

Meeting minutes

Name of meeting: NHS Confederation Group Co Corporate Board Meeting
Date: 13 December 2011
Time: 10.30 - 12.30
Venue: NHS Confederation Offices, Bressenden Place Board Room

Present: Sir Keith Pearson JP (Chair); Shaun Clee (Non-executive Director); Mike Farrar (Chief Executive); Pat McCartan (Non-executive Director); Mike Parish (Non-executive Director); Dean Royles (Director, NHS Employers); David Stout (Deputy Chief Executive); Heather Strawbridge (Non-executive Director)

Lisa Rodrigues (Snr Independent Trustee); Phil Taylor (Independent Trustees and Chair of Audit); Helen Birtwhistle (Director, Welsh Confed); Maggie Evans (Board Secretary) Louise Fish (Director, Communications and Engagement); Sheila McKenzie (Director Finance & Resources); Prem Singh (Associate) ; Steve Shrubbs (Director, Mental Health Network; Jo Webber (Director, Ambulance Network); David Worskett (Director NHSP Network)

Apologies: John McIvor (Non-executive Director); Trevor Purt (Non-executive Director); Steve Warburton (Non-executive Director)

Welcome, introductions and apologies

1. Sir Keith welcomed everyone to the meeting. He welcomed Prem Singh who had recently joined the NHS Confederation on secondment.
2. Apologies were accepted from board members Steve Warburton, Trevor Purt, and John McIvor. Apologies were noted from Karen Charman who was unwell.
3. Sir Keith announced that Paul Sabapathy had resigned from the NHS and as a Trustee and member of this board and that John McIvor, chair of the PCTN had joined the board. Sir Keith said Paul had made an immense contribution during difficult times and the board recorded its thanks to Paul and wished him well for the future.

Declarations of interest

4. There were no additional declarations of interest

Notes of the meeting held on 11 October 2011

5. These were agreed.
6. Lisa Rodrigues asked for an update on the Commission on Dignity in Care and Louise Fish advised that:
 - three oral evidence sessions had been held
 - the commission had met last week to discuss its recommendations and a first draft was expected by 22 December
 - she expected a draft consultation document to be published on 18 January
 - the draft report would be placed on the website; trailed with the media; and copies sent to members
 - the LGA and Age UK would both be circulating the report to their members and stakeholders
 - during January they would be briefing Parliamentary and other stakeholders
7. Louise outlined some of the initial findings which focused on the need for patient centered care; support for staff involved in looking after older people; and the role of providers; commissioners; regulators and government.
8. Lisa Rodrigues asked about communication with members, particularly if they would be informed before the broader community. Louise confirmed that the report would be trailed in newsletters and other communications to members including Mike Farrar's end of year message.
9. Sean Clee was glad that the report would pick up societal values and referred to a strategic partnership that the MHN had with the National Housing Federation.
10. Sir Keith thanked Louise for her update and said that we would send board members an early draft of the report. **Action LF**

Chief Executive's report

11. Chief Executive, Mike Farrar said that preparations for going forward into 2012 were on course in that we were:
 - communicating to members the sense of a refreshed NHS Confederation
 - becoming the first port of call for the media for NHS issues – e.g. NHS Employers work with the industrial action in the NHS
 - increasingly seen as the voice of sense and reason especially with regard to the Health Bill.
12. Other areas:
 - three regional events held so far had been each been different attracting audiences of around 50 but with mixed feedback; we were looking at how to incorporate more policy discussion into the events
 - business development was progressing but at a slightly slower pace than anticipated.

- He had met with the FTN board who had mandated the chair and CE of the FTN to negotiate a longer term deal between the Confederation and the FTN
- Mike had made a significant presentation to the BMA
- discussions were continuing about how the NHS Confederation could work with the National Commissioning Board
- by February we would have a prospectus for members to explain the value of being a member of the NHS Confederation
- the energy around the Bill was lower with a focus now on implementation
- the NHS Confederation had supported Andrew Lansley's 60 standards despite the difficulty of comparable data.

13. Sir Keith thanked Mike for his brief update: comments from the board included:

- CQC position: Mike had been due to give evidence to the PAC on 25 January 2012; our line was that there was no major appetite for major reorganisation of regulators and we were not attributing blame. The Department of Health's review may now report before the PAC hearing.
- Industrial relations: DR reported that the Employers Organisation had sought to do three things during the industrial action in the NHS: (i) to reassure the public; (ii) to avoid distress; (iii) and to maintain positive industrial relations. Going forward most unions were balloting for discontinuous industrial action. NHS Employers was trying to get a deal on NHS pensions before the end of the year.

Paper 2: Action tracker

14. Maggie Evans reported that whilst there were 11 actions on the tracker, 3 were covered on the agenda and the others were not yet due for completion. The board **noted** the report.

Presentation from the NHS Partners Network

15. Sir Keith introduced David Worskett, Director of the NHS Partners Network, saying that the board had previously agreed it would receive a presentation from each of the networks.

16. Following David's presentation the board discussed how the work of the network fitted with Wales and Northern Ireland and the position of GPs as independent providers.

