

## **Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of Trust Board**

**on 20 June 2025 at 10am in the**

**Boardroom, NCS, RVH**

### **Present**

Miss Patricia Gordon	Non-Executive Director (Trust vice-chair and chair of the meeting)
Mrs Ellen Finlay	Non-Executive Director
Mr Joe McVey	Non-Executive Director
Mr David Small	Non-Executive Director
Mrs Maureen Edwards	Interim Chief Executive
Mrs Fiona Cotter	Interim Director of Finance

### **In Attendance:**

Dr Brian Armstrong	Director Unscheduled and Older People's Services
Mr Colin McMullan	Interim Director Adult Community and Older People Services
Mrs Marion Mulholland	Director, Trauma and Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation Medicine, Imaging, Medical Physics and Outpatients
Mr David Porter	Director of Strategic Development
Mr Peter Watson	Head of Office
Mrs Bronagh Dalzell	Head of Corporate Communications

### **Apologies:**

Mr Ciaran Mulgrew	Chairman
Mr John Conaghan	Non-Executive Director
Professor Catherine Ross	Non-Executive Director
Ms Paula Cahalan	Director Child Health and NISTAR, Maternity, Dental, Gynaecology and Sexual Health
Mr Alastair Campbell	Director Performance, Planning and Informatics
Mrs Tara Clinton	Director ACCTSS and Surgery
Mr Chris Hagan	Medical Director
Professor Carmel Hughes	Non-Executive Director
Ms Moira Kearney	Interim Director of Cancer and Specialist Services
Mrs Olga O'Neill	Interim Director of Nursing and User Experience
Miss Tracy Reid	Interim Executive Director Social Work
Dr Peter Sloan	Interim Director Mental Health, Intellectual Disability and Psychological Services
Mrs Gillian Somerville	Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development
Ms Kerrylee Weatherall	Interim Director Children's Community Services

## **1. Chairman's Business**

Miss Gordon welcomed all, thanking everyone for taking the time to attend this meeting of the Trust Board, when there would be consideration of the Trust Annual Accounts, Charitable Trust Fund Accounts and the Annual Report of the Audit Committee.

Miss Gordon noted firstly that Mr Mulgrew had asked her to Chair this meeting, given that he was on Leave.

### **(a) Apologies**

Apologies for the meeting were as noted above.

### **(b) Conflicts of interest**

Miss Gordon asked for any conflicts of interest to be declared. None were declared.

## **2. Belfast Trust Consolidated Annual Report and Accounts including Patients Residents Monies 2024/2025 C148-2025 A&B**

Mrs Cotter referred to the tabled report, noting the scale of the documentation and thanking Mrs Somerville's team, Mrs Dalzell's team and Mr Campbell's team, for their contribution to the report.

Mrs Cotter noted that the Trust Audit Committee had met on 19 June 2025 and wished to recommend the Annual Report and Accounts to the Trust Board for its approval.

Mrs Cotter referenced the key highlight in relation to the Trust's reported breakeven position.

Miss Gordon noted that it was a remarkable achievement for the Trust to complete the year with a small surplus. Miss Gordon noted the very many positive stories within the Annual Report, which she hoped would be shared more widely.

Questions and comments were invited from the Trust Board.

Mrs Finlay expressed congratulations to Mrs Cotter and her team. Mrs Finlay enquired in relation to responsibility for the holiday pay issue, and Mrs Cotter confirmed that while the responsibility for this was with the Trust, the movement in this provision does not count towards our breakeven position.

Mr Small, Chair of the Trust Audit Committee, noted that he considered these to be a good set of accounts, and a good annual report. He noted that the report recognised that the Trust faces many challenges but also that there have been significant achievements and awards, and good budgetary control.

Mr Small noted that the reports had been received at the Audit Committee and that Departmental timeframes had been complied with. Noting the size, scale and breadth of the work of the Trust, Mr Small noted that reaching breakeven was a significant achievement. Noting the unqualified opinion in relation to the accounts, Mr Small noted this was a great position for the Trust. It was however also important, and appropriate, to note the reference to the issues in Cardiac Surgery.

Mr Small noted the recommendations of Sumer NI in relation to DACs, Special Payments, and Declarations of Interests, which had been accepted.

Mr Small noted one unadjusted misstatement but which did not impact on the accounts as it was below the materiality threshold.

Mr Small noted that the Governance Statement reflected internal controls, while the Internal Audit report had provided an overall satisfactory finding.

Mr Small referred to the thanks which external auditors had passed on to Mrs Cotter and her team.

Concluding his remarks, Mr Small advised the Board that the Audit Committee would wish to recommend the Trust Accounts, and the Charitable Funds Accounts to the Trust Board. He also wished to express his thanks to the Trust Finance team for their professionalism and commitment and also his thanks to Sumer NI, NIAO and Internal Audit.

Miss Gordon thanked Mr Small for his summary of the recommendation of the Audit Committee

It was proposed by Mr McVey and seconded by Mr Small that the Trust Accounts be approved. The Board agreed.

Miss Gordon thanked all who had been involved including Mrs Edwards, Mrs Cotter and Mrs Corry, and their teams, for their work across the year.

Mrs Edwards acknowledged the thanks from Miss Gordon, noting the excellent work from Mrs Martin-Poots in relation to Capital, and Mrs Corry in relation to financial management. Mrs Edwards noted too the good work within Directorates, with Directors managing their budgets, and finance being everyone's business. Mrs Edwards noted too the good audit outcome.

### **3. Belfast Trust Charitable Trust Funds Accounts 2024/2025 C149-2025 A&B**

Mrs Cotter noted the papers in relation to the Charitable Trust Funds Accounts, which again had been recommended for approval by the Audit Committee on the previous day. Mrs Cotter highlighted that there had been £1.7m income and £4m expenditure, which expenditure was up by £1.3m year on year.

Mr Small noted that there were clear examples of how the Trust uses Charitable Funds.

The Board approved the Belfast Trust Charitable Trust Funds Accounts.

### **4. Annual Report of Audit Committee**

Mrs Cotter introduced this standard report, which outlined the work of the Committee during the year, including the attendance of members.

Mrs Cotter noted that of the 21 audits undertaken during 2024/2025, 14 had been wholly satisfactory, 5 had been limited and 2 had been split. There was an improving position reported across the Trust with an overall finding of Satisfactory.

Mrs Cotter highlighted the limited opinions, and the work also in relation to Fraud and DAC reports.

Mrs Cotter noted that the Audit Committee self-assessment exercise had confirmed that the committee considered it was fulfilling its role.

Mrs Cotter noted the plans for the Internal Audit for 2024/2025

The Annual Report of Audit Committee was accepted by the Trust Board.

### **5. Any Other Business**

Miss Gordon expressed her thanks to Mrs Edwards for her leadership in recent months.

There was no other business and the meeting concluded at 11am.