



Non-Executive Director (Audit Committee Chair)

Candidate information pack

March 2025

Welcome from the Chair

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Non-Executive Director at University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust (UHSussex).

UHSussex was created in April 2021 through the merger of Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Brighton and Sussex University Hospital NHS Trust. Merging during the pandemic prohibited much of the work that might be expected to integrate the organisation and therefore, although four years old, the Trust is still in the foothills of becoming one University Hospitals Sussex (our mission). There has been a great deal of focus on developing an integrated performance and governance reporting function to enable the Board to be effective, but there is much work to do on organisational culture, the optimal service configuration and delivery model.

As a key element of the service reconfiguration, we have a number of large capital projects underway, including a Trust-wide Electronic Patient Record, a new build £200m cancer centre, a reconfiguration of the emergency floor within the Royal Sussex County and a number of smaller schemes such as Same Day Emergency Care in Worthing and St Richard's Hospitals.

As with all NHS organisations, UHSussex is operating within a very high pressurised environment, where demand for our services – be they elective surgery, diagnostics, cancer services or A&E – is outstripping our ability to supply them in a timely fashion. This is further compounded by the pressures facing local authorities and mental health services, which means that we care for some people far longer than their medical needs require because of restricted capacity in social and mental health care.

Funding for the NHS as a whole has been subject of much political discussion, and whilst new funds have been identified, these, in the main, provide funding for existing, unfunded commitments such as inflation etc and like many other Trusts, UHSussex faces significant financial pressures as it moves into 2025/26 with an opening, unmitigated deficit of around 10% of the total budget for the year. While this will reduce as plans are developed, there is likely to be a gap that will need to be addressed through a combination of productivity improvement, service reconfiguration, asset sales and so on.

The Trust is also subject to a police investigation, Operation Bramber, that is looking into a number of patients who were in our care within, in the main, two specialties: general and neurosurgery. There are, therefore, several families that are understandably concerned and worried by this and our ability to support them has been restricted by the ongoing investigation. The investigation has been reported on the local and national media on several occasions and this is likely to continue for some time.

It is against this backdrop that we are developing our 2030 strategy. The work has included wide consultation with staff and stakeholders and is informed by our knowledge of best practice and emerging treatments; our solid position, that we are a university hospital with research and undergraduate medical, and other clinical professions training as core business; and a commitment to being the major trauma and tertiary centre for the area. Our new strategy will seek to address the challenges we face and provide a clear delivery plan for improvement on all fronts.

UHSussex is a large, complex organisation that is determined to be a leader in its field and so whilst the current environment is challenging, all of us are committed and motivated to providing services that our patients applaud and our staff enjoy delivering.

I tell you all of this not to deter or scare but to give you a sense of what you would be walking into as an NED on our Board: there is much for us to do at UHSussex and we want inspirational, resilient and dedicated people to join us on our journey. Full details are provided further in this pack, but we are looking to appoint three new NEDs and need skills in Audit, outstanding Clinical innovation and successful Transformation.

If you think you can help and are up for the challenge, please contact Jenny Adrian or Rhiannon Smith at our recruitment partners Hunter Healthcare on 07939 250362 or by email: jadrian@hunter-healthcare.com

Philippa Slinger
Chair, University Hospitals Sussex
NHS Foundation Trust



About the Trust

UHSussex is one of the largest organisations in the NHS. We employ nearly 20,000 staff, serve a population of around 1.8 million people across Brighton and Hove, West and Mid Sussex and parts of East Sussex and have an annual operating budget of around £1.6bn.

The Trust provides all district general hospital services and operates seven hospitals in Brighton and West Sussex:

- Princess Royal Hospital in Haywards Heath
- Royal Alexandra Children’s Hospital in Brighton
- Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton
- St Richard’s Hospital in Chichester
- Southlands Hospital in Shoreham-by-Sea
- Sussex Eye Hospital in Brighton
- Worthing Hospital in Worthing

We also provide specialist services for patients from across the wider South East, with Royal Sussex County Hospital being our centre for major trauma and tertiary specialist services.

