

Enclosure No:3

CEO BOARD REPORT

Report provided for:				Report to:	Public Trust Board
Information	<input type="checkbox"/>	Assurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Date of Meeting:	9 th January 2025
Discussion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Approval	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Presented by:	Dr Buki Adeyemo, Chief Executive
Prepared by:	Joe McCrea, Associate Director of Communications
Executive Lead:	Dr Buki Adeyemo, Chief Executive

Aligned to Board Assurance Framework Risk	Risk 1 The Trust fails to deliver effective care leading to regulatory restrictions
Approval / Review:	Execs
Strategic Priorities:	Prevention - To will continue to grow high-quality, integrated services delivered by an innovative and sustainable workforce
Key Enablers:	Quality - We will provide the highest quality, safe and effective services
Sustainability:	Share learning and best practice
Resource Implications:	No
Funding Source:	N/A
Diversity & Inclusion Implications	There is no direct impact on the protected characteristics as part of the completion of this report.
ICS Alignment / Implications:	Strategic fit with system priorities
Recommendation / Required Action	Receive for information and assurance
Executive Summary	The Report updates the Board on strategic activity undertaken since the last meeting and draws the Board's attention to any other issues of significance or interest.

These include:

- A challenging winter
- National spotlight on the Mental Health Investment Standard
- Investigation and Intervention (I&I)
- ICS celebration of Disability History Month
- Launch of new website
- New branding for Combined Charity
- Engagement event to inform our Quality Plan and priorities for the next few years
- Quality in the spotlight in three new CTV shows
- Older Persons Outreach Team named Keele University Placement of the Year for 2024
- Choir and Cards at Christmas
- Sustainability round-up
- New AccessAble leaflets and stands to raise awareness

VERSION CONTROL:

Version	Report to	Date Reported

Chief Executive's Report to the Trust Board

9 January 2025

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report updates the Board on strategic activity undertaken since the last meeting and draws the Board's attention to any other issues of significance or interest.

2.0 NATIONAL CONTEXT AND UPDATES

A challenging winter

The main messages from NHS England and the Department for Health and Social Care in recent weeks, via the weekly winter sitreps, have been a confirmation of what we knew would be, and know has been, an incredibly difficult winter.

There have been more people in general and acute hospital beds than in the corresponding weeks last year, driven in part by a far higher number of flu cases than we would usually see, as well as the impact of circulating RSV, Covid and norovirus.

Coming off the back of months of record demand, this has been causing real pressure across the urgent and emergency care pathway – with ambulance handover delays in particular a cause for concern.

The main joint messages to colleagues has been that the number one ask of local leaders is to do everything possible to prioritise patient safety and quality of care through this period; and that to achieve this, we need every part of the NHS – and social care partners – working together to manage demand as optimally as possible and ensure the most clinically in need patients can be prioritised.

As ever, prevention has a key role to play, and we have been doing everything we can to vaccinate and protect as many people as possible, with vaccinations against Covid, flu and RSV.

During December, the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent health and care system also briefly entered Critical Incident status. Although we are no longer at Critical Incident, we will remain with many of the additional actions we put in place to protect patient care and safety.

Many thanks to all our staff for their incredible efforts to keep our patients and each other safe during this challenging time. They truly are amazing.

National spotlight on the Mental Health Investment Standard

The continuing importance of maintaining the Mental Health Investment Standard has been receiving welcome support.

Speaking at a hearing of the House of Commons Health and Social Care Select Committee, Saffron Cordery, interim chief executive at NHS Providers, stresses it was 'really important' to think about what is trying to be achieved when setting funding allocations.



'If we see the end of something like the mental health investment standard right now, what we will see is the marginalisation of people with severe and enduring mental illness,' she said.

'We will see more crises turning up at our A&E departments. We will see more challenging situations which impact not just acute care, they impact the individuals themselves who are suffering, but also impact across other bits of the public service, like the police, education, etc.

