

# Candidate Information Pack for Members expressing an interest in standing for election as a Public & Staff Governor (2025)



May I take this opportunity to thank you for your interest in the role and/or standing for election as a Governor of Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust - I truly appreciate your support.

If successfully elected as a Governor, you will play a very important role as you will be the link between members of our NHS Foundation Trust and our Board of Directors. In addition, you will represent our Members including patients, carers, the public, stakeholders and staff. You will also act as an ambassador when promoting Membership and the role of Governor.

As a Governor you will be responsible for engaging with our members and the wider public (at large) and will be encouraged to develop your own networks so to canvass views and forward these to our Board of Directors. You will also have a number of other key responsibilities, such as:

- Helping us plan for the future.
- Ensure that we are accountable to our Members alongside the wider communities that we serve.
- Communicating effectively with our Members and the public at large and developing your own networks for engaging with the wider community including minority groups.
- Canvassing the views and opinions of our Members and the public at large, in relation to our forward plans and forwarding these views onto our Board of Directors.
- Supporting our Board of Directors when formulating plans/making key decisions to consider the potential impact on the wider healthcare system/partners and the public at large.
- Helping to recruit new Members alongside promoting membership and the role of Governor.
- Safeguarding probity and good quality healthcare.

Governors of our NHS Foundation Trust also have advisory and guardianship roles with an effective Council of Governors being crucial to our future success.

We continually provide support to our Governors in order to develop their skills/carry out their role, and as a new Governor, you would be invited to participate in our New Governor Induction Training Programme.

In order to progress your election application, I would be delighted if you completed a 'Candidate Nomination Form' which can be found/completed on-line via the election website – [www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025](http://www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025) or by contacting the Returning Officer at Civica Election Services (CES):

Customer Services Helpline: 020 8889 9203  
Returning Officer Name: Ciara Hutchinson  
E-mail: [ftnominationenquiries@cesvotes.com](mailto:ftnominationenquiries@cesvotes.com)  
Postal Address: Ciara Hutchinson  
Returning Officer  
Civica Election Services  
The Election Centre  
33 Clarendon Road  
London, N8 0NW

Please be aware that failure to fully complete and provide all the required supporting documentation, outlined in the nomination form, will result in your form being deemed invalid and unfortunately will not be included in the Governor election process.

Completed Nomination Forms must be received by CES, on-line or in hard copy, by the deadline date of:

**5pm on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> August 2025**

(please do not return completed nomination forms to the Trust (MFT) as these will not be included in the election process alongside any forms received by CES after this date).

A list of 'Governor Elections - Frequently Asked Questions' can be found on page 31.

We do hope that this pack provides the information that you need to consider standing for election as one of our Governors. Should you require any additional information or if you have any queries regarding the role of Governor, please contact our Foundation Trust Membership Office:

E-mail: [ft.enquiries@mft.nhs.uk](mailto:ft.enquiries@mft.nhs.uk)

Freepost: Freepost Plus RRBR-AXBU-XTZT  
MFT NHS Trust  
Oxford Road  
Manchester  
M13 9WL

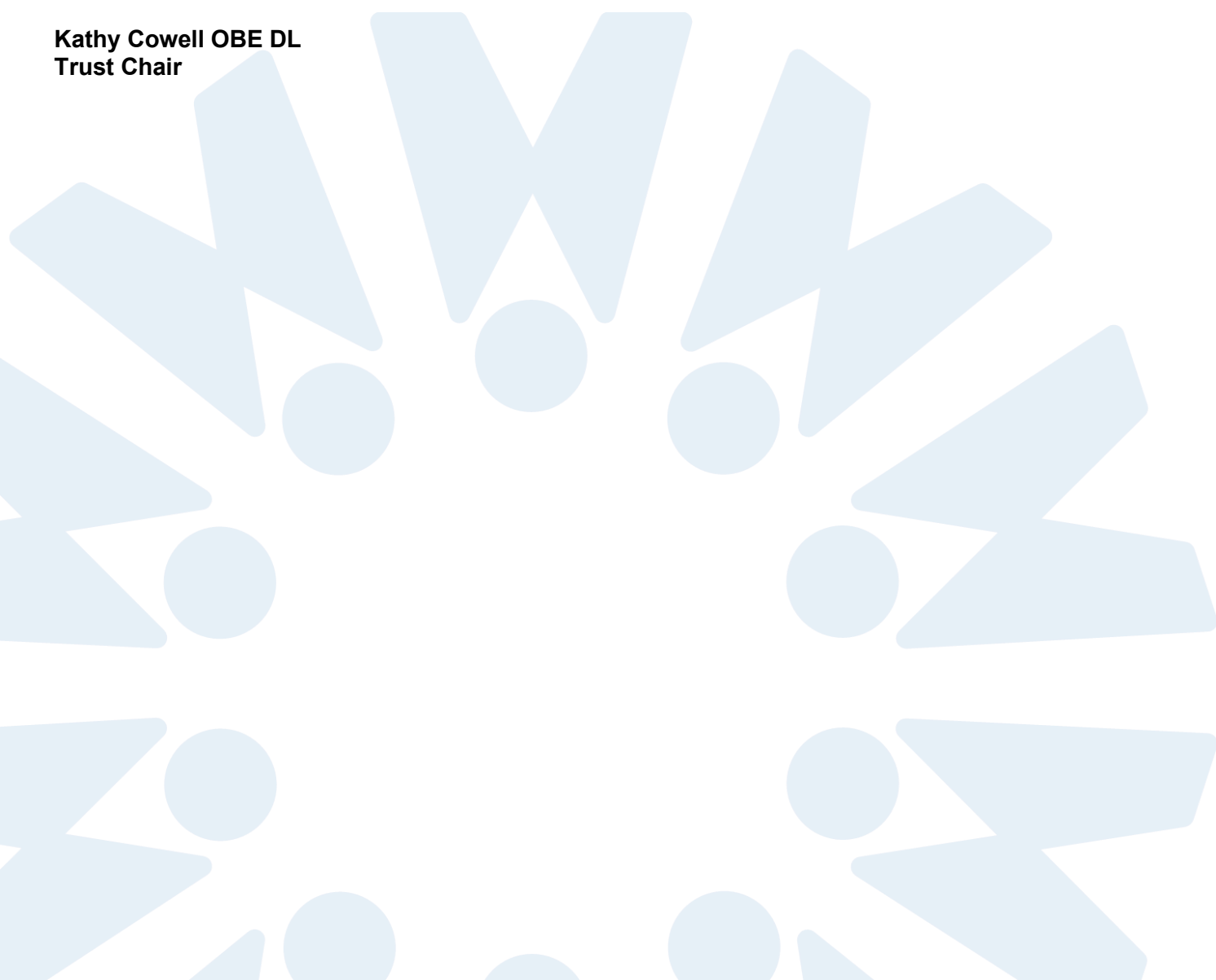
Tel: 0161 276 8661

Once again, thank you for your interest and I wish you every success in the election process.

Yours faithfully



**Kathy Cowell OBE DL**  
**Trust Chair**



## Our NHS Foundation Trust

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) was formed on 1st October 2017 and is one of the largest Foundation Trusts in the UK, employing around 30,000 staff. We are responsible for running a family of ten hospitals across seven separate sites, providing a wide range of services from comprehensive local general hospital care through to highly specialised regional and national services. Our hospitals include:



Royal Manchester Children's Hospital



St Mary's Hospital



Manchester Royal Infirmary



Manchester Royal Eye Hospital



University Dental Hospital of Manchester



Wythenshawe Hospital



Withington Community Hospital



Trafford General Hospital



Altrincham Hospital



North Manchester General Hospital

We provide care for people before they are born right through to the end of their lives.



We are the main provider of hospital care to approximately 1 million people in Manchester and Trafford including accident and emergency, diagnostic tests, outpatient appointments and day case surgery. We are the biggest provider of specialised services in England, which includes major surgery and highly specialised medicine. People come from across the United Kingdom to receive care at our hospitals. Our teams support people with both their physical and mental health, including mental health services for children and young people.



We also provide integrated community care to people in Manchester, Trafford through our Local Care Organisations and Integrated Neighbourhood Teams.

Manchester & Trafford  
Local Care Organisations



Research &  
Innovation

MFT has a strong reputation as a leading trust for research in the Northwest of England, recruiting more people to research studies than any other provider in the region, with the second highest number of participants recruited nationally. This allows us to give the people who access our services and our communities access to the very latest treatments and innovations.

## Our Trust Strategy 2024 – 2029: Where Excellence Meets Compassion



In March 2024 we introduced our strategy for the next 5 years. This is the first time that MFT has a single strategy that covers everything that we do as an organisation. We have developed it with support from our staff, patient and community groups and our partners in the health and care system. We believe that having one strategy for the whole of MFT will help us to be clear about what we want to achieve as an organisation, and the things that we will focus on to deliver this.

We called our strategy 'Where Excellence Meets Compassion' as it describes what we aim to be as an organisation. We aim for excellence in everything that we do, from the care our teams provide in people's own homes and in our hospitals, the education and training we provide, through to the research and innovation work we do to help shape the healthcare of tomorrow. And we are a caring organisation – we care for people from before they are born to the end of their life.

Click [here](#) to read the full Trust Strategy.

### The Difference We Aim to Make:

- More people being supported to live healthy lives in the community with fewer people needing to use healthcare services in an unplanned way.
- More people recommending MFT as a place to be treated.
- More people recommending MFT as a place to work.
- Make the biggest possible difference with the resources we have by delivering our financial plans.
- More people participating in and benefitting from world-class research and innovation.

### Our Objectives:

- We will work with partners to target the biggest causes of illness and inequalities, supporting people to live well from birth through to the end of their lives, reducing their need for healthcare services.
- We will improve the experience of children and adults with long-term conditions, joining-up primary care, community and hospital services so that people are cared for in the most appropriate place.
- We will provide safe, integrated, local services, diagnosing and treating people quickly, giving people an excellent experience wherever they are treated.
- We will strengthen our specialised services and support the adoption of genomics and precision medicine.
- We will continue to deliver the benefits that come with our breadth and scale, using our unique range of services to improve outcomes, address inequalities and deliver value for money.
- We will make sure that our staff feel valued and supported by listening well and responding to their feedback. We will improve the experience of all our staff experience by embracing diversity and fairness.
- We will offer new ways for people to start their career in healthcare. Everyone at MFT will have opportunities to develop new skills and build their careers here.
- We will achieve financial sustainability, increasing our productivity through continuous improvement and the effective management of public money.
- We will deliver value through our estate and digital infrastructure, developing existing and new strategic partnerships.
- We will strengthen our delivery of world-class research and innovation by developing our infrastructure and supporting staff, patients and our communities to take part.
- We will apply research and innovation, including digital technology and artificial intelligence, to improve people's health and the services we provide.

At the same time as developing our organisational strategy, we refreshed our MFT values – the principles that guide the way we work each day. Given the scale of the challenge – and of our ambition – it is important that we create the right conditions for our staff to do what we ask of them. Refreshing our values is just one part of an important piece of work we are doing to change and improve the culture of our organisation.

Set out below are the refreshed values that we have developed through this engagement:

- **We are compassionate.**
- **We are curious.**
- **We are collaborative.**
- **We are open and honest.**
- **We are inclusive.**

We have recently added a fifth value – we are curious. It reflects how we are always searching for ways to learn and improve, as well as focus on research, innovation, education and training. We have used these values to inform the aims, objectives and values that make up our strategy.

A refresh of MFT's Strategy will be undertaken following the recent publication of the Government's 10 Year Plan for England - Fit for the Future (July 2025) which outlines three key shifts in the NHS:

- 1) From Sickness to Prevention.
- 2) From Hospital to Community.
- 3) From Analogue to Digital.

These shifts are designed to create a healthcare system that is more efficient, effective, and equitable for all patients.

# To achieve our mission of: 'Working together to improve the health and quality of life of our diverse communities'...

People who we serve, our colleagues, communities and partners are counting on us, so...



## We are collectively getting it right, when we can all say...

- I listen to and respect the views and opinions of others, valuing their perspectives
- I promote empathy, understanding and kindness to others
- I support others to deal with and respond successfully to challenges
- I seek opportunities to continuously improve and innovate our care, services, research and teaching
- I make a habit of asking questions and seek to notice things that may have been missed
- I keep learning and support others to do the same
- I put the needs of our service users above all else to succeed together
- I share information with all that need it and work together with others to find shared solutions to problems.
- I celebrate the success of others
- I set a good example and behave how I would want others to behave towards me
- I give meaningful feedback and call it out if I see standards or patient safety not being maintained. I invite feedback from others
- I acknowledge when I get it wrong and use it as an opportunity for learning
- I actively ensure those around me feel valued and respected
- I consider other people's different needs and circumstances
- I treat people fairly, based on the unique things each person brings

More information about our Hospitals can be found on our website – [www.mft.nhs.uk](http://www.mft.nhs.uk)

## Council of Governors

The majority of our Governors are elected directly from and by our members and are the link between our Members (determining their need/views on the delivery of services) and our Directors who make the decisions about services (hold responsibility for delivery).