More than 28,000 staff, patients and local people are members of the Foundation Trust. Our members help shape our future plans and priorities. They also elect our Council of Governors. Our governors represent the views of our community and act as a “critical friend” to the Trust. This means they keep an eye on our performance and hold the organisation to account.

Further information about the Trust can be found [here](#).



Our values

UHSussex has a core focus to put the patient first and foremost – our ‘True North’. This is underpinned by a commitment to continuous improvement and a set of values selected by our staff, patients and stakeholders:

Compassion and communication

We treat our patients and staff with the same compassion and empathy we expect for ourselves. We’re here for them when they need us, and we go above and beyond to meet their needs. We care about everyone’s well-being, because that’s why we do what we do. And we make sure everyone feels informed and included. We always find the time to communicate with staff and patients, however busy we may be, because people’s lives depend on it.

Inclusion and respect

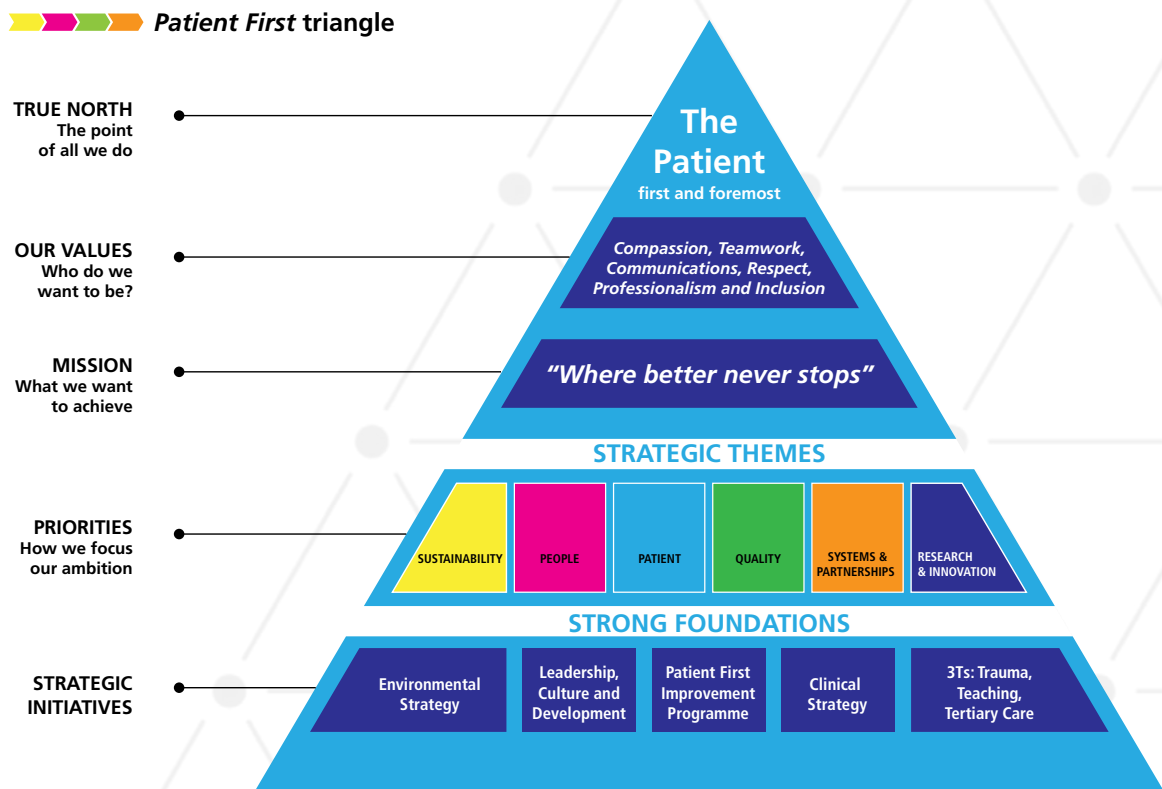
We welcome everyone and treat people as individuals – celebrating difference and always taking the time to listen. We respect people’s choices and always do our best to anticipate their needs. We treat everyone fairly and make sure people are free to be themselves. We make sure our Trust provides equal access for everyone and we put in place the processes, support and advocacy needed to meet people’s individual requirements.

