

Council of Governors Meeting

To be held in public on Thursday 9 July 2026, 5:00pm – 7:00pm

Meeting is held on MS Teams

Agenda

	Title		Action	Time (all pm)
Informal Gathering				4:30
1	Welcome Eileen Taylor, Trust Chair	Verbal	Assurance	5:00
2	Apologies for Absence Eileen Taylor, Trust Chair	Verbal	Assurance	
3	Declarations of Interest Eileen Taylor, Trust Chair	Verbal	Assurance	
4	Draft Minutes, Council of Governors Meeting held in public on 14 May 2026	Attached	Assurance	
5	Welcome to new Governors Eileen Taylor, Trust Chair	Verbal	Approve	5:05
Operational Item				
6	Service Demand, Access and Outcome through a demographic lens Dr Sarah McAllister, Head of Improvement Programmes	Presentation	Assurance	5:50
Strategic Items				
7	Engaging and communicating with our communities –starting the conversation	Presentation & Group Discussion	Assurance	5:50
Business Items				
8	CQC Inspections Update Claire McKenna, Chief Nurse	Presentation	Assurance	6:30
9	Report, Communications and Engagement Committee Felicity Stocker, Committee Chair	Attached	Assurance	6:35
10	Membership Engagement Plan Update Tina Bixby, Community Engagement & Charity Manager	Presentation	Assurance	6:40

11	Committee Elections Norbert Lieckfeldt, Head of Governor and Community Engagement	Attached	Approval	6:45
12	Governors Terms of Office Norbert Lieckfeldt, Head of Governor and Community Engagement	Attached	Approval	6:50
13	Council of Governors Forward Plan	Attached	Assurance	6:55
14	Any Other Urgent Business and Questions from the Public (to be advised in advance by Monday 6 July 2026 . Questions submitted on the day will be responded to following the meeting)			6:55
<p>Date and Time of Future Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 September 2026 • 12 November 2026 • 21 January 2027 (TBC) • 11 March 2027 <p>All meetings will be held in person at Trust HQ (Conference Room, Robert Dolan House, 9 Alie Street, E1 8DE) from 5:00 – 7:00pm unless stated otherwise; January meetings are generally held online.</p>				

For more information on the meeting, including how to access the meeting, please visit [the ELFT website](#). Please contact elft.membership@nhs.net for any specific enquiries.

Eileen Taylor
Chair, East London NHS Foundation Trust

Draft Minutes of Council of Governors Meeting
Held in Public on Thursday 14 May 2026 at 5.00pm
On Microsoft Teams

Present:

Eileen Taylor (Meeting Chair) Trust Chair

Governors:

Patrick Adamolekun	Staff Governor
Gren Bingham	Public Governor, Tower Hamlets
Dafni Boula	Public Governor, Luton
Bob Cazley	Public Governor, Central Beds
Renato Congias	Public Governor, Hackney
Caroline Diehl	Public Governor, Hackney
David Edgar	Public Governor, Tower Hamlets
Ian Gibbs	Public Governor, Newham
Peter Landman	Public Governor, Newham
Beverley Morris	Public Governor, Hackney
Caroline Ogunsola	Staff Governor (Lead Governor)
Ese Okonedo	Public Governor, Hackney
Jamu Patel	Public Governor Luton (Dep Lead Governor)
John Peers	Staff Governor
Felicity Stocker	Public Governor Bedford
Sharmeen Sheikh Sultana	Staff Governor
Gordon Weller	Public Governor Central Beds

In Attendance:

Yesmin Begum	Former Public Governor, Tower Hamlets
Gari Belasco	People Participation Lead for Estates
Liz Birch	Former Public Governor, Central Bedfordshire
Tina Bixby	Community Engagement and Charity Manager
Dr David Bridle	Chief Medical Officer
Tanya Carter	Chief People Officer
Vivek Chaudhri	Non-Executive Director
Alison Cottrell	Non-Executive Director
Peter Cornforth	Non-Executive Director
Kevin Curnow	Chief Finance Officer
Charlotte Davies	Operational Lead, Digital Triage ADHD and Autism
Carys Esseen	Deputy Director of Integrated Care
Richard Fradgley	Executive Director of Integrated Care & Deputy CEO
Amanda Grantham	Financial Sustainability Director
Philippa Graves	Chief Digital Officer
Dawn Hutcheon	Service User and PLACE auditor
Tajmina Khanam	Corporate Administrator
Donna Kinnair	Non-Executive Director
Sue Lees	Non-Executive Director
Norbert Lieckfeldt	Head of Governor & Community Engagement
Tajmina Khanam	Executive Assistant
Claire McKenna	Chief Nurse
Linda McRoberts	Minute Taker

Edwin Ndlovu	Chief Operating Officer & Deputy CEO
Dr Sanjay Nelson	Clinical Director for Learning Disability
Marie Price	Director of Corporate Governance
Suzana Stefanic	Former Public Governor, Central Bedfordshire
David Stevens	Director of Estates
Lorraine Sunduza	Chief Executive Officer
Deborah Wheeler	Vice Chair, London

Apologies:

Mark Dunne	Staff Governor
Elliot Goodman	Public Governor, Rest of England
Lizzie Maushe	Staff Governor
Robert Morris	Appointed Governor, Central Bedfordshire

Absent:

Viv Ahmun	Appointed Governor, Voluntary Sector
Gulam Choudhury	Appointed Governor, Tower Hamlets
Mark Towler	Appointed Governor, Bedford Borough
Reno Marcello	Public Governor, City of London

The minutes are produced in the order of the agenda.