Governors canvass the views and opinions of our Members and the wider public (at large) in relation to our forward plans and forward their views to our Board of Directors. Governors also convey information from the Board of Directors to Members about affordability, service plans and health improvement initiatives and seek views on material issues or changes being discussed. Governors provide support to our Board of Directors to consider potential impacts on the wider healthcare system/partners and the public at large when formulating plans/making key decisions.

One of the important stakeholder groups, represented by our Council of Governors, are the communities that we serve. Our Governors are therefore the key link between the communities and the Trust, ensuring that our Trust is rooted in its communities, owned by the communities, and responds to community needs. We believe that the Trust is afforded huge opportunities and benefits as a result of embracing new ways of operating and engaging with our members and the public.

At MFT, we are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion of staff, patients, carers, families, members, and the communities that we serve and, as part of this commitment, we aim to have a Council of Governors whose membership reflects our diverse communities.

We believe that having a broad and representative membership community, and a Council of Governors directly elected from and by our members, is key to working together to better meet the needs of our patients and our local communities.



## Standing for Election as a Governor of our NHS Foundation Trust

Over the years, many of our members have been interested in standing for election as a Governor with some of their key motivations being outlined below:

- Passionate commitment to the NHS and to the Trust's hospitals and a desire to make a difference alongside giving something positive back to the NHS.
- To make a positive contribution to ensure patients and carers get the highest quality of care at the Trust and, on their behalf, seeking performance assurances from the Trust's Board of Directors.
- To use their personal experience as a patient/carers to help improve standards of care quality and safety, and the care environment.
- To help the Trust to consider patient/staff views when responding to any challenges it faces e.g. finance, restructuring, increasing demand etc.
- To be a voice/advocate for what matters the most to patients and their families, and to the wider community.
- To be a voice/advocate for staff and share their perspective with the Board of Directors.
- To give a voice to particular communities/groups e.g., minority groups, people with learning disabilities etc.
- To support the Trust in putting patients at its core and foster a culture of valuing and engaging staff.

## Statutory Duties of Governors

The statutory duties of Governors are clearly defined:

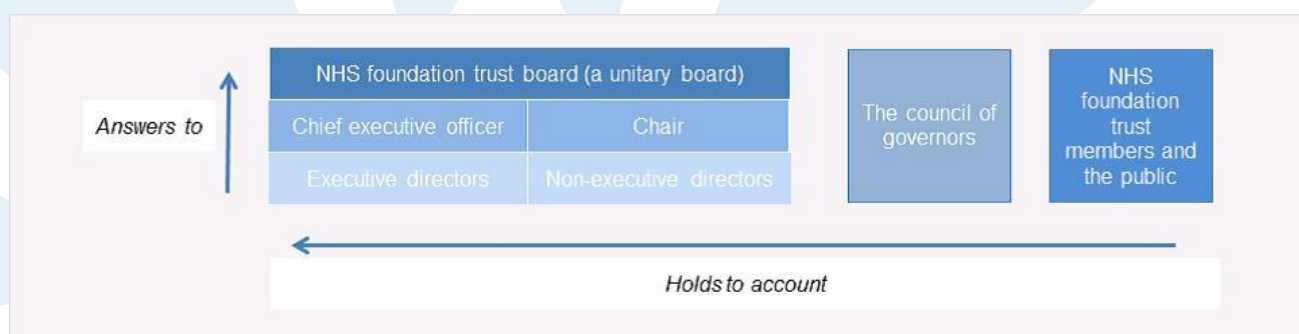
- To hold the Non-Executive Directors individually and collectively to account for the performance of the Board of Directors, and
- To represent the interests of the members of the Foundation Trust as a whole and the interests of the public\*.

New legislation (Health & Care Act 2022) requires Governors to form a rounded view of the interests of the public at large with some key duties of the Council of Governors being in the context of system working and collaboration.

In terms of holding to account, this is in relation to seeking assurances that due process is being followed, that the interests of members and the public are being considered in an appropriate manner and whether the Trust is at significant risk of breaching its conditions of its license.

Legislation also states that "*The Foundation Trust must take steps to secure that the Governors are equipped with the skills and knowledge they require in the capacity as such*".

## Chain of Accountability in NHS Foundation Trusts



Source: Monitor – Your Statutory Duties: A reference guide for NHS Foundation Trust Governors (August 2013)

The role of Governors in 'holding the Non-Executive Directors to account' is described by NHS England as 'one of assurance of the performance of the Board'.



New legislation also highlights that the interests of the public at large are to be the primary consideration in the Board's decision-making processes and whether the Trust's performance has been considered as part of the system/wider provision of health and social care. In addition, the Board is also to have regard in its decision-making to the 'triple aim' duty:

- *Better health and wellbeing for everyone,*
- *Better quality of health services for all,*
- *and Sustainable use of NHS resources.*

In addition to the statutory Governor duties set out in the Health & Social Care Act (2012) alongside new legislation (Health and Care Act 2022), the key functions of the Council of Governors (as set out in our Constitution) are as follows:

- To appoint or remove the Trust Chair and other Non-Executive Directors alongside deciding their remuneration and allowances, and other terms and conditions of office.
- To approve the appointment (by the Non-Executive Directors) of the Trust Chief Executive.
- To appoint or remove the Foundation Trust's Auditor.
- To receive the Trust's annual accounts and any report of the Auditor on them and the annual report at a Council of Governors' Meeting. As and when required (in keeping with guidance requirements), Governors are encouraged to help to identify and prioritise quality priorities and a quality indicator for the Trust.
- To provide views to the Board of Directors (BoD) when the BoD is preparing the document containing information about the Trust's plans, with Governors being required to:
  - Canvass the opinion of the Trust's Members and the wider public at large, and for appointed Governors the body they represent, on the Trust's forward plan, including its objectives, priorities and strategy, and their views should be communicated to the BoD.
- Approving significant transactions alongside applications by the Trust to enter into a merger, acquisition, separation or dissolution and as part of new legislation:
  - *Process undertaken in reaching a decision was appropriate and that the interests of the public at large were considered.*
  - *Council of Governors may be expected to consent to decisions that benefit the broader public interest while not being of immediate advantage to the Foundation Trust.*
- Decide whether non-NHS work would significantly interfere with the Trust's principal purpose, which is to provide goods and services for the health service in England or performing its other functions.
- Approving amendments to the Trust's Constitution.
- As outlined in the 'Governors' Code of Conduct', Governors must treat any information which they receive as confidential and must not disclose it to any third party without the express permission of an authorised representative of the Trust. Authorised information should be utilised by Governors to seek the views of members and the public on material issues or changes being discussed by the Trust and providing information and feedback regarding the Trust, its vision, performance, and material strategic proposals made by the BoD.
- Require one or more Directors to attend a Governors' meeting to obtain information about the performance of the Trust's functions or Directors' performance of their duties and help the Council of Governors decide whether to propose a vote on the Trust's or Directors' Performance.
- To prepare and from time to time review the Trust's Membership Strategy and its policy for the composition of the Council of Governors and of the Non-Executive Directors and, when appropriate, to make recommendations for the revision of the Trust's Constitution.
- To undertake such functions as the BoD shall from time to time request.

In keeping with the latter statutory duty the BoD asks Governors, during meeting attendance and when being presented with information, to also provide support by advising on issues and to assist in the development of ideas.

### Other Governor Responsibilities:

The majority (24 out of 32) of our Governors are elected to carry out their role on behalf of our Members (Public and Staff) with Governors also being responsible for:

- Affairs of the Trust are to be conducted by the Council of Governors in accordance with its Constitution and Licence (includes ensuring the BoDs acts so that the Trust does not breach the conditions of its licence).
- Led by the Trust Chair, Governors are to regularly communicate to members and the wider public at large, details on how Governors have discharged their responsibilities, including their impact and effectiveness on:
  - Holding the Non-Executive Directors to account for the performance of the BoDs.
  - Communicating with members and the public and transmitting their views to the BoDs and;
  - Contributing to the development of forward plans of the Trust.
- To respond as appropriate when consulted by the BoD in accordance with the Trust's Constitution.
- To complete an annual 'Governors' Declaration of Interest' (details recorded in the Trust's Annual Governors' Declaration of Interest Register and formally recorded at a Council of Governors' Meeting). Governors who fail to disclose any interest or material interest required to be disclosed under the Trust's Constitution provisions must permanently vacate their office if required to do so by a majority of the remaining Governors.
- To meet the '*Fit and Proper Person*' Test as defined by regulation 5 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 and/or conditions of the Trust's Licence, undertaking and clearing the associated checks/reviews as and when required (criteria outlined on page 22).
- To adhere to the '*Governors' Code of Conduct*' including Nolan Principles (code outlined on page 23).
- To complete and clear a 'Disclosure & Barring Service' (D&BS) check.
- To adhere to the '*Governors' Media Policy*' and '*Governors' Social Media Policy*'. In serious cases, when the use of social networking is considered to be inappropriate, this could be considered as a serious breach of the Governors' Code of Conduct therefore acting in a manner which is detrimental to the interests of the organisation and in keeping with the Trust's Constitution, this may ultimately result in an individual's term of office as a Governor being revoked.
- To adhere to the '*Governors' Communications Arrangements*' and the Trust's '*Code of Practice for the use of IT, Internet and E-mail*'. In serious cases, the misuse of any e-mail (MFT or personal), could be considered as a serious breach of the Governors' Code of Conduct i.e. acting in a manner which is detrimental to the interests of the organisation and, in keeping with the Trust's Constitution, this may ultimately result in an individual's term of office as a Governor being revoked and in keeping with the Trust's Code of Practice, it is also possible to be subject to civil proceedings or criminal prosecution.
- To elect a Lead Governor.
- To present to Members at the Trust's Annual Members' Meeting any proposed changes to the Trust's Constitution (where an amendment is made in relation to the powers or duties of the Council of Governors) and to approve the minutes of Members' Meetings.
- To remove Governors from the Council of Governors in the event that a Governor has committed a serious breach of the Code of Conduct; or they acted in a manner detrimental to the interests of the Trust; and the Council of Governors consider that it is not in the best interests of the Trust for them to continue as a Governor; or if a Governor fails to disclose any interest or material interest required to be disclosed under the Trust's Constitutional provisions.
- To expel a Member from the Trust if a complaint about a Member is made to the Trust Secretary that they have acted in way detrimental to the interests of the Foundation Trust.
- To attend Governor meetings and training (unless absences are due to reasonable causes and the individual is able to start attending again within such a period as the other Governors consider reasonable).
- To forward views in relation to the Trust Chair's and Non-Executive Directors' (NED) performance (documented via Governor Questionnaire and/or Lead Governor contact) and participate as and when required during the performance review process (telephone interviews). A Governor Appraisal Panel (Council of Governors' Nominations Committee) is established each year with Governor panel members being rotated to review/consider the Trust Chair/NED performance review findings and, as and when required, makes recommendations to the full Council of Governors for approval.
- To participate, as and when required, in the Trusts' Nominations Committee (Appointment Committee) during the appointment process of the Chair and Non-Executive Directors and make recommendations to the full Council of Governors for approval.

- To participate, as and when required, in the Trust's External Auditor Appointment Panel during the selection process and make recommendations to the full Council of Governors for approval.
- To participate, as and when required, in Governor Groups.
- Led by the Trust Chair, Governors are encouraged to self-evaluate their collective performance and effectiveness as part of the Council of Governors review (questionnaire) process.

Governors may also become involved in many areas not covered by legislation however, as outlined by regulators 'Your statutory duties: A reference guide for NHS foundation trust governors' (August 2013), emphasis is made that:

***“Governors do not play an operational role within the Trust. Although NHS Foundation Trusts may choose to involve Governors in hospital visits or volunteering, Governors neither have a right to inspect NHS Foundation Trust property or services nor a duty to meet patients and conduct quality reviews.”***

*Governor duties and responsibilities are subject to any legislative changes and will be updated to reflect any changes resulting from the recent publication of the Government's 10-year Health Plan for England (published July 2025).*

### **Governor Aim & Objectives:**

In keeping with the aforementioned duties and requirements, the Trust has developed the following Governor aim and objectives:

#### Aim:

- Governors proactively representing the interests of members as a whole and the interests of the wider-general public (at large) via active engagement and effectively holding the Non-Executive Directors, individually and collectively to account for the performance of the Board of Directors.

#### Objectives:

- Governor Engagement – Governors to be proactive in developing and implementing best practice membership and public engagement methods.
- Governor Assurance – Governors to act as the conduit between the Foundation Trust's Board of Directors and Members/the public by conveying membership/public interests and providing Board performance assurance.
- Governor Development – the Foundation Trust to support the developing and evolving role of Governor by equipping Governors with the skills and knowledge in order to fulfil their role.