Teamwork and professionalism

We work together to provide exceptional care and uphold the highest standards. We value learning, teaching and training so that we can be the best that we can be. We collaborate, we forge partnerships and we celebrate each other’s success. We make sure all our voices are heard and we speak out when things aren’t right. Our colleagues are our extended family – we stand shoulder to shoulder through good times and bad. We’re driven by our desire to put our Patient First.

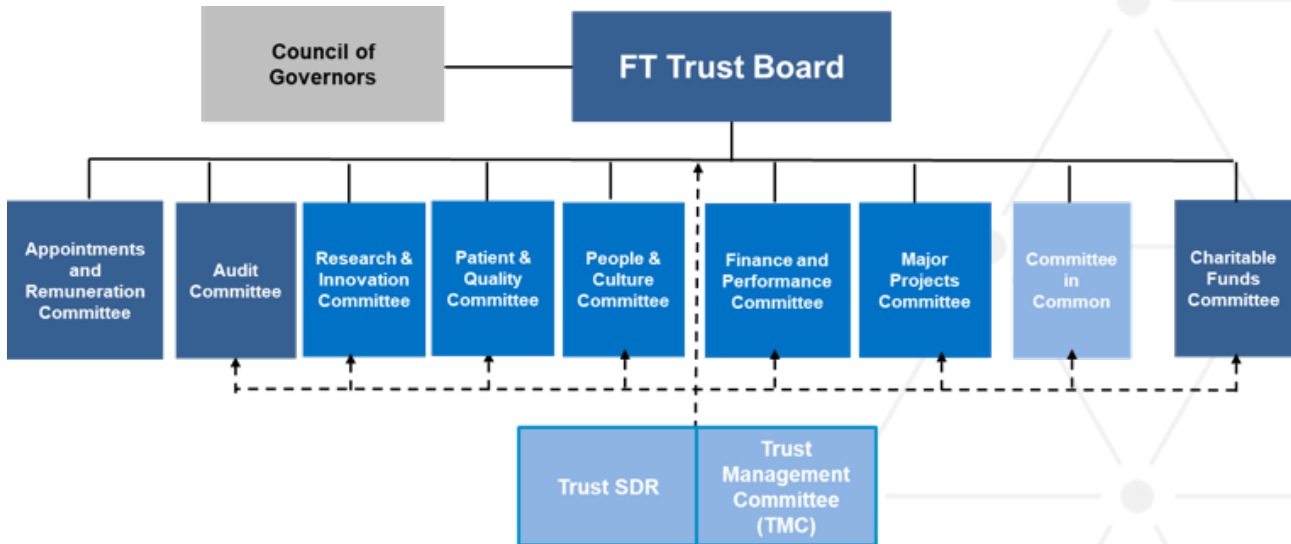
Our Patient First strategy

At UHSussex we are renowned in the NHS for our Patient First strategy – our long-term approach to transforming hospital services for the better. Patient First runs through everything that we do and everything that we are. We are committed to training every leader in Patient First to help them identify how their services can contribute to the achievement of our objectives.



About the Board

The Board leads the organisation and has established a number of committees which are shown below, noting the Major Projects committee's first meeting will be in April 2025. The Board is comprised of eight voting and one non-voting executives and nine NEDs including the Chair.



About the Audit Chair role

UHSussex is in the process of finalising its 2025 – 2030 Strategy. Underpinning the delivery of the strategy is our need to deliver sustained service transformation which supports an improvement in the use of our limited resources whilst either maintaining or improving our patient outcomes, experience and clinical safety systems to ensure the Trust provides the highest quality of care for our patients.

The need for robust financial and operational systems of internal control to ensure the Trust secures the maximum value from the deployment of its resources has never been more at the fore of all we do. The Audit Committee Chair will play a vital role in the coordination of focus of internal and external audit resources to provide robust assurance to the Board on these systems of internal control.

The Audit Committee membership comprises of the five NEDs, these being the Audit Committee Chair and the respective four NED Board Committee Chairs.

Our current Audit Committee Chair is retiring from the Board at the end of June 2025, which leaves us seeking to fill this gap.

