



South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust

Joint Partnership Forum (JPF)

Terms of Reference

Constitution

The Joint Partnership Forum (JPF) is established jointly by the senior leadership team of the Trust and the relevant bodies of the Trust's recognised Unions (GMB, the RCN, UNISON, and Unite the Union), takes its authority from the Executive Management Board, and is referred to in this document as 'The Forum'.

Purpose

The Trust and its recognised Trade Unions/Staff Organisations are committed to and recognise the value of open, regular and timely information-sharing, consultation and negotiation, both formally (collective bargaining) and informally.

The JPF promotes good employee relations and seeks at all times to balance staff wellbeing with the need to run the Trust's services effectively and efficiently for the benefit of patients and wider stakeholders.

The JPF will facilitate:

- Information-sharing and discussion,
- Consultation and engagement,
- Negotiation (collective bargaining),
- Health, safety, and welfare,
- National updates,
- Policies and procedures relating to the above, and
- Joint partnership projects and L&D activity

More detail about the duties of the Forum is set out in the section 'Duties'.

Membership

The core group will comprise:

Director of HR and Organisational Development (Chair)

Deputy Director of HR and OD (Deputy Chair)

Director of Operations

Associate Director of Finance

Deputy Director of Nursing

Medical Deputy Director

Assistant Company Secretary

GMB accredited representative x 2

RCN accredited representative

UNISON accredited representative x 2

Unite the Union accredited representative x 2

By Invitation:



Members of the management team and other trades union officials may be invited to attend to discuss relevant issues.

The Chair of the Forum shall be the Director of HR and OD. The Deputy Chair shall be the Deputy Director of HR and OD. In the absence of both the Chair and Deputy Chair a member will be nominated to chair the meeting.

Quorum

The quorum necessary for formal transaction of business by the Forum shall be eight members including either the Chair or Deputy-Chair (or agreed member as Acting Chair), a member of the Operations Directorate, three Union representatives (as agreed by the recognised Unions) and three other core members (from appropriate Directorates as required by the agenda).

Attendance

In addition to the members, other officers of the Trust may be invited to attend meetings for specific agenda items or when issues relevant to their area of responsibility are to be discussed.

Members and officers unable to attend a meeting may send a fully briefed deputy who is authorised to make decisions on their behalf.

The Chair of the Forum will follow up any issues related to the unexplained non-attendance of members. Should non-attendance jeopardise the functioning of the Forum the Chair will discuss the matter with the members and if necessary seek a substitute or replacement.

Frequency

The Forum shall meet at least 6 times a year and extraordinary meetings may be called by the Chair or Union representatives acting collectively between regular meetings to discuss and resolve any critical issues arising.

Meeting dates will be diarised on a yearly basis.

The meetings will be diarised for three hours but their length may be shortened or extended depending on the demands of the agenda.

Telephone Conference

With leave of the Chair of the Forum, any member or attendee of the Forum may participate in a meeting by means of a teleconference/videoconference where circumstances require it or similar communications equipment whereby all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other and participation in the meeting in this manner shall be deemed to constitute presence in person at such meeting.

Authority



The JPF is not a Committee of the Trust Board nor a Management Group of the Executive Management Board, though it may at times escalate issues to either group or to any other management group.

The JPF reports to the Executive Management Board.

The Forum is authorised by the Trust to investigate any action within its Terms of Reference. It is authorised to seek any information it requires from any employee and all employees are directed to cooperate with any request made by the Forum.

The Forum can obtain outside legal or other independent professional advice and secure the attendance of third parties with relevant experience and expertise, if considered necessary, with the consent of the Chair of the Forum or relevant Union bodies, depending on the reason for such advice to be sought and, if necessary, which body is paying for it.

Duties

The subject matter for meetings will be wide-ranging and varied but in particular will cover the following.

Information sharing and discussion:

- The Trust's financial and operational performance;
- General matters affecting the Trust, both operational and strategic; and
- Collaborative working on matters of common interest such as: equality and inclusion; training and development of managers, staff and staff side representatives; estates and fleet; HR Performance and organisational development.

Consultation:

- Workforce planning and roles and responsibilities;
- Decisions likely to lead to substantial changes in work organisation or contractual relations;
- Health and Safety at work;
- Redundancies (where there are 20 or more employees affected or the removal of a Trust Team/function is proposed); and
- Business acquisitions, mergers, transfers and divestments.

