

From: Steven Course, Chief Finance Officer and Deputy CEO

To: Council of Governors

Date: 12 September 2019

Subject: ELFT Annual Report and Accounts 2018/19 (including Quality Report): Annual External Auditor's Reports

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To present the External Auditor's (Grant Thornton) report on the:
- Trust's Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2019 to the Council of Governors
 - The report on the external assurance on the Trust's Quality Report 2018-2019.

2 Statutory Role of Governors

- 2.1 The NHS Health Act 2006, as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, gives the Council of Governors a statutory requirement to receive the Trust's Annual Report and Accounts and any report of the auditor on them.
- 2.2 Governors will formally receive the Trust's Annual Report and Accounts at the Annual General Meeting on 9 October 2019. Copies have previously been circulated to the Council and a briefing session on the Trust accounts and the annual audit letter was led by the Chief Finance Officer was held 9 July 2019.

3 The Role of the Audit Committee

- 3.1 The Audit Committee is a formal Committee of the Board of Directors established by the Board in line with statutory requirements, corporate governance good practice and the Trust's Standing Orders. There should be at least three Non-Executive Directors as members of the Committee. Officers of the Trust, auditors and others can attend by invitation.

From 1 April – 31 October 2018, the membership of the Committee comprised:

- Paul Hendrick (Committee chair)
- Mary Elford
- Kingsley Peter.

From 1 November 2018, the membership of the Committee comprised:

- Anit Chandara (Committee chair)
- Mary Elford
- Eileen Taylor.

- 3.2 The Chief Finance Officer, the Executive Director of Planning and Performance, the Associate Director of Corporate Governance, and

representatives from Internal Audit, External Audit and Local Counter Fraud Specialists also attend meetings.

- 3.3 While all Board members have a duty to act in the interests of the Trust, the Audit Committee has a particular role, acting independently from the Executive, to ensure that the interests of stakeholders are properly protected in relation to financial reporting and internal control. Its key responsibility is to:
- Advise the Board on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Trust's systems of internal financial control, internal audit function, audit process, risk management and governance
 - Monitor and review the integrity of the Trust's financial statements
 - Monitor and review the External Auditor's independence and objectivity
 - Advise the Board on the adequacy and effectiveness of its arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The Committee works in partnership with the other Board committees to fulfil these aims.

4 Annual External Auditor's Reports 2018/19

- 4.1 The Audit Committee oversees the annual audit of the Trust's Financial Statements and Quality Report. The audit is undertaken by the Trust's External Auditors, Grant Thornton. The External Auditor's Reports summarising the results of the audits for 2018/19 are attached at appendix 1 (Financial Statements) and appendix 2 (Quality Report).
- 4.2 The Council of Governors is asked to note that the Trust received a clean opinion on the audit of the Financial Statements for 2018/19 and also a clean opinion on the Quality Report for 2018/19.

5 Audit Fees

- 5.1 For the financial year ending 31 March 2018, the external audit fees payable to Grant Thornton were £59,020 (audit fee £52,420 and Quality Accounts £6,600) excluding VAT. Their audit and non-audit fees are set and monitored throughout the year. There was no non-audit work undertaken during the financial year ending 2019.

6 Internal Audit

- 6.1 The Trust's Internal Auditors for 2018/19 were RSM UK. Internal Audit provides an independent appraisal service to provide the Trust Board with assurance on the Trust's systems of internal control.
- 6.2 The Audit Committee considers and approves the Internal Audit Plan and receives regular reports on progress against the plan.
- 6.3 The internal audit fees for 2018/19 were £69,650 excluding VAT.

7 Recommendation

- 7.1 The Council of Governors is asked to support the recommendation to reappoint the External Auditors based on the sufficiently high standard of work and support provided to the Trust and that its fees are reasonable.

8 Action Being Requested

- 8.1 The Council of Governors is asked to:
- **RECEIVE** and **NOTE** the report
 - **SUPPORT** the recommendation to reappoint the External Auditors for a further year.