Non Executive (name, role and term of office)

Philippa Slinger	Chair (to 30.06.27)
Paul Layzell	Deputy Chair and People & Culture Committee Chair (to 31.07.25)
Lucy Bloem	Senior Independent Director and Patient & Quality Committee Chair (to 30.06.27)
Phil Hogan	Finance & Performance Committee Chair (to 31.01.26)
Jackie Cassell	Research, Innovation & Digital Committee Chair (to 31.03.27)
David Curley	Audit Committee Chair (retiring 30.06.25)
Wayne Orr	Charitable Funds Committee Chair (to 30.01.27)
Bindesh Shah	(to 30.06.25)
Gordon Ferns	(to 28.02.27)

Executive (name and position)

George Findlay	Chief Executive
Andy Heeps	Deputy Chief Executive
Katie Urch	Chief Medical Officer
Maggie Davies	Chief Nurse
Jonathan Reed	Chief Financial Officer
Rox Smith	Chief Strategy Officer
Nigel Kee	Interim Chief Operating Officer
David Grantham	Chief People Officer
Sandi Drewett	Chief Culture & OD Officer (non voting)

Role description

Job Title:	Non Executive Director – Audit Committee Chair
Remuneration:	£16,000 including a £3,000 responsibility allowance (based on at least four days a month).
Tenure:	Three years, with the opportunity for reappointment for a further term subject to Council of Governor’s decision.
Hours:	At least four days a month which includes preparation time and attendance at Board and committee meetings and may include, albeit exceptionally, some evening work.
Accountable to:	Trust Chair
Reports to:	Trust Chair

Key Relationships:

The post holder will be required to have regular contact with internal and external stakeholders and will often need to engage with them over sensitive, complex, contentious and confidential issues.

An example of some of these stakeholders is detailed below:

Internal:

- Trust Chair
- Executive directors
- Governors

External:

- ICS
- Other partner organisations
- Voluntary organisations

The post holder may be required to participate in internal and external working groups/projects, services and initiatives to provide a wider perspective focusing on the needs of the local population.

Role Purpose:

The NED is a voting member of the Board and will share with other Board members responsibility for ensuring that the Trust exercises its functions effectively, efficiently, economically, with good governance and in accordance with the terms of the Trust’s License (authorisation). The post holder is there to bring his/her unique perspective, informed by his/her experience and understanding of the local population.

The focus of the post holder will be strategic and impartial, providing an external view of the work of the Trust that is removed from the day to day running of the organisation.

The post holder is expected to bring a fresh perspective to the Board in order to provide appropriate oversight, governance and leadership to the Trust in the pursuit of its strategies to deliver effective and high quality healthcare services.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- Together with other Board directors support the leadership of the Trust and ensure that the strategic direction of the Trust is suitably ambitious, meets the needs of the Trust's patients, family and the wider community.
- To ensure a Board level focus on all aspects of quality with particular regard to patient safety and experience is maintained.
- To play an active part in the continued development of the Board in the maintenance of an open and transparent value-led unitary environment that is curious, respectful and challenges and held to account for delivery of agreed strategies and objectives.
- To contribute to the development of the Trust's strategy and strategic delivery plans to enable the Trust to deliver its ambitious goals.
- To contribute to the setting of challenging objectives for improving the Board's performance across its range of functions.
- Monitor the performance of the Trust and its executive team, ensuring that reports meet the highest level of integrity.
- Be assured that the necessary resources are in place for the Trust to meet its objectives and plans.
- To have a genuine commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion and an ability to drive the Trust forward in this area.
- To chair the Trust's Audit Committee, which has a key role in ensuring that the Trust exercises its functions effectively, efficiently and with good governance in accordance with the terms of authorisation and any other applicable legislation and regulations.
- To support the work of the Board by sitting on at least one Board committee as determined by the Chair of the Trust.

