

Agenda item:	6
Date of meeting:	28 January 2026
Report to the:	Group Trust Board
Title of report:	Chief Executive's Report
Report authors:	Sarah Feal, Company Secretary and Freedom to Speak Up Guardian Vicky Brooke, Associate Director of Marketing, Communications and Engagement
Executive sponsor:	Matthew Winn, Chief Executive Officer
Recommendation:	Approve
	The internal governance recommendations in section 6.3.3

Assurance level:	Substantial <input type="checkbox"/> Reasonable <input type="checkbox"/> Partial <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal <input type="checkbox"/>
Rationale:	Not Applicable.

1.0 Executive Summary

The report details in section 6.1 some of the national policy development that impact on the activities of the Trust – focusing on the new NHS Online Hospital and widening of the vaccination programme to cover chickenpox.

Our partnership with Norfolk County Council continues to develop and we will be publicly signing our joint agreement to enhance integrated health and care working for adults and older people in the next month.

Matters connected to our Trusts include the culture of people being able to raise their concerns, shown in 6.3.1 with the Freedom to Speak up data. Secondly the work to merge the organisations continues well, with us on track to create the East of England Community Health and Care NHS Trust on time. As part of that coming together the Board are asked to agree to updates to three Board level policies and terms of reference for a committee in advance of the new organisation starting on April 1st.

Finally, section 6.4 contains a range of insights and activity to support our organisations to be a wonderful place to receive care from and a great employer to support our staff.

2.0 How the report supports tackling Health Inequalities

Not explicitly covered.

3.0 Links to Board Assurance Framework / Trust(s) Risk and Issue Registers

There are none identified.

4.0 Legal and Regulatory requirements

- NHS Act 2006

5.0 Previous consideration by Committee or Executive

19 November 2025, Chief Executive's Report – Group Trust Board.

6.0 Report

6.1 National Updates

6.1.1 NHS Online Hospital

Menopause and prostate problems will be among the priorities for the [NHS's new online hospital](#) when it launches next year. The NHS has selected nine common conditions which will be the first to be treated by the NHS Online service, providing faster access to specialist care.

The Government hopes the new NHS Online hospital, which will transform how healthcare is delivered, allows patients to be triaged quickly through the NHS App, speak to clinicians via video consultation, and be monitored in the comfort of their home, saving unnecessary trips to hospital. The Chair and non executive roles are benign recruited to currently.

There is no detail available on how this will dovetail with locally provided services in our Trusts or with partner organisations.

6.1.2 NHS Vaccination Programme

The NHS's vaccination programme is being expanded to include chickenpox (also known as varicella) for the first time to help shield young children from getting seriously ill. From now on, GP practices will start to offer children a combined MMRV vaccine at 12 months and 18 months of age to add chickenpox to the protections against measles, mumps and rubella.

6.2 Regional Matters

6.2.1 Section 75 Agreement

Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust and Norfolk County Council have agreed to extend their arrangements for the provision of an integrated health and social care management structure, designed to better meet the needs of the users of the services than if the organisations were operating independently.

This arrangement is formalised within a 'Section 75' agreement (section 75 of the NHS Act 2006) and is for 3 years from 1 April 2025, with two further 3-year extensions permitted before a new agreement is required. This agreement replaces the previous arrangements that have been in place since April 2014.

The newly formed integrated management structure is responsible for, broadly, all adult community health services, Assessment and Care Management services (including Intermediate Care and Urgent Community Care) for Norfolk residents.

The finalisation of the agreement cements our close working relationship with Norfolk County Council (adults and children and young people) and confirms our focus as an integrated provider in delivering health and care services to our population. Arrangements are being made for the public facing event to put the formal signatures on the agreement, reflecting our commitment to each other and the Norfolk population.

6.3 Matters related to our Trust(s)

6.3.1 Freedom to Speak Up Update – We Each Have a Voice that Counts.

This update includes concerns raised during the reporting period April to September 2025 through the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian function for Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust. It does not include case management information relating to other speak-up channels across the organisation, for example, line manager or HR routes.

