

# Procedure for conduct of meetings in public

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## Procedure for conduct of meetings in public

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Trust welcomes feedback from members of the public. We are committed to the delivery of our mission and aims within a context of values.
- 1.2 In addition, we are committed to the Nolan Principles of Public Life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership).
- 1.3 The ongoing pandemic has created a different style of working with the majority of meetings held now being virtual meetings and requiring a different approach in terms of meetings etiquette.
- 1.4 Increased levels of interest in current issues facing the Trust have in turn led to increased attendance by members of the public at meetings of the Board of Directors and the Council of Governors. It is important to appropriately manage this public attendance at meetings.

### 2. Purpose

This procedure has been introduced to provide a clear instruction on the conduct of meetings in public.

### 3. Scope

This procedure applies to all staff and members of the public who attend formal meetings of the Board of Directors, Council of Governors, or other decision-making bodies.

### 4. Definitions

- 4.1 A meeting **held in public** is one where members of the public are permitted to attend to observe a formal meeting of a Board or Committee or other decision-making body. Observers at such meetings are not permitted, however, to participate in the discussions.

- 4.2 Meetings held in public differ from **public meetings** which are open to the public and specifically designed to allow members of the public to ask questions and participate in discussions.
- 4.3 The Trust holds meetings of the Board and Council of Governors in public. Details of the meetings scheduled for 2020/21 appear at Appendix 1.
- 4.4 In addition, the Trust holds an annual general meeting of its members in public, to which members of the public are invited.
- 4.5 For meetings held in public questions **related to items on the agenda** can be submitted by members of the public in advance.
  - 4.5.1 The agenda is normally published a week in advance on the Trust's public website.
  - 4.5.2 The deadline for the receipt of all written questions by e mail or hard copy is noon two working days prior to the meeting.
  - 4.5.3 The Chair will adhere to the timings included on the agenda if applicable to ensure that all items of business can be discussed. This may mean that not all questions submitted in advance can be responded to during the meeting.
  - 4.5.4 The decision of the Chair of the meeting is final in determining which questions are discussed at the meeting.
  - 4.5.5 Responses to all questions relevant to the meeting which are discussed will be included in the formal minutes of the meeting and published on the Trust's public website.
- 4.6 In respect of meetings in public held virtually, the following meetings etiquette will apply:-
  - 4.6.1 Zoom or other technology used for virtual meetings necessitates the management by those attending of their own video and microphone settings. Members of the public who are attending the meeting are required to ensure that their microphones and cameras are switched off during meetings to prevent any unintended disruptions to the meeting.

- 4.6.2 The chat function in virtual meetings will only be used for meeting **participants** to signal to the Chair that they wish to make a comment and will be disabled for members of the public attending the meeting.
- 4.6.3 During the period when meetings are being held virtually, you are not required to formally book to attend. Members of the public who wish to attend will, however, be asked to provide their name and contact details prior to being provided with the link to join specific meetings.
- 4.7 Conduct at meetings- whilst we do not expect disruptive behaviour at our meetings held in public, we hope that being clear about our expectations will assist with them running smoothly.
- 4.7.1 The Trust has a common law power to prevent members of the public attending a real life meeting held in public if it has reasonable grounds for believing that they would disrupt the meeting by disorderly conduct and so make it impossible for the Trust to conduct its business.
- 4.7.2 During such a real life meeting, if the Chair of the meeting considers that the behaviours of persons attending the meeting are disrupting the meeting, the Chair can exercise this power to exclude those persons at any time during the meeting.
- 4.7.3 In virtual meetings, should significant intentional disruption arise, we may either disconnect an individual or individuals from the meeting or close the meeting and reconvene with a private link for members of the Board or Council only.

## 5. Procedure Statements

This procedure will be implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021. Regular monitoring of compliance level and effectiveness of this procedure will be via review by the relevant departments.

## 6. Duties and responsibilities

All staff and members of the public who attend formal meetings of the Board of Directors, Council of Governors, or other decision-making bodies have a duty to ensure that this Procedure is followed.

## 7. Procedures

The Trust welcomes feedback from members of the public. We are committed to the delivery of our mission and aims within a context of values. All correspondence can be sent through the Trust Secretary [TSecretary@taviport.nhs.uk](mailto:TSecretary@taviport.nhs.uk)

## 8. Training Requirements

All staff are required to ensure that they are aware of any relevant training requirements related to this procedure.

## 9. Process for monitoring compliance with this procedure

Compliance of this Procedure will be monitored by the Director of Corporate Governance, communications team, members of the Board of Directors and Council of Governors.

## 10. References

- 10.1 The Nolan Principles of Public Life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership)  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2>
- 10.2 <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-committee-on-standards-in-public-life>

## 11. Associated documents<sup>1</sup>

- 11.1 The Seven Principles of Public Life  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2>

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<sup>1</sup> For the current version of Trust procedures, please refer to the intranet.

## 12 Equality Analysis

<b>Completed by</b>	Helen Robinson
<b>Position</b>	Interim Director of Corporate Governance
<b>Date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> March 2021

<b>The following questions determine whether analysis is needed</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?		x
Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how Trust services are delivered?		x
Will the policy have a significant effect on how partner organisations operate in terms of equality?		x
Does the policy relate to functions that have been identified through engagement as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?		x
Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities?		x
Does the policy relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the Trust?		x
Other?		x

If the answer to *all* of these questions was no, then the assessment is complete.

If the answer to *any* of the questions was yes, then undertake the analysis below:

	Yes	No	Comment
Do policy outcomes and service take-up differ between people with different protected characteristics?			
What are the key findings of any engagement you have undertaken?			
If there is a greater effect on one group, is that consistent with the policy aims?			
If the policy has negative effects on people sharing particular characteristics, what steps can be taken to mitigate these effects?			
Will the policy deliver practical benefits for certain groups?			
Does the policy miss opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations?			
Do other policies need to change to enable this policy to be effective?			
Additional comments			

If one or more answers are yes, then the policy may be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010 –seek advice from Human Resources (for staff related policies) or the Trust’s Equalities Lead (for all other policies).



**13: Appendix 1: Schedule of Board and Council of Governors meetings in public**

<b>Board of Directors Meetings</b>	<b>Council of Governors Meetings</b>
Tues 26 <sup>th</sup> January 2021 Meeting 2pm – 5pm	
Tues 30 <sup>th</sup> March 2021 Meeting 2pm – 5pm	Thurs 11 <sup>th</sup> March 2021 Meeting 2pm – 5pm
Tues 18 <sup>th</sup> May 2021 Meeting 2pm – 5pm	
	Thurs 10 <sup>th</sup> June 2021 Meeting 2pm – 5pm
Tues 27 <sup>th</sup> July 2021 Meeting 2pm – 5pm	
Tues 28 <sup>th</sup> September 2021 Meeting 2pm – 5pm	Thurs 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2021 Meeting 2pm – 5pm
Tues 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2021 Meeting 2pm – 5pm	
	Thurs 9 <sup>th</sup> December 2021 Meeting 2pm – 5pm