

Board of Directors (in Public)

24 September

Report Title	Chair’s Report	
Author	Martin Havenhand, Chair	
Accountable Director	Not Applicable	
Lead Board Committee	Not Applicable	
Previous groups	Not Applicable	
Recommended action	Information	
Purpose of the paper	This paper updates the Board on the Chair’s and Non-Executive Directors’ activities and stakeholder engagement since the previous report presented at the Board of Directors meeting in public on 23 July 2026.	
Executive Summary		
Since the previous report to the Board in public on 23 July 2026, the Chair and Non-Executive Directors have maintained an active programme of staff, operational and system engagement. The Chair visited ambulance stations, observed Patient Transport Services and hospital pathways, met fellow trust chairs, supported a regional Non-Executive Director appointment process and attended the launch of the YAS Cultural Library. These activities provided direct insight into operational delivery, partnership working, staff experience and inclusion. The Chair also observed the People Committee and Finance and Performance Committee and undertook Copilot training. Non-Executive Directors continued to provide assurance and organisational visibility through committee activity, quality and operational visits, Freedom to Speak Up engagement, regional NHS discussions, public and staff-network involvement, quality improvement learning and mentoring. Their activity highlighted strong staff commitment, collaborative working and opportunities to share good practice and strengthen services. The report also notes forthcoming recruitment to Associate Non-Executive Director roles.		
Recommendation(s)	It is recommended that the Board note the update from the Chair’s Report.	
Link to Board Assurance Framework Risks (board and board assurance committees only)	10. Act as a collaborative, integral, and influential system partner. 9. Develop and sustain improvements in leadership and staff training and development. 6. Develop and sustain an open and positive workplace culture.	

Chair's Report

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This paper updates the Board on the Chair's and Non-Executive Directors' activities and stakeholder engagement since the previous report presented at the Board of Directors meeting in public on 23 July 2026.

2 VISITS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Visit to Driffield, Beverley and Bridlington ambulance stations

- 2.1 On 30 July I accompanied Adam Layland, Associate Chief Operating Officer on visits to these stations.

PTS observation shift

- 2.2 On 3 August I joined one of our Passenger Transport Teams (PTS) on a shift, based at Wakefield Ambulance Station. As part of the day I visited to the Patient Reception Centre at Pinderfields Hospital.

Visit to Airedale General Hospital

- 2.3 On 10 August, I joined our Chief Executive, Head of our 999 Service, and our Area Operations Manager on a visit to Airedale General Hospital where we met with Sarah Jones, Chair, and Foluke Ajayi, Chief Executive. We visited the emergency department and acute assessment unit and discussed the impact of their Out of Hospital Digital Hub.

- 2.4 Visit to Thirsk and Ripon ambulance stations

On 20 August, I visited our new ambulance station at Thirsk and Ripon ambulance station. I had an opportunity to speak with our Area Operations Manager and two of our Team Leaders.

- 2.5 South Yorkshire Interim Chair and Trust Chairs Monthly catch-up

On 26 August I joined the monthly meeting with fellow South Yorkshire trust chairs. Interviews have been held for the new chair who will also be the South Yorkshire Mayor's Health Commissioner. A recommendation is awaiting Ministerial approval.

Non-Executive Director Interviews

- 2.6 On 10 September, I was a member of the interview panel convened by North West Ambulance Service for the appointment of a Non-Executive Director.

Cultural Library Launch

- 2.7 As part of National Inclusion Week, on 15 September I was delighted to be invited to attend the launch of the Cultural Library at Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS). I spoke with Humera Mushtaq, Chair of Race Equality Network and she provided her insight about the project.

- 2.8 The Cultural Library began as an idea Humera developed through the Race Equality Network to create a welcoming space where colleagues can explore different cultures and identities, and share experiences through reading. As part of this work, a dedicated area in the HQ canteen has been established, the "Culture Corner". The Cultural Library sits within this space and provides books and resources that colleagues can browse, borrow and discuss.

- 2.8.1 Humera invited all our staff networks to suggest and contribute books. This collaborative approach is important because it brings our values of allyship and togetherness to life and helps ensure that the book collection reflects a wide range of staff voices and experiences.
- 2.8.2 The collection includes fiction and non-fiction titles covering cultural awareness, wellbeing, career development and practical skills. Colleagues can borrow a book, read during their breaks, or use the Culture Corner to read together and exchange perspectives. The Cultural Library is therefore more than a collection of books within the Culture Corner, it provides a shared setting that can encourage curiosity, learning and more open conversations across YAS.
- 2.8.3 As the collection grows, the Culture Corner could also become a useful YAS space for conversations about wellbeing, career development and shared learning.

3 BOARD COMMITTEE OBSERVATION

- 3.1 As part of the assurance committees annual review process, I observed the Quality Committee on 9 July, the People Committee on 1 September and the Finance and Performance Committee on 17 September.

4. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 On 4 August, I attended a Copilot training session led by Charlie Harding, Executive Support Manager and Copilot Crew Champion. The session provided an update on Copilot and demonstrated its practical uses.

5. NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ACTIVITY UPDATES

Amanda Moat

- 5.1 I have engaged with committee chairs and the Director of Corporate Services to develop a more structured and consistent model of risk assurance reporting from committees to the Audit and Risk Committee. This has been informed by best practice discussions across regional audit and risk networks
- 5.1.1 I revisited the new Hull Hub again to see the completed works, and staff are expected to move in shortly.
- 5.1.2 At a Mental Health and Learning Disability steering group meeting, I noted significant progress in developing the data dashboard, which will support care improvement discussions across all ICS systems.

Melanie Hudson

- 5.2 Over the summer, I attended online Team Brief and Senior Leadership Team briefing sessions.
- 5.2.1 In my role as Senior Independent Director, I attended my first formal Freedom to Speak Up meeting with the Guardians, Chief Executive, and Director of Corporate Services and Company Secretary. I also met the Guardians separately to discuss their responsibilities, my role and experience, and our ways of working.
- 5.2.2 Alongside the monthly Non-Executive Director catch-up sessions, I attended a Quality Committee assurance session with other Board members.

- 5.2.3 I also had a useful introductory session with Michael Wright as part of his induction as a Non-Executive Director.

Tabitha Arulampalam

- 5.3 In July I attended the NHS Providers NED Forum which focused on the progress of the Health Bill, the emerging era of devolution and the target operating model for getting the National and local NHS relationships right.
- 5.3.1 It was a pleasure to be on one of the STARS short listing panels in July and I look forward to the STARS awards evening later this year.
- 5.3.2 In August I went on quality visits to Bramley and Leeds General Infirmary (Accident & Emergency handover observation), I met the Team Leader of the Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) team and was able to discuss with him the challenges they face. I visited Manor Mill and saw the training areas on site which were in good condition and well used, including the onsite gym facility for the HART team. I visited Wakefield Station and spoke to the Area Operations Manager who is working well with Pinderfields Hospital colleagues to improve A&E assessment facilities and quicker access to A&E.
- 5.3.3 I accompanied our Race Equality Network (REN) colleagues on the welfare vehicle which was stationed at York Fairfields site. This half day was planned to increase awareness of the REN and to speak to staff about welfare issues, sign posting them to further information as required. I was also taken on a tour of the Fairfields York call centre.

Michael Wright

- 5.4 I joined a session with the Regional Chair of NHSE, The Regional Director of Finance and Regional Chief Operating Officer. The session was aimed at Chairs of Finance and Performance Committees.
- 5.4.1 The session covered the new approach to regulation outlined a move away from earned autonomy to earned intervention. It also covered regional operational performance and the current challenges. There was clearly an appetite for Chairs to work together in the future to share good practice.

Becky Malby

- 5.5 I visited Estates, Fleet and Procurement and was impressed by their commitment to YAS, their work and one another. The visit provided very valuable insights into the real world behind the papers we see at Board and committee. I met people who have given years and years of effort to YAS and who can see the difference they are making and have been given the opportunity to develop and grow, and whose ideas and professional views are heard and acted on. I witnessed the robust approach to ensure YAS procurement is effective and efficient.
- 5.5.1 I joined a Critical Friends Network (CFN) meeting where the 111 centre was asking for support to review the quality of their responses to patients and families. The CFN also includes partner organisations, who welcomed the opportunity to contribute to YAS. It was wonderful to meet new members of the public who have joined CFN making vital contributions.
- 5.5.2 As chair of the Quality Committee, I participated in a one-day Quality Foundations course with very enthusiastic colleagues from within YAS, committed to improving the quality of their work across all aspects of YAS activity. It was an excellent day.

- 5.5.3 I am just starting a reciprocal mentoring relationship with a colleague in 111 and looking forward to joint learning

Saghir Alam

- 5.6 On 28 July I visited the Patient Transport Service and Integrated Urgent Care call centres in Wakefield, where I spent time with call handlers. I was impressed by their professionalism, compassionate handling of calls and commitment to Yorkshire Ambulance Service values, as well as their positive approach to allocating patient transport and ambulances for urgent care. I would like to show my appreciation too for the organisation of an excellent visit.

6. ASSOCIATE NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS (ANEDs)

- 6.1 Katie Lees one of our two ANEDs left the Trust at the end of August.
- 6.2 The term of office for ANEDs is two years and comes to an end in February 2027. During October we will be commencing a new recruitment process.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report has no direct financial implications.

7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 This report has no direct equalities implications.

8. QUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 This report has no direct quality implications.

9. RISKS

- 9.1 This report has no direct risk implications.

10. RECOMMENDATION

- 10.1 It is recommended that the Board note the update from the Chair's Report.