Between April and September 2025, there have been **twenty-seven** concerns for Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust. In the same period last year, there were **twenty-one** cases.

Figure 1 - Table of cases included in the National Guardian's Office

2025	April to June	July to September	Total
Total number of cases	13	14	27
Themes			
Attitudes and Behaviours	12	12	24
Equipment and Maintenance	-	-	-
Policies, procedures, and processes	1	2	3

2025	April to June	July to September	Total
Service changes	-	-	-
Other (sexual misconduct)	-	-	-

6.3.2 Merger of our Trusts

- The key milestones and tasks for the last reporting period have all been completed and we are on track to merge the two organisations for 1st April 2026.
- The following is a summary of the key themes from the multiple reviews and interviews with executive and non-executive directors with NHS England.
 - Strong governance and risk management with reporting to board clear.
 - Day-One readiness and capacity available to deliver.
 - Financial sustainability and efficiency with clear savings identified.
 - Digital Transformation and future strategy with interest in how this will evolve to meet wider targets.
 - Quality and patient-centric care with minimal disruption noted and a consideration for a post-merger CQC inspection.
 - Clinical and care strategy shaped through staff / patient engagement and aligned with Integrated Care Board priorities.
 - Stakeholder engagement and strategic positioning – noted the strong engagement with MPs, patient groups and partners, and how our model aligns with national direction.
- Processes for all staff transferring into the organisational are happening and active engagement with our Staff side colleagues, Unions and external stakeholders.

6.3.3 Internal governance changes

- a) The **Managing Conflicts of Interest Policy** has been standardised (in line with NHS England's latest guidance) across both Trusts in preparation for day one in the new organisation.

Key changes include:

- Decision-making staff are now defined as those at NHS Agenda for Change Band 8c and above, or the equivalent in local authorities.
- Gifts of cash or vouchers from patients, families, service users must always be declined.

The Group Trust Board is asked to **approve** the policy and **recommend** this to East of England Community Health and Care NHS Trust from the 1 April 2026, and for the reporting and oversight of the policy to be delegated to the Audit and Risk Committee.

- b) The **Fit and Proper Person Test Framework Policy** has been standardised (in line with NHS England's latest guidance) across both Trusts in preparation for day one in the new organisation.

Key changes include:

- amend County Court Judgement checks from an annual check to three yearly in line with Disclosure Barring Service checks.

The Group Trust Board is asked to **approve** the policy and **recommend** this to East of England Community Health and Care NHS Trust from the 1 April 2026.

- c) The **Risk and Issue Management Policy** has been standardised across both Trusts in preparation for day one in the new organisation.

The Group Trust Board is asked **to note** this was discussed and agreed by the Joint Audit and Risk Committee on 1 December 2025.

- d) The Quality Committee has reviewed and updated its Terms of Reference.

Key changes include:

- meeting frequency changed from **six** to **four** times a year.

The Group Trust Board is asked to **approve** this amendment.

6.4 Update on our communication activity across both organisations

Providing great local health and care

Advanced FT status - We announced on Wednesday that our Trusts have been chosen to become a new Advanced Foundation Trust. This will happen after April 2026 when we have merged to create our new organisation. There more to do as we go through the formal authorisation phase, but this recognition reflects the consistently high standards within our services. Only eight organisations have been chosen. More information - [CCS and NCH&C chosen to become a new Advanced Foundation Trust](#)

HIV Confident – We are working towards becoming a HIV Confident Trust to ensure our services are welcoming, informed and equitable for all. Historic media coverage and outdated fears around HIV transmission continue to influence attitudes within healthcare settings. This can result in stigma and unlawful discrimination, with a real impact on people living with HIV. To help us gain this accreditation we have asked staff to complete a [short survey](#). An e-Learning module will also be released in February 2026 to help build knowledge and confidence around HIV.

Malnutrition Awareness Week – In November, our dietitians were sharing information to help strengthen the understanding of what they do as a team and highlight practical ways NHS colleagues can make a difference and ensure that no one's nutritional needs are overlooked. Each day had a different theme: Monday – Malnutrition screening; Tuesday - #ChallengesTuesday; Wednesday – Hospital Discharge; Thursday – Thirsty Thursday; and Friday – Every Contact Counts.

