

Trust Board of Directors Meeting Report Summary

Date of Meeting: 2 nd July 2026	
Title of Document: Report of the Trust Chair	
To be presented by: Tracy Dowling Chair	Author: Tracy Dowling Chair
1. Status: For Noting	
2. Purpose: To inform the Board of the activities of the Chair	
Relates to:	
Strategic Objective	Include the relevant objective/<u>all</u> – • Improving health: not just treating illness, moving from treatment to prevention. • Joined up care: integration and community-based delivery. • Excellent care: improved outcomes, increasing personalisation and co-production. • Developing staff: supporting our teams and building for the future. • Using technology to improve care: digital, technology and innovation – shifting from analogue to digital care.
Operational performance	Effective oversight from the Chair and the Board will support operational performance delivery
Quality and equality impact	Effective oversight from the Chair and the Board will support delivery of quality and due attention to equity impact of service development
Legal/Regulatory/Audit	n/a
Finance	n/a
Governance	A formal written report from the Chair will assist the Council of Governors with oversight of the activities of the Chair
NHS policy/public consultation	NHS Code of Governance for NHS Provider Trusts: the Chair keeping the Board sighted on governance, leadership, and external context that may not naturally surface through executive reporting
Accreditation/inspection	n/a
Anchor institutions	n/a
ICS/ICB/Alliance	The Chair has key responsibility as ambassador for the Trust working with ICS/ICB and Alliance partners
Board Assurance Framework (BAF) Risk	n/a
Other	n/a

Since my report to the May Board I have continued to visit a number of our services and sites and continued to meet staff members to gain a comprehensive induction to the Trust. I have also continued to attend Board sub committees so that I can appreciate the levels of assurance and processes of governance in use across the Trust.

I am looking forward to welcoming our new Chief Executive, Paul Scott, to the Trust later this month and a comprehensive induction programme has been developed for Paul through July and August, whilst Adrain Marr remains as accountable officer.

This is Adrian's last Board meeting in public and I would like to thank him on behalf of the Board and the wider Trust for all that he has contributed in his years at ESNEFT, and prior to that his career in the NHS. Adrian's leadership through 2026 has been calm, purposeful and effective; we can see the results in the improvements in our National Oversight Framework segment rating which reflect improvements in access to services and quality of care.

There have been a number of engagements with Governors over the last two months including an informal session to share information and insights, Council of Governor's meeting on 17th June, and a meeting of the Appointments and Performance Committee on 10th June.

Through these engagements we have approved the appraisal assessment of the Interim Chair and Non- executive directors for 2025-6; we have approved succession planning for non-executive director terms of office and we have developed an agenda for a Governor development day which is on Monday 20th July.

We have also established the beginnings of a programme of joint Governor and Non-executive director visits to services. The purpose of these visits is to triangulate the information we receive in reports and through data with qualitative information we can glean through seeing services operate in practice, through talking to patients about their experience and through talking to staff about working at ESNEFT. We are piloting this with a first visit in July and have an outline schedule planned for the next six months. Feedback and impact of action from these visits will be reported to the Quality and Patient Safety Committee and to Trust Board through an annual report.

I was pleased to host a visit from the newly appointed Regional Chair designate, Nick Carver. It was a pleasure to walk Nick through the elective orthopaedic pathway that patients experience in the Essex Elective Orthopaedic Centre and to talk through our trust strategic direction and ambitions.

During June we have also spent time as a Board working through our development to be a high performing board in the era of Advanced Foundation Trusts leading delivery of the ambitions heralded in the 10 year Health Plan. This included spending time with partners from the Colchester Medical Practice and from our ICBs and local authority public health colleagues to seek to understand the potential strategic development of services in our neighbourhoods and what this might mean for the partnerships we form and the skills and capabilities needed around the Board table. We will continue to dedicate time to the strategic development of the Board and the Trust strategy over coming months.

Some of the areas I have visited over the last two months include:

- Gynaecology services at Ipswich Hospital
- Allied Health Professionals Workshop on 'left-shift' – the development of services in our communities
- Walk through the cancer services at Ipswich Hospital

- Clacton Community Diagnostic Centre
- Imaging services at Colchester Hospital including cardiac and interventional radiology
- Attending the Suffolk Integrated Neighbourhood teams summit
- Attending the Trust EMBRace network
- Opened the Trust Leadership Development Event

Further visits for community and acute services are in my diary most weeks for the next 2-3 months.

