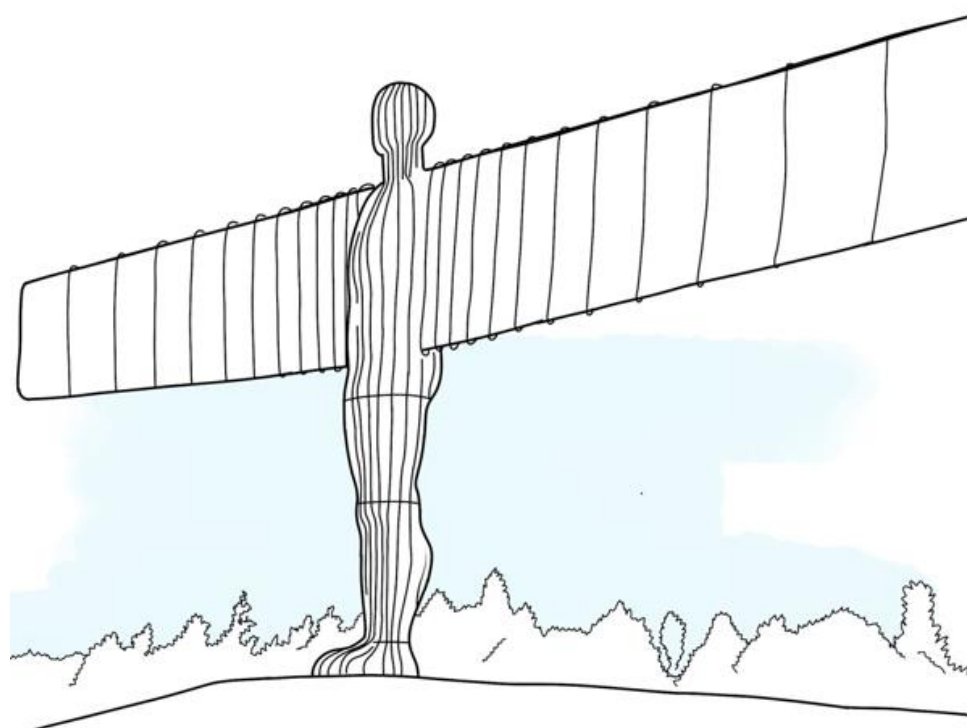


Becoming a Governor of Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust

Guidance for Prospective Candidates 2023

August 2023



Contents

Introduction.....	3
Our Trust	4
Our membership structure	5
Public Membership.....	5
Out of Area / Patient members	6
Staff members.....	6
The Council of Governors.....	6
The Board of Directors	6
The Council of Governors.....	7
Public – Elected.....	7
Out of Area – Elected	7
Staff – Elected.....	7
Appointed Governors.....	7
Terms of office.....	7
Governors’ Roles and Responsibilities	9
Governor communication with members.....	9
Time commitment.....	10
Payment and expenses	10
Terms and conditions	10
Support for Governors	10
Staff Governors	11
Why become a staff Governor?	11
What do staff Governors do?	11
Eligibility to be a Governor	12
Disqualification / removal from office	13
Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.....	13
Qualifications needed.....	13
Nomination process.....	15
Your Electoral Statement.....	15
Membership of Political Parties	15
Financial Interests	15
The Nomination Form.....	16
Elections.....	17
The election process	17
Nomination and election timetable.....	18
Examples of candidate statements	19

Introduction

The Governors of an NHS Foundation Trust are key to its success. They appoint the Chair and Non-Executive Directors on our Trust Board of Directors and help shape future service developments. They share valuable insights into the views of our communities, staff and stakeholders and help us to shape future services.

The role of the Governors is therefore very important. To perform this role we are looking for people that have a real contribution to make in how the Trust delivers services and to the future health and prosperity of Gateshead and the wider region.

The information set out in this document is intended for anyone thinking of becoming a Governor. Brief details are provided about the Trust, how it works, the role of Governors and their responsibilities. Also included in this document is information on eligibility to become a Governor, the nomination process and appointment terms.