MFT's Council of Governors has 32 Elected and Nominated Governors. 17 of these Governors being elected by the public, 7 by our staff and 8 being nominated from partner organisations (including a Youth Governor). The Chair of our Board of Directors (Kathy Cowell) also chairs the Council of Governors. The Council of Governors formally meet at least four times a year at their general meeting of the Council of Governors (meetings are open to the public).

The majority of our Governors (24 out of 32) have been elected to carry out their role on behalf of our Members (staff and public). Governors are therefore accountable to Members.

### **Membership**

The Trust has a membership community of over 50,000 members which is made up of both Public and Staff Members:

- Circa. 22,000 Public Members
- Circa. 30,000 Staff Members.

### **Public Member Constituencies**

Public Members elect a total of 17 Public Governors from the following constituencies:

- Manchester
- Trafford
- Eastern Cheshire
- Rest of Greater Manchester
- Rest of England and Wales.

Eligible Public Members are entitled to stand for election as a Public Governor (if aged 16 years or over) with Public Governors being elected directly from and by Public Members via the Single Transferrable Voting (STV) System.

### **Election Table 1 – 2025 Public Governor seats open for election**

The table below outlines the number of Public Governor seats that are open for election (please note, as highlighted below, there are no seats open for election this year in the Eastern Cheshire Constituency):

Public Constituency	Number of Governors seats to be elected.
Manchester	3 (Three)
Trafford	1 (One)
Eastern Cheshire	0 (Zero)
Rest of Greater Manchester	2 (Two)
Rest of England & Wales	1 (One)
Overall Total	7 (Seven)

The maps on pages 13, 14 & 15 illustrate the Public Member Constituencies for Manchester and the Rest of Greater Manchester areas. Areas that fall outside of these wards are captured in the Rest of England & Wales Public Constituency.



## MANCHESTER – PUBLIC CONSTITUENCY



## TRAFFORD – PUBLIC CONSTITUENCY



**REST OF GREATER MANCHESTER CONSTITUENCY**  
(outlined in green below)



Areas that fall outside of the above wards are captured in the Rest of England & Wales Public Constituency.

## Staff Member Constituency

Staff Members elect a total of 7 Staff Governors in the following 4 staff classes:

- **Medical and Dental** - Staff Class includes Consultants, Specialist Registrars, Dental Practitioners, Clinical Directors, Senior House Officers etc.
- **Nursing and Midwifery** – Staff Class includes Community Nurses, Modern Matrons, Nurse Consultants, Practice Nurses, Sister/Charge Nurses, Specialist Nurses Practitioners, Staff Nurses, Midwives etc.
- **Other Clinical** - Staff Class includes Allied Health Professionals, Healthcare Scientists, Technicians, Clinical Laboratory Staff, Chiropodists, Dietitians, Physiotherapists, Radiographers, Speech and Language Therapists, Health Care Support Workers, Medical Photographers, Healthcare Assistants, Trainee Nursing Associates, Pharmacists, Therapists etc.
- **Non-Clinical and Support** - Staff Class includes Administration and Secretarial Staff, Accountancy staff, Analysts, Managers, Directors, Domestic & Porters (Sodexo Staff), Medical Secretaries, Receptionists, Surveyors etc.

Eligible Staff Members are entitled to stand for election as a Staff Governor with Staff Governors being elected directly from and by Staff Members via the Single Transferrable Voting (STV) method.

## Election Table 2 – 2025 Staff Governor seats open for election

Staff Constituency	Number of Governors seats to be elected.
Nursing & Midwifery	Two (0)
Medical & Dental	One (1)
Other Clinical	One (1)
Non-Clinical & Support	One (1)
Overall Total	Five (5)

## Nominated Partner Organisations

We also have Nominated (Appointed) Governors on our Council of Governors with a total of 8 (eight) Governors being nominated from the following organisations:

- Academic Institutions (University of Manchester)
- Integrated Care System (Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board)
- Local Authority Councils (Manchester City Council and Trafford Borough Council)
- The Trust's Youth Forum (16 – 21-year-olds)
- The Trust's Volunteer Services
- Inclusive Community Groups i.e. Manchester Council for Community Relations or Manchester BME Network and an umbrella third sector organisation (latter organisation currently represented by the Caribbean and African Health Network - CAHN)

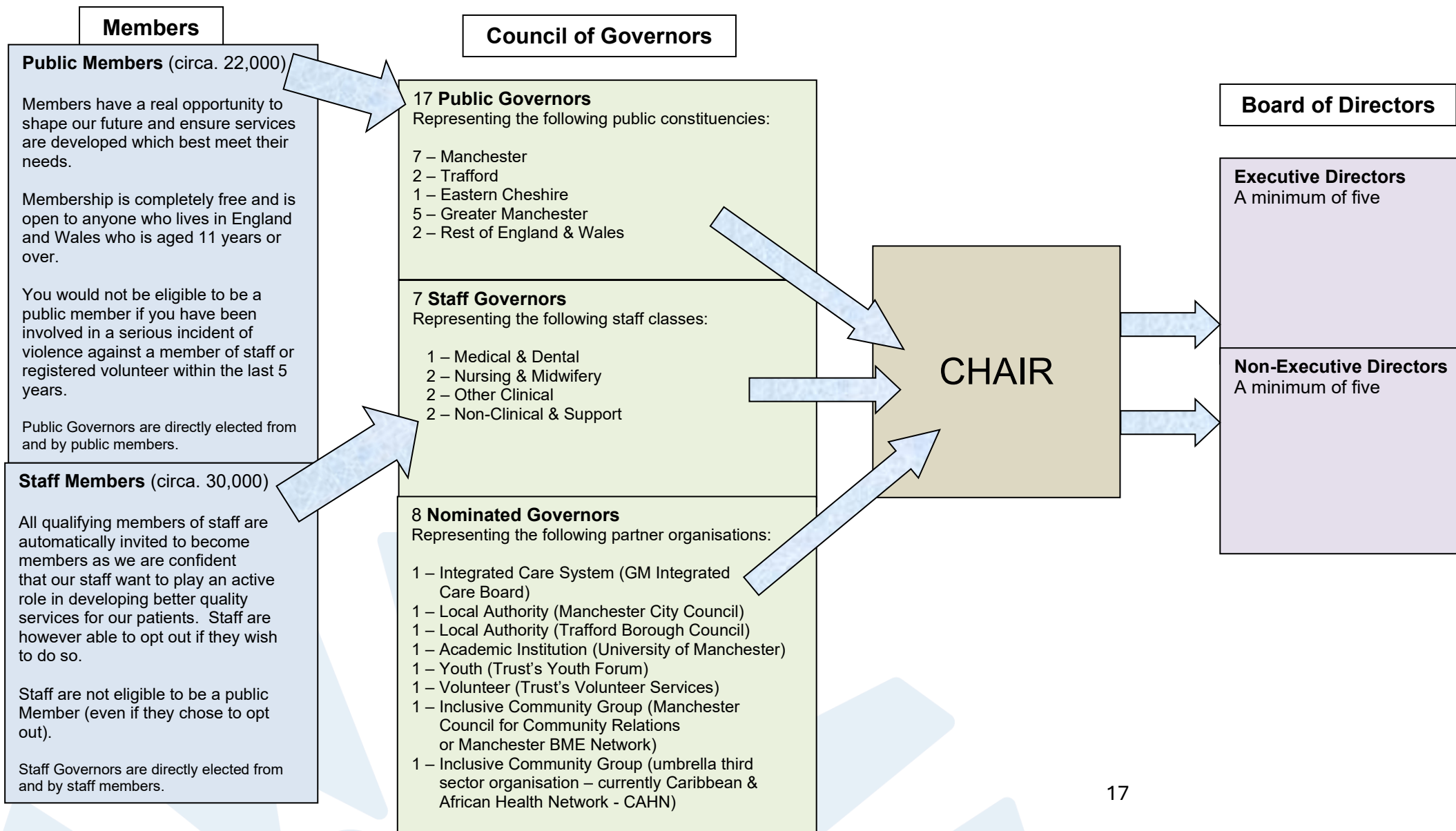
As a Trust with a large Children's Hospital, we are conscious that young people need a way to articulate their views. Therefore, we have developed our relationship with the Trust's Youth Forum to ensure that young people's views are represented on our Council of Governors.



The Trust has a membership community of over 50,000 members which is made up of both Public and Staff Members with Public Members electing our Public Governors, Staff Members electing our Staff Governors and Partner Organisations nominating our Nominated Governors.

## Governance Arrangements – Members, Governors and Board of Directors

The diagram below outlines the Trust's Governance Arrangements and the relationship between Members, Governors and Board of Directors.



## Governor Election Process

Our Governor elections are independently run by an external company i.e. Civica Election Services (CES). The election process commenced on, 17<sup>th</sup> July 2025 following the formal publication of the Notice of Election - available via our "Governor Election" webpage <http://www.mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/governors-and-members/elections> (found under 'the Trust' section of our website – [www.mft.nhs.uk](http://www.mft.nhs.uk)).

The Election Timetable below outlines the 2025 key Governor Election Stages and associated dates:

GOVERNOR ELECTION TIMETABLE - 2025	
Election Stage	Date
Notice of Election issued - Nomination Forms made available to Trust Members (aged 16 years or over where Governor seats are open for election)	Thursday, 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2025
Deadline for receipt of completed nominations	5pm on Monday, 11 <sup>th</sup> August 2025
Summary of valid nominated candidates published	Friday, 15 <sup>th</sup> August 2025
Final date for candidate withdrawal	5pm on Monday, 18 <sup>th</sup> August 2025
Notice of Poll published	Friday, 29 <sup>th</sup> August 2025
Voting packs despatched to Trust Members (where Governor seats are contested)	Monday, 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2025
Closing date for election (deadline for receipt of completed voting packs)	5pm on Friday, 19 <sup>th</sup> September 2025
Declaration of results	Monday, 22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2025
Successfully elected candidates formally start in office following closure of our Annual Members' Meeting (AMM)*	<b>*Annual Members' Meeting Date: Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2025</b> <b>Successful candidates start in office: Tuesday, 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025</b>

As outlined above, once that the nomination process closes at 5pm on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> August 2025, eligible members will subsequently be provided with an opportunity to vote (where Governor seats are contested) and provided with the details of the candidates that are standing for election with members directly voting for the candidate(s) that they wish to represent them using the single transferrable voting method (more details provided on page 19).

The result of the elections will be declared on Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2025, with newly elected Governors formally taking up their role following closure of the Trust's Annual Members' Meeting scheduled for:

**Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

**details to be posted on the 2025 Annual Members' Meeting webpage**  
(<https://mft.nhs.uk/member-meetings/annual-members-meeting-6/>)

**All candidates standing for election are invited to participate in this meeting - please make a note of this date in your diary.**

## Nomination Form

In order to stand for election, members must complete and sign a nomination form. Nomination Forms can be found and completed online via the election website - [www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025](http://www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025) and/or directly requested from Civica Election Services (contact details on page 2).

As part of the nomination form completion process, candidates are asked to produce a candidate's statement (no more than 250 words). Your statement is important as it provides you with an opportunity to tell members why they should vote for you.

## Civica Election Nomination instruction video - Preparing for An Election

For more information on how to nominate yourself and how to write an effective election statement, you can view this instruction video which is available via below link via the Civica election website - [www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025](http://www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025)

In addition, sample candidate statements can also be requested directly from Civica Election Services who will also be able to provide further assistance to complete your nomination form.

You can also visit the Trust's 'Meet our Governors' webpage, which you may also find useful to see our current Governor pen portrait information:

<https://mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/governors-and-members/council-of-governors/>  
(found under 'The Trust' section of our website – [www.mft.nhs.uk](http://www.mft.nhs.uk)).

## Single Transferrable Voting (STV) System

The Single Transferable Vote is a logical system of election designed to attain its objectives with economy, efficiency, and certainty. It ensures that as far as possible, every vote has a positive part in helping to elect some candidate, that no voting power is wasted, and that no voter has a greater influence on the result than any other.

This is achieved by giving each elector ONE vote, irrespective of the number of vacancies to be filled, and making that vote transferable. Voting papers are completed by placing the candidates into a preferred order using the figure '1', '2', '3', etc. The figure '1' represents the vote and is mandatory. The rest are contingency markings and optional but important as they can influence the final result. For that reason the elector is recommended to express preferences until he/she is unable to differentiate between any remaining candidates.

When votes are counted, the Returning Officer works to a Quota. This is the number of votes a candidate requires to be certain of election and is calculated to a simple arithmetical formula.

Any candidate elected with more votes than needed (i.e. above the quota), has surplus votes transferred to the remaining candidates – again using a set formula. Votes of any candidates excluded from the count through insufficient support are also transferred. In both cases the contingency markings come into play, and thereby avoids votes being wasted as would be the case in the first-past-the-post election.

