Recovery and Resilience Cell
Senior Leadership Team

Findings from the Corporate Governance Effectiveness Review

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Survey Overview

- Purpose to understand changes made to pre-identified corporate governance meetings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to gather learning and innovation.

- Meetings reviewed were: Board of Directors; Audit; Finance, Business and Investment; Mental Health Legislation; Quality and Safety Committees.

- Range of stakeholders invited to provide feedback, with a 75% response rate.

- Questions focused on: performance reporting; risk management; meeting management; use of technology; flow of information; stakeholder engagement.

- Survey underpinned by crisis response matrix, championed by Professor John Wright.

- Participants asked to reflect whether changes provided greater or less assurance.

- Survey split into two sections (Board; sub-committees) – duplicate findings received.
Findings: Performance Reporting

Better Assurance Received
- Dynamic systems established to support incident management.
- Concise reporting, clear purpose and recommendation.
- Establishment of Ethics Committee gleaming different view points.
- Executive-led revisions to existing practice (IPR), shared ownership.
- Success achieved by focusing on small changes resulting in big impact.

Less Assurance Received
- Elements of performance reporting felt too ‘finance’ focused.
- Scrutiny undertaken on broader performance metrics at sub-committees, not always connected through to Board formal reporting.
- Reporting focused on pandemic, risk of unintentional gaps / lack of oversight.
- Temporary pause of internal audit reporting reduced independent assurance.

For Consideration
- Further strengthen ‘assurance and escalation’ report from sub-committees.
- Strategy delivery to better inform work plans for Board and sub-committees.
- Continued development of the performance management framework to service internal and external requirements – shared ownership. Support dynamic reporting, consider meeting schedule and flow of information.
- Increase different thinking / viewpoints in formal meetings.
- High-level reports with ‘reading room’ for supporting papers.
Findings: Risk Management

Better Assurance Received
- Development of COVID-19 specific risk register.
- Proactive external benchmarking undertaken, continued use of external professional networks.
- Pandemic presented opportunities for training refreshers (legislation).

Less Assurance Received
- COVID-19 risk register, Corporate Risk Register (CRR), Board Assurance Framework (BAF) felt disjointed. Champion success of BAF template and format.
- CRR too operational to support strategic discussion.
- Understand progress made on refreshed risk management strategy, and ‘risk oversight’ being key responsibility of a Board of Directors.

For Consideration
- Further development of the risk management framework to provide foresight to support strategic decision making, part of the refresh of Risk Mngt. Strategy.
- Internal and external learning to feature within sub-committee assurance framework.
- CRR to support Senior Leadership Team framework, connected to the BAF to provide narrative on risks associated with the strategic risks.
- Review training/development requirements for all Board members, enhanced for ‘champions’; additional ‘opt ins’ for specific sub-committees on particular topics.
Findings: Meeting Management

Better Assurance Received
- Specialist corporate governance provision supporting all corporate governance meetings.
- Enhanced learning and reflection through formal meetings and developments sessions.
- Focussing on immediate priorities created a focused agenda and shared vision, reduced meeting time meant more preparation took place for meeting discussion.
- Good level of ‘business as usual’ maintained - working together: corporate governance; Non-Executive Directors; and Executive Management Team to co-produce.

Less Assurance Received
- Time pressure of reduced meeting lengths: potentially reduced debate and increased informal discussions outside of formal meeting setting.
- More focused meetings, increased ‘mental drain’, working at fast pace, and lack of breaks/reflection in meetings and throughout the working day.

For Consideration
- Support development of specialist Corporate Governance Service: focus on embedding Integrated Governance Guide and internal training/development programme; support refresh of work plans; undertaken secretariat function; support well led workstream; support BAF development. Consistency of corporate governance support.
- Care Trust Way methodology to be embedded within meetings.
- Rules of engagement to manage expectations should ‘business as usual’ continue to be maintained, noting increased pressure/requirements. Commit to realistic meeting times.
Findings: Use of Technology

**Better Assurance Received**
- Virtual meetings and events working well, welcomed efficiencies but mindful that sessions may not work for all types of events.
- Build on success of embracing digital working to maximise programmes being used and gain training/support for colleagues.

**Less Assurance Received**
- Virtual meetings/events not accessible to everyone, avoid unintentional exclusion and meet statutory requirement of holding some ‘meetings in public’.
- Blended approach to virtual and face to face meetings/events would be welcomed as a future commitment.

**For Consideration**
- Trust estate equipped with teleconferencing facilities at key sites.
- Support/guidance from IT on programmes used. Need to understand how large audiences can be accessed and statutory requirement of meeting in public can be better delivered.
- Understand full capabilities of new programmes being used.
- Blended approach to virtual and face to face meetings/events to support agile working.
Findings: Flow of Information

**Better Assurance Received**
- Innovations and rapid improvements seen due to focused attention on agreed topics.
- Strong Non-Executive Director involvement throughout the pandemic in key governance processes.
- Shared vision supported co-production and strong engagement across portfolios/directorates.

**Less Assurance Received**
- On occasion, excessive data and lengthy reports presented that did not support the discussion.
- Developments to be made to strengthen operational meeting structure to provide better line of sight; escalation and assurance routes; visibility and engagement.
- Lack of focus on monitoring delivery for the Trust’s overarching strategies.

**For Consideration**
- Empower operational meeting structure. Develop clear purpose and accountability for all meetings, remove duplication, SLT sighted on potential gaps.
- Embed strategy monitoring within Board and sub-committees.
- Reporting lines from operational meetings to sub-committees to be refreshed.
Findings: Stakeholder Engagement

**Better Assurance Received**
- Good participation with a variety of stakeholders, through virtual meetings and planned targeted engagement programmes.
- Good representation of service users and carers through the Learning Week.
- Good examples of partnership working, shared vision and goals.

**Less Assurance Received**
- Virtual meetings not accessible to everyone, need to fulfil statutory requirements (meetings held in public); provide opportunities to make stakeholders voices heard.
- Challenge on maintaining improvements and innovations made on engaging with stakeholders.
- Supporting Board visibility, and transparency and openness of corporate governance meetings through ongoing engagement with stakeholders and internal marketing.

**For Consideration**
- Building on successes of target engagement and making meetings/events inclusive.
- CTW methodology to support development of a framework to support more ‘listening’ and learning throughout the meetings to encourage further opportunities for receiving feedback/stakeholder representation, build on success of Service User/Carer/Staff Experience.
- Embed improved system working and multi-agency approach to support community connector aspirations at Trust.
Care Trust Way – emerging themes

- Maximise inclusion / diversity in representation
- Focused / lean approach / learn and remove ‘waste’
- Build on previous successes / reflection
- Co-design across different professions / roles
- Corporate governance developments = example case study of CTW.
- Shared focused and problem solving
- Internal and external learning
- Training and development opportunities
- Clear purpose / roles / responsibilities
- Celebrating success
Next steps

1) Support recommendations outlined for consideration, a framework managed by the Corporate Governance Manager will be established.

2) Note the development of a specialist Corporate Governance Service and support it to become embedded across the Trust.

3) Output report on the findings and next steps will be presented to Board of Directors on 30 July 2020 as part of the well led workstream.

4) Support the corporate governance continuous improvements being a Care Trust Way case study to help promote good corporate governance processes that enhance Board visibility and engagement.