Anyone wishing to apply to become a Governor should read this information carefully. Further advice is available by contacting the Corporate Services Office via email to ghnt.foundation.enquiries@nhs.net or by telephone on 0191 445 6043.

The information in this document will tell you about:

- Our Trust
- Membership structure
- Structure of the Council of Governors
- Governors' roles and responsibilities
- Time commitment and payment
- Support available for Governors
- Eligibility to be a Governor
- Nomination process
- Election process
- Examples of candidate statements

If you decide you wish to stand for this election to become a Governor of the Trust you must be either a public, patient or staff member. You will need to complete a Nomination Form and return to Civic Election Services no later than 5.00pm on Wednesday 27th September 2023.

Our Trust

Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust was authorised as a Foundation Trust in January 2005. We provide secondary care, community services and older persons' mental health services to a local population of approximately 200,000. We also provide specialist screening services, gynaecology-oncology, pathology and breast services across a wider population, including other parts of the North East, Humberside, Cumbria and Lancashire.

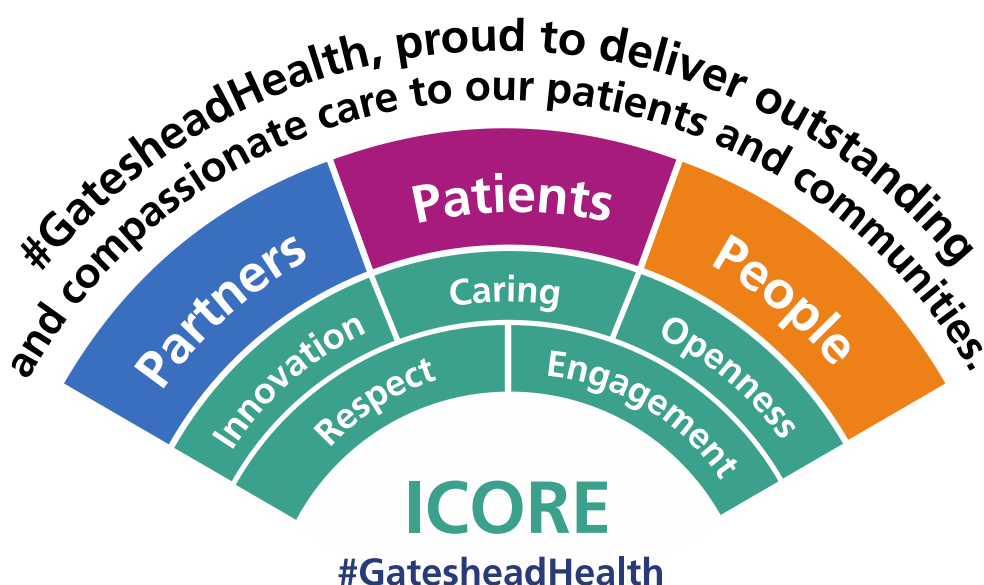
Our services are primarily delivered from three locations in the Gateshead area – the Queen Elizabeth Hospital site, Bensham Hospital and Blaydon Urgent Treatment Centre.

We employ over 4,800 staff and are also supported by many valued volunteers from our local communities.

Our values are grouped to form the acronym ICORE – Innovation, Care Openness, Respect and Engagement. Our values are the core of who we are and everything we do – we strive to live our values every day to provide the best care to our patients and the best working environment for our staff.



Our patients, people and partners are at the heart of our strategy and underpin everything we strive to deliver and achieve.



Our membership structure

The membership of the NHS Foundation Trust is divided into three kinds of members – Public, Out of Area / Patient and Staff.

Public Membership

Those eligible to become public members are people over the age of 16 who live in Gateshead and the immediate surrounding area which is divided into three constituencies; Western, Central and Eastern Gateshead, and the Out of Area constituency which covers the geographical area of the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System (other than areas within the Gateshead constituency). The Out of Area constituency also encapsulates service users of the Trust who live outside of the geographical

The map below shows the boundaries for the public membership

People over 16 years of age, living in these areas who wish to become a public member of Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust, must complete and have accepted a membership application form. Members can vote to elect Governors for their constituency and can choose to be nominated to stand for election as a Governor.