- Demonstrate commitment to the Trust and to the wider NHS as a whole.
- Be committed to ensuring that the Trust's values are embedded in all aspects of its business.
- Maintain a commitment to upholding the Nolan Principles of Public Life along with an ability to reflect them in his/her role.
- To understand the principles of operational excellence and lean management systems which embody the Trust's continuous improvement philosophy which has underpinned its 'Patient First' methodology over a number of years. These in themselves build on the NHS IMPACT's five components that underpin a culture of continuous improvement (these being: in people and culture; developing leadership behaviours; building improvement capability and capacity; and embedding improvement into management systems and processes).

Specific Responsibilities of the Audit Chair

The audit Chair is responsible for:

- Chairing the Audit committee
- Ensuring the Trust's financial statements are accurate, transparent, and comply with relevant regulations
- Overseeing the internal and external audit processes
- Ensuring effective financial controls are in place
- Reviewing and challenging the Trust's risk management framework
- Lead the process for appointing and evaluation external auditors
- Providing assurance to the Council of Governors

Additional information about the general areas of responsibility for all UHSussex NEDs can be found at Annex 1.

Person Specification

QUALIFICATIONS
Essential Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a good level of professional expertise and knowledge within an area such as IT, customer (Patient) care, legal, finance or care services • Audit or accountancy qualification
EXPERIENCE
Essential Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent financial or audit experience sufficient to be able to be the Chair of the Audit committee in holding the Trust's auditors to account for the delivery of their duties • Able to establish credibility and command respect from clinicians, stakeholders, partners, and especially patients, healthcare professionals and service providers • Demonstrable understanding of the local arrangements for listening and responding to the voices of patients, carers and patient organisations. You should also have an understanding of effective involvement and engagement techniques and its application in practice • Have a desire to ensure the Trust is successfully involving patients, carers and the public in the work of a public sector organisation
Desirable Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the resource allocations devolved to NHS bodies, and a general knowledge of the accounting regime within which the NHS operates • Understanding of how to build corporate accountability and social processes
LEADERSHIP
Essential Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capability to understand and analyse complex issues, drawing on the breadth of data that needs to inform Board deliberations and decision-making, and the wisdom to ensure that it is used ethically to balance competing priorities and make difficult decisions
Desirable Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general understanding of health and an appreciation of the broad social, political and economic trends influencing it
GOVERNANCE AND ASSURANCE
Essential Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of project management • A general understanding of good governance and of the difference between governance and management • The confidence to question information and explanations supplied by others, who may be experts in their field

WORKING WITH OTHERS**Essential Criteria**

- Strong capabilities to act as an ambassador on behalf of the Trust

Desirable Criteria

- Experience of working in a multi-disciplinary environment
- Ability to engage with and influence with a range of stakeholders including public, carers, voluntary organisations, health professionals, the local authority and CCG lay members

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES**Essential Criteria**

- The ability to influence and persuade others articulating a balanced, not personal, view and to engage in constructive debate without being adversarial or losing respect and goodwill to accept collective responsibility and maintain confidentiality on issues raised
- Be able to command respect and trust of colleagues
- The ability to demonstrate how your skills and abilities can actively contribute to the work of the Board and how this will enable you to participate effectively as a team member
- Be able and willing to spend time preparing for meetings and have demonstrable experience of reading and analysing complex papers and weighing evidence
- Demonstration of adherence to the Nolan Principles of conduct in public life (appendix 1)
- Live within the local community or be able to demonstrate how you are otherwise able to bring that perspective to the Board
- Be able to demonstrate that you share and champion the values of the Board

Annex 1

General Areas of Responsibility

Leadership Competency Framework

As a member of the UHSussex board (voting and non-voting), the post holder will be expected to demonstrate professional behaviours that support, and are fully aligned to the NHS leadership competency framework for Board members. The framework has the following domains:

- Driving high-quality and sustainable outcomes
- Setting strategy and delivering long-term transformation
- Promoting equality and inclusion, and reducing health and workforce inequalities
- Providing robust governance and assurance
- Creating a compassionate, just and positive culture
- Building a trusted relationship with partners and communities

These domains will be incorporated into the recruitment process for Board roles and form part of the annual appraisal process.

Further information regarding the Board leadership competency framework is available via NHS England NHS leadership competency framework for Board members.

The competency domains are aligned to **Our NHS People Promise, Our Leadership Way** and the **Seven Principles of Public Life** (Nolan Principles).