Attached to this report is a short summary of notable recent communications regarding our services and our staff, including some examples of innovation and excellence.

4. Recommendations / Actions

The Board is invited to note the contents of this report.

Appendix 1: Communications

a) Essex and Suffolk Elective Orthopaedic Centre accredited as a surgical hub

High standards of patient care at Essex and Suffolk Elective Orthopaedic Centre (ESEOC) have received a national seal of approval.

The centre, based in the Dame Clare Marx Building at Colchester Hospital, has been named as a new surgical hub by NHS England as part of a national quality assessment scheme.

This national accreditation is a proud moment for our teams. It's a testament to the expertise of our colleagues and the quality of care they provide, and it will help us continue to reduce waiting times and deliver the best possible outcomes for our patients.

The ESEOC team received the accreditation after being measured against a set of standards for some of the most common surgical procedures, such as hip replacements. It also seeks to assure patients about the high standards of clinical care they are receiving.

b) Most improved Trust in the East of England

Thousands more patients are being treated faster as our Trust improves waiting times for planned care and operations as we move up a level in the National Oversight Framework rankings, from Level 4 to Level 3 – the most improved in the East of England.

The improvement work we have put in place, particularly for those patients waiting 18 weeks to begin treatment following their referral from their GP moving from 54% to 60% in the three months to the end of March this year, of patients waiting no more than 18 weeks means that more than 5,400 patients have been able to get back to their day-to-day lives more quickly. We still have more work to do continue this trajectory for all our patients, and we are committed to sustaining this work through our culture of hard work and continuous improvement.

c) Spotlight on success

Many congratulations to ESNEFT colleagues who have been nominated for the Norfolk and Suffolk Health and Care Awards 2026. The awards recognise individuals, teams and organisations delivering outstanding contributions across the region. The winners will be announced at the Norfolk and Suffolk Health and Care Expo 2026, at Rowley Mile Racecourse in Newmarket, on Friday 3 July.

ESNEFT colleagues and teams nominated:

Analogue to digital award

- **Epic Stork Team** – East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust
- **ESNEFT Parkinson's Clinical Team and Innovation Team** – East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust, Kneu Health, and Health Innovation East
- **Redesigning Adult Weight Management and Obesity Pathways** – NHS Norfolk and Suffolk ICB, East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust and Big Picture Medical
- **Virtual Bones** – West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust, Orthobones Ltd and East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust

Treatment to prevention award

- **Woodbridge Holistic Assessment Team (WHAT)** – Suffolk County Council, East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust, Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust, Shaw Trust, Deben Health Group PCN

Research and Innovation award

- **Dr Wendy MacNab: WiD Easy Endometrial Cancer Diagnostics** – East and East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust

Supporting Young People award

- **Carolyn McAskill, Michaela Wood, Rachel Senior: Epilepsy Nurse Specialists** – East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust
- **Health Inequalities at ESNEFT: The Bea Healthy Play Project** – East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust
- **Rachel Senior** – East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust

Unsung Hero award

- **Donny Brown** – East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust

d) Chief Nursing Officer Award

Healthcare support workers at ESNEFT have been recognised with the Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) Award for their outstanding contributions to patient care.

Congratulations to Inga Zubaviciute, Rachel Tuffin and Donna Vantankeren, The awards were presented by NHS England's Interim Regional Director of Nursing for the East of England, Frances Bolger.

The recognition highlights the vital role healthcare support workers play across the NHS

e) New GP Interface team

A new team has launched at the Trust to help support communication between colleagues at ESNEFT and in primary care. The primary and secondary care interface facilitators will bridge the gap between ESNEFT and primary care through better communication and collaboration between local GP practices and ESNEFT services – in our hospitals and the community.

A head for heights

Brave fundraisers took on a 135ft descent in wet and windy conditions down Ipswich Hospital's iconic tower recently so far, raising £60,000 for Colchester & Ipswich Hospitals Charity.

Over two days, more than 150 participants stepped over the edge of the hospital tower to support causes close to their hearts, with many raising funds for the charity's Time Garden Appeal.

Tracy Dowling

Chair