Out of Area / Patient members

In March 2009, the Trust's constitution was amended to create an out-of-area constituency consisting of one seat.

Members of this constituency are those which reside in the geographical boundaries of the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System, or do not live in the any of the public or out-of-area geographies but have at any time during the seven years immediately preceding the date of their application been a patient of the Trust.

Carers of patients who meet these criteria are also eligible to become Patient Members.

Staff members

Staff directly employed by the Trust are automatically members for the duration of their employment, unless they choose to 'opt out'.

Staff whose services are contracted for by the Trust, staff not employed by the Trust but who in effect work in and with the Trust for most of their time are given the same status as staff, if they wish, provided they have worked with the Trust for a minimum of one year.

Employees of the Trust cannot be public members.

The Council of Governors

The Council of Governors consists of elected and nominated Governors who provide an important link between the Trust, local people, staff and key stakeholder organisations by sharing information and views that can be used to develop and improve healthcare services.

The election rules are stated in the Trust's Constitution using the "first past the post" voting system. Elections are carried out on behalf of the Trust by the independent Civica Election Services.

The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors consists of the Trust Chair, Chief Executive, five Executive Directors, each with a specific portfolio of responsibilities, and seven non-executive directors. The Board of Directors is responsible for setting the strategy for the Trust, in consultation with the Council of Governors, and for monitoring the performance of the Trust.

The Council of Governors

The Council of Governors is chaired by the Trust's Chair.

The majority of Governors are elected by the public membership of Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust. The remaining Governors are elected by the patient membership or staff membership and some are nominated by partner organisations.

The number of Governors in each category is:

Public – Elected

The number for each constituency is based on the population of each constituency:

16 Governors

- 6 – Western
- 3 – Eastern
- 7 – Central

Out of Area – Elected

1 Governor

Staff – Elected

6 Governors

Appointed Governors

9 Governors:

- 1 x Gateshead CCG Governor
- 1 x Gateshead Council Governor
- 1 x Voluntary Organisation Governor
- 1 x Newcastle University Governor
- 1 x Northumbria University Governor
- 1 x Gateshead College Governor
- 1 x Gateshead Jewish Community Council Governor
- 1 x Gateshead Diversity Forum Governor
- 1 x Gateshead Youth Assembly Governor

The make-up of our appointed Governors is currently under review to ensure it is reflective of the Trust's key stakeholders following the establishment of the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System (ICS) and the changes to NHS regional commissioning and governance.

Terms of office

Public, out-of-area and staff Governors may hold office for up to three years and will be eligible for re-election at the end of that period, for a further two terms of office, to serve no more than a total of nine consecutive years. If they cease to be a member of the constituency they represent (e.g. if a public Governor moves to another residence outside of their original constituency, or a staff member leaves the Trust), they will then cease to be an elected Governor.

For this election, vacancies are as follows:

2 Western Governors

Serving from 5th January 2024 to 4th January 2027 (3 years) x 2

2 Central Governors

Serving from 5th January 2024 to 4th January 2027 (3 years) x 2

2 Eastern Governors

Serving from 5th January 2024 to 4th January 2027 (1 year) x 2

1 Patient/Out of Area Governor

Serving from 5th January 2024 to 4th January 2027 (3 years) x 1

3 Staff Governors

Serving from 5th January 2024 to 4th January 2027 (3 years) x 3

Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust holds four meetings of the Council of Governors each year including the Annual General Meeting. Members are entitled to attend the Annual General Meeting and may also attend routine meetings of the Council of Governors, unless excluded by the resolution on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest. The dates of the Council of Governor meetings are published on the website.

A copy of the Trust's Constitution is available online or a printed copy can be supplied on request.

Governors' Roles and Responsibilities

Individual Governors and the Council of Governors as a whole make a unique contribution to the work of the Trust.