Information Governance and Confidentiality

- You will be expected to comply with all Trust policy requirements in relation to Information Governance, including the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act and the Trust's Acceptable Use Policy and the NHS Information Governance Standards.
- You may gain privileged knowledge of highly confidential nature relating to private affairs, diagnosis and treatment of patients, information affecting members of the public, personal matters concerning staff, commercial confidences of third parties and details of items under consideration by this Trust. Such information should not be divulged or passed to any unauthorised person or persons.

Policies

- The post holder is required to abide by all policies of the Trust.
- Failure to comply with these requirements may constitute gross misconduct under the Trust's Disciplinary Policy which may lead to summary dismissal.

Appointment Details

- The appointment is for a term of three years starting from the date of appointment. The appointment may be renewed for a further two terms subject to a demonstration of continuing competence.
- The appointment is made by the Council of Governors, who within a Foundation Trust play a crucial role in holding the Board to account through the NEDs for the formulation and delivery of the Trust's strategy.
- As a NED for the University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust your legal status is that of an office holder only and not as an employee of the Trust. You will be engaged via letter of appointment and paid via payroll, in line with HMRC regulations, in order for PAYE and NI deductions and contribution to be applied.

Time Commitment

- NHSE suggests that NEDs would be expected to be available for at least 3-4 days a month, however, the reality is that the time commitment will be more than this to enable the Trust to deliver its ambition to be at the forefront of the delivery of the NHS long-term plan. The time commitment will also include some possible evening engagements.

Residency Criteria

- The applicant should live within Sussex, or be able to demonstrate how you are able to bring the local communities' perspective to the Trust Board.

Remuneration

- The remuneration for this post is £16,000 per annum, which includes a £3,000 responsibility allowance for being the Audit Committee Chair. NEDs are also eligible to claim allowance for travel and subsistence costs incurred necessarily on Trust business in accordance with the Trust's policy.

Training and Development

- Training and development required by a successful candidate will be discussed and agreed as part of an individual's continuous development plan while in the role. The Trust actively promotes attendance at NHS Providers NED induction and links to the HFMA Audit Committee Chair's forums.

Standards in Public Life

- You will be expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct. A successful candidate will be asked to subscribe to the Nolan principles of public life and the Good governance standard for Public life and the professional standards authority you should note particularly the requirement to declare any conflict of interest that arises in the course of Board and committee business and the need to declare any relevant commercial, public or voluntary bodies. You must be apolitical and therefore cannot be a serving councillor, or be acting for any councillor / Member of Parliament.
- The above responsibilities will be subject to objective setting and personal development planning in consultation with the Chair.

Disqualification Criteria

Some individuals are not eligible to be appointed to NHS Boards. These include people who:

- Are not eligible to work in the UK
- Have received a prison sentence or suspended sentence of three months or more in the last five years
- Are the subject of a bankruptcy restriction order or interim order
- Have been dismissed (except by redundancy) by an NHS body
- Are under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986
- Have been removed from trusteeship of a charity

Other Information

- This job description is not exhaustive and other duties may be determined from time to time by the Chair of the Trust, commensurate with the role and general responsibilities of this post. The duties of this post may be changed subject to negotiation with the post holder.

How to apply

All applications must be received by 28 April 2025

For a confidential discussion please contact our recruitment partners **Rhiannon Smith and Jenny Adrian** at Hunter Healthcare jadrian@hunter-healthcare.com or by phone on 07939 250362.

All applications must quote the reference UHD_AUDIT and include:

- A full curriculum vitae
- A covering letter (no more than two pages) indicating how you meet the selection criteria and articulating why you are interested in the role
- Contact details for referees covering the last six years (who will not be contacted without your permission)
- A contact email address and telephone no.
- A completed [Diversity Monitoring Form](#) and [Fit and Proper Person Monitoring Form](#).

Please send all documentation by email to our applications inbox at Hunter Healthcare on: applications@hunter-healthcare.com

KEY DATES:

Application Deadline	28 April 2025
Shortlisting	w/c 26 May 2025
Interviews	13 & 16 June 2025



University Hospitals Sussex

NHS Foundation Trust



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