'So we need to make sure that we're building on some really good progress that we've made, to continue that and build that into the funding framework, funding services in the community, funding mental health, funding social care, funding primary care. They are steps in and of themselves to shift the demand, but they are also important to provide the right kind of care that people need.

Health Services Safety Investigations Body publishes Report on "Mental health inpatient settings: Supporting safe care during transition from inpatient children and young people's mental health services to adult mental health services"

This is one of a series of HSSIB investigations on the theme of patient safety in mental health inpatient settings. This investigation focused specifically on the conditions that contribute to the outcomes for young people who transition from inpatient children and young people's mental health services (CYPMHS) to adult mental health services (AMHS).

The aim of the investigation was to examine the impacts of transition from inpatient CYPMHS to AMHS on people who have experienced it, their families and carers, and on staff involved. The investigation also considered wider system implications regarding the integration of childhood to adulthood transitional services across health, social care and education.

Amongst the key findings were:

- Young people may be discharged from inpatient CYPMHS because they have reached 'transition age' and not because their mental health care needs have changed.
- AMHS criteria for ongoing care as an 'adult' inpatient may mean young people are discharged from inpatient CYPMHS to an alternative setting which is not suitable to meet their ongoing needs, for example bed and breakfast hostels, with community services providing more limited mental health care and support.
- Young people, families and carers are not reliably informed of, or prepared for, the differences in care approach between inpatient CYPMHS and inpatient AMHS.
- Health, social care, local authorities and education do not always work together in a consistent and integrated way to support positive outcomes for young people who are transitioning from inpatient CYPMHS to AMHS.
- There is currently no alignment, equity of access, or clear responsibility and accountability for children and young people's health, education and social support that spans their transition from childhood to adulthood.



3.0 STAFFORDSHIRE AND STOKE-ON-TRENT INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEM (ICS)

Investigation and Intervention (I&I)

A Financial Controls and Recovery Group will commence on the 6th January 2025. This meeting will replace the internal Vacancy Review Panel. The meeting will be facilitated by Deloitte / Kingsgate.

The meeting will focus on reviewing agency expenditure by staff group, overtime and bank expenditure. CIP plans will also be reviewed along with reviewing and approving vacancy requests. Vacancy requests will come under additional scrutiny with a view to understanding what the risk and impact would be if the post is not filled, this is expected to be the main focus of the meeting.

The I&I process is expected to end around the end of February 2025.

ICS celebration of Disability History Month

The trust was delighted to participate in the first SSOT ICS Disability History Month virtual Conference on Tuesday 17 December. The theme for the event and the national awareness month 2024 was Disability, Livelihood and Employment. All trust and partner organisation colleagues were welcome to attend, with attendance particularly encouraged for those who have line management or leadership responsibilities or who identify as being differently abled (i.e. with a disability, long term health condition and/or neurodiversity) to take part, including staff network members and allies.

Colleagues from across the system shared their personal disability-related stories and examples of good practice.

We were also delighted to participate in two podcasts published as part of Disability History Month 2024 by NHS Employers on demystifying workplace adjustments. Both podcasts featured our own Angela Peake, Differently Abled Buddy Scheme Project Manager.

The podcasts were facilitated by Roxanne Steele, Accessibility and Inclusion Specialist for Diversity and Ability, and featured Angela talking along with Lydia Warren from Barts Health NHS Trust.

In the first episode, the podcast covered workplace adjustments, what they are and why they are important. The podcast participants explored how to request workplace adjustments, along with some of the barriers and benefits.

The Combined Ability Network (CAN) also got a mention for its shared support and leading development of good practice. Angela also discussed the 'This is Me' health passport and recommended using this as the basis for a discussion with your line manager.



4.0 OUR TRUST

Launch of new website

We are proud to have launched a new public website, which went live in on 12th December – available at the normal URL at www.combined.nhs.uk

We have listened to feedback from a wide range of our service users and stakeholders and invested in an upgrade to our public-facing website, featuring a slick new design, easy-to-use features, and simple navigation.

