



Report Title	Board Governance Report
Author	David O'Brien Director of Corporate Services and Company Secretary
Accountable Director	David O'Brien Director of Corporate Services and Company Secretary
Previous committees/groups	None. Proposed appointments have been agreed with the individuals concerned.
Recommended action(s)	Approval
Purpose of the paper	Present updates on matters relating to Board governance
Executive Summary	
<p>This report presents updates on two matters relating to Board governance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The proposed appointment of a NED lead for safeguarding.2. Arrangements for the developmental review of the Trust's Well-Led arrangements.	
Recommendation(s)	<p>The Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Approves the appointment of Melanie Hudson as the NED lead for safeguarding.2. Notes the arrangements for the forthcoming Well-Led developmental review
Link to Board Assurance Framework Risks (board and level 2 committees only)	6. Open and Positive Culture

Board Governance Report

1. PURPOSE

1.1 This report presents recent developments relating to Board governance.

2. BOARD GOVERNANCE UPDATES

2.1 Non-Executive Director Lead for Safeguarding

2.1.1 Under the current governance arrangements there is no dedicated NED lead role for safeguarding is undertaken. The NED leadership for safeguarding is merged with the role of Chair of the Quality Committee (safeguarding is included in the remit of the Quality Committee).

2.1.2 Following the Board training session on safeguarding held in October it is proposed to strengthen the NED leadership in this area by appointing a dedicated NED lead for safeguarding.

2.1.3 The proposal is to appoint Melanie Hudson as the NED lead for safeguarding. If approved, this appointment will take immediate effect.

2.2 Well-Led Developmental Review

2.2.1 The Trust has commissioned an external developmental review of its Well-Led arrangements. The Well-Led Framework is a set of standards used by the Care Quality Commission to assess the effectiveness of leadership and governance in NHS organisations. The framework was revised in 2024 and currently contains the following eight domains:

- Shared direction and culture.
- Capable, compassionate, and inclusive leaders.
- Freedom to speak up.
- Workforce equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Governance, management, and sustainability.
- Partnerships and communities.
- Learning, improvement, and innovation.
- Environmental sustainability.

For each of these domains the CQC has published a set of 'quality statements' that describe what good looks like: [Well-led - Care Quality Commission](#)

2.2.2 Following a competitive procurement process the Trust has commissioned **Aqua** (the Advancing Quality Alliance, [Home – Aqua](#)) to carry out its Well-Led review:

- Aqua is an NHS organisation that delivers a range of improvement support services to health and care providers.
- Aqua has undertaken more than fifty Well-Led reviews of NHS trusts, including multiple trusts in Yorkshire.
- Aqua's recent experience of the ambulance sector includes a Well-Led review and related leadership and governance work with two other Northern Ambulance Alliance partners.

2.2.3 The review will include multiple elements, as follows:

- Significant desk-based research / document review: strategy, plans, meeting papers etc.
- Meeting observations, including:
 - 17 March: People Committee.
 - 12 March: Quality Committee.
 - 19 March: Finance and Performance Committee.
 - 26 March: Trust Board.
 - 14 April: Audit and Risk Committee.
- 1-2-1 interviews with key internal stakeholders: Board Directors (Executive and NEDs), TEG, some Heads of Service and Subject Matter Experts. These interviews will mainly take place via MS Teams during March.
- 1-2-1 interviews with key external stakeholders and system partners, nominated by the Trust. These interviews will mainly take place during February.
- Staff focus groups (optional).

2.2.4 The detailed timetable for the review is being finalised and the interviews are now being scheduled.

2.2.5 The draft report is expected to be available to the Trust by late April or early May.

2.2.6 On 29 January the Board will receive a briefing in private via Teams from the Aqua lead director for the review, Cath Hill.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The Well-Led review has a cost implication but for reasons of commercial sensitivity the figure is not included in this public report. The cost is met from existing budgets and does not represent a cost pressure.

4. RISK

4.1 Failure to develop and maintain effective Board governance arrangements for the Trust would present risks relating to strategic leadership capacity and capability, compliance with regulatory frameworks and codes (CQC Well-Led Framework, NHS Code of Governance, NHS Provider License), public and patient confidence, and reputation amongst sector and system partners.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The Board:

1. Approves the appointment of Melanie Hudson as the NED lead for safeguarding.
2. Notes the arrangements for the forthcoming Well-Led developmental review.

David O'Brien
Director of Corporate Services and Company Secretary

January 2026