

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS HELD IN PUBLIC
ON 25 NOVEMBER 2025 AT 5:15PM
VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS / BOARD ROOM TRUST HQ**

Members Present:

Liam Coleman (LC)	Trust Chair
Natalie Titcombe (NT)	Lead Governor, Public Governor, Swindon Constituency
Chris Callow (CCa)	Deputy Governor, Public Governor, Wiltshire Central & Southern
Cecelia Olley (CO)	Public Governor, Swindon Constituency
Ashish Channawar (AC)	Public Governor, Swindon Constituency
Stephen Baldwin (SB)	Public Governor, West Berks and Oxfordshire
Vivien Coppen (VC)	Public Governor Swindon Constituency
Judith Furse (JF)	Public Governor Swindon Constituency
Lesley Hemingway (LH)	Public Governor, Swindon Constituency
Sarah Marshall (SM)	Public Governor, Northern Wiltshire Constituency
Emma Wiltshire (EW)	Staff Governor, Nursing & Therapy
Chris Shepherd (CS)	Staff Governor, Admin, Auxiliary & Volunteers
Sam Pearce-Kearney (SPK)	Appointed Governor, Wiltshire Council
Raana Bodman (RB)	Public Governor, Swindon

In attendance:

Emily Beardshall (EB)	Deputy Director of Improvement & Partnerships
Caroline Coles (CC)	Company Secretary
Luisa Goddard (LG)	Chief Nurse
Benny Goodman (BG)	Chief Operating Officer
Lisa Thomas (LT)	Manging Director
Jude Gray (JG)	Chief People Officer
Bernie Morley (BM)	Non-Executive Director
Sharon Scott (SS)	Corporate Governance Assistant
William Smart (WS)	Non-Executive Director
Helen Spice (HS)	Non-Executive Director
Cara Charles-Barks (CCB)	CEO
Simon Wade (SW)	Chief Finance Officer
Sandra Gordon (SG)	Non-Executive Director
Faried Chopdat (FC)	Non-Executive Director
Neil Clark (NC)	Non-Executive Director
Chris Burton (CB)	Non-Executive Director

Apologies:

Claudia Paoloni (CP)	Non-Executive Director
Caroline Borishade (CB)	Staff Governor, Allied Health Professionals
Tony Pickworth (TP)	Staff Governor, Doctors & Dentists
Leah Palmer (LP)	Appointed Governor, New College
Ray Ballman (RB)	Appointed Governor, Wiltshire Council
Julian Duxfield (JD)	Non-Executive Director
Mary Day (MD)	Public Governor, Swindon
Gordon Wilson (GW)	Public Governor, Swindon

Matters Open to the Public and Press

Minute	Description	Action
36/25	Welcome and apologies for absence	

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and extended his welcome to the new non-executives, associate non-executives and governors attending their first meeting.

Apologies were noted as above

37/25 Declarations of Interest

none

38/25 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Council of Governors held on 17 June 2025 were adopted and signed as a correct record.

39/25 Action Tracker

The Council of Governors received and considered the outstanding action list. CS confirmed action 09/25 was on the agenda for the People's Experience & Quality Working Group scheduled for 3 December.

The Council of Governors **noted** the report.

40/25 Questions from the public and governors for discussion

none

41/25 CEO Report

The Council of Governors received and considered the CEO report. Key areas covered:

1. Reminder of upcoming joint governor away session in Chippenham
2. Updates on risks and challenges facing NHS Trusts
3. Winter planning and contingency measures
4. Partnership working to reduce A&E attendances and improve patient discharge

CCB highlighted the need for greater visibility of risks and challenges with recognition that the NHS was under significant pressure nationally. LT explained the operating management and safety systems in place aimed to keep patients safe at a systemic level.

VG requested more information on turnaround team, whether the amount put aside for the Sulis Hospital came out of the overall 3 hospital budget and whether the reference to NHS online being funded by NHSE would lead to a reduction in funding. CCB confirmed the turnaround team were external, recruited on a fixed cost basis with learning gained shared across the other hospitals. Their role was to provide additional support during the winter period. The Sulis funding reference related to an income target. CCB advised it was too early to determine the impact of reduced funding.