The new website has been designed to be fully compatible with the newest Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.2), which aim to improve accessibility for three major groups: users with cognitive or learning disabilities, users with low vision and users with disabilities on mobile devices.

The new website design has improved navigation and access to key information and content. The top menu is now much simpler to use, with only two levels of navigation.

All of our most popular and most used content is easily accessible, including:

- [Latest news](#)
- [A–Z of our services](#) – with increased and improved content
- [Latest jobs and recruitment opportunities](#)
- [Board papers and proceedings](#)
- [Contact details](#)

The front page specifically promotes access to NHS 111, our Crisis Care Centre and the Wellbeing Portal. Every page across the site features links to our trust charity in the top menu and footer.

We hope that the new website design offers users a more enjoyable experience, while maintaining access to vital information about our services, trust updates and ways to get in touch with us.

If you have any comments or questions about the website, please contact the Communications Team: communications@combined.nhs.uk.

New branding for Combined Charity

During December, Liz Mellor, Chief Strategy Officer and Executive Lead for Charity, launched the new branding for our trust charity.



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Following a staff vote to select the new logo 'Combined Charity' is now the official name for what many people may have previously known as 'charitable funds'.

Over the next few weeks and months you will start to see and hear more about the activities of Combined Charity and we are encouraging as many staff as possible to get involved in awareness and fundraising activities so that we can continue to provide outstanding care across the trust.

To find out more please visit the new [Combined Charity page on CAT](#).

4.1



Engagement event to inform our Quality Plan and priorities for the next few years

Kenny Laing (Chief Nurse), Dennis Okolo (Chief Medical Officer) and Zoe Grant (Deputy Chief Nurse) have been three sessions to welcome multi-disciplinary discussions to capture the voice of our clinical & professional colleagues within our quality plan.

There have been three quality planning sessions on safety, effectiveness and engagement.

Please see the date and time below for the last remaining session, next week.

- Engagement: 14 January 2025, 12:30pm – [Join the meeting here](#)

Quality in the spotlight in three new CTV shows

Our Quality agenda will be heavily in spotlight during January, with three new shows delivered over Combined Television (CTV).

The latest edition of our *Combined Minds* talks features Jayne Beasley explaining how Quality Improvement drives everything she does, and focussing on the importance of QI becoming an embedded part of how our services and teams think, act and do.

A special film spotlights the roll-out of our '*Time to Shine*' handbook and new posters reminding all of our teams and people on getting the quality basics right.



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Finally, in an exciting new initiative, we are proud to launch the first episode of *"The Quality Show"*. The Quality Show is a new initiative we are introducing at Combined, to shine a light and give a platform to the whole range of initiatives and projects which are being developed at the Trust to improve the quality of the services we provide and the care we deliver.

Delivered in an informal Chat Show format – and hosted by the Chair of our Quality Committee, Professor Pauline Walsh, - it discusses and learns from the experiences of our frontline staff and their partner as they identify areas where we can improve quality, design practical interventions and actions to do so and track the results of their efforts.

And for the first edition of The Quality Show, where better to start than with seizing the opportunity with our partners to strengthen the power of our Carers, through an improvement initiative led by the Community Team at Greenfields.

4.2



Older Persons Outreach Team named Keele University Placement of the Year for 2024

The Older Persons Outreach Team were delighted to announce that they have been awarded the Keele Placement of the Year Award for 2024. The team was nominated for this honour by students from the university.

This was based upon student experience and the high level of support that students identified the team for providing. We are immensely proud and grateful to all of our students for showing their appreciation.

The team have are pleased to have been given the award and said:

"It is a privilege to assist learners in achieving their goals, finding learning opportunities, and growing as professionals."

Thank you to our students and well done to the team!