It is important to remember that under no circumstances can a later preference count against an earlier preference and that failure to record preferences can limit the elector's influence on the election result.

In the event that Governor seats are contested, during the voting process (commences Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025), a short video can be viewed to explain how STV voting works via the Civica Election Services website [www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025](http://www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025)

### **Further Election Information**

As outlined in the election timetable, the nomination process formally opens on Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> July 2025 and all forms must be completed and returned directly to Civica Election Services by:

**5pm on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> August 2025**

**(can be completed/returned on-line - [www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025](http://www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025)**

**or in hard copy - postal address details outlined on the nomination form).**

**Please do NOT return completed nomination forms to the Trust as these will not be counted in the election nomination process.**

Please see the 'Governor Elections - Frequently Asked Questions' (page 31) for more detailed information about the Governor Election process or contact the Foundation Trust Membership Office (contact details on page 3).

### **Eligibility to be a Governor:**

- Governors must be Members of Manchester University NHS Foundation.
- Governors must be at least 16 years old.
- Public Governors must live in the area (constituency) that they represent.
- Staff Governors must have a job role in the staff class (constituency) they represent.
- Nominated (Appointed) Governors must be supported in office by the partner organisation that they represent.

You do not need specific qualifications to be a Governor, other than an interest in healthcare and a commitment to representing members and the wider general public, at large, to the best of your ability. There are, however, certain statutory requirements that prevent an individual from becoming a Governor, such as criminal convictions within the preceding five years, bankruptcy, dismissal from an NHS job within the preceding two years or disqualification from an NHS body.

### **You cannot become (or continue as) a Governor if:**

- You are a person under 16 years of age.
- You are an un-discharged bankrupt or estate has been sequestrated (un-discharged).
- You have made a composition or arrangements with or granted a trust deed for your creditors and have not been discharged yet.
- You are a person in relation to whom a moratorium period under a debt relief order applies under Part 7A of the Insolvency Act 1986.
- You have, in the last five years, been convicted in the British Isles of any offence and a sentence of imprisonment for a period of three months without the option of a fine was imposed.
- You are a Director of the Foundation Trust or a Governor or Director of an NHS body (unless appointed by an appointing organisation which is an NHS body).
- You are a spouse, partner, parent or child of a member of the Board of Directors of the Foundation Trust.
- You are a member of a local authority's Scrutiny Committee covering health matters.
- You are subject to a Sex Offender Order.
- You have been dismissed from paid employment with an NHS body in the last two years for reasons other than redundancy.
- Your position as Chair, member or Director of an NHS body has been terminated on the grounds that the appointment is not in the interest of the health service, for non-attendance at meetings or for non-disclosure of a pecuniary interest.



- You failed to sign and deliver to the Secretary a statement (in the form required by the Secretary) confirming acceptance and adherence of the Trust's Code of Conduct for Governors.
- You have been removed as a Governor or Member due to committing a serious breach of the Code of Conduct or acted in a manner detrimental to the interests of a Foundation Trust or that the Council of Governors considered that it was in the best interests of the Foundation Trust for you to not continue as a Governor or Member or for failing to attend Council of Governors' Meetings or for refusing to undertake any training which the Council of Governors requires all Governors to undertake and that any existing and/or future breach may result in being removed as a Governor.
- You refuse to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- You are not considered suitable by the Foundation Trust from the disclosures (convictions/cautions) obtained as a result of a Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- You do not meet the "Fit and Proper" Persons Test defined by regulation 5 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 and/or conditions of the Trust's License with associated checks/reviews including i.e. insolvency, bankruptcy and disqualified directors' registration alongside a health questionnaire).
- You fail to attend three consecutive meetings of the Council of Governors, unless the other Governors are satisfied that the absences were due to reasonable causes and you will be able to start attending meetings of the Council of Governors again within such a period as the other Governors consider reasonable.
- You have refused without reasonable cause to undertake any training which the Council of Governors requires all Governors to undertake.
- You fail to disclose any declaration of interest on an annual basis or at any-time that your circumstances change.
- You have refused to sign a declaration of your qualification to vote as a member of the Foundation Trust.
- You are prevented from being a member of the Council of Governors.
- Your tenure as a Governor of another Foundation Trust has been terminated for cause.
- Unless otherwise decided, you are currently or have previously been a Governor of an NHS Foundation Trust, other than the Trust.
- Being a member of the Staff Constituency you have a current and unexpired written warning which has been imposed following disciplinary action by the Trust arising out of your employment with the Trust.
- You are a vexatious complainant that:
  - has threatened, harassed, harmed or abused staff, patients and/or visitors of the Trust; or
  - is found by the Trust (applying the relevant Trust policy) to have abused or used inappropriately the Trust's or a predecessor Trust's complaints procedure, shall be refused membership of the Trust or where an existing member shall have their membership of the Trust withdrawn.

## **Additional Mandatory Requirements**

### **Declaration of Interests Compliance**

Members of the Council of Governors are expected on an annual basis, or at any-time should their circumstances change, to disclose to the Council any pecuniary, personal or family interests (including partner), whether the interest is actual or potential, direct or indirect. Interests declared are then formally recorded in the Register of Interest of Governors. The register is available to the public on request and via the Trust's website ('Meet our Governors' webpage - <https://mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/governors-and-members/council-of-governors/>), with interests

being formally documented via completion of a Governor Declaration of Interest Form and reported to the Council of Governors, on an annual basis (at a Council of Governors' Meeting). Governors who fail to disclose any interest or material interest required to be disclosed under the Trust's Constitution provisions must permanently vacate their office if required to do so by a majority of the remaining Governors.

### **Fit and Proper Person Declaration & Checks**

As defined by regulation 5 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 and/or condition of the Trust's License, Governors are required to meet the "fit and proper" person test. To meet this test, Governors are required to clear checks for insolvency, bankruptcy and disqualified directors' registration on a regular basis (or in keeping with a Governors' Term of Office).

In order to appropriately support Governors to properly perform tasks which are intrinsic to the Governor role, as part of the 'Fit and Proper Persons Test', Governors are asked to complete a health questionnaire (to receive Employee Health and Wellbeing clearance).

In the event of a Governor being or becoming an "unfit person" under the Foundation Trust's Constitution, they must permanently vacate their office.

Governors, as part of the Fit and Proper Person's process, are required to comply with the Trust's 'Fit and Proper Person Policy', undertaking and clearing checks/reviews as and when required in addition to also stating their compliance with the information below on an annual basis:

I declare that I am a fit and proper person to carry out my role. I:

- am of good character.
- have the qualifications, competence, skills and experience which are necessary for me to carry out my duties.
- where applicable, have not been erased, removed or struck-off a register of professionals maintained by a regulator of healthcare or social work professionals.
- am capable by reason of health of properly performing tasks which are intrinsic to the position.
- am not prohibited from holding office (e.g. directors disqualification order).
- within the last five years:
  - I have not been convicted of a criminal offence and sentenced to imprisonment of three months or more.
  - been un-discharged bankrupt nor have been subject to bankruptcy restrictions or have made arrangement/compositions with creditors and has not discharged.
  - nor is on any 'barred' list.
- have not been responsible for, contributed to or facilitated any serious misconduct or mismanagement (whether unlawful or not) in the course of carrying on a regulated activity or providing a service elsewhere which, if provided in England, would be a regulated activity.

The legislation states: if you are required to hold a registration with a relevant professional body to carry out your role, you must hold such registration and must have the entitlement to use any professional titles associated with this registration. Where you no longer meet the requirement to hold the registration, any if you are a healthcare professional, social worker or other professional registered with a healthcare or social care regulator, you must inform the regulator in question.

Should a Governor's circumstances change, and they no longer comply with the Fit and Proper Person Test (as described above), they have a duty to inform the Chair.

### **Code of Conduct Compliance**

All Governors are required to sign a declaration saying that they will comply with the Code of Conduct for Governors. In keeping with the Trust's Constitution, an individual cannot become (or continue as) a Governor if they failed to sign and deliver to the Secretary a statement (in the form required by the Secretary) confirming acceptance of the Code of Conduct for Governors.

If a Governor commits a serious breach of the Code of Conduct; or they have acted in a manner detrimental to the interests of the Trust; and the Council of Governors consider that it is not in the best interests of the Trust for them to continue as a Governor, under the Trust's Constitution provisions they must permanently vacate their office if required to do so by a majority of the remaining Governors.

Key elements of the Governors' Code of Conduct are outlined below:

As an NHS Foundation Trust Governor:

- I will commit to actively support the Trust's Mission and Values.
- I will seek at all time to support the Trust in its aims and priorities and ensure that its needs and interests are foremost in decision-making.
- I will act with discretion and care in respect of difficult and confidential issues.
- I will maintain confidentiality with regard to information gained.
- I will uphold the seven principles of public life as outlined by the Nolan Committee.
- I will acknowledge that the Trust is an apolitical organisation.
- If I am a member of a trade union, political party or other organisation, I recognise that I will not be representing those organisations, but will be representing the public and staff that elected me or the organisation that nominated me.
- I will be honest and act with integrity and probity at all times.
- I will seek to ensure that my Governor colleagues are valued and that judgements about them are consistent, fair and unbiased and are properly founded.
- I will show my commitment to working as a team member by working with my colleagues in the NHS and wider community.
- I will seek to ensure that the membership of the constituency, area or category that I represent is properly informed and able to influence services.
- I will seek to ensure that no one is discriminated against because of their religion, belief, race, colour, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, age, social or economic status or national origin.
- I will at all times comply with the Constitution, Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions of the Trust.
- I will seek to ensure that the best interests of the public, patients, carers and staff are upheld in decision-making and that decisions are not improperly influenced by gifts or inducements.
- I will support and assist the Chief Executive of the Trust in his responsibility to answer to the Independent Regulator, Commissioners and the Public in terms of fully and faithfully declaring and explaining the use of resources and the performance of the total NHS in putting national policy into practice and delivering targets.

## Nolan Principles

The Nolan Committee sets out 'Seven Principles of Public Life' which apply to all who serve the public in any way and which includes NHS Foundation Trust Governors. These are:

**Selflessness** - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

**Integrity** - Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

**Objectivity** - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

**Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the Public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

**Openness** - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

**Honesty** - Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

**Leadership** - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

## **Disclosure and Barring Service Check (DBS)**

In keeping with the Trust's Constitution, all Governors are required to consent to, and clear, a Disclosure and Barring Service check. This check is designed to confirm whether you have a criminal record. This is important for an organisation which has responsibility for both young and vulnerable members of the public. Clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service allows the organisation to confidently allow individuals to carry out their Governor role.

Please be aware that a standard DBS disclosure certificate contains information about **any** convictions, cautions (including reprimands and final warnings) which are not 'protected' as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order) 1975 (as amended). More information about the DBS, can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

In keeping with the Trust's Constitution, a Governor will be disqualified if on the basis of any disclosures (convictions/cautions) obtained through a Disclosure and Barring Service check, he/she is not considered suitable by the Trust or that such a person are such that it would be inappropriate for him/her to become or continue as a Governor or it would adversely affect public confidence in the Trust or otherwise bring the Trust into disrepute.

## **Membership Engagement & Recruitment Activities and Guidance Compliance**

The completion/clearance of MFT's Governor Governance process including receiving clearance from a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check is a mandatory requirement for all Governors in order for them to fully take up/continue in their role. Clearance from the DBS check is specifically required before a Governor can undertake/participate in any type of Membership recruitment or engagement activity. Once completed, and clearance subsequently received, the Trust's 'Membership Recruitment & Engagement Guidance' is to be followed and adhered to at all times.

In serious causes, any practices/behaviours which are considered to be inappropriate, may be considered as a serious breach of the Governors' Code of Conduct i.e. acting in a manner which is detrimental to the interests of the organisation and in keeping with MFT's Constitution, this may ultimately result in an individual's term of office as a Governor being revoked.

The COVID-19 pandemic was an extremely difficult time for us all and as associated restrictions have been relaxed, proactive steps have been taken over recent years to reintroduce some engagement initiatives. Details of future engagement opportunities, meetings and events, will be promoted to Governors and Members via appropriate communication channels. Of note, all Membership and Governor meeting arrangements, which are open to the public, will continue to remain under review to ensure adherence to appropriate infection prevention and control guidance, going forward.

## **Other Policies and Guidelines**

In addition to the above governance requirements (Declaration of Interests Compliance, Fit & Proper Person's Declaration & Checks, Code of Conduct Compliance, Disclosure and Barring Service Check, Trust's Membership Recruitment and Engagement Guidance Compliance), Governors are also required to comply with the following Policies/Guidelines/Rules:

- Trust's Code of Practice for the use of IT, Internet and E-mail.
- Governor Communications – Guidance.
- Social Media – A Guide for Governors.
- Trust Media Policy.
- Governor Meeting Ground Rules.