World Diabetes Day - We marked World Diabetes Day with [meal tips on our social media](#) from our dietitians to help people balance their blood sugar.

Antimicrobial Awareness Week – On social media we have been sharing [messages to build understanding of the antimicrobial resistance](#) and steps people can take to avoid the spread of resistant infections. This has included sharing

pledges from our Medical Director, Chief Nurses and infection prevention and control leads.

Sexual health outreach - Our sexual health teams are actively reaching people in our communities to raise awareness of sexual health and the services available. The teams have been at the Bedford Sixth Form wellbeing fair, Central Bedfordshire health fair, Kingston Library in Milton Keynes and East Coast College in Lowestoft.

SystemOne – Our patient information in Norfolk for adult services has been brought together into a single SystemOne unit, removing previous duplication. This is better for patients and our staff. Having a single SystemOne unit with accurately recorded data will give us a truer picture of clinical capacity and help us avoid wasting resources and time, data breaches and improve the experience for our patients.

Service moves - community teams (NN4 and UCR) working at Brundall Health Centre will now be based at Magna Medical Centre. The new address is Magna Medical Centre, 1 Magna Way, Little Plumstead, Norwich, NR13 5SP. They will be joined in the coming weeks by the community team from Hoveton and Wroxham Medical Centre, as well as GPs.

Read more about the new [Magna Medical Centre Development](#) on the Hoveton and Wroxham Medical Centre website.

Collaboration with partners

Baby Week - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Children and Young People's Health Services had a successful Baby Week (14 – 20 November) to highlight baby health and wellbeing.

Events took place across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council, including rhyme time, sensory play, swimming sessions, story time and much more, all for free! The families got to meet our health visiting team, infant feeding team and speech and language team. Family Hubs, National Literacy Trust and Hampton Pharmacy also joined us. The end of Baby Week was celebrated with a fun-filled baby rave.

Our Facebook posts about the week have had 65.4k views on Facebook and 11.2k views on Instagram.

Youth participation – The Beds and Luton Young People's Participation Group had its first meeting on Monday. It was great to see such an engaged and diverse group of young people wanting to help make our services as good as possible for other young people. The first session was about understanding the group's purpose, getting to know each other, and co-producing how the group will function. In January it will start with its first projects.

NCH&C welcomes NHS Providers Chair - On Monday, we welcomed Sir Terence Stephenson, Chair of NHS Providers, to Norwich Community Hospital. Sir Terence toured services including the Willow Therapy Unit and Mulberry Unit, meeting staff and patients.

MP visit - Rob Mack (Norfolk Health and Care Director), Kirsty Rowden (Operations Director of Intermediate Care and Urgent Community Response), Corwen Hull (Clinical Director for Intermediate Care and Urgent Community Response) and Luciano Pitasi (WTU ward manager) met with Alice MacDonald, Labour MP for

Norwich North in December to give her a tour of the WTU and show her the ways the care provided at WTU is helping patients regain their independence and get ready to return home with confidence.

Valuing our people

HSJ Awards – CCS was a finalist in the HSJ Awards for its Staff Wellbeing category. The awards were held in London on 20 November and recognised our work to develop an open supportive culture where everyone can belong and thrive.

Award nominations - NCH&C has been nominated for the Apprenticeships Norfolk Awards 2026 in the category of Large Apprenticeship Employer of the Year reflecting our dedication to 'growing our own' workforce. Many thanks to all involved in supporting apprentices within the trust. We will know in the next few weeks if we have been successful in making the finals.

NCH&C has also been awarded the NHS England Gold Standard for its 5-day Work Experience Programme. This achievement is a testament to the hard work, dedication, and passion of our teams who have created an outstanding programme that provides meaningful opportunities for individuals exploring careers in healthcare.

Open Conversations - Following the fantastic feedback from the Open Conversation earlier in the year, from December 2025 these have become a regular monthly event. These are a chance to reflect on challenges and feelings, in relation to race.

