



Council of Governors

Date of Meeting:	25 September 2025
Report Title:	Lead Governor's report
Executive/NED Lead:	N/A
Report author(s):	Helen Rose

Approval

Discussion

Information

Assurance

Executive summary

An update is provided on the activities of the Lead Governor in supporting the Council in meeting its general duties.

Action Required of the Council

The Council is invited to note the report.

Lead Governor Report to the Council of Governors

25 September 2025

Since our last meeting in public on the 25 June at Colchester, I have been delighted to have the support of Caroline Bowden as the newly appointed Deputy Lead Governor.

Along with other Governors, I have continued to attend the Trust Board meetings in public and use the opportunity to ask questions at the final item on its agenda. As I have mentioned before, at other Trusts, governors give a regular report about Governor activities, direct to their Trust Boards in public.

While the Sustainability Review has been taking place across West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust and our Trust, in the spirit of collaboration, I have continued to keep in close touch with West Suffolk's Lead Governor, particularly as our two Trust Boards have been considering the possibility of a Joint Chair across our two organisations.

As governors will be aware, a Joint Nominations Committee was formed with three governors from each of our two Trusts (with both lead governors and deputies and another governor) and an inaugural meeting was held in July. However, ESNEFT's Board has since made the decision not to establish a Joint Chair but to appoint for a substantive post at ESNEFT.

In addition to considering the appointments of a non-executive director and an associate non-executive director, our Appointments and Performance Committee has therefore been meeting as a matter of urgency to establish the process to appoint an ESNEFT Chair as soon as possible.

As part of my role as Lead Governor I have valued regular contact with our interim Chair, the Director of Governance and the Trust Secretary - particularly in helping me to understand the role of governors as the detail of the 10 Year Plan unfolds. I'm sure all the governors have appreciated our informal meetings with Mark, especially with announcements of the launch of a new NHS oversight framework and the self-assessment process renewed by NHS England. Governors look forward to further detail before the Trust Board meets in October.

As Lead Governor and as a public governor for Suffolk, my term of office is due to come to an end this 31 October. Although it's tough to go, terms of office are there for a reason. It's all too easy to become institutionalised and the recent governor elections will allow fresh ideas and energy to be brought into the Council of Governors.

Importantly, it has been a privilege to work alongside each of our Essex and Suffolk Governors, our team of Staff Governors and those Governors appointed by organisations across the ESNEFT patch.

Helen Rose