

Attending Board of Directors Meetings Held in Public

1. The Board of Directors meets in public every one or two months, in a venue in either Bristol, South Gloucestershire or North Somerset – please see our website for details of the venue for specific meetings. Members of the public and press are welcome to attend to observe these meetings but must be aware that they cannot take part in the discussion as, although the meeting is held in public, it is not a public meeting.
2. There are times when the Board needs to consider agenda items which are confidential and cannot be discussed in public. The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings Act) 1960 permits the Board to pass a resolution at the meeting to exclude the public and press from the meeting ‘whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business, or for other special reasons stated in the resolution’.
3. A copy of the agenda and supporting papers are published in advance of the meeting on the About Us section of the Trust’s public website at www.uhbw.nhs.uk (for UHBW-specific meetings) or www.nbt.nhs.uk (for NBT-specific meetings).
4. Nameplates for each Board Member are displayed on the table to enable you to identify who is speaking. Board Members consider each agenda item in turn. They may not actively discuss each item in detail; this does not mean that the item has not received careful consideration but may be because the matter has been discussed in detail at Board Committee level or because no one wishes to challenge the recommendations being made.
5. The Trust welcomes feedback and members of the public may ask the Board a question on any matter which is within the powers and duties of the Trust. Questions may be asked verbally at Board meetings, at the discretion of the Chair. The Chair will determine who is best placed to respond and how the response should be provided.
6. A maximum of ten minutes is allowed for public questions at Board meetings. This may be extended at the discretion of the Chair.
7. Questions can also be submitted in writing at least five working days before the Board meeting by emailing Trust.Secretariat@uhbw.nhs.uk or trust.secretary@nbt.nhs.uk (depending which Trust your question is intended for). Each question must give the name and address of the questioner and if the question is being asked on behalf of an organisation then the name of the organisation must be stated. No more than three written questions may be submitted per person. If the Chair considers the question appropriate for the Board meeting, the Trust will normally provide a written response, and the question and response will be read out at the meeting. Copies of the questions and the responses will be recorded in the minutes.

8. Written questions may be rejected and oral questions need not be answered when the Chair considers that they:
 - are not on any matter that is within the powers and duties of the Trust;
 - are defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
 - are substantially the same as a question that has been put to a meeting of the Trust Board and been answered in the past six months; or
 - would require the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.
9. Audio or video recording and photographing of Board meetings by members of the press or public is not permitted.
10. The Chair ensures that Board meetings take place without disruption and has the right to exclude members of the public if they cause disruption.
11. Anyone requiring any specific arrangements in regard to disability or special needs should alert the Director of Corporate Governance one week in advance. The Trust will endeavour to accommodate these requirements.
12. A summary of the key items discussed and decisions taken at the Board is recorded in the minutes, which the Board will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting. The minutes are published on the Trust website as part of the papers for the next meeting in the About Us section at www.uhbw.nhs.uk or www.nbt.nhs.uk

For further information please contact the Trust Secretariat via email at Trust.Secretariat@uhbw.nhs.uk or by post to: Director of Corporate Governance, Trust HQ, Marlborough Street, Bristol, BS1 3NU or Trust.Secretary@nbt.nhs.uk or by post to: Director of Corporate Governance, North Bristol NHS Trust, Trust Headquarters, Southmead Hospital, Southmead Road, Bristol, BS10 5NB.