Topics for consultation and engagement include but are not restricted to: Policies and procedures, working conditions, new ways of working, clinical quality, training, health and safety, equipment, staffing levels, welfare, Trust strategy, job stability, equal opportunities.

Negotiation (collective bargaining):



The JPF enables the Trust to negotiate with staff representatives on employee terms and conditions that are not negotiated nationally.

Policies, procedures and plans:

The JPF will be involved in discussion, consultation and, where relevant, negotiation around the content of, and changes to, Trust policies and procedures prior to approval.

Joint projects and training

The JPF will be involved and participate in time to time in projects and training design and delivery.

Values and principles:

The JPF will promote effective partnership working and the Trust's values through its operation and the operations of its members in respect of JPF activity.

The JPF will at all times remain conscious of the impact that its decisions have on the Trust's patients.

Risk management:

In the event that the Forum has risk(s) on the risk register it will undertake the duties set out in Appendix 1.

Support:

The Forum shall be supported by the Executive Assistant to the Director of HR and OD and duties shall include:

Requesting agenda items from management and Union colleagues in advance of each meeting. Both management and staff side may add items to the agenda. If any item is not to be taken the other side shall be informed prior to the meeting whenever feasible and an explanation provided;

Providing timely notice of meetings and forwarding details including the agenda and supporting papers to members and attendees in advance of the meetings;

Enforcing a disciplined timeframe for agenda items and papers, as below:

i. At least twenty-one working days prior to each meeting, agenda items will be due from Forum members;

ii. At least fifteen working days before each meeting, papers will be due from Forum members;

iii. At least fourteen working days prior to each meeting, papers will be issued to all Forum members and any invited directors, managers and officers.



Recording formal minutes of meetings and keeping a record of matters arising and issues to be carried forward (action log), and circulating approved draft minutes and action log within fourteen working days from the date of the last meeting;

Reporting

The Forum will provide reports and escalate specific issues to the Executive Management Board.

The Chair of the Forum may report significant issues by exception to the Board of Directors and/or relevant Committees of the Board.

Review

The Forum will undertake a self-assessment at the end of each meeting to review its effectiveness in discharging its responsibilities as set out in these Terms of Reference.

The Forum shall review its own performance and Terms of Reference at least once a year to ensure it is operating at maximum effectiveness. Any proposed changes shall be submitted to the HR Senior Leadership Team for approval

These Terms of Reference shall be approved by the HR Senior Leadership Team and formally reviewed at intervals not exceeding two years.

Approved by: Executive Management Board

Approved date:

Review Date:



Appendix 1

The Forum administrator is responsible for ensuring the most recent Group risk register is downloaded from Datix and included in the collation and distribution of papers to members.

If a Principal Risk Lead (a Principal Risk Lead has authority to progress the risk actions) is not a member of the Forum, they will be formally invited to attend by the Chair. If the Principal Risk Lead is unable to attend the Chair will formally request an update to ensure members remain informed.

At all scheduled Forum meetings, members will discuss and report on each of the following criteria pertaining to each identified Open risk:

Progress of action(s)

Adequacy of controls (controls assurance) when identified

Risk grading reviewed

Reasons for Principal Risk Lead failing to meet a review date

Status review (Open or Proposed for Closure)

Datix Ref.	Progress of each action N (Not due) O (Overdue)	Adequacy of Controls: E (Effective) N (Non-Effective)	Risk Grade(s) Reviewed Y (Yes) N (No)	Review Date Met Y (Yes) N (No)	Status Review O (Open) P (Proposed for Closure)
123	N O	E	Y	N	O
456	N N N	E	Y	Y	P

The Forum Chair will communicate with the Accountable Executive if the status of a risk changes from Open to Proposed for Closure (The Principal Risk Lead is responsible for all updates on their risk). It is the responsibility of the Accountable Executive to approve closure of a risk or ask the Forum Chair for further evidence of assurance. Where further evidence of assurance is requested, the Forum Chair will ensure the Principal Risk Lead changes the status of the risk back to Open.

The Forum Chair will compose an annual risk management report and risk management will be included in the Forum annual report for the Trust Board.