

**Board of Directors (in Public)**  
**26 March 2026**



Report Title	Chair's Report	
Author	Martin Havehand, Chair	
Accountable Director	Martin Havenhand, Chair	
Previous committees/groups	N/A	
Recommended action(s) (assurance, approval, information)	Information/Assurance	
Purpose of the paper	To brief Board members of the activity and stakeholder engagement undertaken by the Chair and Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) since the last report presented to the Board in Public on 29 January 2026.	
Executive Summary		
<p>The Chair's activity during this period focused on national leadership engagement, equality and inclusion, system and partnership collaboration and frontline visibility.</p> <p>Key themes included addressing health inequalities and female leadership progression through AACE discussions, strengthening the Armed Forces Network, approving the 2026/27 Business Plan, and contributing to regional NHS leadership forums.</p> <p>The Chair also undertook frontline and staff wellbeing engagement, including Community First Responder activity and attendance at a Schwartz Round.</p> <p>Updates were provided from Non-Executive Directors highlighting their activities during February and March 2026.</p>		
Recommendation(s)	Note the update from the Chair's Report.	
Link to Board Assurance Framework Risks (board and level 2 committees only)	6. Develop and sustain an open and positive workplace culture. 10. Act as a collaborative, integral, and influential system partner. 11. Collaborate effectively to improve population health and reduce health inequalities.	

# Chair's Report

## 1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides an update of the Chair's and Non-Executive Directors (NED) activities since the last report presented to the Board of Directors in Public on 29 January 2026.

## 2.0 Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) Chairs and AACE Council Meeting 2 February

2.1 One of the key items was a presentation and discussion on inequalities and the level of volunteering in deprived areas. Evidence shows that there are the fewest numbers of defibrillators and Community First Responders in deprived areas This is a real challenge for all ambulance services.

2.2 We received a presentation on how we might accelerate female progression into operational leadership roles. Evidence shows that fewer women than men are appointed to band 6 and 7 roles.

## 3.0 Yorkshire Ambulance Service Armed Forces Network

3.1 On 5 February in my capacity as Board Champion for the Armed Forces Network I met with Dave Green, Executive Director of Quality and Chief Paramedic (Executive Sponsor), Chris Hackett, Senior Clinical Advisor (Paramedic and retiring chair of the network) Emergency Operations Centre and Phil Hardwick, Performance Improvement Manager and incoming chair of the network, to discuss the future of the Trust's Armed Forces Network.

3.2 Chris provided a detailed briefing outlining the progress made in recent years, and we engaged in a discussion regarding Phil's strategic vision for the Network as well as the key milestones anticipated over the next two years.

3.3 Phil chaired the Armed Forces Network meeting on 18 March and provided an excellent presentation on the plans for the network in 2026/27.

3.4 Under the Armed Forces Covenant, NHS bodies must give 'due regard' to this community's needs in planning and delivering services. To support this, NHS England and the Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA) have launched a national training and education programme from October 2025, and arrangements are being made for this to be presented at one of our Board Strategic Forums.

## 4.0 Extraordinary Trust Board Meeting 10 February

4.1 We convened an Extraordinary Trust Board Meeting to sign off the Business Plan for 2026/27 so that we could submit our plan to the NHSE Regional Office on 12 February which was deadline day.

## **5.0 Yorkshire and The Humber NHS Trust Chairs' Meeting 11 February**

- 5.1 I chaired the meeting and Matthew Taylor, Chief Executive, NHS Confederation/NHS Providers, Sir Andrew Morris, Deputy Chair of NHS England and Fiona Edwards, Regional Director, NHS England presented overviews/updates of current issues they are dealing with.
- 6.3 Zoe Birch, Head of Organisational Development and Talent at NHSE North East and Yorkshire provided an update of the national Aspiring Chief Executive Programme and the national Aspiring Chairs Programme.

## **7.0 Community First Responder Visit and rideout**

- 7.1 On 23 February I visited our Emergency Operations Centre in Wakefield to meet with Julie Bunten, Community First Responder (CFR) Dispatcher. At the time of my visit 52 volunteer CFRs had booked in making themselves available for dispatch. Julie provided me with an excellent overview on how the service works and the type of patients they are dispatched to.
- 7.2 Later in the day I travelled to Selby to accompany Vicki Smith (CFR) on her shift, and I had the opportunity to visit two patients, one involving support from the clinical assessment unit and the other assisting the patient in advance of an ambulance crew arriving. It was a pleasure to witness Vicki's professionalism on both occasions.

