



TRUST BOARD

Title: KEY ISSUES AND ESCALATION POINTS
Name of Committee: Extraordinary Audit Committee
Committee Chair: Catherine Dugmore
Meeting Date: 13th October 2022

Summary of key messages:

The following key issues were discussed:

- Continuation of the conversation regarding the content and timing of the Audit Completion report presented to the Audit Committee on 10th October 2022.
- Audit Completion and Value for Money report

Auditors apologised for the confusion with meeting papers on 10th October 2022 Committee meeting. It was clarified that the Auditors were expecting to present the Auditor's Annual report which included the Value for Money commentary, not the completion report. The Committee was informed that the Auditors had concluded the Auditor's report on 7th October 2022 and hence the confusion in reports. It was highlighted that the Completion report was a private document and shouldn't be published on the Trust website.

Auditors confirmed they had issued an unmodified opinion on the financial statements and a qualified report on the remuneration of staff report relating to a prior year disclosure which had previously been discussed

The auditors agreed to amend the statement in the Audit Completion report which suggested a question of management integrity in relation to the situation where the Annual Report and Accounts were put into the public domain before receipt of the Auditors Annual Report.

In regard to the Value for Money part of the Auditor Annual report the following points were noted:

Financial sustainability

- No indications of significant weaknesses were identified in the Trust's arrangements.
- There were no matters to be reported to the Committee by exception.
- The review showed that there were appropriate arrangements in place to monitor the Trust budget for 2021/22 and there was adequate challenge by the Trust Board on performance.
- For 2022/23 budget, there was an initial deficit plan of £1.7m, however with additional funding provided, the Trust was looking to achieve a break-even position.
- The Trust recognised that there were unstable and rising cost pressures and identified a risk relating to the pressures.

Governance

- The review confirmed that the Trust had adequate governance arrangements in place.
- Apart from Clinical Audit, all internal audit reports for 2021/22 including risk management provided reasonable assurance. Clinical Audit had partial assurance but there were no significant weaknesses in the use of resources arrangements.
- Delays in actioning internal audit actions were being monitored and addressed by management.
- No concerns were raised by the Local Counter Fraud Services team.

Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness

- Trust arrangements were reviewed; this included internal audit work undertaken around accounts payables and expenses which had reasonable assurance.
- Recommendations raised were reviewed and confirmed that there were no significant weaknesses identified. Actions were in place to implement the recommendations.

The Committee noted that following this meeting, a final report for the Trust, which would be published on the Trust's website would be issued. The Auditor would also issue the Trust audit certificate for 2021/22. The Auditors also thanked Mark Robbins and the team for the work and patience throughout the audit.

Escalation Points:

There were no points for escalation to the Board.

Emerging Risks/Issues:

None

Examples of Outstanding Practice or Innovation:

None

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