



WORLD CLASS CARE
FOR OUR COMMUNITY



Royal Surrey
NHS Foundation Trust



Deputy Chair

Candidate Information Pack
March 2026



Welcome from the Chair

Thank you for your interest in joining the Royal Surrey Foundation Trust as a Non-Executive Director – specifically the Deputy Chair.

I recently completed my third year as Chair here, I remain in awe of the commitment, passion and sheer hard work colleagues right across the Trust demonstrate every day. The past year has been a challenging one for all of us in the NHS and there is more change to come; but at the Royal Surrey we are determined to make the most of the many opportunities these changes will create for us, our staff and – crucially – for the communities and individuals we serve.

At the Royal Surrey we never stand still: our most recent achievements include a CQC Outstanding rating after a Well-Led inspection; reopening our re-furbished cancer centre, and delivering a new Community Diagnostic Centre at Milford Hospital. The new Cancer and Surgical Innovation Centre is almost complete, and our new group model partnership with neighbouring Ashford & St Peter's Hospital is progressing well. The staff survey results showed further improvement, seeing us placed in the top 5% of trusts nationally, demonstrating that despite the myriad of challenges the RSFT remains a content family. However, we are never complacent and know that there is still much more for us to do be sure that we are delivering the best possible care for all our community.

We are ambitious, but we are also clear that we will need help in achieving our goals. One element of this is the appointment of a new Deputy Chair to join the Board, which is an inclusive and collegiate space, where colleagues support, but also challenge each other to deliver better outcomes and experiences for our staff and patients.

This is a crucial leadership role, particularly following my recent appointment as Group Chair, to support the Royal Surrey Board, Council of Governors, senior leadership, and corporate governance across the Trust.

Applicants must have a genuine commitment to patients and the promotion of excellent health care services; they must be able to embrace and champion the Trust's values; and they must be able to add value, independence and rigour to strategy development. Beyond these more generic skills, we are specifically looking for an innovative, forward looking, and engaging NED, with the ability to take on some traditional Chair responsibilities – such as chairing occasional Board meetings and supporting our Council of Governors – and provide strong leadership as a key aide to myself. Our expectation is that the successful candidate will come with excellent leadership, communication, and relationship skills, and a good understanding of NHS structures and governance.

We are keen to consider candidates who can also bring diversity of thought, background, and protected characteristics – while the Board as a whole currently has good age and gender diversity, we are less representative, for example, of the ethnic diversity we see in our staff and in the communities we serve.

For an informal conversation about the post, please contact Rhiannon Smith or Jenny Adrian at our recruitment partners, Hunter Healthcare by email: jadrian@hunter-healthcare.com or phone: 07939 250362

Joss Bigmore
Chair, RSFT



About Us

The Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust is an award-winning, multi-site healthcare provider operating from a main acute site in Guildford and across community and primary care sites in Surrey.

We are also a regional cancer centre and provide many world class services and aspire to deliver more for our patients in the future, as evidenced by our recent investment in the Royal Surrey Cancer Centre and a brand new Cancer and Surgical Innovation Centre, which has introduced state-of-the-art facilities to the Royal Surrey and increases our surgical capacity. Completed at the end of 2025, the centre has six new operating theatres, enabling an additional 7,000 patients to receive surgery every year.

Royal Surrey is a core partner in the Surrey Heartlands Health and Care Partnership Integrated Care System. These organisations have a clear remit to strengthen out-of-hospital services, improve access to the right urgent care services, align and join up care across Surrey and Guildford and Waverley thereby reducing inappropriate admissions to hospital.

The Trust's urgent and emergency care services include a high demand Emergency Department at the Royal Surrey County Hospital and an exceptional Minor Injuries Unit at Haslemere Hospital, both performing well nationally.

The Trust provides adult community services in partnership with Procure, the local GP Federation.

As a tertiary cancer centre, the Trust provides several services which are commissioned by NHS Specialised Commissioning including radiotherapy and robotic surgery.