## **8.0 Swartz Rounds**

- 8.1 I attended a Swartz Round event on 25 February focussing on "Feelings of isolation at work".
- 8.2 Swartz Rounds are structured forums for clinical and nonclinical staff to discuss emotional and social aspects of work. The purpose is reflection, not problem-solving and evidence shows they can reduce stress.

## **9.0 Board Strategic Forum 26 February**

- 9.1 The sessions featured presentations and discussions relating to 999 Performance, Remote Patient Care transformation for 2026/27 and beyond, as well as Clinical Research and Quality Improvement.

## **10.0 Quality Improvement Fellowship Celebration Event 2 March**

- 10.1 Peter Reading and I attended this event, which marked the completion of the Fellowship programme and the achievement of Level 4 Improvement Practitioners. The event highlighted work completed, and the application of learning acquired over the past 18 months. It was pleasing to see how the fellows had become champions of Quality Improvement and how they had developed an improvement mind set

## **11.0 Bradford Hospital visit 3 March 2026**

- 11.1 Together with Dave Green (Executive Director of Quality and Chief Paramedic) and John McSorley (Head of 999 Operations – West Yorkshire) I met with the Chair,

Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Chief Operating Officer to address issues of mutual concern in the best interest of patients.

- 11.2 Following a discussion on some key issues we visited the Emergency Department and had the opportunity to meet with consultants, nurses and healthcare professionals.

## **12.0 Leeds and Wakefield ambulance station visits 4 March 2026**

- 12.1 I met with Nick Smith (Associate Chief Operating Officer – West Yorkshire) and visited Leeds and Wakefield stations and met with the Head of Operations, Deputy Head of Operations, two of our Area Operations Managers and several Team Leaders and crews.

## **13.0 Ambulance Leadership Forum (ALF) 10-11 March**

- 13.1 Together with senior leaders from the Trust, I attended the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) Ambulance Leadership Forum in Windsor. This year's theme was Sustainability for ambulance services: From environmental responsibility to financial resilience and lasting cultural change.

## **14.0 Settle and Ingleton ambulance station visits 14 March**

- 14.1 I visited Settle and Ingleton ambulance stations on Saturday 14 March to meet crews working the weekend. I was warmly welcomed by the Team Leader on duty, and I had some valuable discussions with crews about their role and challenges operating in rural areas.

## **15.0 YAS Research Seminar 17 March**

- 15.1 I attended this event at Cave Castle Hotel in South Cave along with many YAS colleagues and visitors from other ambulance services, universities and hospitals.
- 15.2 The presentations of research studies were excellent with many opportunities for us to reflect on how we do things and consider improvement to practice.

## **16.0 West Yorkshire Community Provider Collaborative Board**

- 16.1 From 1 April I on behalf of Yorkshire Ambulance Service will be taking on the chair role for 2026/27. I have had two handover meetings on 10 February and 19 March in preparation for the programme ahead.

## **17.0 NED Recruitment**

- 17.1 We are in the process of appointing a new Non-Executive Director and we have received some high calibre applications and interviews will be held during April.

## **18.0 Non-Executive Director (NED) and Associate NED (ANED) Annual reviews**

- 18.1 All annual reviews for NEDs and Associate NEDs have been scheduled.

## 19.0 NED and Associate NED Activity

### 19.1 Amanda Moat

Marc Thomas, Deputy Chief Executive/Chief Operating Officer and I as Sponsor and Champion of disability, engaged with the Deputy Chair of the staff disability network and heard how more adaptive technology is being introduced to working practices and that the reasonable adjustments process is improving. We've followed up with discussions regarding opportunities for making visible our support frameworks for disability.

Also, like many other leaders, I attended Ambulance Leadership Forum at Windsor, the theme was 'sustainability', a great showcase of progress in the Ambulance Sector and fantastic opportunities to forge new relationships.

At the South Yorkshire Audit and Risk chairs forum I led agenda items:

- Exploration of SY wide joint Internal Audits
- Illustrations of Best practice for Audit and Risk committees.

I attended the countdown for the 24 hours CPR-athon held at Meadowhall Shopping Centre, meeting the participants afterwards.

### 19.2 Melanie Hudson

Since the last meeting I have attended the online YAS Leadership Forum.

