

Agenda Item 1.vii

Report to:	Board of Directors	Date: 06 November 2025
Report from:	Eilish Midlane, Chief Executive	
Principal Objective/Strategy and Title	Chief Executive report	
Board Assurance Framework Entries	Governance	
Regulatory Requirement	N/A	
Equality Considerations	None believed to apply	
Key Risks	N/A	
For:	Information	

1 Purpose

This report provides the Trust Board with a bi-monthly update from the Chief Executive.

2 Introduction

As we moved past the half year point in 2025-2026, we have taken the opportunity to undertake a review of progress against the commitments that we made as part of the planning round for the year: reduction of waiting lists and a 5% improvement in the Referral To Treatment (RTT) standard, reduction in long waiting patients, recovery of the cancer 62-day standard, and delivery of a breakeven financial position.

I am pleased to report that elective recovery is significantly ahead of plan, with a material reduction in the number of patients waiting for treatment and an improvement in RTT performance of greater than the 5% requirement. Cancer performance has been slower to recover but a concerted effort by all involved is beginning to yield results. For a financial position, I have confidence that we will deliver a breakeven position at the end of the year, but we will have a higher dependence on non-recurrent savings than is comfortable. As a consequence, I have established a Financial Improvement and Productivity Board, which I lead, with a focus on further reducing spend on temporary staffing now that we have the lowest vacancy level for many years, identifying and delivering our recurrent cost improvement projects, addressing increases in our non-pay spend. The Board mirrors the approach of the Access Board, and I am confident that it will have the same successful impact.

3 Compassion: our people

3.1 Long service awards

We held our annual Long Service Awards in October, celebrating 1,820 years of loyal service with colleagues from across the trust who were marking 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 and 40 years.

The event allowed attendees to hear more about the incredible work of their colleagues from over the years and awards were presented by myself and Jag Ahluwalia, Chair. Attendees enjoyed lunch together while reminiscing about years past, accompanied by a selection of photos from the archives.

A huge thank you to all those celebrating a milestone this year. Their work doesn't go unnoticed.

3.2 Diwali and Black History Month celebrations

Diwali

Staff and patients came together in the atrium on Friday 17 October to celebrate the vibrant festival of Diwali. The event was filled with joy and featured captivating dance performances and an array of delicious treats. It was a wonderful occasion embraced and enjoyed by all.

Black History Month

Each year we mark Black History Month by coming together to share experiences, stories and insights. So, on Tuesday 28 October 2025, staff and special guests gathered to do just that. Every day, our colleagues from minority ethnic backgrounds make an incredible impact - caring for patients, supporting one another, and pioneering treatments that will change lives. Yet we also recognise the challenges they continue to face in today's world.

3.3 Strategy Development

It's been a busy month as we have continued to engage and iterate our new strategy with staff and partners. We'll be reviewing the final wording of the strategy in the board meeting later today, but it has been both a privilege and very humbling to hear from so many members of our staff and communities as we have worked through this process. It's my sincere hope that the final version that is put before board today truly reflects the hopes, aspirations, and vision for the future that people have shared with us. I look forward to working with you all in delivering the strategic aims we've collectively aligned around.

3.4 Resident doctors Mess Project

I am delighted to report that building works for the resident doctors' mess on the 5th floor have now been completed. A kitchenette, office space and comfortable relaxing area has been built, and the resident doctors are now using it.

My thanks to all involved in the project including our resident doctor representatives on the task and finish group and to all those displaced by the work; Transplant nursing team, Alert

and Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP), Allied Health Professional (AHP) team and the resident doctors themselves.

4 Excellence: quality

4.1 Surgical site infections (wound infections)

Inpatient and readmission surgical site infection rate remains above the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) benchmark (of 2.7%). Quarter 1 validated rate was 6.1%. Improvement work continues to be a key focus for the Trust.

4.2 Flu vaccine uptake

We are pleased to report that Royal Papworth is currently in the top five NHS trusts nationwide for the highest percentage of frontline staff vaccinated against the flu this year. Throughout October 2025 we administered circa 1,200 vaccines to our staff, representing around 45% of our staff. This has helped protect themselves, their loved ones and our patients against a potentially serious illness. Our vaccinators will continue to offer the vaccine to staff well into November 2025.

4.3 Mycobacterium Abscessus

The outbreak in 2019 at our hospital of this bacterial infection, which was linked to our water supply, continues to be a key focus area for us, as we work to ensure that the lessons we learned are implemented internally as well as externally.

We have recently held conversations with local members of parliament to help them see the broader context of *M.abscessus* and how lessons learned have been incorporated into regulations which seek to avoid a similar occurrence in the UK, particularly concerning the new hospital project's understanding of the challenge.

4.4 Royal Papworth named as one of the best for inpatient care

This annual survey (**CQC adult inpatient survey 2024**) invites feedback from patients who have spent at least one night in our hospital, covering areas such as environment, communication, involvement in decisions, and dignity.

We are proud that Royal Papworth has once again been rated 'much better than expected' placing us among just eight hospitals to achieve this highest rating for the sixth year in a row!