AC asked for further clarity the Trust's confidence in delivering high-risk recovery actions safely, the risks if partners under-performed, how capital would be secured for safety-critical equipment, and what daily trigger points ensured performance stayed on track. It was noted that recovery was managed daily by balancing financial pressures with staff wellbeing and quality

oversight, while increasing system demand—such as a 16% rise in ambulance attendances—required coordinated and system-wide action. Challenges around staff wellbeing were acknowledged, with a commitment to maintaining

open and transparent communication. The system-wide savings plan was designed to mitigate risks associated with capital constraints, and planning and prioritisation were undertaken as fully as possible. No single metric indicated unsafe operation; instead, a broad range of safety interventions and safeguarding measures ensured the Trust continued to operate safely and effectively.

SPK raised concerns about winter pressures, flu rates, and ambulance attendances. LT confirmed contingency plans were in place, including a bed escalation programme and escalation framework.

The Council of Governors **noted** the report.

42/25 Lead Governor Report

The Council of Governors received an update from the Lead Governor which provided a summary of governor activity since the last meeting on 17 June 2025 which included welcoming the new governors.

The Governors and Board thanked NT for her commitment, contribution and support as both a governor and Lead Governor over the last 3 years.

The Council of Governors **noted** the report.

43/25 Chair of the Engagement & Membership Governance Working Group

The Council of Governors received the Engagement & Membership Governance Working Group Assurance Report which highlighted the detailed discussions held at the meeting since the last Council of Governors meeting on 17 June 2025. There were no issues to escalate to the Council of Governors.

The Council of Governors **noted** the report.

44/25 Chair of the People's Experience & Quality Working Group

The Council of Governors received the People's Experience & Quality Governance Working Group Assurance Report which highlighted the detailed discussions held at the meeting since the last Council of Governors meeting on 17 June 2025. There were no issues to escalate to the Council of Governors.

The Council of Governors **noted** the report.

45/25 Chair of the Business & Planning working group Report

The Council of Governors received the Business & Planning Working Group Assurance Report which highlighted the detailed discussions held at the meeting since the last Council of Governors meeting on 17 June 2025. There were no issues to escalate to the Council of Governors.

The Council of Governors **noted** the report.

46/25 PFI Expiry

The Council of Governors received an update from Simon Wade. The report covered the

- PFI transition,
- centre of Best Practice Survey,
- the category B state, future service model.

NT asked how the surveys would be funded. SW confirmed they were funded by the provider which was one of the reasons they were delayed so long. SW advised he didn't foresee any future delays.

CS asked about the workarounds employees had made within buildings, whether the surveys would pick these up and whether there would be a charge to correct the work. SW advised that the surveys would pick up significant changes which would be measured against the original hospital plans. Charges would depend on the scale of the work.

The Council of Governors **noted** the update.

47/25 CQC visit update

The Council of Governors received an update on CQC visit. LG advised that CQC were undergoing another transformation programme reverting to sector specific assessments. They were also under a lot of political pressure to increase inspections, and the expectation was that there would be more inspection activity in the coming year.

VG asked whether the early recurrence of corridor care, shortly after the opening of the new ED, was attributable to increased demand. It was confirmed that the primary driver was a rise in overall activity. It was also noted that while the quality of care within ED had improved, the physical footprint of the new department was not larger, limiting capacity despite the enhanced environment.

Questions were raised around whether the rate of increase in admissions had changed because the handover delay was down, forcing up the numbers of admission and how much of this was linked to not being able to get in to see their GP. BG advised the ambulance handover had been under 33 minutes over the last 6 weeks, but demand had also risen. It was debated whether the quicker offload of ambulances had either upped demand or was the new norm.

Although GWH had not yet analysed the data CCB advised that the ambulance trust had conducted audits (two days at Bath, and two days planned at GWH) to build a clear profile of demand and causes.

SM asked whether ambulances were redistributed to other Trusts and was advised that peripheral divers were sometimes arranged but in reality, all hospitals were under simultaneous pressure, especially during flu spikes.

The Council of Governors **noted** the report.

48/25 Elections

The Council of Governors received a formal update on the results of the elections.

The Council of Governors **noted** the report.

49/25 Lead and Deputy Governor

The Council of Governors received a request to approve the appointment of Chris Callow as Lead Governor. It was confirmed that the appointment of Deputy Governor would be communicated at the end of the week.

The Council of Governors **approved** the appointment of Chris Callow as Lead Governor.

Action: SS to communicate the results of appointment of Deputy Governor

SS

50/25 Public Urgent Items (if any)

There was a shared hospital admission experience. To protect the confidentiality of the experience it was agreed that LG would pick up the points raised off-line.

51/25 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 18 February 2026.