delivered at the Trust’s Vaccination Hub at King’s Mill Hospital.

An incredible 1.6million+ individual doses of the lifesaving COVID-19 vaccination were delivered at King’s Mill Hospital by Sherwood Forest Hospitals since the programme began – accounting for half of all vaccines delivered in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire during that time.

As the country’s vaccine programme has slowed, the time has now come for the Centre to close its doors. As it does so, we have passed on a message of thanks to each and every member of the vaccination team for their incredible efforts during that time.

Their professionalism, teamwork and innovation shone through every step of the way, with everyone from frontline healthcare workers administering vaccines, the operational and pharmacy teams coordinating distribution, the administrative staff keeping the programme on track and the volunteers providing support all having a vital role to play.

Everyone in the country’s NHS is immensely proud of what they have achieved together and the positive impact they continue to make on the health and wellbeing of our local communities.

We are privileged to have had such an outstanding team and we wish them all well as this proud chapter of our Trust’s history comes to a close.

Submission of Thirlwall Inquiry response

I have previously updated the Board of Directors that NHS England had made a request to Sherwood Forest Hospitals to provide evidence to support the national Thirlwall Inquiry. [The full terms of reference for the inquiry are available to view on the gov.uk website.](#)

The Inquiry was announced following the trial of Lucy Letby, who was sentenced to life imprisonment and a whole life order on each of seven counts of murder and seven counts of attempted murder. That trial, which concluded on 21 August 2023, considered offences that took place at the Countess of Chester Hospital – part of the Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

I can confirm the Trust has responded to the request for evidence, which took the form of a questionnaire that was sent to Trusts across the country, and the Inquiry Team have confirmed receipt of that evidence.

As a Trust, we are now awaiting further correspondence from the Inquiry Team in case any further information or clarification is required. I will commit to keep the Board and Council of Governors updated about this important work.

Green partnership improves public transport for hospital users



During December, I was pleased to join representatives from Nottinghamshire County Council and Stagecoach to celebrate the introduction of two new bus stops to the grounds of King's Mill Hospital that will allow patients, visitors and staff to be dropped off closer to the main entrance of the hospital.

The introduction of the bus stops is thanks to a partnership between Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Nottinghamshire County Council and Stagecoach East Midlands.

Stagecoach East Midlands has operated the high frequency number 1 bus service along Sutton Road and past King's Mill Hospital for many years.

Previously, passengers would have to board and get off on Sutton Road outside the hospital grounds then walk the 200metres to the hospital main entrance. Now, bus users attending hospital for work, appointments or to visit friends and relatives will be dropped off on hospital grounds close to the main entrance.

Thanks to funding from the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), Nottinghamshire County Council has upgraded the traffic light signals at the two entry and exit points at King's Mill Hospital to give local bus services priority.

Buses communicate their position and punctuality of service to the urban traffic control centre, which will then trigger specific traffic lights to green to reduce delays and keep buses running on time.

Nottinghamshire County Council has provided two high quality bus shelters with lighting and integrated real time information displays, which provide live next bus information along with disruption and general travel information. The bus stops are also fully accessible with seating for up to six passengers plus space for wheelchair users.

The bus stops have been made possible thanks to a combination of funds from Sherwood Forest Hospitals Trust and the County Council's Green Investment Fund.

To complement the zero carbon ambitions of the Trust, the Council ensured that the displays are 100% solar powered with battery storage and are powered 24/7 all year round.

The Trust's green plan sets out its plans for sustainable development and long-term carbon dioxide emission reductions, with the overall aim to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2040.

We are delighted that we can offer this service to give bus users' easier access to our hospital. It will really benefit those who are less able to walk and take away anxiety around missing appointments.

It's also great news for colleagues at the Trust and means that they can finish their shift without the added stress of having to run to make their bus home.

I would like to formally extend my thanks to both Stagecoach East Midlands and Nottinghamshire County Council, who have been instrumental in making this change happen.

I am pleased that the new facilities meet our plans to become a net zero Trust.

The number 1 service has been running for nearly 30 years and it takes customers from Huthwaite to Mansfield Woodhouse every ten minutes, seven days a week.

Stagecoach East Midlands have seen a 50% increase in passengers using the number 1 service to travel to hospital since the new bus stops were introduced.

England's Chief Nursing Officer and Chief Midwifery Officer visit Sherwood Forest Hospitals



The work of Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust's maternity team was in the spotlight during November when England's Chief Nursing Officer and Chief Midwifery Officer visited King's Mill Hospital on Thursday 23rd November 2023.

Dame Ruth May, Chief Nursing Officer for England, and Kate Brintworth, Chief Midwifery Officer for England, spoke to midwives, nurses and maternity support workers who showcased various aspects of their work.