The roles and responsibilities of the Governors are:

- To appoint or remove the Chair and other Non-Executive Directors
- To decide the remuneration and allowances, and the other terms and conditions of office of the Non-Executive Directors
- To appoint or remove the Auditor
- To be presented with the Annual Accounts, any report of the Auditor on them and the Annual Report
- To approve an appointment of the Chief Executive
- To give the views of the Council of Governors to the Directors for the purposes of the preparation (by the Directors) of the Forward Planning in respect of each Financial Year to be given to the Independent Regulator
- To respond as appropriate when consulted by the Directors
- To represent the interests of the members as a whole and the interests of the public
- To hold the Non-Executive Directors individually and collectively to account for the performance of the Board of Directors

The Governors also have the specific role and function of:

- Providing views to the Board of Directors on the strategic direction of the Trust
- Developing membership
- Representing the interests of all the Members (and not just the constituency which elected them).

The Governors may exercise other functions at the request of the Board of Directors.

The Governors are expected to bring their individual skills and knowledge to bear on the exercise of their functions, but are expected to act collectively and not in pursuit of sectional interests.

The day-to-day operational management of the Trust rests with the Board of Directors, as does the liability of the organisation. The Board of Directors is held to account by the Council of Governors.

Governor communication with members

The Trust is committed to supporting communication between members and Governors, which it will facilitate through the Company Secretary and Corporate Services Assistant.

Any member can communicate with any Governor. Governors may communicate with their members by email, the website, their own networks and community engagement events. Governors can also hold Members' briefings and recruitment events which provide an opportunity for direct dialogue and feedback.

Time commitment

It is difficult to say how much time is needed to undertake this role. Governors can expect to commit a minimum of ten days per year for meetings and workshops of the Governors plus a further seven days if involved in committees and linking with members. The time commitment is therefore likely to be somewhere between ten and fifteen full days per year, but could be more depending on how involved Governors become.

The Council of Governors meet in full formal session four times per year. These are the core meetings where Governors will have the opportunity to hear from our Board Members and ask questions of them on the performance and strategy of the Trust.

Meetings of the Council of Governors are held at 10.00 am on a Wednesday morning and normally last until lunchtime. Papers for the meetings are distributed seven days before the meeting and Governors are expected to have read the papers to prepare for the meeting.

Staff members applying to become a staff Governor must ensure that they make their Line Manager aware of their application and the expected time commitment involved.

Payment and expenses

Governors of NHS Foundation Trusts are voluntary positions and cannot by law be remunerated for their input but they will however be eligible for out of pocket expenses such as travelling costs – this will be at the level incurred rather than by a schedule of standard expense payments.

Terms and conditions

All Governors are expected to adhere to the Trust's policies and procedures and will be bound by the Trust's Code of Conduct for Governors. Specific issues relating to confidentiality must be adhered to as defined in the Constitution.

Support for Governors

All new Governors will be provided with the opportunity to attend a formal induction session. This will provide further information on the Trust, its governance and the practical and operational aspects of being a Governor. Governors will be provided with a free parking pass and an ID badge upon induction.

All Governors have the opportunity to attend quarterly workshops which aim to provide continuous learning and development within the role. There will also be opportunities to access external training and development.

Staff Governors

Why become a staff Governor?

Do you want to have a say in the decisions that affect your working life, and contribute to making the services that the Trust provides for patients the very best they can be? Do you believe that the views of staff should be heard at every level of the Trust, and think that you would be able to understand and share the views of staff with the Council of Governors and Board of Directors? If so, you may want to consider becoming a staff Governor.

You should care about our patients and the services the Trust provides, and specifically you should wish to bring the knowledge and experience of staff into discussions and decisions about the direction of the Trust, service improvements and working conditions.

Staff Governors have a vital role to play as part of the Council of Governors, and the role is satisfying and challenging. Staff Governors will have key responsibilities to both the Council of Governors and to the staff members they represent. It is an important role, so please read on to find out more about what being a staff Governor will involve.

What do staff Governors do?

Staff Governors have the same roles and responsibilities as other Governors, and therefore the roles and responsibilities outlined earlier in this guide apply.

The following additional information explains how some of the responsibilities can be applied to the staff Governor role.