## **Governance Arrangements**

In order to progress a Governor's start in office, individuals are requested to review/complete the following:

- Security/Identification Badge application form.
- Contact Information Form.
- Governor Skill Mix Matrix.
- Governor Photograph Consent Form.



All new Governor Forms, Policies and Guidelines will be issued to successfully elected individuals following their formal announcement at our Annual Members' Meeting (29<sup>th</sup> September 2025), and we invite all candidates to participate (meeting details on page 18).

We also ask new Governors to provide a digital photograph and pen portrait information (max. 250 words) as this information is displayed on our website for members of the public to view. Support is provided by the Trust's Communication Team to produce this pen portrait information with key information being taken directly from a candidate's election statement (please note that references to external companies/organisations are anonymised).

**Please note that the Trust will not issue Security ID Badges or E-mail accounts until all Governance arrangements (including Disclosure and Barring Service Check) have been fully completed, processed and cleared.**

### **Governor Meetings**

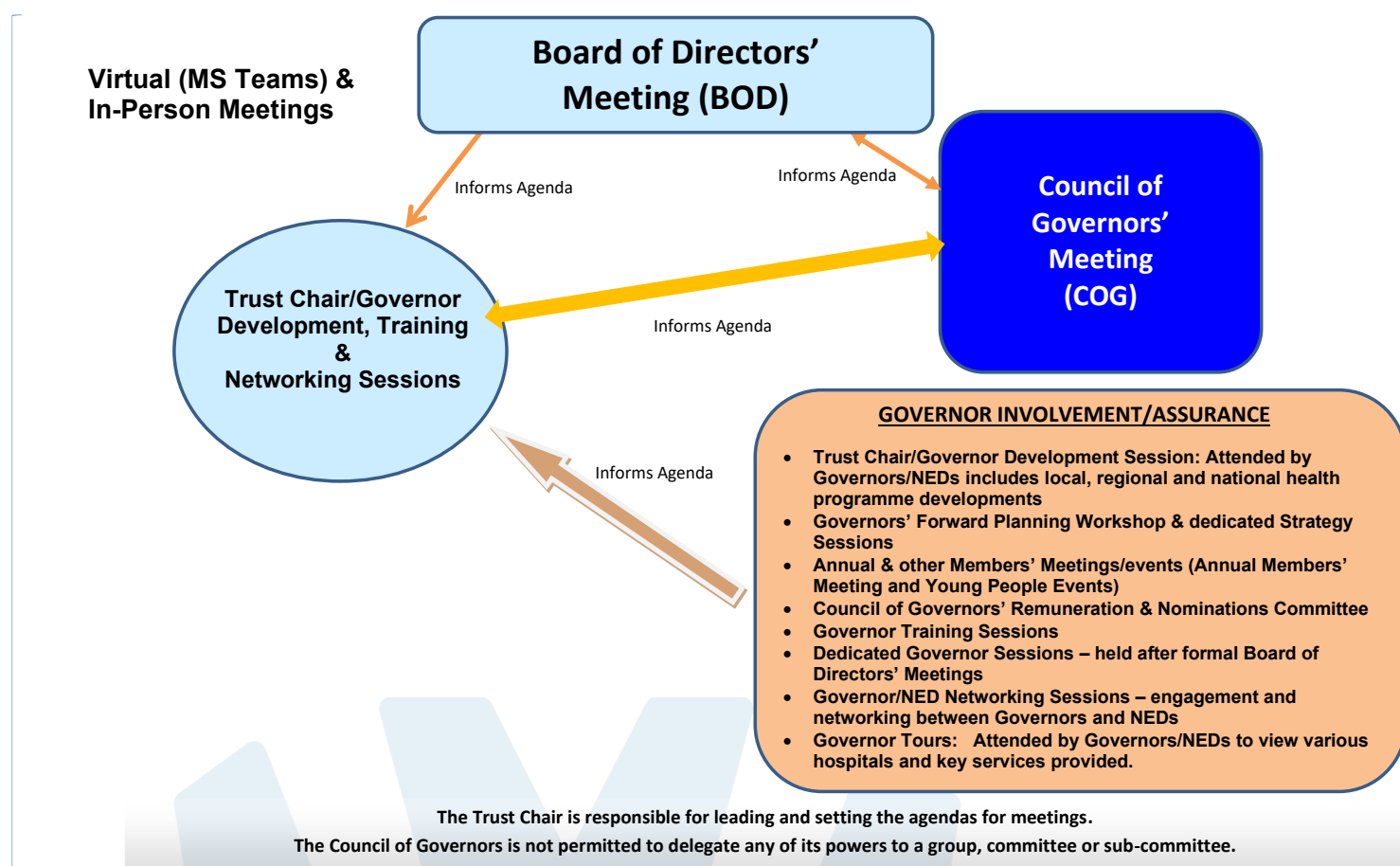
The Council of Governors discharges its statutory duties at its formal general meetings of the Council of Governors which usually meet four times during the course of a year in addition to attending a fifth statutory event namely the Trust's Annual Members' Meeting. Governor meetings are predominantly held during the day (anytime between 9.00 am – 5.00 pm).

As outlined in MFT's Constitution, Governors are expected to attend/participate in Council of Governors' Meetings and key Governor training, with the Trust's Constitution outlining that a person holding office as a Governor shall immediately cease to do so if:

*“they fail to attend three consecutive meetings of the Council of Governors, unless the other Governors are satisfied that the absences were due to reasonable causes and they will be able to start attending meetings of the Council of Governors again within such a period as the other Governors consider reasonable.”*

*“they have refused without reasonable cause to undertake any training which the Council of Governors requires all Governors to undertake.”*

As previously outlined, Governors are the link between our members and the wider public (at large), determining their needs and views on the delivery of the Trust's services, and our Directors who make the decisions and hold responsibility for services. In order to enhance this process, the Trust (supported by the Council of Governors), has established a 'Governor Meeting Framework' (please see diagram below), with the resultant meeting structure including the establishment of the following statutory and non-statutory meetings:



In keeping with national guidance (published by NHS England), Governor 'face-to-face' meetings were stood down throughout the COVID-19 National Emergency. New ways of working were established which included holding 'virtual' (MS Teams) Governor Meetings/Sessions alongside issuing electronic briefings.

These 'virtual' meeting arrangements enabled Governors to actively engage, have open and transparent discussions and seek appropriate assurances from the Trust Chair and participating NEDs, alongside providing support throughout the challenging period.

As COVID-19 restrictions have been withdrawn, we have reintroduced some face-to-face meetings and events, alongside continuing to host virtual meetings/sessions. Membership and Governor meeting arrangements continues to remain under review, to ensure adherence to national infection prevention and control guidance going forward.

In keeping with NHSE's requirements, the Trust Chair is responsible for leading and setting meeting agendas with Governors being required to comply with the following Governor Meeting Ground Rules:

### **Governor Ground Rules for Meetings - Face to Face & Virtual (MS Teams - Teleconferencing/Videoconferencing)**

- In preparation of a virtual 'MS Teams' (Videoconferencing/Teleconferencing) meeting/session, Governors should ensure that they are in a room/area which is 'PRIVATE' enabling Governors to participate in discussions in privacy, without interruptions/distractions, and out of earshot of all family members, colleagues etc.

- Governors are to make any necessary preparations to ensure devices (mobile/laptop/PC/iPads etc.) is set up (and ready to use) in advance of the meeting start time alongside ensuring their environment is conducive to their meeting needs e.g. refreshments prepared, sufficient lighting (if using video facilities), headset tested/working etc.
- Governors are expected to join the meeting/session at the specified start-time (on time), however if unforeseen circumstances result in a Governor being late in joining a session, ensure that the Trust Chair (or meeting organiser) is aware that you have joined the session when it is appropriate to do so i.e. when the Trust Chair invites Governors to submit questions and/or share their comments or via the MS Teams chat facilities (otherwise your apologies will be formally noted).
- Governors are expected to participate/stay for the full duration of the meeting/session (supporting the Meeting Chair to enable meeting/session to finish on time).
- The following etiquette, should be adopted, when participating in the meeting/session:
  - All devices (mobile/laptop/PC/iPads etc.) should be put on mute once the meeting/session has formally started and should remain on mute for the duration of the meeting (only being taken off mute once Governors are invited to submit any questions or make an observation) – it is advisable to locate and test this function out on your device in advance of the meeting session (and not during the meeting);
  - To prevent any possible meeting disruptions (feedback, beeping noises, automated voice messages etc.) please do not use any other applications on your device during the meeting e.g. text messages, e-mails etc.;
  - In the event that a Governor receives, or, needs to make an urgent call (to deal with a matter that cannot wait until the meeting has formally concluded), Governors should discretely leave the virtual meeting session (i.e. hang up from link/call) and re-join when able to do so;
  - Governors are expected to actively listen and, where possible, refrain from asking any questions or make observations during information sharing;
  - Once the Trust Chair/Director has finished providing an overview/information, Governors will be invited to ask questions and/or share their observations;
  - If a Governor wishes to ask a question, this should be done by raising your hand via the MS Team facility (if participating via MS Teams video link), or, Governors should call out their name if participating via MS Teams teleconferencing facility. The Trust Chair will note any Governor raised hand facilities pressed and/or name and will call out one Governor's name, in turn, to ask their specific question or make their observation (only one person should speak at any one time, speaking clearly into their device – please ensure the mute facility is deactivated when speaking and then re-activated once you've shared your question with the audience);
  - In the event that a response to a question or comment made is not understood, Governors may ask the 'Presenter', via the Trust Chair, for further clarity/explanation.
  - Please be mindful that a number of Governors may wish to ask a question on a particular subject matter and therefore, be considerate, and help to ensure everyone has sufficient opportunity/time to ask their question.
- When speaking, Governors are requested to use polite, plain and simple language, taking care not to talk for too long or too hastily.
- Please respect and value that everyone is different and will think differently, with Governors encouraged to embrace differing views and opinions.
- All attempts should be made to avoid using abbreviations, with words being spoken in full, e.g. Accident and Emergency rather than A&E.
- Recordings of meetings are not permitted, under any circumstances, unless the express permission has been granted by the Trust Chair or an authorised representative of the Trust.

### **Governor Term of Office**

As outlined in the Trust's Constitution, an Elected (Public and Staff) or Nominated Governor term of office shall not exceed three years with individuals taking up the role immediately after the Annual Members' Meeting or other Members' Meeting at which their election/nomination results are announced.

At the end of a Governor's term of office, the individual may offer themselves for re-election or re-nomination, however an Elected or Nominated (Appointed) Governor may not hold office for more than three terms or a maximum of nine consecutive years, whichever is the shorter in duration, and shall not be eligible for re-election or re-nomination if he has already held office for more than six consecutive years.

Of note, an Elected or Nominated (Appointed) Governor may not stand again for re-election or re-appointment as a Governor until three years has elapsed since their resignation or their completion of the maximum three terms or nine consecutive years as a Governor.

Governors will cease to hold office if they no longer live in the area of their constituency (Public Governors), no longer work for the Trust or hold a position in the staff class that they represent (Staff Governors) or are no longer supported in office by the partner organisation that they represent (Nominated/Appointed Governors).

Following the recent publication of the Government's 10-year Health Plan for England (published in July 2025), Governors who are elected/nominated during this 2025 process will have a two-year term of office, subject to any legislative changes.

### **Termination of Office**

Individuals will cease to be a Governor if:

- They resign in writing to the Trust's Secretary.
- They do not attend three consecutive Council of Governors' Meetings unless they are able to give a reasonable reason or they are able to start attending meetings again.
- They do not take part in the training programmes which are considered essential for all Governors unless they have a reasonable reason.
- They are no longer a member of the constituency, area or staff class that they were elected to represent (this applies to elected Governors – Public and Staff).
- The organisation they represent, in the case of Nominated (Appointed) Governors, terminates their appointment.
- A change in their circumstances and/or a false declaration is made during the nomination process which means that they no longer (or did not) meet the criteria for being a Governor.
- They fail to comply and clear the Trust's mandatory requirements (Declaration of Interests, Fit and Proper Persons Test including associated checks/reviews, Code of Conduct Compliance, Disclosure and Barring Service check, Membership Engagement & Recruitment Guidance Compliance, alongside adherence to Governor Meeting Ground Rules, Governor Communication Guidance and Social/Media and Media Policies).

A more detailed list of specifications can be found in the Trust's Constitution (copy available via the Foundation Trust Membership Office – contact details on page 3).

**All Governors positions (Public, Staff and Appointed) are subject to the fulfilment of the aforementioned eligibility criteria with Governors ceasing to hold office should these criteria be/become unfulfilled.**

### **Additional Governor Information**

#### **Support for Governors**

If successfully elected as a new Governor, you will be invited to participate in an Induction Programme which is aimed to ensure that you fully understand the role and responsibilities of a Governor.

You will also be invited to attend/participate in an induction meeting with the Trust Chair at which you will be provided information which is relevant to the key duties of your Governor role in addition to information about our NHS Foundation Trust and the services that we provide.

