



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STAFF COUNCIL

**THURSDAY 22 OCTOBER 2009
1100-1330 HRS
CONFERENCE ROOM, HQ**

Attendees:	Eddie Brand (chair) (EB) Caron Hitchen (CH) Richard Webber Tony Crabtree (TC) Phil Savage (PS) Steve Sale (SS) Bob Buck (BB) Brian Eldridge (BE) Pat Hopkins (PHo) Dave Smith (DS) Eric Roberts (ER) Tim Stephens (TS) Mark Lione (ML) Pete Hannell (PHa) David Lamey (DL) Phil Thompson (PT) Gary Edwards (GE) Nic Daw (ND)	Unison, Staff side chair HR & OD Director Director of Operations Assistant Director, HR Unite Head of Operational Workforce Modernisation Unite GMB GMB Unison Unison, Staff side secretary Unison Unison Unison Unison Unison (lead Full Time Official) Unison Head of PTS
In attendance:	Sam Williams (minutes) (SW) Peter Thorpe (for item 58/08)	HR Olympics Office
Apologies:	Mick Butler Martin Flaherty Mike Dinan Sandra Adams	

Eddie Brand introduced Brian Eldridge, GMB and Dave Smith to the group. Caron Hitchen introduced her new PA, Sam Williams.

ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
49/09	Minutes of the previous meeting, 16 July 2009	
	The previous minutes were agreed. CH said Mike Dinan (MD) would like to meet with staff side representatives for a specifically organised meeting on finance. Mike is back in the office next week.	MD
50/09	Matters arising	
	37.01 Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) (32/09)	
	TC circulated an outline of key dates when arrangements are being phased in. He confirmed there is no implication for our staff in terms of registration at this stage, and proposed a formal briefing at the first meeting of the Staff Council in 2010. TC acknowledged that a primary concern for staff at present was the registration fee.	TC
	37.02 Public holidays (TOIL) (16/09)	
	TC had written to ER and EB outlining his understanding of why the current	Staff Side

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	Trust application and interpretation represented for fair and equitable treatment for all staff, regardless of shift or working patterns. If staff side concerns remained, he suggested referring the matter either to joint secretaries or the terms and conditions sub-group, in which case a meeting could be useful, perhaps in November.	
	37.03 Joint disciplinary training (15/09)	
	6 November 2009 had been agreed for an initial meeting to discuss this training.	
51/09	Director of Operations – report (standing item)	
	RW reported that current performance of Cat A calls is showing signs of improvement although the Trust is under immense pressure from the SHA on Cat B performance.	
	200-300 calls per day are being dealt with via telephone advice. There is some unhappiness with area cover – last month the number of deployments came down and as long as this is sustained there may be no need to change area cover. There have been significant increases to baseline staffing.	
	Hospitals – hospitals are under pressure to reduce hospital turnaround time. Overall hospital end of turnaround time has not changed.	
	Changes – RW reported that green calls and a proportion of amber calls are being dealt with through telephone advice and consideration is being given to putting more calls to NHS Direct.	
	Mental health – a review had been carried out which followed the PTS trial at Camden from which it has been decided to allow low risk patients to be transported by PTS.	
	Divert and closure policy – RW said there are some changes not yet agreed. Hospitals can't arrange internal divers. He said he will ask for higher scrutiny of patients not handed over within 30 minutes.	
	Make Ready – Make Ready is under review. It is being considered that more Make Ready be available in day time.	
	Met Police calls – we have started three tranches of calls with the Met: fire arms and number of resources we dedicate at night; vehicle seizures; and call categorisation.	
	ER suggested that it would be helpful to have RW's report in bullet points, the facts and figures etc. He also asked to have figures on costs of rest breaks.	RW
	ER said he would like to enter into talks about getting Make Ready back in-house. RW responded that Make Ready is being reviewed. With regards to rest breaks, RW said more than 60% are getting rest breaks but he wants this figure to reach 80% in November. RW to get bullet points on facts and figures out.	RW/ER
	EB suggested that the clinical telephone advice trial should have been based somewhere other than Bromley. RW said Bromley was chosen because it had the capacity and was convenient for travel and had easy access.	
52/09	Director of Human Resources – report (standing item)	
	CH gave an update on the recruitment campaign. The plan is to recruit 600 new staff and we are well on the way to achieving this (CH to produce bullet points/figures relating to this item). CH said she is highly confident of recruiting the full complement by the end of the year. In terms of staff that	CH