1 **Welcome**

1.1 Trust Chair, Eileen Taylor:

- Welcomed everyone to the Council of Governors meeting held in public, particularly the outgoing Governors – Liz Birch, Bev Morris, Suzana Stefanic and Yesmin Begum. There was also a special welcome to colleagues from the CQC who held a focus group with Governors prior to this meeting.
- Warmly welcomed back Chief People Officer Tanya Carter who had returned from maternity leave.
- Congratulated Bob Cazley and Peter Landman who were successful in the recent elections and congratulated David Edgar who has been elected as Councillor for the Limehouse Ward in Tower Hamlets in the recent local elections.
- Put on record the Council's sincere thanks for the contributions of Appointed Governors Sade Etti (Hackney) and Melanie Onovo (Newham) who were leaving the Council due to the local election results
- Reminded the meeting of the Trust values – we care, we respect, we are inclusive.
- Highlighted some awareness days, particularly those with resonance to the work of the Trust:
 - The Trust is marking Mental Health Awareness Week and it's *Wear it Green Day* today – Eileen thanked all who had chosen to do that. This is in support of the ELFT Charity which does such great work for service users and staff.
 - Windrush Day is next month and provides an opportunity to remember, celebrate and thank the Windrush generation who came from far and wide to help rebuild this country, many working for the NHS. ELFT's thanks go to all of them.
 - IDAHOBIT, the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia is on 17 May and reminds us to guard against bigotry and discrimination against some of the most vulnerable amongst us.

- 31 May is World No Tobacco Day and ELFT's smoking cessation teams are doing sterling work. The recent legislation, makes it essentially illegal for anyone 14 or younger to purchase tobacco products, creating future smoke-free generations may well prove to be one of the most substantive and beneficial public health initiatives ever.

2. Apologies for Absence

2.1 Apologies were received as noted above.

3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 No declarations of interest have been received regarding today's meeting, or which are not already included in the published registers.

4. Minutes of the Council of Governors meeting held on 12 March 2026

4.1 The minutes of the meetings held in **public and in private on 12 March 2026** were **APPROVED** as correct records.

5. Action Log and Matters Arising

5.1 Action Log

- **Action 225:** *Bring an update about services through a demographic lens* is on the Forward Plan and **Action 228** (*Update on Trust's Anti-Racism Work*) is on a similar theme; they will be scheduled so they build on each other.
- **Action 229:** *Schedule a Follow-Up Session on AI* is on the Forward Plan and there is an update at today's meeting.
- **Action 230** – Eileen thanked the Council for her letter of appreciation - and **Action 231** *circulate list of NEDs with their roles*, are both completed and can be CLOSED.

6. Farewell to Departing Governors

6.1 Eileen bid a very fond farewell to each of the departing Governors – Beverley, Liz, Suzana and Yesmin. She thanked them for all they had done and praised each individually for their various contributions as advocates for their communities. They were each presented with a parting gift from the Council and each said a few words of farewell to the Council.

7. ADHD and Autism Services at ELFT

7.1 Eileen and Donna Kinnair introduced this topic:

- At the recent Council meeting Governors raised concerns about the long waiting times for ADHD and Autism diagnosis where demand, as experienced widely in the NHS, is outstripping what services can provide. The ELFT service was additionally struggling with an outdated commissioning model.
- Since then, a governor development session on ADHD and autism services for children and young people has been held to provide assurance that, whilst receiving a diagnosis may take some time, a formal diagnosis is not a requirement for dedicated support from ELFT.
- Operational staff were introduced to present recent work to ensure the ADHD service is on a sound and properly commissioned footing both to manage the

waiting list and to outline latest improvements in the management of long waits.

Amanda Grantham, the Financial Sustainability Director and Sanjay Nelson, the Clinical Director for Learning Disability, highlighted:

- The poor service user experience had been compounded by a financial challenge as ELFT were delivering services they were not funded for. The financial sustainability work addressed both achieving financial sustainability and improving patient care.
- Moving to a digital solution allows for better segmentation of the waiting cohort which enables focus on moderate and severe cases of impairment and improves both the clinician and service user experience and enables holistic care through primary care where this is more appropriate.
- A digital self-assessment tool with service users completing an online survey enables triage into mild, moderate and severe cases. This aims to ensure moderate and severe cases are being prioritised, accessing the right services more quickly. It also resulted in reducing the clinicians' admin time and freeing up more time with patients.
- Discussions are ongoing with the ICBs to commission this work in future.