We're incredibly grateful to every patient who took the time to complete the CQC Adult Inpatient Survey. Their feedback helps us recognise areas we're doing well in, while also highlighting others where more attention is required

Whether from patients, visitors or staff, feedback we receive throughout the year is invaluable, helping us to continuously improve and help shape services that truly meet the needs of those we care for

4.5 Working with Partners

As part of our ongoing commitment to work with partners across the membership of the Federation of Specialist Hospitals (FSH) the Deputy Chief Executive Officer attended a

meeting with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. He had the opportunity to highlight the work that Royal Papworth Hospital was already delivering across the three shifts within the government's 10-year health plan (i.e. moving more care from hospitals to communities, making better use of technology in health and care, and focusing on preventing sickness, not just treating it) and the progress being made on waiting times. A good discussion followed about areas for further collaboration between federation members and government. We look forward to continuing to work together to improve the health and care of the population we collectively serve.

5 **Collaboration: productivity**

5.1 **Elective Recovery**

There remains a continued focus on elective recovery and our waiting list continues to reduce as a result. The total patients waiting for treatment was 6,080 in September 2025, importantly those waiting over 18 weeks also continues to reduce with a reduction from 2,850 in February 2025 to 1,698 in August 2025.

Consequently, RTT continues to improve and September saw the biggest month on month improvement to date with our position being 72.1% of our patients waiting less than 18 weeks for treatment. This is a result of the collaborative efforts of all teams across the Trust and means we are amongst the most improved in the country.

In addition, we have increased operational grip and oversight of the number of patients waiting in excess of 52 weeks. As a result of this and targeted improvement actions, the number of patients waiting over 52 weeks has reduced from 56 in August to 38 on 30 October. This equates to a 32% reduction and is the lowest number of patients waiting over 52 weeks for 15 months. This will continue to be a focus as we strive to ensure no patients are waiting over 52 weeks by the end of November.

Validation of our waiting list helps to identify patients who no longer need treatment as well as to ensure patients are at the right stage of their pathway. Following a review of processes in place, our validation of patients waiting 12 weeks or more (and validated every 12 weeks) has improved from 34.9% in May 2025 to 98.3% in September 2025.

Diagnostics are a key part of elective recovery as well as ongoing planned care. An increased focus on diagnostics commenced in May 2025 and has since seen a reduction in patients waiting over 6 weeks due to targeted efforts particularly in thoracic and radiology. The number of patients waiting over six weeks within thoracic for a diagnostic has reduced from 2,271 in May 2025 to 158 in September 2025 and within radiology from 978 in May 2025 to 888 in September 2025.

Cancer

There has been an enhanced focus on our cancer waits, particularly around the 62-day target (commencement of treatment within two months of an urgent referral). Collaborative efforts underpin daily oversight and as a result more of our patients are receiving treatment within 62-days.

A new cancer improvement trajectory has been developed based on our improved operational grip and oversight as well as targeted improvement actions.

5.2 Financial position and operational planning

Whilst the Trust's finances are on plan at month six, we have had to look to non-recurrent means to deliver this position.

We recognise that this is financially unsustainable to continue in this way, and that it will have a negative impact on our future plans and ability to invest to support us to deliver our priorities.

We have therefore responded rapidly to this situation. We have been developing a Financial Recovery Plan which has identified a range of interventions to improve our current position in a planned and safe way. These include measures to reduce our pay run-rate and maximise recovery of income for the work that we are doing.

We have also put in place a Financial Improvement and Productivity Board (FIPB) which met for the first time at the end of October. The FIPB will not only support us to deliver this year's Plan but will focus us on financial improvement underpinned by transformational change and actions aligned to the trust's strategy.

5.3 Digital report

Windows 11 upgrade improves site wide security

We have successfully completed rolling out Windows 11 across our estate, on plan to time and cost. A small number of devices remain on Windows 10 with extended support until their update in December this year. The plan aligns with an ongoing commitment for security of end user devices.

Journey to connect with NHS App begins with Patient Portal

Our bid to NHS England for a patient engagement portal has been successful. Funding for a limited number of organisations means we can begin to deploy our patient portal enabling seamless integration with NHS App and moving towards our ambitions for the NHS 10-year plan and digital and data strategy.

Project Deployment Update

The computer application Vitalograph has been successfully deployed and is now live across our Trust, replacing the previous Vyaire system for Pulmonary Function Testing. The upgrade enhances clinical delivery and offers improved patient experience through more accurate diagnostics and streamlined workflows.

British Computer Society (BCS) – Going for Gold

The Digital team has made further strides towards department-wide registration with BCS. The team has moved from Silver to Gold accreditation, reflecting 90% of the Digital team is now registered as IT professionals.

6 And also.....congratulations to....

CSO Awards

Our Cyber Analyst, Chris Bardell, has been recognised in the prestigious CSO30 this year, a great accolade and well-deserved recognition.

2025 National B.A.M.E. Health and Care Awards

Health Inequalities Specialist Berin Krenek has been recognised for her exceptional work in public health and was the winner of the **Public Health Impact Award recently**. Her efforts, notably in smoking cessation, are making a real difference by transforming lives and strengthening communities.