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	<p>have come out of training, further figures are to come out on that too. By the end of the year, nearly 500 new staff will be out on ambulances.</p> <p>CH referred to the 18-month training plan (taking us up to March 2011) that had been presented to the Trust Board. She said that looking at the plan now, we need to catch up with delivering training and also look at how we make sure everyone has mandatory training in the time required.</p> <p>At the last Staff Council meeting CH updated on appeals activity. CH said she would make this a regular update. Since the last meeting CH reported that six appeals have been received. The majority of those were heard within a two month period. CH said that arrangements are improving and generally appeal dates are identified in a reasonable time scale. Provision and exchange of paperwork still needed to be improved, however, in order to make sure both parties have time to prepare.</p> <p>CH reported back to the group on the a recent employment tribunal case (Small vs LAS) which had gone to the Court of Appeal, and which colleagues may wish to read aout. The original tribunal found against the LAS and the Court of Appeal said the original tribunal had been wrong in its decision. The case had been remitted to another tribunal and the case was ultimately dismissed. CH wished to highlight to the group personal and emotional impact of tribunal proceedings on all those involved, including claimants themselves. This should not be underestimated.</p> <p>CH said that we are waiting for the report to come back of the development of the new FRU role on NWOW, following the trial in October. The initial feedback is that it was successful. SS added that we were testing the model of a tasking regime rather than the paramedic skills. The trial tested sending a resource without automatic ambulance back-up. Colleagues from OPF will be invited to join the project. SS said he is hoping to produce final project initiation document to project members. He will update as and when on the despatch model. ER asked SS when a formal proposal for the new role will be made. SS responded that as soon as the project initiation document had been agreed, everyone will get together to formalise the recommendation proposal. SS said he would be happy to meet with ER to talk through the process.</p>	CH/SW
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53/09	<p>Director of Finance – report (standing item)</p> <p>CH said that the general message is that the Trust is on track to meet the financial requirements for the year. However, pressure is increasing from the SHA in terms of expected savings, and the requirement to deliver savings is likely to mean some difficult times ahead.</p> <p>CQC rating on financial resources was “excellent” and quality of services was “good”. Staff costs are increasing as staff numbers increase, but overtime is going down as would be expected.</p> <p>The delay in vacating the Park Royal site will cost c£800,000, a figure which could yet rise if no buyer is found in the near future.</p>	
54/09	<p>New Ways of Working (standing item)</p> <p>CH reported the key messages on NWOW. Chase Farm is progressing very well. Teams are organised and team-based rotas are ready to start trial next Monday 26 October. Barnehurst have consulted with staff and the rota development is underway. Chase Farm progressed well with redecorating their mess room and have received provision of a training room. We are aware of problems at Barnehurst in providing similar facilities.</p>	
55/09	<p>PTS issues (standing item)</p> <p>PTS financials – ND reported PTS is £300,000 in surplus, though had some difficulties in month six.</p>	

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	<p>Tendering situation – ND summarised the current and imminent tendering schedule and offered to provide more details if anyone wants them. The big risk in this tendering round is amalgamation of Bromley, Queen Elizabeth and Queen Mary Sidcup hospitals. If lost this represents £3m worth of business and could affect 75 staff.</p> <p>ND said PTS did not plan to bid for the contract for Great Ormond St Hospital but other tender responses are being prepared. Bids for 14 hospitals have to be returned in November.</p> <p>PDA's have been issued to staff in the south and a user group meeting to enable staff to give feedback is being arranged.</p> <p>Implementation of the new management structure is almost complete. It is hoped to have remaining positions filled by December.</p> <p>ND said that one issue remains with rota changes, and currently there are around 200 different rota lines on the system! The aim would be to bring it down to 6-8 core rota lines which will utilise resources better.</p>	
56/09	<p>ND said he would provide bullet points on figures and key points of this report.</p> <p>Fleet issues (standing item)</p> <p>BB said that the workshops are exceedingly busy. Staff are working flat out and are doing their best to turn vehicles around but there have been lots of complaints.</p>	ND
	<p>BB referred to the fleet review and seven day working issues. He felt that progress had been too slow, and this was unsettling for staff. He urged that everyone get together for an open debate and to move forward so that fleet staff are aware of what's going on. BB thought that the quality of information available to staff needed to be improved. RW said the arrival of the new vehicles should help to reduce the pressure, and that it is still the intention that remaining LDV's will be out of service by the end of the financial year. The new vehicles are turning out at a rate of five per week. RW agreed to facilitate a meeting to debate and move on with this issue.</p>	RW/BB
57/09	<p>Foundation Trust (standing item)</p> <p>CH reported that the application for the Foundation Trust had been slowed recently, but that it was expected that the application would be submitted in 2010. CH said there is a process called "historical due diligence" which takes three months and must take place before we start our application. The message is that we will not be a Foundation Trust this financial year.</p> <p>CH said consultation feedback was given to the last Trust Board meeting and that, following consultation, the issue of any trade union seat on the Board of Governors is still under consideration.. CH will give feedback when she has more info but this is still a live issue.</p>	CH
	<p>CH reminded the meeting that staff will become members of the Foundation Trust automatically unless they opt out – letters are being prepared to eligible staff members.</p> <p>Membership newspaper planned to be published next month to be a regular item.</p>	
58/09	<p>Olympic planning update</p> <p>Peter Thorpe gave an update of the planning and preparation for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. PT said he would welcome feedback and contributions, either individually or through staff side lead Mark Lione.</p>	All
	<p>The Olympics 2012 newsletter has gone out. Again, PT invited feedback on its</p>	All