Charlotte Davies, the operational lead for this project highlighted:

- Phase 1 of the pathway saw the service contacting everyone on the waiting list with an invitation to complete the self-assessment tool, which saw a phenomenal 71% response rate.
- Those identified with low impairment will be discharged from the waiting list and be referred back to primary care; however, each GP is able to override this initial diagnosis and refer the patient back to the service.
- More than 1,000 patients on the waiting list indicated they no longer required an appointment.
- Those patients who did not respond digitally are being contacted by post.
- The service is now in the process of re-setting the waiting lists with the results of the self-assessment tool using RiO to enable monitoring of waiting times.
- The ambition is for a maximum 18 week wait to be seen by ADHD services. Mobilising and operationalising the workforce plans to do that is a significant challenge.
- A similar process is carried out for the Autism diagnostic service which was facing comparable challenges.

Richard Fradgley highlighted that this work and developing the pathway has secured a £2m investment to reduce the waiting lists.

7.2 In discussion the Council noted:

- The gender and age breakdown of the waiting list will be monitored as it is part of the equity work.
- The self-assessment tool focuses on the symptoms experienced by the service users to assess the individual level of impairment and is capable of considering highly personalised circumstances.

Due to time restrictions Governors were encouraged to submit any additional questions on this topic to Norbert Lieckfeldt who will share questions and any responses with the Council.

7.3 The Council **RECEIVED and NOTED** the presentation.

8. Using Estate Services to improve service user experience

8.1 Gari Belasco, the PP Lead for Estates, and Dawn Hutcheon, a service user involved in PLACE audits, highlighted initiatives to improve this area:

- They stressed that Estates includes more than the physical environment, for example the food provided on in-patient wards.
- For Estates, there is a people participation workstream, a PLACE audit programme, food committees and QI projects.
- Estates matters as it often forms the first impression of services, enables accessibility and inclusivity and the link between food and wellbeing is well established. Essentially, environment influences recovery.
- PLACE is an NHS England programme of all in-patient wards with audits carried out by service users and carers and results compared across all Trusts. The progress on actions is tracked
- In addition to the PLACE assessments an Environment Assurance Group has been established where the Estates and clinical teams discuss the physical environment with service users. Food committees discuss nutrition, the enjoyment of food, its cultural appropriateness and its sustainability. Service users and carers are given a direct contact to the Estates team to highlight any issues.
- A QI project called PYMS – ‘Put yourself in my shoes’ – is carrying out signage audits to identify any possible improvements.
- Dawn highlighted how recent PLACE work had really made a difference with a live tracker so the PLACE auditors can monitor progress. They look at cleanliness, food, privacy and dignity and rate dementia wards e.g. on their use of colour and other disability adjustments.
- Last year’s results show ELFT doing well in some areas but is ranked in the bottom 25% for food. This potentially has a significant impact on patient experience as for many, in-patients catering on the wards is their only source of food. The food committees are now operating in all Boroughs across the Trust and sharing their reviews, with recent improvements including the provision of healthy snacks and digital menu ordering systems, which are now in place in multiple Trust sites. Catering partners are looking at meeting cultural needs – this is a complex challenge and will need further development.
- Challenges include a significant and long-established backlog of Estates improvements, multiple service providers, and collaborating with multiple teams with competing priorities.
- Finally, Dawn highlighted that involvement in these initiatives through people participation, as well as improving services for our patients can make a meaningful contribution to the recovery journey.

8.2 The notes will be shared with Governors. and any Governors were invited to submit any questions to Norbert Lieckfeldt after the meeting.

- 8.3 The Council **RECEIVED and NOTED** the presentation.
- 8.4 In breakout groups, the meeting discussed: “What in Estates in your view makes the biggest positive difference in service user experience?”.
The themed outcome of the discussion is attached as Appendix 1.

9. CQC Inspections Update

- 9.1 Clare McKenna presented the update, highlighting:
- The CQC have finished their core inspections and have now commenced the well led inspection.
 - They will be meeting with teams and attending meetings throughout May and will meet with the Board on 30 June and 1 July.
 - The Board will continue to update the Council of Governors of the progress of the inspection, any initial high-level feedback from CQC and the Trust’s response.
 - Thanks to the Governors who have taken part in the earlier meeting with CQC staff.
- 9.2 The Council **RECEIVED and NOTED** the update.

10 Financial Update

- 10.1 Eileen acknowledged this would be Kevin Curnow’s last Council of Governors meeting as ELFT’s Chief Finance Officer. On behalf of the Council she thanked Kevin for his significant contributions to consolidate ELFT’s financial position and presented him with a gift from the Governors.