The pair were given a tour of the Sherwood Birthing Unit, the Maternity Ward, and Neonatal Unit at King's Mill, where maternity services were rated 'good' in the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) latest report.

This is the first time that England's Chief Nursing Officer has visited the Trust since it achieved Pathway to Excellence accreditation almost exactly a year ago.

During their visit, the pair also heard from the Trust's Recruitment and Retention Midwife, Sharon Parker, who explained how the Trust has created a safe, nurturing environment for newly qualified midwives. Since taking up post in 2022, Sharon has successfully recruited into all vacant posts for newly-qualified midwives and all these midwives still work for the Trust – something that is recognised as a huge success given the challenge nationally.

The Trust also shared news of its Neonatal team achieving Stage 2 Baby Friendly accreditation from the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). The programme enables services to support families with feeding and help parents build a close and loving relationship with their baby.

Claire Allison, Tobacco Dependence Maternity Lead for the Trust’s maternity tobacco treatment service, also showcased how the Trust supports pregnant families to quit smoking. The specialist Phoenix team recognises that smoking in pregnancy is the result of addiction to nicotine, which requires treatment, so they provide free, friendly support that is tailored to each individual - without judgement or pressure. More than 200 babies have been born ‘smoke-free’ as a result of the team’s support.



During their visit, the Chief Nursing Officer and Chief Midwifery Officer also presented the Pastoral Care Award to the Trust (pictured above) in recognition of the support the Trust provides to its internationally educated Nurses and Midwives from the moment the recruitment process begins and throughout their employment.

The Trust has been recruiting international colleagues for more than four years and currently has more than 200 international Nurses and two international Midwives.

We are immensely proud of our teams and the care and dedication they provide to our patients here at Sherwood. We were really pleased to be able to showcase just some of the great things going on here across our hospitals to two of the county’s most senior leaders.

Congratulations to our nurses who successfully completed their preceptorship programme and first year with us here at Sherwood Forest Hospitals



The one-year preceptorship is an in-depth programme of learning and competency-based training, including an introduction to leadership and becoming proficient in relevant clinical skills, that all newly qualified nurses are required to undertake.

The preceptorship programme allows newly qualified nurses a structured start and enables them to integrate into their new team and place of work. It helps them to use their knowledge in everyday practice and grow personally as well as professionally.

The scheme also helps the Trust in understanding the challenges our newly qualified nurses face.

This latest cohort of newly qualified nurses were the first to complete the year-long programme since its extension from 22 weeks to a year in September 2022.

Sherwood Forest Hospitals gains 'Veterans Aware' accreditation

During Remembrance Week in early November, we were delighted to receive the news that Sherwood Forest Hospitals has been accredited to the highest standard available from the Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance in recognition of the support we provide for armed forces serving personnel and veterans.

Over the last 12 months, we have worked to strengthen the support provided to the area's armed forces community by working towards achieving a gold standard of the independently assessed Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance accreditation.

As a Trust, we originally signed the Armed Forces Covenant in 2016 as a commitment to ensuring that those who serve or have served in the armed forces and their families are treated fairly whenever they need the Trust's services. This commitment also covers all members of staff and volunteers across the Trust.

The VCHA's aim is to make sure that patients from the Armed Forces Community, including families, are paid due regard, and are not disadvantaged in terms of access to and outcomes of healthcare, as a result of their military life in line with the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant.

Achieving the gold standard accreditation shows the strength of our commitment to supporting our armed forces veterans and serving personnel across Nottinghamshire.



Mobile clinical research van visits King's Mill

Members of the local community have been invited to find out more about clinical research by visiting a mobile research unit at King's Mill Hospital, when the Nottinghamshire Mobile Research Unit visited King's Mill Hospital between Monday 20th November and Friday 1st December 2023.

The unit, which has a fully-equipped research clinic, aims to make it easier for members of the public to access research opportunities and take part in clinical trials.

Sherwood Forest Hospitals already carries out research in its dedicated facilities at King's Mill Hospital alongside local GP practices.

During its stay at King's Mill, patients and members of the public had the opportunity to talk to clinical research colleagues between 10am and 3pm every weekday where they were able to learn about how the Trust's Research and Innovation team carries out cutting-edge research. This includes screening for undiagnosed liver disease and treatment for high cholesterol.

The Trust currently has more than 4,000 patients taking part in research trials in more than 25 areas, including Respiratory, Oncology and Rheumatology. As a Trust, we are planning to build on this work by expanding studies into areas not previously involved in research.

Having the unit outside the hospital is showcasing how we can make research more visible and accessible to the local community in the hope that more people have the opportunity to participate in clinical research studies and provide them with access to new treatments and interventions.