Ongoing support for the Trust's Council of Governors is provided by the Director of Corporate Business/Trust Secretary and Foundation Trust Membership Manager/Deputy Trust Board Secretary. In addition, the Trust's Lead Governor also acts as mentor to new Governors with the Trust also establishing a 'Governor Buddy' Scheme which identifies two existing Governors who also provide additional support to new Governors (e.g. advice, mentoring etc.), in their new role.

#### **Additional Support**

As an NHS Foundation Trust, we are committed to establishing a truly representative membership and welcome Members and Governors from all backgrounds and protected characteristics. We do not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

We are committed to supporting Governors so that they are able to undertake their role to the best of their ability and we recognise that you may need additional support in order for you to do this. We appreciate that additional support may be required for a variety of reasons including: -

- Physical accessibility (e.g. disability, older or frail people).
- Language.
- Culture and traditions.
- Social expectations (young people).
- Lifestyles.

In order to appropriately support Governors, as part of the Governors' Governance process (Fit and Proper Persons Test), new Governors are asked to complete a health questionnaire as we appreciate that disabilities and support needs are of a diverse nature.

If at any point a Governor considers him or herself to have a disability and/or requires additional support in relation to their Governor role, or for any other reason, support arrangements will be made via the Director of Corporate Business/Trust Secretary and/or Foundation Trust Membership Manager/Deputy Trust Board Secretary.

As part of the membership application process, we ask applicants to disclose information in relation to their ethnicity, language and disability status with all information collected being confidential, in keeping with Data Protection rules and not released to third parties and is only processed and used to contact you about the Trust's Membership and/or other related issues. A copy of MFT's privacy notice can be found on the Trust's website <https://mft.nhs.uk/privacy-policy/>

If the information that you supplied as part of your initial membership application process has changed or changes in the future, or if you wish to cancel your membership, please contact the Foundation Trust Membership Manager (contact details on page 3).

### Communication Arrangements

Outside of Governor Meetings/Events, in the main, communication with Governors is undertaken via e-mail with all Governors being issued with a Trust e-mail account once that all governance arrangements have concluded (clearance received). It is therefore important for Governors to be able to regularly access their Trust e-mail account via their home/work or any other secure computer system with support being provided by the Trust's Informatics Team in the event of any IT problems. Virtual meetings are held via live streaming facilities (Microsoft Teams videoconferencing), therefore it is also important that you have access to a phone alongside a device e.g. computer, laptop, mobile phone that you can download apps onto.

Governors are expected to comply with the Trust's 'Governor Communications – Guidance' and associated 'Code of Practice for the use of IT, Internet and E-mail', with the misuse of any e-mails being considered as a serious breach of the 'Governors' Code of Conduct' which may ultimately result in an individual's term of office as a Governor being revoked.

### Expenses

Although Governors are not paid, the Trust does have a limited budget in terms of travel and subsistence and will reimburse Governors for **authorised** expenses (such as travel) which have been incurred whilst carrying out their duties. **However, if travelling by car, Governors are responsible for ensuring that they have appropriate car insurance cover i.e. for business purposes and must provide proof i.e. valid insurance certificate in order to subsequently claim back their expenses.**



### Where can I get more information from?

If you have a question in relation to our Governor elections, please see the list of 'Frequently Asked Questions' (from page 31). If you require any further help/support or information, please contact the Returning Officer:

Ciara Hutchinson  
Returning Officer  
Civica Election Services  
The Election Centre  
33 Clarendon Road  
London, N8 0NW

Tel: 020 8889 9203

E-mail: [ciara.hutchinson@cesvotes.com](mailto:ciara.hutchinson@cesvotes.com)

Online: [www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025](http://www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025)

If you require any further information regarding the role of Governor, please contact the Foundation Trust Membership Office: -

E-mail: [ft.enquiries@mft.nhs.uk](mailto:ft.enquiries@mft.nhs.uk)  
Tel: 0161 276 8661  
Freepost: Freepost Plus RRBR-AXBU-XTZT  
MFT NHS Trust  
Oxford Road  
Manchester  
M13 9WL

Once again thank you for your interest and we wish you every success in the election process. We truly appreciate your support in our NHS Foundation Trust.

## **Frequently Asked Questions - Governor Elections**

### **1. Why does the Trust hold Governor elections?**

The Trust holds Governor Elections each year to fill any vacant seats on our Council of Governors and/or to open up seats in relation to those Governors whose term of office is ending.

### **2. Who runs the election?**

The election is run by an independent, external election company namely Civica Election Services.

### **3. What is the Council of Governors?**

The Council of Governors is made up of 32 Governors namely:

- 17 Public Governors (elected from and by our Public Members)
- 7 Staff Governors (elected from and by our Staff Members)
- 8 Nominated (Appointed) Governors (nominated from and by our partner organisations).

### **4. Why are some people nominated rather than elected?**

In order to ensure local accountability, there are both elected and nominated Governors. Elected Governors represent members in our public and staff constituencies. Nominated Governors represent the partner organisations that we work with such as councils, academic institutes (Universities), other integrated care health organisations, in addition to the Trust's Youth Forum and Volunteer Services. We also have Nominated Governors to represent the views of inclusive community groups. Of note, the majority of our Council of Governors (24 out of 32) is elected by our members who collectively, as a whole, support system working and collaboration, forming a rounded view of the interests of the public at large.

### **5. What is the difference between a Member and a Governor?**

Our membership community is made up of patients, carers, local residents, staff and the public with members voting to elect representatives (Governors) onto our Council of Governors. Governors are responsible for representing the interests of members (public and staff) and the wider-general public at large and engaging with them so to forward rounded views and opinions to the Trust's Board of Directors.

### **6. Am I eligible to vote in the election?**

You are eligible to vote if you are registered as a Member of our Foundation Trust in the member constituency for which an election is being held. However, in keeping with our Constitution, during the election period only individuals that are current members or become members on or before the closing date of the receipt of nominations (from election candidates), can vote during the current 2025 election namely:

**5pm on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> August 2025.**

Therefore, all **new public member applications** (alongside staff membership enrolments) **are temporarily put on hold from 5pm on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> August 2025 until the election closure date i.e. 5pm on Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> September 2025**, with all pending applications/enrollments being duly processed following this date.

### **7. How will I know the election process has started and when do I vote?**

At the start of the Governor Election process (usually July each year), the independent, external election company will issue a 'Notice of Election' which includes an 'Election Timetable' (specifies the key nomination and voting dates including deadlines).

During each election period, all key documents are published on our website Governor 'Elections' webpage - <https://mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/governors-and-members/elections/> (found under 'The Trust' section of our website – [www.mft.nhs.uk](http://www.mft.nhs.uk)) with regular updates being posted at key stages of the election process including the outcome of any uncontested seats.

In preparation of the election process starting, the 'Election Timetable' is available on the Governor 'Elections' webpage - <https://mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/governors-and-members/elections/> with the 2025 election process formally starting on Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> July 2025 and voting packs being dispatched to eligible Members on Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 (for those Governor seats that are contested only).

Election notification and papers are usually sent via e-mail or post via the election company to relevant/qualifying members (constituencies where Governor seats are open for election). Voting packs are also sent directly to qualifying members via e-mail or post (for those Governor seats that are contested only), with the 2025 deadline date that votes are to be returned directly to the Election Company (Civica Election Services) being 5pm on Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> September 2025 (via the on-line election website or post):

**Election Company - Civica Election Services Contact Details:**

**Online Election Website:** [www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025](http://www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025)

**Post:** Civica Election Services, The Election Centre, 33 Clarendon Road, London, N8 0NW

**Telephone:** 020 8889 9203

During the election process, any queries regarding election documents or voting papers are to be directed to the Returning Officer of the Election Company (see below). Contact details will also be published on our website 'Governor Elections' webpage - <https://mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/governors-and-members/elections/> at the start of the 2025 election process (Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> July 2025).

**Returning Officer: Ciara Hutchinson (Civica Election Services)**

**Telephone:** 020 8889 9203

**E-mail:** [ciara.hutchinson@cesvotes.com](mailto:ciara.hutchinson@cesvotes.com)

**8. I don't know if I am a member, how can I find out?**

If you provide your name and contact details to the Foundation Trust Membership Office (contact details below), they will be able to let you know if you are registered as a member and, if you are, which membership constituency you are in.

Membership is completely free with public membership being open to anyone aged 11 years or over who lives in England and Wales. The Public Member constituency is subdivided into the following areas:

- Manchester
- Trafford
- Eastern Cheshire
- Rest of Greater Manchester
- Rest of England & Wales.

Maps of each of the above 'Public Constituency Areas' can be found on pages 13, 14 & 15 with information about Public Membership being available via MFT's 'Information for Public Members' webpage:

<https://mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/governors-and-members/information-public-members/>



If you are not currently a public member and are interested in becoming one, complete an on-line form available via the following link and/or QR code

<https://secure.membra.co.uk/Join/MFT>

Alternatively, a paper copy of the application form can be requested by contacting the membership office (details on, page 30).

Eligible staff are automatically invited to become staff members however are able to opt out (by contacting the Foundation Trust Membership Office – contact details below). The Staff Member constituency is subdivided into the following staff classes/groups:

- **Medical & Dental - Staff Class includes: Consultants, Specialist Registrars, Dental Practitioners, Clinical Directors, Senior House Officers etc.**
- **Nursing & Midwifery - Staff Class includes: Community Nurses, Modern Matrons, Nurse Consultants, Practice Nurses, Sister/Charge Nurses, Specialist Nurses Practitioners, Staff Nurses, Midwives etc.**
- **Other Clinical - Staff Class includes: Allied Health Professionals, Healthcare Scientists, Technicians, Clinical Laboratory Staff, Chiropodists, Dietitians, Physiotherapists, Radiographers, Speech and Language Therapists, Health Care Support Workers, Medical Photographers, Healthcare Assistants, Trainee Nursing Associates, Pharmacists, Therapists etc.**
- **Non-Clinical & Support - Staff Class includes: Administration and Secretarial Staff, Accountancy staff, Analysts, Managers, Directors, Domestic & Porters and all Sodexo Staff, Medical Secretaries, Receptionists, Surveyors etc.**

Staff Members only: For more information about MFT's Staff Membership go to MFT's 'Staff Membership and Governor Information' intranet page:

<https://intranet.mft.nhs.uk/content/corporate-services/information-for-staff-members>

In keeping with our Constitution and Election Rules, during the election period all new public membership applications and eligible staff membership enrollments are required to be duly processed before the deadline date of the receipt of nominations (from election candidates) at 5pm on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> August 2025. Any new membership applications/enrollments received following this date will be temporarily put on hold until the election process closes on 5pm on Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2025 following which pending applications/enrollments will be duly processed.

As part of the NHS membership application process, you will be asked to supply your personal data, with any data that you supply being used only to contact you about the Trust's Membership and/or other related issues and will be processed for these purposes only and will not be shared with third parties and will be stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act. A copy of MFT's privacy notice can be found on the Trust's website <https://mft.nhs.uk/privacy-policy/>

#### **Foundation Trust Membership Office – Contact Details:**

By Post: Freepost Plus RRBR-AXBU-XTZT  
MFT NHS Trust  
Oxford Road  
Manchester  
M13 9WL

E-mail: [ft.enquiries@mft.nhs.uk](mailto:ft.enquiries@mft.nhs.uk)

By Phone: 0161 276 8661 (office hours 9.00 am to 5.00 pm, Monday to Friday; answering machine outside these hours)

### **‘Member Portal’ – enables you to directly change, update or cancel your Membership**

If already a member and the information that you supplied as part of your initial membership application process has changed or changes in the future, or if you wish to cancel your membership, you can manage your membership data through our ‘Member Portal’. You can access this (register) by visiting: <https://secure.membra.co.uk/MemberPortal/MFT> and inputting the email address you added to your membership details as part of your application process. You will then be asked to input your first name and set a password. To complete the registration process, you will be sent an email with a link to confirm your ‘Member Portal’ account. Alternatively, contact the Foundation Trust Membership Office (contact details above) to change your details, cancel your membership or if you would like to discuss any other membership queries.

### **9. Can I switch from the public to staff constituency and vice-versa?**

No, in order to be eligible as a staff member you must be employed by the Trust (under a contract of employment of at least 12 months) and/or exercise functions for the purposes of the Trust, otherwise than under a contract of employment with the Trust, provided such individuals have exercised these functions continuously for a period of at least 12 months (please note, for the avoidance of doubt this does not include individuals who assist or provide services to the Trust on a voluntary basis).

Qualifying members of staff are automatically invited to become members upon their appointment (do have the opportunity to opt out by contacting the Foundation Trust Membership Office details as above). If a member of staff is eligible to become a staff member they cannot become a member of any other constituency even if they opt out. Staff that do not wish to be a Staff Member are not eligible to vote.