Kevin highlighted:

- ELFT are expecting to end the financial year (to March 2026) in a surplus position. The annual audit is currently under way.
 - Month 1 progress for this year is in line with forecast and has just been reported to the Board’s Finance, Business and Investment Committee (FBIC).
 - There will be a more in-depth presentation of the numbers in the year end accounts in due course, including as always a separate presentation to interested Governors.
- 10.2 The update was **RECEIVED and NOTED**.

11 Trust Strategy Progress Update

- 11.1 Carys Esseen highlighted:
- Since the last Council meeting update, work has gone into identifying an engaging, accessible design. This will be printed and on display in all Trust sites.
 - There will also be a plain text version available on the website and an easy read version is being co-designed with service users and staff so everyone in the ELFT community can access the strategy on an equal footing.
 - Work has being going into the Strategy Delivery Framework which will be presented to the Board next week.

- The Governors had previously stressed the strategy needs to lead to tangible differences in the lives of those ELFT serve and the delivery document will set out how to bring that to life.
- The Governors will have an on-going role, as they play their part in seeking assurance through the NEDs that the Board is focussed on delivery against the strategy.
- The Governors will also be asked to feedback about how the strategy is 'landing' through their community connections.

11.2 In discussion the Governors:

- Thanked Carys and her team for the hard work that has gone into the strategy and the delivery document, involving so many people.
- Noted that it is the job of the Board to monitor the delivery of the strategy – the Governors' role is to hold the Non-Executive Directors to account for how the Board manages that process.
- Noted the Delivery Framework sets out the different ways to prioritise and sequence work, how to mobilise resources and whether structures serve well. The Governors will seek assurances around the delivery and impact.
- The Delivery Framework and Strategy in its final form will be presented to the Board next week and Governors are invited to attend to hear that presentation. The Board paper on this agenda item will be sent under separate cover to the Governors.
- The Delivery Framework is new for ELFT and the committees may be re-aligned to ensure clear lines to the strategy.
- There is also a need to monitor that in starting new initiatives, none of what we are currently done well is undermined – so the delivery framework will look at leadership and culture. This is a new way of working for ELFT, so will be about learning as delivery progresses and ensuring the monitoring continues throughout the five years of the strategy.

Governors were asked to submit any further questions to Norbert Lieckfeldt who will share them, together with the responses.

11.3 The update was **RECEIVED and NOTED**.

12. Council Principles on AI Application

12.1 Vivek Chaudhri, Non-Executive Director:

- Explained that following the previous discussions at Council a potential Governor framework for the use of AI has been developed. The framework has ten principles including: Humans stay in charge, Safety first, No digital exclusion and Strengthening our workforce (by freeing up time) – the full list was presented in the paper circulated.
- The Council is used to working through framework documents like this draft, supporting Governors in seeking the right assurance from the Board.
- The Ambient Voice pilot project mentioned at the previous meeting in March will launch next week and the Council of Governors will be kept in touch with progress.
- Acknowledged that AI can make mistakes, so humans must approve what it does – but it appears to have great potential.

12.2 In discussion, Governors:

- Raised concern that the adoption of AI into healthcare settings is not moving quickly enough – needs to be clear how it is being introduced to help people, for example in Talking Therapies.
- Noted that the presentation about the ADHD work was a good example of how using AI (to digitally triage) is helping people get to the help they need more quickly – the AI framework should not prevent the Trust from using AI in this fashion.
- Agreed the need to realise the benefits but do this in a responsible way.

12.3 The report was **RECEIVED and NOTED**.

13 Update – Communications and Engagement Committee

13.1 Felicity Stoker noted the committee had a discussion on the fast-moving topic of AI.

13.2 The report was **RECEIVED and NOTED**.

14. Membership Engagement Plan Update

14.1 Tina Bixby highlighted:

- The final report for the current membership engagement plan covering 2023-26 has just been produced, covering 2025-26 which will be formally presented to the Board's People Participation Committee.
- ELFT have previously an NHS Providers award for the plan and it has been replicated across other Trusts.
- There have been over 20 'pop up' events across the Trust where the team attended meetings where people were already gathering rather than organising specific ELFT meetings. This enabled discussion about often sensitive or stigmatised topics in an atmosphere of trust.
- A membership survey is planned in due course to find out what is important to the membership.
- In future the plan will be a *Community* Engagement Plan, to focus on what matters most and to work with communities. Rather than being members, people will be encouraged to see themselves as part of the ELFT community.
- Community engagement can be hard to measure, but there are many individual stories of how people have felt a difference and been helped through the membership and pop-up events.

Eileen commended the plan as being well ahead of its time.

14.2 The Council **RECEIVED and NOTED** the report.

15. Council of Governors Elections

15.1 The Council **RECEIVED and NOTED** the report.

15.2 In an earlier contribution it was noted that the participation, whilst comparable with similar Trusts and previous years, had been low in terms of absolute numbers.