Adviser

Staff Governors should communicate with staff in their staff constituency and feed the views of staff back to the Council of Governors and into any working groups or committees they are part of. Staff Governors should advise the Council of Governors of the impact of decisions on staff, and advise on how staff can contribute to improving services for patients. They should regularly advise staff of work undertaken by the Council of Governors and seek their views. The Trust will work with the staff Governors to develop effective ways to make sure this happens.

Ambassador and guardian

As an ambassador, staff Governors should seek to engage with staff as much as possible about the work of the Council of Governors and the Trust, and encourage staff to remain part of the Foundation Trust membership so they can influence the formal governance structures of the Trust at Council of Governors meetings.

Working alongside the rest of the Council of Governors, staff Governors will ensure that the Trust works to fulfil its aims and purpose.

Key principles

There are some principles that underline the role. Staff Governors:

- work as part of the Council of Governors
- should adhere to the Code of Conduct for Governors (as set out in the constitution)
- are representatives of staff members
- should seek the views of staff and communicate with staff about the Council of Governors, the Trust and its work
- have the same rights as all other Governors
- should not pursue a personal agenda at the expense of others
- should not get personally involved in staff members' individual problems or issues, and never promise to solve someone's problem themselves
- are not expected to express anyone's views other than their own, including when inputting a general 'staff perspective' i.e. it will be their personal understanding of the views of others
- are not expected to always agree with other staff Governors, or other Governors in general – Governors are expected to be professional when disagreement occurs
- who disagree with or question the Board of Directors will not find their professional standing within the Trust affected in any way as long as the Code of Conduct is complied with
- do not perform the same role as, or replace, staff-side representatives

Staff Governors and staff-side representatives

The role of staff Governor is significantly different from that of a trade union representative. Staff Governors do not work on behalf of individual staff members, or represent individuals to resolve issues or problems. However, staff Governors do have a responsibility for reporting staff views in meetings of the Council of Governors and working groups where there may not be a staff-side representative.

Eligibility to be a Governor

A person may not become or continue as a Governor of the Trust if:

1. In the case of a staff Governor or public Governor, they cease to be a member of the constituency they represent.
2. In the case of a CCG Governor, Local Authority Governor or other partnership Governor, the sponsoring CCG, Local Authority, or partnership organisation withdraw their sponsorship of them.
3. They have been adjudged bankrupt or their estate has been sequestrated and in either case they have not been discharged.
4. They have made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for, their creditors and has not been discharged in respect of it.
5. They have within the preceding five years, been convicted in the British Islands of any offence, and a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of three months or more (without the option of a fine) was imposed on them.
6. They have within the preceding two years been dismissed, from any paid employment for misconduct with a health service body.
7. They are a person whose tenure of office as the chair or as a member or director of a health service body has been terminated on the grounds that their appointment is not in the interests of the health service, for non-attendance at meetings, or for non-disclosure of a pecuniary/non-pecuniary interest.
8. They are an Executive or Non-Executive Director of the Trust, or a Governor, Non-Executive Director, Chair, Chief Executive officer of another Foundation NHS Trust.

9. They have had their name removed, by a direction under section 46 of the 1977 Act from any list prepared under Part II of that Act, and has not subsequently had their name included in such a list.
10. They are incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing and administering their property and affairs.
11. They have failed to comply with the required standard of behaviour as per the Trust policy for withholding treatment from violent and abusive patients.
12. They have been placed on the Registers of schedule 1 Offenders pursuant to the Sex Offenders Act 1977 and /or the Children & Young Person Act 1933.
13. They fail to abide by the Trust's Constitution.
14. In the case of a staff Governor who has been suspended from duties for any reason, they will also be suspended from their role as Governor for the duration of their suspension.
15. They are under 16 years of age.
16. They have failed to undertake the required training for Governors.