### **10. Is the Council of Governors the same as the Board of Directors?**

No, the Board of Directors is made up of Executive and Non-Executive board members who are collectively responsible for the performance of the Trust and which exercises power on behalf of the Trust.

### **11. What is the difference between the Board of Directors and Council of Governors?**

The overriding duty of the Board of Directors is to be collectively and individually responsible for promoting the success of the NHS Foundation Trust so as to maximise the benefits for the members of the NHS Foundation Trust as a whole and for the wider general public, at large through system working and collaboration. This means the Board is focused on providing high-quality health care and operating efficiently whilst considering the effects of their decisions on other partners in the system and the public at large.

By way of contrast, the overriding role of the Council of Governors is to hold the Non-Executive Directors, individually and collectively to account for the performance of the Board of Directors and to represent the interests of Foundation Trust members and the wider-general public, at large.

The Board is therefore responsible for the strategic direction and performance of the Trust, while the Council of Governors is responsible primarily for assuring the performance of the Board.

### **12. What are the duties of Governors?**

Under the Health & Social Care Act (2012), the statutory duties of Governors are clearly defined:

- To hold the Non-Executive Directors individually and collectively to account for the performance of the Board of Directors, and
- To represent the interests of the members of the Foundation Trust as a whole and the interests of the public\*.

Legislation (Health & Care Act 2022) requires Governors to form a rounded view of the interests of the public at large with some key duties of the Council of Governors being in the context of system working and collaboration.



In terms of holding to account, this is in relation to seeking assurances that due process is being followed, that the interests of members and the public are being considered in an appropriate manner and whether the Trust is at significant risk of breaching its conditions of its license.

Legislation also states that “*The Foundation Trust must take steps to secure that the Governors are equipped with the skills and knowledge they require in the capacity as such*”.

NHS England (Regulator of Foundation Trusts) outlines the key statutory duties and responsibilities of Governors as follows:

- To appoint or remove the Trust Chair and other Non-Executive Directors alongside deciding their remuneration and allowances, and other terms and conditions of office.
- To approve the appointment (by the Non-Executive Directors) of the Trust Chief Executive.
- To appoint or remove the Foundation Trust’s Auditor.
- To receive the Trust’s annual accounts and any report of the Auditor on them and the annual report at a Council of Governors’ Meeting. As and when required (in keeping with guidance requirements), Governors are encouraged to help to identify and prioritise quality priorities and a quality indicator for the Trust.
- To provide views to the Board of Directors (BoD) when the BoD is preparing the document containing information about the Trust’s plans, with Governors being required to:
  - Canvass the opinion of the Trust’s Members and the public, and for appointed Governors the body they represent, on the Trust’s forward plan, including its objectives, priorities and strategy, and their views should be communicated to the BoD.
- Approving significant transactions alongside applications by the Trust to enter into a merger, acquisition, separation or dissolution.
- Decide whether non-NHS work would significantly interfere with the Trust’s principal purpose, which is to provide goods and services for the health service in England or performing its other functions.
- Approving amendments to the Trust’s Constitution.
- As outlined in the ‘Governors’ Code of Conduct’, Governors must treat any information which they receive as confidential and must not disclose it to any third party without the express permission of an authorised representative of the Trust. Authorised information should be utilised by Governors to seek the views of members and the public on material issues or changes being discussed by the Trust and providing information and feedback regarding the Trust, its vision, performance, and material strategic proposals made by the BoD.
- Require one or more Directors to attend a Governors’ meeting to obtain information about the performance of the Trust’s functions or Directors’ performance of their duties and help the Council of Governors decide whether to propose a vote on the Trust’s or Directors’ Performance.
- To prepare and from time to time review the Trust’s Membership Strategy and its policy for the composition of the Council of Governors and of the Non-Executive Directors and, when appropriate, to make recommendations for the revision of the Trust’s Constitution.
- To undertake such functions as the BoD shall from time-to-time request.

In keeping with the latter statutory duty, the BoD asks Governors during meeting attendance/participation and when being presented with information, to also advise on issues, assist in the development of ideas and act as a sounding board. Governors are also responsible for:

- Affairs of the Trust are to be conducted by the Council of Governors in accordance with its Constitution and Licence (includes ensuring the BoD acts so that the Trust does not breach the conditions of its licence).
- Led by the Trust Chair, Governors are to regularly communicate to members and the public details on how Governors have discharged their responsibilities, including their impact and effectiveness on:
  - Holding the Non-Executive Directors to account for the performance of the BoDs.
  - Communicating with members and the public and transmitting their views to the BoDs and;

- Contributing to the development of forward plans of the Trust.
- To respond as appropriate when consulted by the BoD in accordance with the Trust's Constitution.
- To complete an annual '*Governors' Declaration of Interest*' (details recorded in the Trust's Annual Governors' Declaration of Interest Register and formally recorded at a Council of Governors' Meeting). Governors who fail to disclose any interest or material interest required to be disclosed under the Trust's Constitution provisions must permanently vacate their office if required to do so by a majority of the remaining Governors.
- To meet the '*Fit and Proper Person*' Test as defined by regulation 5 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 and/or condition of the Trust's Licence, undertaking and clearing the associated checks/reviews as and when required i.e. insolvency, bankruptcy and disqualified directors' registration alongside a health questionnaire (full criteria outlined on page 22).
- To adhere to the '*Governors' Code of Conduct*' including Nolan Principles
- To complete and clear a 'Disclosure & Barring Service' (D&BS) check.
- To adhere to the '*Governors' Media Policy*' and '*Governors' Social Media Policy*'. In serious cases, when the use of social networking is considered to be inappropriate, this could be considered as a serious breach of the Governors' Code of Conduct therefore acting in a manner which is detrimental to the interests of the organisation and in keeping with the Trust's Constitution, this may ultimately result in an individual's term of office as a Governor being revoked.
- To adhere to the '*Governors' Communications Arrangements*' and the Trust's '*Code of Practice for the use of IT, Internet and E-mail*'. In serious cases, the misuse of any e-mail (MFT or personal), could be considered as a serious breach of the Governors' Code of Conduct i.e. acting in a manner which is detrimental to the interests of the organisation and, in keeping with the Trust's Constitution, this may ultimately result in an individual's term of office as a Governor being revoked and in keeping with the Trust's Code of Practice, it is also possible to be subject to civil proceedings or criminal prosecution.
- To adhere to the '*Membership Recruitment & Engagement Guidance for Governors*'. In serious cases, when inappropriate engagement/recruitment practices or behaviours are adopted, this could be considered as a serious breach of the Governors' Code of Conduct therefore acting in a manner which is detrimental to the interests of the organisation and in keeping with the Trust's Constitution, this may ultimately result in an individual's term of office as a Governor being revoked.
- To elect a Lead Governor.
- To present to Members at the Trust's Annual Members' Meeting any proposed changes to the Trust's Constitution (where an amendment is made in relation to the powers or duties of the Council of Governors) and to approve the minutes of Members' Meetings.
- To remove Governors from the Council of Governors in the event that a Governor has committed a serious breach of the Code of Conduct; or they acted in a manner detrimental to the interests of the Trust; and the Council of Governors consider that it is not in the best interests of the Trust for them to continue as a Governor; or if a Governor fails to disclose any interest or material interest required to be disclosed under the Trust's Constitutional provisions.
- To expel a Member from the Trust if a complaint about a Member is made to the Trust Secretary that they have acted in a way detrimental to the interests of the Foundation Trust.
- To attend Governor meetings and training (unless absences are due to reasonable causes and the individual is able to start attending again within such a period as the other Governors consider reasonable).
- To forward views in relation to the Trust Chair's and Non-Executive Directors' (NED) performance (documented via Governor Questionnaire and/or Lead Governor contact) and participate as and when required during the performance review process (telephone interviews). A Governor Appraisal Panel (Council of Governors' Nominations Committee) is established each year with Governor panel members being rotated to review/consider the Trust Chair/NED performance

review findings and, as and when required, makes recommendations to the full Council of Governors for approval.

- To participate, as and when required, in the Trusts' Nominations Committee (Appointment Committee) during the appointment process of the Trust Chair and Non-Executive Directors and make recommendations to the full Council of Governors for approval.
- To participate, as and when required, in the Trust's External Auditor Appointment Panel during the selection process and make recommendations to the full Council of Governors for approval.
- To participate, as and when required, in Governor Groups.
- Led by the Trust Chair, Governors are encouraged to self-evaluate their collective performance and effectiveness as part of the Council of Governors Review (questionnaire) process.

Further details of the Governor role are outlined in the Trust's Constitution (copy available via 'The Trust' webpage - <https://mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/>)

### **13. I am a member and interested in standing for election as a Governor, what is the process?**

All qualifying/eligible members that are aged 16 years or over can nominate themselves to stand for election as a Governor. Elections are usually held each year for those Governor posts whose term of office are ending or have resigned with the election process usually starting around July each year.

At the start of the Governor election process an invitation letter, from our Trust Chair, is usually sent out via e-mail or post to the relevant member constituencies (where Governor seats are open for election), informing members that the election process is starting and includes the on-line election website/contact details of the external company who facilitates our election process. Members then need to fully complete a 'candidate nomination form' if interested in standing for election (available via the on-line website and/or election company). For contested seats, ballot (voting) papers are then sent to members who in turn vote for the candidate(s) that they wish to be elected to our Council of Governors (single transferrable voting method).

An Election Timetable is published on our website Governor 'Elections' webpage at the start of the election process and includes key deadline dates alongside contact information:

<https://mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/governors-and-members/elections/>

### **14. I am NOT a member and interested in standing for election as a Governor, what do I need to do?**

In order to stand for election as a Public Governor, you do need to be registered as a member and aged 16 years or over. Public membership application forms are available to complete on-line - form available via the following link and/or QR code

<https://secure.membra.co.uk/Join/MFT>

Once your public membership application form has been received and processed, you will receive a membership welcome letter which provides more information about being a Member.

Please note, eligible staff are automatically invited to become staff members and should therefore not complete a public membership application form. Whilst no staff governor seats are open during the current 2025 election, in years when seats are open, staff members complete a 'Staff Nomination Form'.



In order to qualify as an eligible public member and election candidate during the 2025 Governor election process, both your 'membership application' alongside your 'candidate nomination form' need to be completed and processed ensuring that your valid 'candidate nomination form' is received directly by the election company before the closing date for the receipt of nominations:

**5pm on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> August 2025**

### 15. Does someone have to nominate me to stand for election as a Governor?

No, you can nominate yourself.

### 16. How can I get a Nomination Form?

Nomination Forms can be found and completed on-line via the election company's website (i.e. **Civica Election Services**) - [www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025](http://www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025) with requests for paper copies also being made directly to **Civica Election Services** by contacting their Customer Services Team (contact details on page 2).

**Please make sure that you carefully read the 'Candidate Declaration' Section on the candidate nomination form to ensure you meet the mandated Governor Eligibility Criteria, and also follow the checklist on the nomination form providing all of the details requested (to ensure validity of your nomination).**

**Please be aware that any completed nomination forms that are sent to the Trust will not be counted in the election nomination process.**

### 17. What is the deadline for Nominations?

The deadline for receipt of nominations is **5pm on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> August 2025**.

### 18. Do I need any qualifications to be a Governor?

No, you do not need specific qualifications to be a Governor, other than an interest in healthcare and a commitment to representing members and the public to the best of your ability.

### 19. How will I know who I am running against?

The election company (Civica) will issue a 'Notice of Poll' on Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> August 2025 which outlines the candidates that are standing for election and is published on our website Governor 'Elections' webpage (<http://www.mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/governors-and-members/elections> - found under 'The Trust' section of our website – [www.mft.nhs.uk](http://www.mft.nhs.uk)). In addition, candidates' election statements are sent to relevant members (where Governor seats are open for election and the seats are contested) and are also made available on our Governor Election webpage (candidates' election statements listed per membership constituency).

### 20. What information do I need to provide as part of the nomination process?

In keeping with 'Model Election Rules' (produced by NHS Providers and form part of the Trust's Constitution), candidates are asked to provide:

- Name, title, home address, date of birth, contact and Membership Constituency details.
- Any membership of political parties.
- Any financial or other interest in the Trust.
- A photograph .
- A personal statement of no more than 250 words.
- Signed declaration confirming eligibility to stand as a nominee (Governor Candidate) - see question 21 for more details.

For contested seats, in order to fulfil requirements to provide members with appropriate information to make an informed choice about which candidate(s) they feel would best represent them, and in keeping with the aforementioned 'Model Election Rules', voting papers are sent to eligible members and include all valid candidates' names alongside declarations, photographs and personal statements received. For candidates that are current Governors that are standing for re-election, key meeting attendance/participation (provided by the Trust), is also included.



