



SCAS 2022/23 ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING

Minutes of the South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust 2022/23 Annual Members Meeting held on Wednesday 13 September 2023 via Microsoft Teams

Board members

Professor Sir Keith Willett (Chair); David Eltringham (Chief Executive); Sumit Biswas (NED); Les Broude (NED); Dr John Black (Chief Medical Officer); Paul Kempster (Chief Operating Officer); Daryl Lutchmaya (Chief Governance Officer); Mike McEnaney (NED); Melanie Saunders (Chief People Officer); and Professor Helen Young (Chief Nurse).

Apologies

Apologies for absence were **received** from Board members: Nigel Chapman (NED); Ian Green (NED); Mike Murphy (Chief Strategy Officer); Dhammika Perera (NED); and Anne Stebbing (NED).

In Attendance

Mike Appleyard (Public Governor, Buckinghamshire); Andy Bartlett (Public Governor, Hampshire); Martina Brown (Medicines and Research Manager); Mark Davis (Public Governor, Berkshire & Deputy Lead Governor); Charles Deakin (Assistant Medical Director/Research Team Lead); Margaret Eaglestone (Membership and Engagement Manager); Laura Hinsley (Head of Public Sector Audit-England/Public Sector External Audit); Graeme Hoskin (Appointed Governor) Nora Hussein (Interim Assistant Trust Secretary); Loretta Light (Public Governor, Oxfordshire); David Lockett (Public Governor, Hampshire); Anthony Nicolson (Public Governor, Hampshire); Helen Pocock (Senior Research Paramedic); Helen Ramsay, (Public Governor, Oxford & Lead Governor); Stuart Rees (Interim Director of Finance); Ian Sayer (Staff Governor, 999); Nick Smith (Marketing and Communications Manager); Barry Thurston (Interim Chief Digital Officer); Susan Wall (Corporate Governance and Compliance Officer/minutes); Matt Watts (Deputy Director of Communications, Marketing and Engagement); Alan Weir (Staff Governor, Corporate); David Wesson (Public Governor, Oxfordshire); and Barry Wood (Appointed Governor).

Apologies

Apologies **received** from Charles McGill (Public Governor, Hampshire).

The Annual Members Meeting was attended by a number of staff, Governors, volunteers and members of the public.

ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING

AMM 2022-23/01 Chair's Welcome and Introduction

The Chair welcomed all to the Trust's 2022/23 Annual Members Meeting highlighting it had been a year of considerable challenge and change, referencing that fuller comments were available in the Trust's Annual Report which was on the Trust's website.

AMM 2022-23/02 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations received.

AMM 2022-23/03 Minutes of the meeting held 28 September 2022

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2021/22 were **APPROVED** as an accurate record of the meeting.

AMM 2022-23/04 SCAS Review of the Year

The Trust Chair welcomed the Chief Executive Officer to his first Annual Members Meeting and who presented a review of the year, highlighting in a slide set:

- he had experienced great enthusiasm and compassion from colleagues at site visits he had undertaken across all teams in his first six months at the Trust, which truly demonstrated SCAS values whilst operating under varied pressures and challenges;
- SCAS had made good progress in completing actions required following the disappointing inadequate rating received from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) following its inspection in April 2022. The subsequent Improvement Plan and activities recognised long-term challenges which were linked into the Trust Strategy;
- focus on the Ten Point Plan embedded in the Improvement Plan provided a road map in supporting high quality safe services for patients and the health and wellbeing of people in all activities;
- Category 2 999 performance rate remained below the expected target, however the Trust was committed to achieve the set intermediary standard by March 2024 and as part of the strategy to achieve this, the Care Navigator structure was being employed;
- demand on services had increased and innovations around development of clinical pathways had resulted in a significant number of patients receiving the right treatment more quickly;
- SCAS had been a major support during the pandemic and running the national Covid response services for England;
- Charity and volunteer services, such as Community First Responders provided a range of support in the community;
- the Trust was progressing in its bid to become greener and more sustainable, and a focus on green vehicles would assist this; and
- the Quality Account published at the end of June was available on the Trust website.

The Chief Executive Officer thanked the Board, teams, staff, volunteers and Governors in their hard work and commitment in what had been an on-going challenging environment in balancing operational pressures, quality and safety, workforce, and financials. The Trust Chair acknowledged the comprehensive review provided by the CEO that summarised the breadth of activities undertaken by SCAS within the context of national pressures on the NHS, Public Services, and Local Authorities. Relationships with stakeholders would be central in the provision of the quality of care provided to patients and public more generally.

AMM 2022-23/05 Financial review including the 2022-23 Accounts

The Interim Director of Finance provided an overview of the Trust's position from the Annual Accounts 2022/23 highlighting that the Trust had achieved a £47,000 surplus and had met its statutory financial duties in the reporting period. Updates were provided in relation to income and expenditure, cash, capital and cost improvement programmes. The Interim Director of Finance stated there were on-going challenges arising from the underlying financial position that were being reviewed and addressed in the current financial year and that there was a continuing focus in delivering value for money and in making improvements for the future such as increasing the number of electrical vehicles in the fleet and digital technology.