Disqualification / removal from office

If three quarters of all Governors agree, they can exclude anyone so disqualified from standing from re-election to be a Governor of the Foundation Trust for up to a maximum of 5 years. Any such exclusion will take immediate effect and must then be confirmed in writing to the person excluded within 15 working days. At the end of an exclusion period, the exclusion must be explicitly reconsidered if the person so excluded indicates to the Company Secretary that they wish to stand again for election to become a Governor of the Foundation Trust. If the exclusion is then reaffirmed, the reasoning and length of exclusion should be given in writing to the person excluded and also included in the public papers of the Council of Governors.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check

All Governors are required to comply with the fit and proper persons requirements of the Trust's licence to operate. 'Unfit persons' are defined as undischarged bankrupts, individuals who have served a prison sentence of three months or longer during the previous five years, and disqualified directors. All Governors will be required to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check upon appointment to assist us in seeking assurance over the fit and proper persons requirements of our licence.

Qualifications needed

To be a Governor, you must be at least 16 years of age at the date you nominate yourself for election or are appointed.

No special skills, educational achievements or other qualifications are required, but potential candidates should:

- Have an interest in and understanding of health services
- Keep pace with strategic issues affecting the Trust
- Contribute towards the future planning of the Trust
- Understand the role and requirements of the NHS regulators, NHS England and the Care Quality Commission (CQC)



- Act and behave in the interests of the Trust
- Communicate with and develop the Membership of the Trust

Training and support will be provided for all of the above.

Nomination process

This section explains what you need to do to become a candidate in the elections to the Council of Governors. If you are unsure about any aspect of this please contact the Corporate Services Office on 0191 4456043 or 0191 4453712.

Your Electoral Statement

Each candidate is entitled to submit an electoral statement, which will be reproduced by the Trust and given, in a pack with all other candidates' electoral statements, to the members with their ballot papers. Examples of candidates' statements can be found on page 19.

You should see your electoral statement as your main opportunity to persuade your fellow members to vote for you. You may write what you wish but we would suggest you should focus on explaining the experience you have and what you think would make you an effective Governor. You may also want to list organisations or groups that you are a member of that may be of interest to people voting for you. There are only three rules about your electoral statement:

1. It can be no longer than 150 words. If you submit something longer then only the first 150 words, as counted by our word processing systems, will be printed. All words count regardless of their length.
2. Only standard text may be used.
3. If, in the opinion of the Returning Officer, any part of your electoral statement is likely to cause offence to members or is potentially defamatory or libellous that part of your electoral address will be edited or deleted before your statement is published. No undertaking is given that you will be informed of or consulted on this amendment to your statement.

The submission of an electoral statement, while strongly recommended, is optional. If you do not submit a statement a note to this effect will, for avoidance of doubt, be printed in the relevant space.

Membership of Political Parties

It is a requirement of the Electoral Rules that if you are a member of a political party you must declare this in the relevant space on the nomination form. If you are unclear as to whether an organisation you are a member of, is a political party for these purposes please contact us.

Financial Interests

It is also a requirement of the Electoral Rules that if you have any financial interests in or dealings with Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust and/or the organisation as an NHS Foundation Trust you must declare these. If you need advice on this please contact us.

The Nomination Form

A nomination form is included within your pack but if you need another copy, please contact Civica Election Services on 0208 889 9203. If, for any reason, you submit more than one nomination form only the first one received and opened by the ERS will be accepted.

Nomination forms can also be completed online at www.cesvotes.com/gateshead2023

We will accept a revised nomination form if you or we find that there is an error or problem with your first form. If you need a revised nomination form this must still be received by the closing date for receipt of nominations (27th September 2023). It must also be accompanied by a written statement from you withdrawing your earlier nomination form and authorising us to substitute your revised form.

Elections

The elections in 2023 will be for the following seats:

Constituency	Number of Governors being elected	Term of appointment
Western	2	Serving for 3 years x 2
Central	2	Serving for 3 years x 2
Eastern	2	Serving for 1 year x 2
Patient/Out of Area	1	Serving for 3 years x 1
Staff	3	Serving for 3 years x 3

All appointments will commence on 5 January 2024.

The election process

Exact details of how the election will be conducted are in the Electoral Rules. The following is a summary of the key points:

1. The election will, like elections for the UK Parliament, be conducted on a 'first past the post' system.
2. Where more than one candidate is to be elected from a constituency the relevant number of people will be elected on a simple order of votes polled.
3. The election will be undertaken as a secret postal ballot.
4. Electors will vote only for candidates in their own constituency and will receive a ballot paper with only those candidates on it.
5. Each elector will receive, with their ballot paper a booklet containing the electoral statements of the candidates in their constituency.
6. The election will be run for the Trust by an independent organisation (Civica Election Services) who will be acting as Returning Officer for the election.