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	format and usefulness.	
59/09	Pandemic flu planning	
	<p>TC reminded the staff side that the proposal to establish a joint group to consider workforce and HR issues in the pandemic remained outstanding. He distributed the latest copy of the national HR framework for ambulance trusts.. TC also formally proposed that the reference period for calculating average working time under the European Working Time Directive be extended for the pandemic period only to 52 weeks. This was agreed.</p> <p>TC reported that the programme of vaccinations for seasonal flu for all staff has begun. Similarly for swine flu we hope to start to get supplies in the near future and it is hoped that staff side will support the programme and encourage staff to have the vaccination. The swine flu jab will be available for frontline staff, and the seasonal jab is for everyone. TC said it is important to take steps to protect self, family and colleagues. ER said that he felt the Council should encourage people to take the flu jab.</p> <p>CH added that we have completed our first round of call-taking training (a six day course) for support services staff in EOC. Fifteen people have completed the course. There are plans to run it again to provide additional support to EOC.</p>	
60/09	PPEd/APEd	
	<p>PHa said that the Service has insufficient numbers of PPEds. There is a list of 70 staff waiting to be put on the PPEd course. Unqualified or untrained PPEds can't be used indefinitely.</p> <p>CH responded that she had not been aware of the issue and thanked PHa for bringing it up. She said that we are looking at flexible options of providing the training and agreed it is a priority to get PPEds through this training and to release staff to take it.</p>	
61/09	Staff Council Constitution (update and for signature)	
	<p>TC tabled for signature an updated version of the constitution reflecting the agreed additional seat for GMB and also that TGWU and Amicus had now merged to form Unite. He said he also took the opportunity to change the management of the management side. He confirmed that nothing else had been changed in the document. The single Unite seat will be allocated for the next meeting. Unison, TGWU/Unite and Amicus/Unite signed the new constitution at the meeting, and a copy would be sent to GMB as their full time official had been unable to attend.</p> <p>TC said that one of the sub groups of the Staff Council is the Corporate Health and Safety Group. He said that it is proposed that the terms of reference and membership of the group be reviewed, with seats allocated to trade unions in future. Details had already been circulated, but staff side asked that the formal proposal be sent to the FTOs after the meeting, with a dead-line for responses. A period of one month for this consultation was agreed, and it was accepted that no response means agreement.</p>	TC/Unions
62/09	NHS Staff survey	
	TC said the survey forms went out the week before last and asked everyone to encourage participation. He assured the group that management do not see any response and that there is total confidentiality.	All
63/09	EMT4 letters	
	PHo asked for clarification on the point in the letter that staff won't advance through the second pay gateway if they don't take paramedic training. CH responded that the agreement is on the Pulse "Agenda for Change", which confirmed that these proposals were being implemented. CH said HR wrote to staff because we thought over time staff may have forgotten that aspect of the agreement.	
	AOB	

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	TC said that an issue had been raised around A&E support staff, step down arrangements and tasking. TC clarified with Paul Woodrow who shared some concerns about the arrangements. TC suggested taking this issue forward via the Operational Partnership Forum at its meeting on 23 November, but that a small group of two or three could get together earlier to discuss if needed.	EB

Date of next meeting: 16 February 2010