Disability History Month - This year's theme affirms that every life is valuable and brings value to our communities. Those with diverse abilities can create transformation and innovation that improves the lives of those who are disabled and non-disabled. During Disability History Month we talked to our staff about being Disability Confident Leader employer and what this means for our colleagues.

Grief Awareness event - Working in the NHS means grief is often part of our daily lives. We encourage staff to support each other with simple strategies such as talking to your colleagues and checking in on how your team are doing. For National Grief Awareness Week (2-8 December 2025). Tracey Dryhurst, NCH&C's Specialist Palliative Care Pathway Lead - Wellbeing Services, led a talk for the Norfolk Bereavement Alliance hosted by the Priscilla Bacon Hospice Charity Bereavement Service.

Healthcare Support Worker Celebration Day – Both Trusts recognised support workers for the celebration on Sunday 23 November. The day was marked with thank you messages in internal comms and on social media. We also shared [a special message from our Chief Nurse and AHP Officer](#) Kate Howard.

Staff recognition – We have continued to recognise our people through our monthly award schemes. Stars of the Month in NCH&C have included Alice Edge, Specialist Palliative Care Nurse; Sorrel Read, Healthcare Assistant; and Lee Baker, Senior Community Nurse. Our Shine a Light winners at CCS include Dental Nurse Sue Peart, Dentist Shona Feare and Dental Therapist Sumayya Damani from Special Care Dentistry in Wisbech. Kirstie Flack in the Communications Team won our Thanks A Bunch award.

Remembrance Day - On Tuesday 11 November, the group held a moving Remembrance Day ceremony at Norwich Community Hospital. Staff gathered to

observe a two-minute silence alongside Dom and Clare, the leads for our armed forces networks. We also commemorated the twenty-six civilians who tragically lost their lives at The Lodge, Woodlands Hospital during the bombing raids of April 1942.

Mental Health First Aider Day – We marked this national day with thank you messages to our mental health first aiders and by sharing more information about the role with our staff and through social media. Mental health first aider Faiza explained: “For me, being a mental health first aider is about creating a safe, non-judgemental space for colleagues to share how they are feeling. It’s not about having all the answers, but about listening, offering reassurance and guiding people to the right support at the right time.”

2025 highlights - To celebrate some of the achievements across our Group last year we put together a highlight video that was shared with all staff. We know this is just a fraction of what was achieved in 2025 but the video shows the huge impact our teams and services made last year: [2025 Rewind CCS and NCH&C](#)

Secure our future through innovation

New website – To support our service users, carers and partner organisations, we are developing a new website for our new trust. As well as bringing together information about all our work into a single place, we are taking the opportunity to refresh our content to make it clearer and more accessible. The new site will be live in April.

Staff from many of our services are involved in the development and we have also had support from our patient partners who are playing an important role in making sure the content meets the needs of our users.

New intranet – The final staff engagement group for the intranet development project took place in January. Staff from both trusts have been telling us how they use the current sites, the information they are looking for on the site, and the tools they would find helpful on a new site. The feedback will be used to shape the structure, look and feel of the new intranet site due to launch on 1 April 2026.

NCH&C skin integrity team delivers first care home conference - Working in collaboration with Medicare Plus, Smith and Nephew and Frontier Medical, the Skin Integrity team offered two face-to-face training sessions, focusing on the prevention and treatment of Moisture Associated Skin Damage (MASD), skin tears and pressure ulcers. Over 80 delegates shared great discussion about wound prevention and treatment in relation to the focus topics. Resource material and opportunities for further learning and information was also provided to support delegates consolidation of the snapshot shared within the session.

Award for stroke team - Our stroke team has won the [Tavistock Trust for Aphasia's](#) Best Aphasia Poster Award 2025. The award was presented at the UK Stroke Forum in Aberdeen. This follows a project to create a range of new resources to support stroke patients, including new patient guides and video resources.

Annex:

1. Managing Conflicts of Interest Policy

2. Fit and Proper Person Test Framework Policy
3. Quality Committee Terms of Reference