The results of the election will be announced by the Trust at 12.00 noon on Tuesday 14th November 2023. The results will be publicised on the Trust's website <https://www.gatesheadhealth.nhs.uk/patients/get-involved/membership/> at this time and will be sent by post to all candidates.

Nomination and election timetable

The proceedings at an election shall be conducted in accordance with the following timetable as agreed with Civica Election Services.

ELECTION STAGE	DATE
Notice of Election / nomination open	Wednesday 30 August 2023
Nominations deadline	Wednesday 27 September 2023
Summary of valid nominated candidates published	Thursday 28 September 2023
Final date for candidate withdrawal	Monday 2 October 2023
Notice of Poll published	Wednesday 18 October 2023
Voting packs despatched	Thursday 19 October 2023
Close of election	Monday 13 November 2023
Declaration of results	Tuesday 14 November 2023

Examples of candidate statements

The following are some examples that candidates standing for election have submitted. They are included for illustrative purposes only. Prospective Governors may find these useful.

<p>Candidate 1</p> <p>I want to be involved in the excellent quality of care provided by Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust. I have a particular interest in provision of healthcare to the elderly.</p> <p>I feel that a Governor should act as a bridge between local people and the hospital.</p>	<p>Candidate 2</p> <p>As a life-long resident of Gateshead, I am aware of the importance of accessible health services and how much these have grown and developed to serve the local community.</p> <p>I hope to represent the interests of patients and members of this award winning hospital and help develop further the excellent health service we have in Gateshead.</p>
<p>Candidate 3</p> <p>I have been a patient on a number of occasions, and for over 15 years have volunteered at the hospital; visiting patients on the wards, listening and talking to them. This I feel has given me an insight into that the views are of patients, and what they expect of the hospital.</p> <p>As a Governor, I would work to ensure that the best facilities, services and standards are available for patients, and that management and staff strive at all times to deliver the best possible care.</p>	<p>Candidate 4</p> <p>I have lived in Gateshead all my life and have recently retired. This would therefore allow me the time, if elected, to participate in maintaining and enhancing the excellence achieved by Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust.</p> <p>I have received a lot patient care and therefore feel well placed to represent my constituency from that perspective.</p> <p>I believe the Trust to be at the “cutting-edge” of healthcare and that it is on the pathway to further achievements for the benefit of the community in this area.</p>
<p>Candidate 5 (Staff)</p> <p>Having worked for the NHS for many years, I have experience in maintaining dialogue with the public and professional bodies. Being a qualified nurse, I understand the needs of quality care, training and motivation for staff. I would promote relations for the Trust and community.</p> <p>As a nurse, part of my duties is to liaise between the community and authorities. I would exercise these skills for the Trust.</p>	<p>Candidate 6 (Staff)</p> <p>I would like to become a Governor to be actively involved with the shaping of a quality organisation that staff are proud to work in and feel valued and the patients feel safe and confident in the care and treatment provided to them.</p> <p>I have strong communication, organisational and leadership skills and I am highly motivated and thrive on new challenges.</p>
<p>Candidate A (Staff)</p> <p>I would like to become a Governor to be actively involved with the shaping of a quality organisation that staff are proud to work in and feel valued and the patients feel safe and</p>	<p>Candidate B (Staff)</p> <p>Having worked for the NHS for many years, I have experience in maintaining dialogue with the public and professional bodies. Being a qualified nurse, I understand the needs of quality care,</p>

<p>confident in the care and treatment provided to them.</p> <p>I have strong communication, organisational and leadership skills and I am highly motivated and thrive on new challenges.</p>	<p>training and motivation for staff. I would promote relations for the Trust and community.</p> <p>As a nurse part of my duties is to liaise between the community and authorities. I would exercise these skills for the Trust.</p>
---	---