

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting and Annual Members Meeting
of Dorset County Hospital (DCH) NHS Foundation Trust
held on the 15 September at 5.00 pm – 7.00 pm
in the Lecture Theatre, Dorset County Hospital**

AMM25/001	Chairman's Welcome	Action
	David Clayton-Smith, Trust Chair thanked everyone who had taken the time to come along this evening, and to all of our colleagues who are presenting and had brought information stands. The Chair welcomed attendees, outlined the meeting agenda and confirmed approval of the 2024 Annual Members' Meeting minutes. He reflected on the changing NHS landscape, highlighting the importance of maintaining high-quality care while responding to new national and system arrangements. He emphasised the Trust's commitment to partnership working, population health and collaboration with communities and healthcare partners. The Chair also recognised progress across the Dorset HealthCare and Dorset County Hospital Federation, developments through the Our Dorset Provider Collaborative, and the support of the voluntary sector and hospital charity. He thanked staff, Governors and Board members for their continued commitment and expressed confidence in the organisation's ability to respond to future challenges and opportunities while remaining focused on improving outcomes for local communities.	
AMM25/002	Highlights of the Year	
	Matthew Bryant, Chief Executive reflected on the challenges facing the NHS and the importance of maintaining high-quality, person-centred care through strong partnerships with patients, carers, staff and communities. He outlined the Government's 10 Year Health Plan and its focus on community-based care, digital transformation, treatment to prevention, noting its alignment with the Trust's joint strategy with Dorset HealthCare. He highlighted progress in partnership working, including the Federation with Dorset HealthCare, Integrated Neighbourhood Teams, the FutureCare programme and the Our Dorset Provider Collaborative. The Chief Executive acknowledged the financial challenges facing the NHS, praised the resilience and innovation of colleagues, and highlighted a number of service improvements and achievements during the year. He concluded by reaffirming the Trust's commitment to staff wellbeing, service improvement and working with partners to shape future services.	
AMM25/003	Performance	
	Jo Howarth, Director of Nursing and Quality, presented the Performance Report on behalf of Anita Thomas, Chief Operating Officer which included - • Urgent and Emergency Care • Elective Care – Referral to Treatment • Elective Care- Cancer • Elective Care – Diagnostics	

AMM25/004	Annual Accounts	
	Chris Hearn, Chief Financial Officer presented a summary of the Trust Annual Accounts for 2024/25 and gave some context of the financial situation. He acknowledged the contribution of colleagues throughout the system to bring about these savings. The Chief Financial Officer made a presentation which included: • Financial results; • Income • Expenditure • Capital Investment • Financial Plan The Chief Finance Officer reported that the Trust Accounts had been completed and signed off by KPMG, the external auditors. The Accounts had been approved by the Board of Directors, received by the Council of Governors and laid before Parliament. The Trust had received a clean audit opinion for 2024/25 from KPMG.	
AMM25/005	Quality Account	
	Dawn Dawson, Chief Nursing Officer presented the Quality Account and highlighted the wide range of activity. The Chief Nursing Officer highlighted the Quality Priorities for the Trust, including patient safety, patient experience and clinical effectiveness. The Chief Nursing Officer highlighted the key achievements for the Trust which included a reduction in the number of reported falls and the successful embedment of the Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF). She detailed the local priorities with the improvement plans and detailed the situation of reportable incidents for 2024 – 2025. She described the early Infection Prevention and Management (IPM) optimisation plan which is a 12-month planning document that sets out how an organisation will continuously improve its approach.	
AMM25/006	Constitution changes	
	Jenny Horrabin, Director of Corporate Affairs introduced the Trust Constitution Changes that had been made in April 2025. The Director of Corporate Affairs explained why the changes were needed to align the Constitution with the Dorset HealthCare Constitution to reflect the joint working between the two Trusts. She described the work that had taken place to facilitate the changes and the establishment of the Governor Constitution Review Group. The Director of Corporate Affairs outlined the main changes that had been made including - • Restructure of the public constituencies from five to three • Changes to the quorum requirements for the Council of Governors • Amendments to the Standing Orders • Review of the organisations represented by Appointed Governors	

	The Director of Corporate Affairs then explained the approval process of the Constitutional Changes and why the item is being presented at the AMM here today for completeness.	
AMM25/007	Service presentation	
	Dr Louise Curtis gave an informative talk about the use of technology in type 1 diabetes and an inpatient safety initiative to improve the care of people in hospital with diabetes.	
AMM25/008	Lead Governor Report	
	Kathryn Harrison, Lead Governor, advised that she was required to report on the Membership Strategy and confirmed that the Council of Governors holds a Membership Development Committee for all Governors to attend. She reflected on the elections that were held in July 2024. The Lead Governor talked about the membership engagement carried out by Governors and lead by Governor Jean-Pierre Lambert where Governors had visited a mother and baby group and a local knitting group to connect with members of the local community. The Lead Governor explained that the people in attendance at the community groups enjoy talking to the Governor about their healthcare experiences and there are future plans for Governors to attend two Church lunches and a coffee morning in Portland, as well as the plans for the Governors to attend a veterans group this week. The Lead Governor reported that consistent feedback from the Governor engagement work is praise for the staff at Dorset County Hospital and that they act with kindness. Other themes that the Governors hear are issues with transport and poor communication about their hospital treatment. These issues were being picked up by Dawn Dawson the Chief Nursing Officer regarding this and improvements are being made. The Lead Governor thanked all the Board members for all they are doing.	
AMM25/009	Questions from the Public	
	The Chair read out the previously submitted questions from Lynne Hubbard <i>Compelling evidence, which is publicly available, demonstrates that in almost all cases SubCos undermine pay and conditions that have been agreed with NHS staff: see the Health Service Journal investigation showing that only one SubCo of 17 reviewed maintained agreements under Agenda for Change.</i> <i>Changes to pay and conditions imposed by SubCos inevitably affect staff morale, retention and quality of service, breaking up the NHS team. In the face of such evidence why do health executives in Dorset wish to implement a scheme likely to degrade essential health provision for our communities?</i>	

	Nicola Plumb, Chief People Officer, thanked Lynne for the questions and confirmed that the decision to go ahead with the SubCo arrangement has not yet been made and acknowledged the uncertainty this has caused for colleagues. The Chief People Officer reflected that the feedback from some staff was there had been too much engagement and for others not enough and explained that the Trusts are in final dispute with Unison regarding the SubCo. Question from Dr David Cove <i>The major new development for expansion of emergency care is in full progress. I understood this was to deal with the undercapacity of the existing A+E which was built for a substantially lower number of patients (20,000 vs 30,000pa). This has resulted in frequent delays, corridor beds and ambulances and patients waiting at front door. I am concerned to hear that the reorganisation and substantial build does not include any expansion of A+E beds/cubicles. Is this true and how will the present undercapacity be managed?</i> The Chief Executive responded that the Emergency Department (ED) was expanded and has 47 spaces compared to 35, Critical Care now have 16 beds which can be expanded to 24. Rachel Wharton, Chief Medical Officer noted that the Urgent Treatment Centre would reduce demand on the Emergency Department by managing patients whose needs could be met through alternative urgent care pathways. Neil Howard, Public Member asked- Is Forston going to be dissolved? The Chief Executive and the Chief Nursing Officer answered that the previous Melstock House will be changing to a discharge ward. They had been on site today and acknowledged the work that is needed demographically.	
AMM25/010	Chairman's closing remarks	
	The Chair thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and to all colleagues for their presentations.	
AMM25/011	Meeting closed	