

Key Issues Report

Issues for referral

Originating Committee/Group and meeting date:	Performance and Finance Committee, 24 June 2026
Chair:	John Humpston, Non-Executive Director
Lead Executive (as appropriate):	James Rowe, Chief Financial Officer (Interim)

Subject	Details of Issue	Action*
Board Assurance Framework (BAF)	The framework has been strengthened through the introduction of clearer actions, delivery milestones and timescales, providing greater transparency on how risks will be managed and mitigated over time. Responses to Audit and Risk Committee queries have also been reviewed and updated to improve clarity regarding expected outcomes and delivery trajectories	Assurance
Operational Performance Reports	Elective performance has improved, with reductions in overall waiting lists and long waits, while cancer performance continues to recover through targeted specialty improvement plans. Diagnostic performance remains strong overall, although workforce and capacity constraints persist in some areas.	Assurance
Acute and Community	The Committee emphasised the importance of improving operational standards, discharge processes and multidisciplinary working, supported by enhanced use of Epic data, discharge targets and benchmarking information to drive reductions in length of stay and release bed capacity. Improved patient flow and reductions in length of stay remain critical to achieving sustainable operational performance and reducing corridor care pressures.	
Patient Safety and Quality Report	Progress continues in addressing infection prevention and control risks, including estates-related improvements and ongoing work to strengthen performance reporting and understanding of mental health patient pathways. Investment in nursing and midwifery workforce initiatives is beginning to deliver benefits through improved staffing resilience and reduced reliance on temporary staffing. The Committee also noted the importance of monitoring the impact of forthcoming national maternity review publications, and emerging national medical workforce developments.	Assurance

Subject	Details of Issue	Action*
Workforce Performance	Workforce controls have been strengthened through vacancy management arrangements and enhanced oversight of temporary staffing. The reported vacancy rate remains influenced by planned vacancies linked to service transformation programmes and future workforce expansion following the acuity review. Recruitment continues in priority clinical areas, although challenges remain in some specialist and medical workforce groups. Bank and agency expenditure is reducing as a result of strengthened controls, while improvements in attendance management processes are contributing to better management of sickness absence. Workforce levels remain under close review to ensure financial improvement is balanced with quality, productivity and operational performance.	Assurance
Finance Report Month 2 Productivity and Efficiency	The Trust reported a £3.3m adverse variance to plan at Month 2, resulting in a £4.4m deficit. Key drivers include temporary staffing expenditure, under-delivery of CIP, residual seasonal variation costs, unmitigated financial risks and the impact of industrial action. A range of recovery actions have been implemented, including strengthened divisional recovery planning, tighter cost controls, enhanced management of workforce expenditure and accelerated improvement programmes. Month 3 will provide a critical assessment of whether these actions are delivering the required financial improvement. Productivity remains above the national benchmark, although a declining trend is emerging. Further analysis will be undertaken to understand the relationship between productivity, activity delivery and financial performance, recognising that some income-related pressures are yet to be fully reflected in the reported position.	Alert
NHS Oversight Framework (NOF) Q4	The Committee noted an improvement in the Trust's Quarter 4 2025/26 NOF position, with ESNEFT moving from Segment 4 to Segment 3 and improving its national ranking. This was primarily driven by stronger performance in access standards and an improved financial metric score. The Committee also received an update on changes to the NOF for 2026/27, including a significant increase in the number of performance metrics, the introduction of fixed performance thresholds and the inclusion of ICB performance assessment. These changes are expected to increase system-wide performance oversight and place greater emphasis on delivery against absolute standards rather than comparative rankings.	Assurance
Overseas Visitors Policy	The Committee received and approved the revised Overseas Visitor Charging Policy, updated to reflect changes arising from the implementation of Epic and the Trust's approved approach to upfront charging where applicable. The revised policy strengthens operational guidance for staff, following engagement which identified a need for clearer support in identifying patients who may not be eligible for NHS-funded care and understanding the appropriate actions to take. The policy has also been informed by national guidance and benchmarking through regional networks.	Assurance

Subject	Details of Issue	Action*
NHS Key Data Return Stocktake	The Committee received assurance that the Trust has maintained compliance with the majority of national reporting requirements following Epic implementation, with data quality performance remaining above the national average. Epic is delivering improved reporting capability and greater visibility of operational metrics, while a small number of remaining reporting challenges are being managed through agreed interim arrangements and planned system enhancements.	Assurance
Financial Recovery Plan	The Committee received a reflective review of the Trust's financial performance and recovery approach. While productivity remained positive during 2025/26, CIP delivery fell short of target and a number of planned schemes did not deliver their expected benefits. The implementation of Epic, alongside significant operational pressures, impacted organisational capacity to deliver improvement programmes. The recovery strategy is focused on stabilisation, consolidation and maximising the benefits of existing investments through strengthened divisional recovery plans, tighter financial controls, enhanced programme management and earlier, more robust financial planning. There is a strong focus on integrating quality, productivity and financial improvement, supported by service redesign, standardisation and digital transformation.	Alert
Reports by Consent	The Accountability Framework month 1 report was received.	Assurance

*Key:		Approval	Positive action required regarding an item of business or support for a decision
Escalation	Support/decision required by reporting committee to resolve an issue within its remit	Alert	Proactive notification of subject matter/risk that reporting committee is currently dealing with or mitigating which may require future action/decision
Assurance	Evidence or information to demonstrate that appropriate action is being taken within a reporting committee's remit	Information	No action required. Reporting to update on discussion within a reporting committee's remit