## 21. Do I need to agree and sign any declarations as part of the nomination process?

Yes, it is important that candidates read carefully the declaration section of the 'Candidate Nomination Form' in order to ensure their eligibility to stand as a Governor candidate. If later found that any of the declarations (below) were, or become applicable, this will result in the individual being removed as a Governor (if successfully elected) – candidates are required to sign a declaration that:

- They are not a person who has been adjudged bankrupt or whose estate has been sequestrated and (in either case) has not been discharged.
- They are not a person who has made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for, his creditors and has not been discharged in respect of it.
- They are not a person in relation to whom a moratorium period under a debt relief order applies under Part 7A of the Insolvency Act 1986;
- They are not a person who within the preceding 5 years has been convicted in the British Islands of any offence if a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than 3 months (without the option of a fine) was imposed on them.
- They are not a person who is under sixteen (16) years of age.
- They are not a person who is subject to a sex offender order.
- They are not a person who has not, within the preceding two (2) years, been dismissed by any other reason than redundancy, from any paid employment with an NHS body.
- They are not a person who has not had a tenure as the Trust Chair or as a member or Director of an NHS body terminated because their appointment was not in the interests of the health service, for non-attendance at meetings, or for non-disclosure of a pecuniary interest.
- They accept and abide by the Foundation's Trust values and will agree to confirm acceptance of and adhere to the Trust's 'Code of Conduct for Governors'.
- They are not a Director of the Foundation Trust or a Governor or Director of an NHS body (unless appointed by an appointing organisation which is an NHS body).
- They are not the spouse, partner, parent or child of a member of the Board of Directors of the Foundation Trust.
- They are not a member of a local authority's Scrutiny Committee covering health matters
- They are not a person who has previously been removed as a Governor or Member due to committing a serious breach of the Code of Conduct or that acted in a manner detrimental to the interests of the Foundation Trust or that the Council of Governors considered that it was in the best interests of the Foundation Trust for them not to continue as a Governor or Member or for failing to attend Council of Governors' Meetings or for refusing to undertake any training which the Council of Governors requires all Governors to undertake and that, if successfully elected, are aware that any existing and/or future breach may result in being removed as a Governor.
- They are aware that they will be required to consent to and clear a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and are also aware that they will be disqualified if considered to be unsuitable by the Trust on the basis of any disclosures obtained.
- They are aware that they will be required to disclose any declaration of interest on an annual basis or at any-time should their circumstances change and that failure to disclose any interest may result in being removed as a Governor.
- They are aware that they will be required to attend/participate in regular meetings and training sessions and adhere to the Trust's Governor Meeting Ground Rules (with meetings being predominately held Monday to Friday, anytime between 9.00 am - 5.00 pm).
- They are not a person who is unfit and improper as defined by regulation 5 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 and/or condition the Trust's Licence and are aware that they will be required to consent to and clear associated checks/reviews i.e. insolvency, bankruptcy and disqualified directors' registration alongside a health questionnaire.
- They are not person who has refused to sign a declaration of their qualification to vote as a member of the Trust and that they are not prevented from being a member of the Council of Governors.



- They are not a person who has had their tenure as a Governor of another Foundation Trust terminated for cause.
- Unless otherwise decided they are not a person who is currently or has previously been a Governor of an NHS Foundation Trust, other than the Trust.
- Being a member of the Staff Constituency they are not a person who has a current and unexpired written warning which has been imposed following disciplinary action by the Trust arising out of your employment with the Trust.
- They are not a person who is a vexatious complainant that:
  - has threatened, harassed, harmed or abused staff, patients and/or visitors of the Trust; or
  - is found by the Trust (applying the relevant Trust policy) to have abused or used inappropriately the Trust's or a predecessor Trust's complaints procedure, shall be refused membership of the Trust or where an existing member shall have their membership of the Trust withdrawn.
- They are aware that the terms of office for the Governor role is for a 2-year period starting at the Annual Members' Meeting (2025) and is subject to any legislative changes as a result of the Government's 10-year Health Plan for England (published in July 2025).

Further disqualification details are outlined in the Trust's constitution (copy available via 'The Trust' webpage - <https://mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/>)

## 22. I am not a very good writer, can the Trust help me to put together my statement or edit it?

The Trust is not permitted to provide help with or edit candidates' statements as we have to be fair to all the candidates. However, if you are having difficulties, the election company i.e. **Civica Election Services** will usually be able to provide examples of previous candidate statements and provide guidance, learning aids and assistance.

In addition, information on how to write an effective election statement and how the election process works, is also provided by the election company i.e. Civica, short video - available via the election website [www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025](http://www.cesvotes.com/MFT2025)

## 23. What happens if I change my mind?

You can change your mind and withdraw from the Governor Election process, but you must let the election company i.e. **Civica Election Services** know. The date for final candidate withdrawal is:

- **5pm on Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> August 2025.**

## 24. Does the Trust give me any publicity to promote my campaign?

The Trust gives objective, balanced and fair coverage equivalent in size and content to all candidates on its website by making available each candidate's election statement only.

Upon request, the Trust will provide a limited number of membership application forms for those public candidates who wish to recruit public members as part of their campaign promotion.

Please note that, in keeping with our Constitution, only individuals that become members on or before the closing date of the receipt of nominations (from election candidates) can vote during the 2025 Governor Elections namely:

- **5pm on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> August 2025.**

Therefore, all new public member applications and staff membership enrollments are temporarily put on hold from 5pm on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> August 2025 until the election closure date i.e. 5pm on Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> September 2025, with all pending applications/enrollments being duly processed following this date.

## 25. What about funding to promote my campaign?

There is no funding provided to promote campaigns whether incurred by candidates or another person.

## 26. How/who decides who has won (elected as a Governor)?

Members decide who is successfully elected as a Governor with votes being counted by the Returning Officer of the external, independent election company i.e. **Civica Election Services**, using the single transferrable voting system.

## 27. When will I know if I have won (been successfully elected as a Governor)?

Written confirmation of the results is sent to every candidate via the election company i.e. **Civica Election Services**, in keeping with the election timetable sometime after 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2025. Once that all candidates have been notified, the results are then formally published on our website Governor 'Elections' webpage – <http://www.mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/governors-and-members/elections> found under 'the Trust' section of our website – [www.mft.nhs.uk](http://www.mft.nhs.uk).

## 28. If I am elected as a Governor, how do I discharge my duties?

New ways of working have been established, as a result of the COVID-19 National Emergency, and associated restrictions. In order to keep Governors apprised of key developments, regular Briefings (and updates) are issued to Governors alongside the Trust Chair, regularly holding a number of 'virtual' Governor Meetings/Sessions. 'Virtual' communications (film-clips/vlogs etc.) alongside video/teleconferencing (MS Teams) meeting arrangements have enabled Governors to actively engage, have open and transparent discussions and seek appropriate assurances from the Trust Chair and participating NEDs.

As restrictions have been relaxed, steps have been taken to hold Governor and Membership Meetings in-person with regular reviews being undertaken to determine whether meetings should be held virtually, or, in person. Other alternative channels of communication with Governors/Members are also explored to be in keeping with updated UK Government Guidance.

If successfully elected as a Governor, you will discharge your duties by participating in regular meetings of the Council of Governors, Annual Members' Meetings and Membership Events, in addition to participating in ongoing development and training sessions. You will also be invited to participate in ad hoc Governor Panels/Groups and other Governor/Trust meetings. Please note that Governor meetings are predominantly held during the day (anytime between 9.00am – 5.00pm).

In order to become more effective in the role of Governor, individuals are expected to participate in member and public meetings/events, which will help you to build relationships and become more confident at making direct contact with participating members (public and staff) and the wider-general public (at large). Governors are also asked to take part in effectiveness and performance self-assessments (via regular Governor questionnaires).

**Outside of meetings, communication with Governors is done via e-mail, therefore it is important that you have access to a computer/internet facilities.** Virtual meetings are held via video/teleconferencing facilities i.e. live-streaming via Microsoft Teams. It is therefore important that you have access to a phone alongside a device e.g. computer, laptop, mobile phone etc. that you can download apps onto.

In order to facilitate the more general concept of Governors representing the wider-general public (at large), regular interactions/engagement with a diverse range of people, groups and networks is beneficial in order to canvass views and opinions, in addition to promoting the Trust, Membership and the role of Governor.

## 29. Will I need any training to take on this role?

The Trust arranges a New Governor Induction Programme which all newly elected/nominated Governors are invited to participate in (includes an Introduction Meeting with our Trust Chair). The Trust also schedules ongoing Governor Development and Training Sessions for all Governors (new and

existing) throughout the course of each year. New Governor Induction and Training sessions are usually held in the immediate weeks after new Governors formally start in office (following the Annual or other Membership Meeting (at which their election is announced) and it would be prudent to be available during mid-late October with induction meeting/training dates being tentatively scheduled for 17<sup>th</sup> October and 29<sup>th</sup> October 2025 (full day events) with other key Governor meetings being tentatively scheduled in November and December 2025. Upon being successfully elected, a Governor Meeting Planner is issued which outlines key dates to diarise.

Additional Governor training and development needs (individual and as a Council of Governors) are also identified during meeting/session participation alongside Governor self-evaluation (Performance and Effectiveness Review) questionnaire process.

### 30. Will I need to comply with a Code of Conduct?

All new Governors are sent a 'Governors' Code of Conduct' which you will be asked to review and agree compliance with whilst carrying out the role of Governor. In addition, new Governors are also required to meet the 'Fit and Proper Persons' Test with associated checks being undertaken in relation to insolvency, bankruptcy and disqualified directors' registration alongside a health questionnaire. NHS Foundation Trust Governors are required to clear the 'Fit and Proper Person Test' thereafter on an annual basis.

Eligibility to be a Governor including mandatory requirements are outlined in our 'Governor Criteria' and are applicable to all Governors positions (Public, Staff and Nominated). In order for an individual to become or continue as a Governor, is subject to the fulfilment of the aforementioned eligibility criteria with Governors ceasing to hold office should this criterion be/become unfulfilled.

Our Governor Criteria is available via our Governors 'Election' webpage: <http://www.mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/governors-and-members/elections>

Alternatively, please contact the Foundation Trust Membership Office (contact details outlined on page 3) to obtain a copy.

### 31. Will I have to disclose information about my income, assets or finance?

You are required to declare on an annual basis and/or as and when your circumstances change, any material interests as prescribed in the Trust's Constitution, copy available via 'The Trust' webpage - <https://mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/> or the FT Membership Office (contact details outlined on page 3).

Declarations include any directorships, interests in firms likely to be considered as trading partners or providing services to the NHS, positions of authority in charities and voluntary organisations in the field of health and social care; and connections with firms entering into financial arrangements with the Trust. More information is available in the 'Governor Criteria' - available via our 'Council of Governors' webpage: <http://www.mft.nhs.uk/the-trust/governors-and-members/elections>

### 32. Will I be paid for this role?

No, Governors do not receive payment but the Trust does have a limited budget in terms of travel and subsistence and will reimburse Governors for authorised travelling costs and expenses incurred in carrying out their duties. However, if travelling by car, **Governors are responsible for ensuring that they have appropriate car insurance cover i.e. for business purposes and must provide proof i.e. valid insurance certificate** in order to subsequently claim back their expenses.

### 33. Will I have to meet any personal civil liability for my actions out of my personal resources?

Only if you have acted recklessly. If you have acted honestly and in good faith, you will not meet any personal civil liability incurred in the execution of your functions out of your personal resources with any cost arising in this way being met by the Trust.

### **34. How long is the term of office of a Governor?**

As outlined in the Trust's Constitution, an Elected (Public and Staff) or Nominated Governor term of office shall not exceed three years and formally take up their role immediately after the Annual Members' Meeting or other Members' Meeting at which the election/nomination results are announced. The Constitution defines a "year" as the period commencing immediately after the conclusion of the Annual Members' Meeting or Members' Meeting and ending at the conclusion of the next Annual Members' Meeting.

At the end of a Governor's term of office, the individual may offer themselves for re-election or re-nomination, however an Elected or Nominated (Appointed) Governor may not hold office for more than three terms or a maximum of nine consecutive years, whichever is the shorter in duration, and shall not be eligible for re-election or re-nomination if he has already held office for more than six consecutive years.

Following the recent publication of the Government's 10-year Health Plan for England (published in July 2025), Governors who are elected/nominated during this 2025 process will have a two-year term of office, subject to any legislative changes.

Of note, an Elected or Nominated (Appointed) Governor may not stand again for re-election or re-appointment as a Governor until three years has elapsed since their resignation or their completion of the maximum three terms or nine consecutive years as a Governor. Governors will also cease to hold office if they no longer live in the area of their constituency (Public Governors), no longer work for the Trust or hold a position in the staff class that they represent (Staff Governors) or are no longer supported in office by the partner organisation that they represent (Appointed Governors).

### **35. Can I have access to the public membership database?**

No, in keeping with the GDPR rules and the Data Protection Act, membership data/details are not disclosed.

**If you any other questions or queries about the Governor Election Process, Membership or the role of Governor, please contact the Foundation Trust Membership Office (contact details on page 3)**