16. Council of Governors Forward Plan

16.1 The Council **RECEIVED and NOTED** the report.

17. Any Other Urgent Business and Questions from the Public

17.1 The Board meeting is in Luton on 21 May and all Governors are welcome to attend.

18. Date and Time of Next Meeting

- Thursday 9 July 2026, 5-7pm

All meetings will be held in person at Trust HQ (Conference Room, Robert Dolan House, 9 Alie Street, E1 8DE) from 5:00 – 7:00pm unless stated otherwise.

The meeting closed at 6.55pm.

draft

Estates and Service User Experience – Structured Report

1. Purpose

To identify the key factors within Estates that most positively influence service user experience, based on stakeholder input and note-taker observations.

2. Executive Summary

The feedback highlights that **service user experience is shaped primarily by environment, accessibility, staff interaction, and dignity of care.**

Core priorities include:

- Maintaining clean, welcoming, and safe environments
- Ensuring clear access, signage, and inclusivity
- Providing high-quality food and facilities
- Embedding dignity and respect throughout the user journey

A consistent theme is that **small environmental and behavioural factors (e.g. smiling staff, cleanliness, lighting)** have a disproportionately large impact on user perception.

Cross-Cutting Priorities

Across all themes, the following priorities emerge:

- Cleanliness and maintenance excellence
 - Welcoming, non-institutional environments
 - Clear access and navigation
 - Respectful, responsive staff interactions
 - Inclusive and culturally sensitive design
 - Dignity embedded throughout the user journey
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3. Key Themes and Findings

3.1 First Impressions & Environment

Findings:

- First impressions on entering a building are critical
- Environments should feel:
 - Welcoming
 - Bright, warm, and airy
 - Calm and non-institutional
- External spaces (green areas, gardens) enhance wellbeing

Issues Identified:

- Some buildings feel “archaic” or overly institutional
 - Poor lighting (e.g. harsh or non-adjustable lighting) impacts wellbeing
-

3.2 Dignity and Service User Journey

Findings:

- Dignity is a central and recurring theme
- Experience must be considered end-to-end

Key Insight:

The entire estates pathway should prioritise dignity as the leading focus.

3.3 Cleanliness and Maintenance

Findings:

- Cleanliness is a top priority across all feedback
- Toilets and high-use areas frequently highlighted as problematic

Issues Identified:

- Insufficient cleaning frequency (e.g. gaps during the day)
- Poor maintenance (e.g. broken facilities, no hot water)

- Perception of neglect in some areas

3.4 Accessibility and Navigation

Findings:

- Accessibility and signage significantly influence experience
- Easy navigation reduces stress for service users and families

Issues Identified:

- Confusing or unclear signage
- Limited parking and high costs
- Inadequate drop-off/pick-up arrangements

3.5 Staff Interaction & Culture

Findings:

- Human interaction is a critical determinant of experience
- Simple behaviours (e.g. smiling, welcoming attitude) matter greatly

Issues Identified:

- Reception and front-line staff engagement inconsistent
- Lack of “customer-focused” mindset in some areas

3.6 Food and Nutrition

Findings:

- Food is considered “very important” to service users
- Needs to reflect diverse dietary and cultural requirements

Issues Identified:

- Limited accommodation for specific diets (e.g. vegan, coeliac)
- Staff not always trained to support dietary needs

3.7 Inclusivity and Cultural Sensitivity

Findings:

- Services must reflect diverse populations
- Cultural and religious needs affect user comfort

Issues Identified:

- Lack of appropriate facilities (e.g. wash facilities for religious practices)
- Limited translation or language support

3.8 Facilities and Resources

Findings:

- Quality and condition of facilities directly affect perception of care
- Demand for:
 - Personal storage
 - Activity spaces (especially for younger users)
 - Technology access (WiFi, TV, radio)

Issues Identified:

- Resource constraints impacting responsiveness
- Outdated or insufficient infrastructure

3.9 Communication and Systems

Findings:

- Accessible communication channels are essential
- Systems should be responsive and user-friendly

Issues Identified:

- Over-reliance on email communication
 - Limited support for users with hearing or communication difficulties
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draft

Council of Governors - Action Log following Council Meeting 14 May 2026							
Ref	Meeting Date	Agenda item	Action Point	Owner	Due Date	Status	Comments
225	15/01/2026	Medium Term Plan	Update Council on demographics of service access and distributions	Richard Fradgley	2026	In progress	On Agenda for July Meeting
228	12/03/2026	5 Year Plan & Strategy	Schedule PCREF/Anti-Racism Work for Council Session	Norbert Lieckfeldt	2026	Forward plan	
229	12/03/2026	Strategic Priority Them	Schedule Follow-Up Session on AI	Norbert Lieckfeldt	2026	Forward plan	

- In progress
- Closed
- Forward plan

Communications and Engagement Committee Report

To: Council of Governors
From: Felicity Stocker Chair of Communications and Engagement Committee
Author: Norbert Lieckfeldt Head of Governor & Community Engagement
Date: 9 July 2026
Agenda Item: Communications and Engagement Committee Report

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To provide the Council of Governors with assurance on the effectiveness of the Trust's arrangements for communications, membership and community engagement, people participation, and related governance matters, as reviewed by the Communications and Engagement Committee.