AMM 2022-23/06 Auditors Report

The Head of Public Sector Audit from the Trust's Auditors detailed the role that the auditors had taken in the process of reviewing the Trust's accounts in accordance with statutory requirements. She stated the Trust accounts gave a true and fair view of the financial position as at 31 March 2023 achieving the positive position of an 'unqualified opinion' and the Annual Auditors Report as a public document was available in full on the Trust website.

It was noted there had been five adjustments made during the audit process, however these had not impacted on the reported surplus position and had been flagged in lessons learned for future attention, with improvement points being overseen by the Trust's internal Audit Committee. Weaknesses in the reporting period related to Value for Money (VfM) around financial sustainability and to governance within the organisation, however matters were continuously improving positively in line with improvement plans whilst recognising there was on-going significant pressure within NHS finance.

A couple of questions were received from the public who asked whether the SCAS financial position had any connotations to other external agencies, Local Authorities or NHS England in relation to VfM and were there implications to SCAS flowing from performance of other systems within the geography necessitating different arrangements or penalties in SCAS achieving their budget; and in relation to governance and Well Led the slow progress for this against the Improvement Programme.

The Head of Public Sector Audit replied that a Foundation Trust was responsible for its own finances which historically had been an advantage, however pressures in the NHS were such that Foundation Trusts as well as other Trusts were experiencing challenges. She referenced that funding was provided from Integrated Care Systems with the provision of ambulance services being across several counties and that there were particular challenges being experienced by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight system. It was noted Trusts within the Hampshire and Isle of Wight system had set break even budgets where possible and that the SCAS Board had discussed and had agreed a break-even position with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight system from their previously reported deficit position. In relation to VfM and from an auditors perspective, they were focussed on arrangements and mitigations being in place to achieve VfM. The process of identifying areas for the significant 11% of savings required in the current financial year was continually being reviewed.

The Interim Director of Finance added that £14.1 million savings had been identified and there were organisational and system challenges to find the remaining £4.4 million savings required, however there were robust financial checks and controls over the Trust's financial position in

place. The Head of Public Sector Audit stated that in relation to Governance and Well Led, there were two areas of consideration. Firstly, addressing the criteria to exit level four of the National Oversight Framework (NOF4) and accountability and clarity in delivery of one formal cohesive Trust wide improvement plan which would be monitored by the Board Assurance Framework system. It was noted that six months on since the end of the reporting period, that progress had been made in recruiting to the Governance team. The Chair added updates on progress would be available at upcoming Trust Board meetings in Public.

AMM 2022-23/07 Research Developments

The Deputy Medical Officer/Research Lead provided an update on research developments covering: research funding; the three main research areas of Emergency research trials, Community research trials, and Staff research trials; and current research and developments.

Key points of note:

- research into ambulance services had developed over the last ten years;
- the main area of research SCAS was involved in was Emergency research trials, the results of which had supported improving patient outcomes and experience;
- research trials also linked with hospital studies in supporting the reduction of hospital admissions;
- results of research studies by SCAS had provided valuable information both nationally and internationally with many publications of research in peer-reviewed journals and presentations at conferences;
- research study results had assisted in the updating of Resus guidelines, mechanical chest compression devices and drug administration in cardiac arrest patients; and
- the Healthcare Professional Council had made it mandatory for paramedics to be involved in research which had been embraced positively by crews in the Trust in the development of research activities.

The Chair thanked the Research Team for their important work and highlighted that their endeavours were testament to SCAS being in the forefront of Emergency Research trials.

AMM 2022-23/08 Council of Governors' Review of the Year

The Chair thanked Barry Wood (former Lead Governor) and introduced Helen Ramsay the new Lead Governor who gave an overview of recent governance changes, the role and duties of Governors, membership update, activities undertaken; and the upcoming Governor elections.

Key points of note were: enhanced collaboration was in place between Governors and relevant Board members; there was a drive to grow staff and public membership to reflect the demographics that SCAS served; and Governors had engaged in supporting further understanding into the access to care in particular in addressing health inequalities.

The Chair thanked all Governors for the important work that they had undertaken in the organisation and for the focus to increase members to represent the diversity of the population the Trust served.

AMM 2022-23/09 Question and Answer Session

A question was received from a member who was involved in voluntary community development about how best to support messaging to a diverse community to assist people about how to access appropriate healthcare. The Chair advised this could be discussed in a

separate meeting following the AMM to explain it in more detail and would be supported by locality statistical data that had been gathered by SCAS. The CEO offered to be the initial referral point.

The Chair thanked all those who had contributed and attended the meeting. He closed by saying the public sector, for a while, had been under significant financial pressure and it was imperative that all in the Integrated Care Systems and Local Authorities understood the pressures and worked together to ensure appropriate and safe healthcare response in emergencies.

AMM 2022-23/10 Closure of Annual Members

Meeting closed at 18:33.