Royal Surrey is a hub for a network of services with neighbouring hospitals. The Trust is investing through the Cancer Alliance in mechanisms to enable joint working, for example, by providing better digital connectivity across all the Trust sites.

The Trust is one of seven participants in NHS England Vital Signs, a quality improvement programme, which focuses on continuous process improvement as a route to improved quality of services for patients and experience of work for staff. Quality Improvement methodology is becoming part of the DNA of the Trust with staff being supported to acquire the tools and culture to make changes which will benefit patients.

Following most recent CQC inspections in Spring 2024 the Royal Surrey County Hospital, our Maternity Services, and the Trust as a whole were rated Outstanding.

Our Vision, Mission and Values

The Trust undertook a listening exercise with its staff which has formed our vision, mission and values. We are currently working with staff to define our new behaviours which will become part of everything we do.

Our mission is

Together we deliver compassionate, safe care every day.

Our vision is

To provide nationally celebrated, community focused health and care.

Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust aims to ensure that no job applicant or employee is unfairly disadvantaged on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status/civil partnership, religion/belief or trade union status.

Our values are

Continuously improving

- Continuously improving is not just a value.
- It's what unlocks our innovation.

Excelling together

- Excelling together is not just a value.
- It's what we do every day.

Caring together

- Caring together is not just a value.
- It's what sets our Royal Surrey family apart.

Learning together

- Learning together is not just a value.
- It's what keeps our services safe.



Our Strategic Objectives

True North Objectives

“True North” is a concept the Trust has adopted as part of the commitment to its continuous improvement methodology. Our current True North objectives were agreed in early 2019 and describe an ideal state that the Trust should always be striving towards.

Our objectives have stood up to the extraordinary impact of Covid-19, and continued recovery, affect everything we do. We have always been able to track our response to the challenges we face through reference back to the True North objectives and the standards they set as we deliver care. We are currently undertaking a review of our Trust Strategy and further developing our True North objectives, due to be republished in 2026.

Breakthrough objectives

Breakthrough objectives provide a flexible approach to adapt the operational reality of the Trust to its strategic direction. This has been particularly relevant in recent years where the national political and financial context has continued to impact on every aspect of the organisation. Many of the breakthrough objectives have been adjusted to reflect ongoing challenges and increasing demand on our services within the wider contextual position.. Focusing on reducing the number of long-waiting patients, supporting staff in their health and wellbeing, and increasing the number of patients on a Patient Initiated Follow Up pathway, all positively impact on the Trust’s response to the national picture whilst maintaining a clear link to the True North, and therefore, Five Year Strategic goals.



Zero harm

To cause no harm to patients, staff or the Trust by eradicating errors and continuously improving the quality, effectiveness and safety of our services



To deliver financially and environmentally sustainable services

Being as efficient as possible in all we do and delivering value for money – removing duplication and waste allow us to invest in sustainable services and facilities



Top 10% NHS Staff Survey engagement score

We want our staff to be motivated, supported and valued so we continue to attract, recruit and retain the best people



Deliver all constitutional targets

Transforming our pathways and investing in our facilities so that our patients have access to care in a timely way



With system partners, improve population health, patient experience and reduce per capita cost

Working with our system partners to improve care for all our population



The Role

The Deputy Chair is a non-executive director of the Trust Board and, together with other members, is responsible for the strategic leadership, direction, and development of the Trust.

Board members share a corporate responsibility for the governance and performance of the Trust in meeting both strategic and operational objectives. Board members also represent the Trust at external events or regulatory meetings.

The Deputy Chair is responsible for working closely with the Group Chair to lead the Board of Directors at the Royal Surrey, ensuring effective governance, strategic direction, and Well-Led performance. They will assume the responsibilities of the Chair in their absence or when they have a conflict of interest, and otherwise delegate for the Chair as required. This may include chairing occasional Board and Council of Governor meetings.