2 Background

2.1 The Communications and Engagement Committee is a committee of the Council of Governors. Its role is to support the Council in discharging its statutory responsibilities by reviewing and providing assurance on the Trust's approach to communications, membership engagement, community engagement, and people participation.

2.2 The Committee also provides a forum for governors to explore emerging issues, risks, and opportunities relating to public engagement, transparency, accountability, and reputation.

3 Communications and Media

3.1 The Committee received a communications update, including:

3.2 Trust Strategy Launch

Glenn Mitchell (ELFT Head of Communications) presented a comprehensive update on the launch of the new Trust strategy, detailing the engagement process, objectives, launch events, and plans for directorate-level integration.

3.3 Staff Awards & Recognition

Glenn updated the group on ongoing discussions regarding the Staff Awards, focusing on the need for a more inclusive and accessible approach to recognition across diverse geographies, with consideration for staff who are less digitally connected.

3.4 Response to major incidents

Glenn discussed the Trust's response to the Bedfordshire train crash and the recent heatwave, highlighting psychological support initiatives. Jamu Patel requested formal acknowledgement of staff efforts at Bedford and Luton hospitals and elsewhere in support of the victims and for working through the heatwave.

3.5 **Anti-Semitism, Anti-Racism and Trust Charter**

Beverley raised ongoing concerns about anti-Semitism, prompting Glenn to outline the Trust's response, including the development of an anti-racism charter and reference to recent national guidance following Lord John Mann's review. Glenn referenced the government's acceptance of the review into anti-Semitism and racism in the NHS, noting ongoing analysis of its implications and the Trust's commitment to sharing updates as guidance becomes clearer.

3.6 Glenn highlighted the recent appointment of Mike Fox as the Trust's new Chief Finance Officer. Mike comes to the Trust from the SW London Integrated Care Board and also brings lived experience as a carer.

3.7 The Crisis House in Bedford is planned to open its doors in the next month after a slight delay caused by the renovation works necessary.

3.8 The Trust has recently joined the [Triangle of Care](#), which is a national quality improvement programme that helps NHS organisations work better with unpaid carers. It is run by the Carers Trust and supports our ambition to work more closely with carers and families.

4 **Future of Trust Governance – Starting the Conversation about Community Accountability and Engagement**

4.1 The Committee held a detailed discussion on new NHS governance arrangements, exploring the potential impact and opportunities on community engagement, independence, and accountability. A summary of the discussion is attached as Appendix A.

5 **People Participation Committee Update**

5.1 Norbert provided a brief update on the most recent People Participation Committee, including reports from service directors on Working Together Group priorities, the annual equity, diversity, and inclusion report, and some concern raised about the coproduction in accessibility audits carried out on the Trust's estate.

6 **Recommendation**

6.1 The Council of Governors is asked to:
RECEIVE and **NOTE** the assurance provided by the Communications and Engagement Committee.

Appendix A – Governor Views on Community Accountability & Engagement – Key Themes

1. Protect Independent Challenge

Governors' strongest concern was preserving an independent community voice that can challenge and influence the Trust. Any future model must provide genuine scrutiny and not simply collect feedback.

2. Reach the Voices We Don't Hear

Governors felt engagement often misses quieter communities, including isolated people, refugees, migrant communities and those without digital access. A key priority is ensuring the loudest voices do not dominate.

3. Be Visible in Communities

There was strong support for ELFT and governors being present in local communities, events and networks. Engagement should be proactive, face-to-face where possible, and build trust through visibility.

4. Show That Engagement Changes Things

Governors repeatedly stressed that people will only stay involved if they can see their views making a difference. Clear "You Said, We Did" evidence and regular reporting are essential.

5. Improve Coordination

The current landscape is crowded, involving ELFT, Healthwatch, ICBs, local authorities, VCSE partners and participation groups. Governors highlighted the need for greater coordination and clearer accountability.

6. Keep it Local

Governors favoured place-based engagement, recognising that communities in Hackney, Newham, Luton and Bedfordshire have different needs and require different approaches.

Overall Message

Governors were less focused on preserving current structures and more focused on preserving what matters: independence, inclusion, visibility, influence and local credibility. Their view was that any replacement for the current governor model must deliver stronger community influence and clearer impact than the arrangements it replaces.