I took part in a review meeting to consider a Freedom To Speak Up (FTSU) matter which had been submitted to the Senior Independent Director for consideration.

I attended the Women and Allies network meeting which was face to face and had some thought-provoking presentations. It was good to meet some new colleagues. A fantastic amount of work had gone into the session and there was not the level of turn out that had been expected, but I am sure that the presentations and outcomes will have been widely shared.

I visited the Estates and Fleet team and had a tour of the facilities and a detailed discussion about key issues including specific recruitment as well as gaining a better understanding of the work carried out by the teams as a part of my induction.

I will be visiting Wakefield Ambulance Station and Manor Mill to visit our HART and Resilience teams.

### 19.3 Tabitha Arulampalam

I attended the West Yorkshire ICB Partnership meeting and circulated key issues that were discussed, to NEDs. There is much churn in the system, but also potential for YAS to influence the future.

I attended the Race Equality Network meeting and steering group meeting and provided targeted advice to the chair and deputy chair about certain challenging issues. I attended the Health and Well-being Group (which reports to the People Committee) and the People Directorate Senior Leadership Team meeting to understand the way the groups functioned, they were very informative visits.

I met with the Public Health lead and the Medical Director to be updated on general progress in this area. We discussed links we need to use with the ICB and a project in the Wakefield area which was attempting to advance health inequality priorities in partnership with YAS.

I visited the Fleet and Estates department, I saw new vehicles and heard about the challenges of planning for the future, including the financial and practical challenges posed by meeting the national target to increase the use of electric vehicles. ‘

#### 19.4 Andrew Chang

Since my previous update I have, in my role as NED lead for Freedom to Speak Up, continued to be updated on FTSU activity and to review a case raised with the FTSU team.

As part of my role as the Senior Independent Director, I convened a meeting of Non-Executives and Associate Non-Executives to reflect on Trust strategy.

In my role as chair of the Charitable Funds Committee, I attended the start and finish of the 24 hours CPR-athon held in Meadowhall Shopping Centre in support of the Yorkshire Ambulance Service Charity.

I took part in three NHS England selection panels for its Aspiring Chairs Talent Programme, assessing eleven NEDs from around England for the programme.

I attended a Seacole Group meeting with Dr Penny Dash, Chair of NHS England.

#### 19.5 Becky Malby

Alongside the usual committee meetings this month I visited ambulance crews who had just handed patients over at Bradford Royal Infirmary, with Tim Millington, Associate Director of Paramedicine. Over several hours we heard from committed, caring ambulance crews about the people they care for, what helps them do their job well, and what gets in the way. Their passion for their job and for providing excellent care shone through. Their empathy for people experiencing trauma and ill health was humbling.

#### 19.6 Rebecca Randall

In February, I attended the HETT Digital Leaders' Summit, where the political push for ambient voice technology was evident (despite the lack of a strong evidence base). Here I attended a Shuri Network roundtable, to discuss strategies for increasing staff diversity in digital careers in the NHS.

Also, in February I had a conversation with NHS England colleagues about plans for intelligent navigation/AI triage through the NHS App, with the expectation that this will reduce pressure on ambulance services.

In March, I attended the YAS Research Seminar, where the presentations and informal conversations with YAS colleagues brought my attention to a range of issues, including staff reluctance to ask patients about their ethnicity, reluctance to refer to other services because of the significant time on site this typically leads to so that it is perceived as 'easier' to take a patient to hospital, the role of YAS in health prevention through 'making every contact count' and the potential to increase this, and planned research to look at risk factors for recontacting following see and treat. The day was a great success; with external attendees I spoke to commenting on the

vibrant environment with strong attendance by YAS staff and the sense that research activity is embedded within the Trust.

19.7 Saghir Alam

Through my NED Induction Programme, I attended a half day Corporate Induction session, and I have met with our Chief Executive, Medical Director and Chief Digital Information Officer.

In February I joined a meeting with our Chair, Medical Director, fellow NED Amanda Moat, and Associate Chief Operating Officer (North, East and South Yorkshire to discuss Neighbourhood Health in South Yorkshire.

As Lead NED for South Yorkshire, I attended the South Yorkshire ICB Chairs meeting.

Finally, I attended an NHS Race Equality meeting with a focus on Driving Inclusion.

**20.0 Recommendation**

20.1 It is recommended that the Board note the report.