Choir and Cards at Christmas

The Board will know that one of my favourite things to do with Combined is my involvement with the Combined Choir. This meets every Wednesday at Harplands Hospital and is welcoming and open to everyone to join – as I regularly remind people. Hot on the heels of a hugely enjoyable appearance at REACH 2024, the choir helped bring some Christmas cheer to staff and service users across Harplands by visiting and performing a range of carols and traditional Christmas songs. They also made an appearance at the Greenfields memorial service.

This Christmas also saw us continue the tradition of sending a personalised Christmas card to all of our staff at home, as well as our colleagues at SERCO. Myself and the Exec team ensure each and every card has a personal signature from one of us. It's one of those little things that make a real difference, and as our card message says it is an opportunity for us



to say a huge thank you to all of our people for all they have done in the year just passed and continue to do to deliver great care at Combined.

4.3



Sustainability round-up

The Trust launched the carbon footprint tool in April 2024, becoming the first in the local system to directly chart and monitor emissions in line with delivering a net zero NHS. Reducing emissions using this tool will be a priority for this year. To support sustainability efforts, the Trust re-launched the internal communication campaign, consolidating resources and activities, including the Sustainability Champion programme, a resource bank, and the *Proud to be Green* communications campaign.

Some wider key highlights to date include:

- Staff Engagement:
 - Over 80% of staff completed the Environmentally Sustainable Healthcare training, achieving compliance across all directorates.
 - 389 staff from 17 teams participated in the sustainability reward scheme, with 10 teams earning gold awards.
- Energy Efficiency:
 - £80,000 internal funding secured to replace inefficient lighting with LED equivalents, reducing electricity-related emissions.
- Travel and Transport:
 - Achieved a response from 377 staff across the Trust-wide travel and transport survey, the highest overall response rate in the County.
 - Insights informed targeted campaigns, including August's *Cycle to Work Day*, which engaged over 5,000 people through social media and podcasts.
- Food Waste Reduction:
 - Successfully implemented measures to minimise bulk food waste in inpatient settings, achieving significant reductions.
- System and Procurement Initiatives:
 - Actively engaged in system adaptation plans for rapid local implementation if needed.
 - NHS procurement regulations for net zero and social value weighting are routinely considered in Trust tender activities.

The Trust remains actively engaged in system and regional NHS Green agenda working groups, demonstrating leadership in sustainability and ensuring alignment with emerging initiatives. In preparation for this coming year we will prioritise a refreshed Green Plan to align with national requirements and forthcoming guidance, reinforcing our commitment to environmental sustainability.



4.4

**New AccessAble leaflets and stands to raise awareness**

The trust is proud to have partnered with AccessAble since October 2022 to provide our AccessAble detailed access guides to all our trust clinical sites and services, with Keele Medical Centre still to be added.

The Detailed Access Guides are available online and via the AccessAble app, providing facts, figures, and photographs to help service users, visitors and staff plan their journeys to and around the trust sites, covering everything from parking facilities and hearing loops, to walking distances and accessible toilets. We also benefit from a series of reports suggesting improvements that can be made to make our services more accessible, helping us to plan in improvements as part of our estate developments programme.

The idea is so that people can #KnowMoreGoMore, helping to reduce some of the anxiety involved in attending new places for appointments and admissions, supporting better attendance. AccessAble are specialists in all types of disability, but the information they provide is helpful whether or not someone identifies as having a disability.

New leaflets are being shared with clinical teams currently. Please ensure these are displayed and shared with service users and visitors in your service, and encourage people to access and download the app. We also have two new pull up banner stands proudly displayed at Harplands during Disability History Month. If you would like to display the pull up banner in your area, or for more information about AccessAble, please contact Lesley.Faux@combined.nhs.uk to arrange this.

To see the trust's detailed access guides click [here](#) or download the app. The guides can also be accessed from each clinical service's page on the trust's website.

5.0 Conclusion

Once again, it has been a busy month at Combined, full of further examples of the initiatives and activities that continue to contribute to us being outstanding in all we do and how we do it.