17. The board said they had found the presentation interesting and useful and thanked David.

Paper 3: Principles and priorities for business planning 2012/13

18. Louise Fish, Director of Communications and Engagement and Sheila McKenzie, Director of Finance and Resources gave a presentation summarising the contents of the paper.

Members and partners

19. The board discussed the strategy and agreed it was important to have flexibility in keeping members and in acquiring new members who wanted to access networks rather than the core NHS Confederation. The board **agreed** the strategy.

Financial context: fees for 2012

20. There was a wide ranging discussion about the level of the core membership fee; some network fees; and options for the staff pay award.

Business development

21. The board agreed that growth was necessary in the NHS Confederation and discussed whether the organisation had the necessary targeted commercial and marketing experience which could help us to think more broadly and better understand the market. Mike said that he was planning to work with individuals with the specific skills on a short-term self funding basis.

Paper 4: HR and OD strategy

22. Liz Roe, Head of HR, joined the meeting to present her paper. In introducing the paper Liz said that there were 3 main components of the strategy; people; performance and pay and added that there were both hard and soft deliverables contained in the strategy.
23. Sir Keith thanked Liz for her presentation and said with regard to total reward it would make sense to refer to NHS Employers who were leading on this for the NHS and he also thought that we seemed to be behind the industry by not having performance related or variable pay.
24. Mike Parish thought a fundamental question was what type of organisation did the Confederation want to be and if we were aspiring to be more entrepreneurial then the strategy and pay system should reflect this. Lisa Rodrigues suggested we needed 2 strategies with an OD strategy articulating the type of organisation we were seeking to be and an HR strategy underpinning and supporting the delivery of the OD strategy.
25. Mike Farrar commented that parts of the business needed to be highly entrepreneurial whereas others, such as policy, did not need to be and that we were not a single culture business which should be reflected in the OD strategy. Accepting that the strategy was an emergent one the board asked the Senior Management Team to better describe the various attributes of the different parts of the business to inform the strategy. **Action SMT/Liz Roe.**
26. The board also talked about the relevance of using the NHS leadership framework in the NHS Confederation given that we were not an NHS organisation: it was agreed that it would need considerable adaptation and there were varying views of its usefulness. It was **agreed** that we should consider looking for another leadership framework. **Action Liz Roe.**

Paper 5: Annual conference and exhibition

27. The board noted the briefing about the 2011 conference paper and **agreed** with the recommendation in the paper that Liverpool ACC should be booked for 2013 conference and exhibition.

Paper 6: Scheme of delegation

28. Maggie Evans said the current scheme of delegation had been in operation for a number of years and its use had identified some anomalies which had prompted a review. The organisation was now more mature with improved governance and the recommendation now was that operational issues should be delegated to the chief executive. If that was the case, there was a question about the role of the corporate board and the paper suggested that a transition plan and timeline be developed to address this issue and to plan to work mainly within the charity rather than the subsidiary company. Maggie also referred to the anomalies highlighted in the paper around the signing off levels.

29. The chairman agreed if the board had confidence in the executive the principle that operational matters should be dealt with by them was correct. He also suggested that it would be helpful to have the transition timeline by March 2012.

30. Phil Taylor, chair of audit, said that the trend in NHS organisation was to tighten financial controls and lower signing off limits and he questioned whether the £250k limit should be reduced to £100k. Mike Parish asked about other controls in the organisation and Sheila McKenzie said that controls around procurement for example were now very effective although purchase order compliance was still running at 70%. Phil Taylor recorded his thanks to Sheila McKenzie and Maggie Evans for their work which had resulted in considerably improved controls but he thought there was still more to be done.

31. The board asked the Senior Management Team to look at the extent of financial commitments over £100k and to return with a proposal. **Action SMT.**

Paper 7: Business plan 11/13 – proposed arrangements for monitoring and reporting

32. Deputy Chief Executive, David Stout introduced the paper explaining the new arrangements for monitoring and reporting on the business plan. He reflected that there were 41 critical deliverables contained in the business plan: 29 of them had been reported as green and on track with the remainder being amber. Of the deliverables rated as amber he drew the board's attention to two of them: the funding of the SDO network and the presentation of a risk register.

33. Looking forward to 12/13 David said that he would be looking to develop an integrated report which contained finance; performance; workforce and risk.

34. The board welcomed the report which gave an up to date snapshot of progress with the business plan.

Paper 8: Finance report to 31 October 2011

35. Sheila McKenzie presented the report which showed a similar position presented to the last meeting. Her key message was the organisation needed to get better at budgeting and was discussing with SMT how this might be improved as part of the business planning process for 2012/13. The board **noted** the report and reflected that there were challenging times ahead.

Paper 9: Voluntary publication scheme

36. Louise Fish reminded the board that they had asked the Senior Management Team to recommend how to publish salaries, issues about procurement, policies, gifts and hospitality and lists of registers. The recommendations in the paper were **agreed**.

Meeting close

37. There being no other business the meeting was closed. Date of the next meeting 14 February 2012.