To: Council of Governors
From: Norbert Lieckfeldt, Head of Governor & Community Engagement
Date: 9 July 2026
Subject: Council Committee Membership

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update the Council on the plans for filling current and upcoming vacancies in the membership of the Council Committees:
- Nominations and Conduct Committee (NomCo)
 - Significant Business and Strategy Committee (SBSC)
 - Communications & Engagement Committee (CEC)

2.0 Background on Committee Membership

- 2.1 The membership of all Council committees is determined by the Council (reference Council of Governors Standing Orders para 5.1).
- 2.2 Committee membership ends with the respective governor's current term of office irrespective of whether they have been re-elected for a further term. This is to ensure succession planning and refreshing the committee membership.

3.0 Committee Membership

3.1 Nominations & Conduct Committee (NomCo)

NomCo has a membership of seven Governors (inc the lead governor as ex officio member). In addition, the Trust Chair and Trust Vice-Chair are also (non-voting) members of the committee. Of the seven elected members, a minimum of two must be public Governors, one a staff Governor and one an appointed Governor.

The Committee currently has two vacancies due to Sade Etti ceasing to be an Appointed Governor, and Andrea Okoloekwe leaving ELFT (and therefore her position as staff Governor). Further vacancies will arise as Mark Dunne, Caroline Ogunsola, and Jamu Patel will reach the end of their terms on 31 October.

Membership requirements require at least one staff Governor; Governors from any constituency (public, staff, appointed) could nominate themselves for any other of the vacant spaces.

Expressions of interest were invited on the 8 June. By the deadline, the number of valid nomination form received was larger than the number of vacancies. A call for nomination forms was therefore sent on 23 June. By the deadline, one valid nomination form has been received by Gren Bingham who has therefore been elected unopposed; consequently, the current Committee membership is

Gren Bingham
Mark Dunne*
Caroline Ogunsola*
Jamu Patel*
Ruby Sayed
Hazel Thomas

[*= due to retire by 31 October 2026]

This will leave the Committee short of its required membership. The Governors & Members Office will seek new nominations to fill the vacancies by 1 November.

3.2 Significant Business & Strategy Committee (SBSC)

SBSC membership consists of the deputy lead governor (ex officio) and eight governors with a minimum of one governor per constituency (public, appointed or staff)

The Committee currently has one vacancy due to Andrea Okoloekwe leaving the Trust.

As of 1 November 2026, the committee will have a further four vacancies:

- Dafni Boula
- Reno Marcello
- Caroline Ogunsola
- Jamu Patel

Terms of reference require at least one staff Governor; Governors from any constituency (public, staff, appointed) could nominate themselves for any other of the vacant spaces.

Expressions of interest were invited on the 8 June 2026. By the deadline one valid expression of interest was received by a staff Governor (John Peers) who is therefore elected unopposed.

As the numbers of valid expressions of interest was larger than the number of other vacancies, a call for nomination forms was sent on 23 June. By the deadline, one valid nomination form has been received (Robert Nobrega) who has therefore been elected unopposed.

Therefore, the current membership of the SBSC is

Gren Bingham
 Dafni Boula*
 Elliot Goodman
 Reno Marcello*
 Robert Morris
 Robert Nobrega (from 1 November 2026)
 John Peers*
 Caroline Ogunsola*
 Jamu Patel*
 Hazel Thomas
 [* = due to retire 31 October 2026]

The Governors & Members Office will seek new nominations to fill the vacancies by 1 November.

3.3 Communications & Engagement Committee

With the retirement of Beverley Morris, the Committee’s membership has fallen below the minimum requirement of six Governors. There is no upper limit on membership, so verbal expressions of interest at the meeting are invited for those Governors who wish to be a member of the Committee.

5.0 Action being requested

5.1 The Council is asked to:

- **RECEIVE** and **NOTE** the report
- **NOTE** the Committee membership as follows:

Communications & Engagement Committee	Nominations & Conduct Committee	Significant Business & Strategy Committee
Felicity Stocker (Chair) Dafni Boula (Vice-Chair) Gren Bingham Jamu Patel Hazel Thomas	Gren Bingham Mark Dunne Caroline Ogunsola Jamu Patel Ruby Sayed Hazel Thomas	Gren Bingham Dafni Boula Elliot Goodman Reno Marcello Robert Morris <i>Robert Nobrega (from 1 Nov 2026)</i> Caroline Ogunsola John Peers Jamu Patel Hazel Thomas

Governor Terms of Office – Proposed Approach

To: Council of Governors
From: Eileen Taylor, Chair
Author: Norbert Lieckfeldt, Head of Governor & Community Engagement
Date: 9 July 2026
Agenda Item: ELFT Governors Terms of Office

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report sets out the implications of potential legislative changes affecting the role of Governors and seeks the Council’s agreement on a practical and proportionate approach to managing Governor terms of office during this transitional period.

2 Background

2.1 The Health Bill currently before Parliament proposes to remove the role of Governors in NHS Foundation Trusts. Subject to Parliamentary approval, it is anticipated that these changes will come into effect from 1 April 2027.

