

---

**Trust Public Board August 2008**

**Foundation Trust Application**

To receive a report from the FT Project Board on progress with the Foundation Trust Application

**Report by:** Jan Filochowski, Chief Executive

---

**Purpose**

At our October 2007 meeting, the Board made the decision to apply for Foundation Trust status. This paper provides the Board with recent developments, including the position of the SHA on the Trust's application. It also outlines the dates for the public consultation period.

**SHA Position**

The SHA outlined their position in a letter, dated 28 February, which outlined the 'show stoppers' that would prevent the Trust progressing with a full application to the DH. These were:

- Health Care Commission Ratings
- Statutory Break Even Duty
- Contractual Activity
- Fit for Purpose Board

The Trust produced a 'work plan' that detailed the programme of activities and proposed timescales that it would use to overcome the obstacles outlined above. A presentation of this work formed the basis of a Chairs and Chief Executives meeting between the Trust and the SHA on 7 July.

At the meeting on the 7 July, the SHA were satisfied that sufficient progress had been made on all of the issues listed above to allow the Trust to move forward.

**Trust Position**

The proposal is to launch the public consultation at or around the AGM in September 08 and for it to run until the middle of December. The timetable for the stages of the application is therefore subject to refinement as shown in the table below.

**Communication Support**

The Trust tendered for external Communications support. Four companies were invited to tender and a 4/5 month contract will be awarded to run from the end of August 2008. This will provide support in a complex and challenging period as the Trust applies for FT status and will assist in the sizeable task of securing FT membership and managing the various messages that the Trust needs to put across about how services are being delivered now and in the future. They will deliver a wide reaching campaign, touching all residents of west Hertfordshire, particularly the seldom-heard groups alongside those that have used the Trust's services and their carers.

## IT Support

The Trust has commissioned a membership management system from Active Solutions, that will allow members to join on line, allow for paper based registration, register their particular interests (for future discussion/focus groups) and pull out reports, such as the demographic split of members, that Monitor requires.

## Consultation document

A draft consultation document was discussed at the FT Project Board on 6 August (attached for information). This will need to be redesigned as part of the work programme agreed with the successful external communications support team.

## Constituent Boundaries

The Trust needs to define its constituent boundaries, i.e. the area which it considers to be its catchment area and from which it can draw members (and eventually Governors). The FT Project Board agreed that the 6 constituency boundaries would be:

- Watford
- Hemel Hempstead
- St Albans
- Berkhamsted and Tring
- Three Rivers
- Hertsmere

These are not set in stone and would be subject to potential change during the public consultation.

## Membership

There are three types of Membership - public, patients and staff. This will ensure that the Trust has input from the greatest areas of influence and give the local community a much stronger voice on what the Trust does in the future.

The Trust has to set a minimum age for Membership and this has been set at 16 years of age. This will give the Trust the opinions of younger Members and patients, as well as set a minimum age for voting rights. All Members will have the right to vote for representatives on a new Board of Governors.

### *Staff Membership*

All of our permanent staff and our main contract staff automatically become Members. Staff have the right to opt-out of Membership, if they wish.

### *Public Membership*

Anyone who lives in west Hertfordshire Watford, Hemel Hempstead, St Albans, Berkhamstead and Tring, Three Rivers and Hertsmere and are over the age of 16. West Hertfordshire is the main population the Trust serves, so will offer Membership to anyone living in the area.

### *Patient Membership*

People who do not live in one of the west Hertfordshire areas above, but have been a patient at any of the hospitals, (Watford General Hospital, Hemel Hempstead General Hospital or St Albans

City Hospital) or are the primary carer of one of the patients, can be a Member if over 16 years of age.

## Board

An important next stage is for the Board to become involved in the implications of becoming an FT and working as an FT Board. 360 degree training is underway. Further development of the Board to fully integrate with the strategic and market positioning of the Trust will be important as the Trust prepares for external scrutiny, such as B2B challenges.

A proposed Board development plan will be presented to the October meeting.

## Revised Timetable

The proposal is to launch the public consultation at events in September, including the AGM, and for it to run until the middle of December 08. The timetable for the stages of the application is therefore subject to refinement as shown in the table below.

---

14 March 2008	Initial feedback on Draft IBP
End March 2008	Chair/CEOs meeting Agree with SHA overall time lines and milestones
March >	Development of Integrated Business Plan/LTFM
July 7	SHA agree Trust can proceed to consultation
Sept 23 to Dec 16	Public Consultation on proposal to become FT
January 09 >	Board Development
April 09 >	Mock B2Bs
Jan > March 09	Next iteration of IBP/LTFM ready SHA assesses whether Trust is consistently hitting all performance targets during 2008/9
Apr /May 09?	EoE SHA recommendation to DH Applications committee
June/July 09?	DH Applications Committee submits proposals to Sec of State
August/September 09?	Monitor assessment commences
December 2009?	Possible for FT authorisation

?: indicates where the dates are subject to additional change in view of other developments

## Conclusion

This is an important stage in the continued development of West Hertfordshire Hospital NHS Trust.

The Board are asked to:

- note the launch of the public consultation phase in September
- note the progress that has been made in obtaining external support
- commit to future involvement in the Trust becoming a Foundation Trust

**Jan Filochowski**  
Chief Executive  
August 2008