2.2 The following proposals are based on the legislation as currently drafted. There remains a degree of uncertainty due to impending changes in government; the Trust will keep Governors informed of any further developments.

2.2 A number of experienced Governors will reach the end of their three-year term on 31 October 2026:

Reno Marcello	City of London
Patrick Adamolekun	Staff Governor
Mark Dunne	Staff Governor
Lizzie Maushe	Staff Governor
Caroline Ogunsola	Staff Governor & Lead Governor
John Peers	Staff Governor
Sharmeen Sheikh Sultana	Staff Governor
Dafni Boula	Luton
Jamu Patel	Luton

2.3 Under the NHS Act 2006,

- Governors may serve a maximum term of three years
- Extension of a term is not permitted **unless through re-election**
- NHS England has confirmed that no dispensation will be granted

2.4 Running elections in 2026 would

- Incur costs of approximately £4,000 - £5,000 (excluding staff time)
- Likely result in successful candidates serving a term of approximately six months

3 **Approach for a transition period**

3.1 The Council is asked to support:

- Deferring the 2026 Governor elections
- Reviewing this position at the March 2027 Council meeting, when there is greater clarity regarding the legislation

3.2 **Retention of expertise through advisory roles**

To ensure continuity and preserve experience, it is proposed that Governors whose terms expire on 31 October 2026 are invited to continue to attend public Council meetings and contribute to discussions in an advisory capacity.

In line with the Trust's Constitution¹:

- Advisors are not Governors
- Advisors do not hold voting rights

This approach nevertheless enables the Council to retain valuable insight and corporate knowledge during a critical transition period.

This is an invitation to retiring governors and does not impose any obligation on them.

3.3 **Interim arrangements for Lead & Deputy Lead Governor roles**

From 1 November 2026 the positions of Lead Governor and Deputy Lead Governor will fall vacant.

The Council is asked to support holding these vacancies without immediate replacement and assigning the function of regulatory liaison (as required) to the Director of Corporate Governance (pro tem)

This includes acting as a point of contact with NHS England and the Care Quality Commission where escalation outside normal Board routes is appropriate. This arrangement will be reviewed in March 2027.

4. **Rationale**

4.1 **Value for money**

Holding elections for potentially a short residual term would not represent a proportionate or responsible use of public funds.

4.2 **Continuity and organizational resilience**

Retaining outgoing Governors as advisors preserves skills, experience and diversity and supports the Council's effectiveness during a period of change

4.3 **Supporting future governance arrangements**

The Council is expected to contribute to shaping future approaches to public accountability and community engagement. Maintaining experienced input will be essential to this work.

4.4 **Governance assurance**

The Council will remain quorate beyond October 2026. No significant decision-making risks are anticipated. Advisor status provides continuity without altering formal accountability.

¹ 2.5.6 The Council of Governors and its committees may call upon outside advisors to help them in their tasks, provided that financial and other implications of seeking outside advisors have been discussed and agreed by the Board of Directors. Advisors may be used to bring in missing skills to the meeting, widen the pool of experience, ensure that the Council of Governors reflects the diversity of its constituent groups, or to assist and train other council governors. Advisors are not designated as governors and do not have voting rights.

4.5 **Interim Lead Governor Function**

The formal escalation role of the Lead Governor has never been required in ELFT's history as a Foundation Trust. A clear and proportionate interim arrangement with the Director of Corporate Governance has been used in other Trusts, is acceptable to NHS England, and ensures continued regulatory assurance and a defined point of contact if required.

4.6 **Review point**

All proposals remain time-limited and subject to review by March 2027, when greater legislative certainty is expected.

5 **Recommendation**

The Council of Governors is asked to:

- NOTE the contents of this report
- SUPPORT the decision to defer the 2026 Governor elections
- APPROVE the invitation for outgoing Governors to continue as advisors to the Council
- SUPPORT the decision to hold vacant the Lead and Deputy Lead Governor roles
- SUPPORT the interim designation of the Director of Corporate Governance as regulatory liaison (pro tem)
- AGREE that all arrangements will be reviewed in March 2027

COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS FORWARD PLAN 2026/27

Date of Meeting	Key Strategic Agenda Items
10 September 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCREF/Anti-Racism Update (see Action Log) • Impact, NHS Bill (if published) • Trust Strategy Update • Annual Members Meeting Plans
12 November 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AI Discussion • Annual Report & Accounts • Impact, NHS Bill (if published)
14 January 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact, NHS Bill (if published) • Trust Strategy Update
11 March 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CoG Strategic priority • Impact, NHS Bill (if published)

Standing / regular reports at every meeting:

- Minutes
- Action log and matters arising
- Trust performance update
- Reports of the Council committees after each meeting:
 - Communications and Engagement Committee
inc community engagement plan
 - Nominations and Conduct Committee
 - Significant Business and Strategy Committee