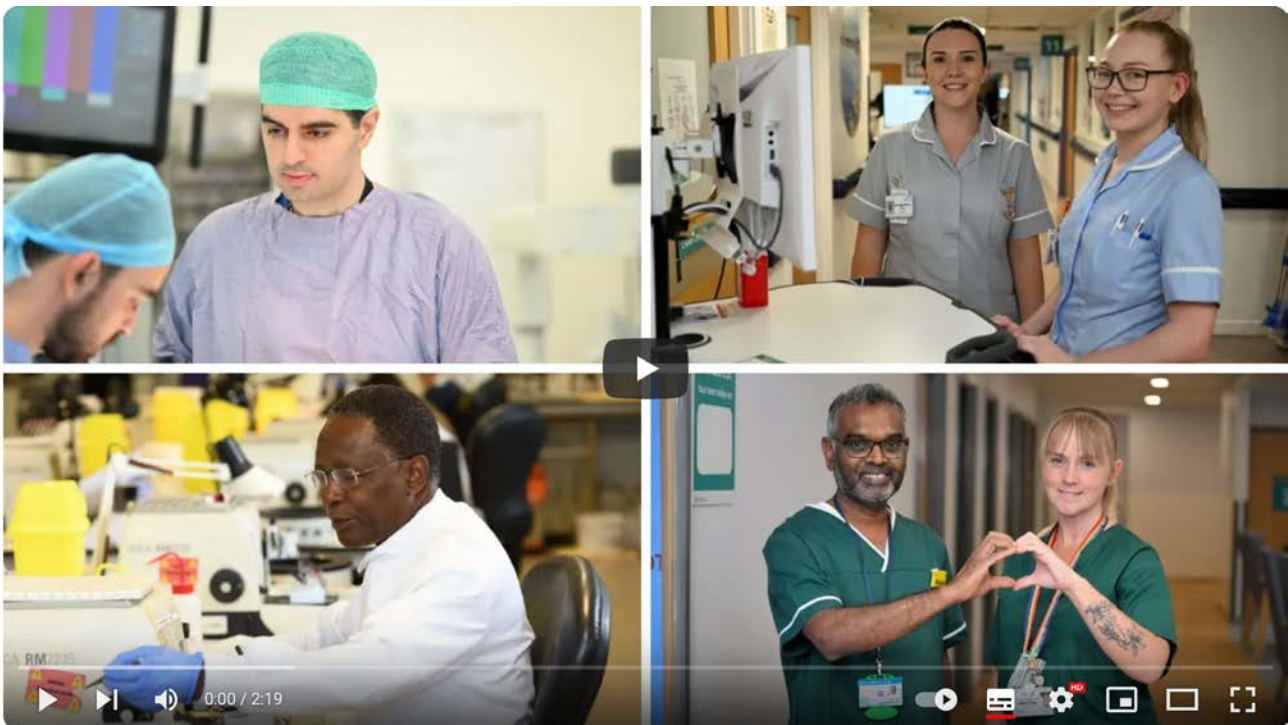
The Deputy Chair also holds the same key accountabilities and responsibilities as other non-executive directors of the Board, as below. This includes attending and/or chairing at least two of the Board's committees – specific duties will be agreed between the Chair and Deputy Chair as required.

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Commit to working to, and encouraging within the Trust, the highest standards of probity, integrity and governance and contribute to ensuring that the Trust's internal governance arrangements conform to best practice and statutory requirements.
- Behave in accordance with the Trust's values, and in furtherance of its mission, vision and strategic goals.
- Assist fellow directors in setting the Trust's values and standards and ensure that its obligations to its stakeholders and the wider community are understood and fairly balanced at all times.
- Ensure that the commitment to patient safety, experience, and outcomes is at the heart of the Trust's strategy, change programmes and improvement plans so that patients consistently receive high quality care that is commensurate with the Trust values.
- Provide independent judgement and advice on issues of strategy, vision, performance, resources, and standards of conduct and constructively challenge, influence and help the executive directors develop proposals on such strategies.
- Consider information with an open, growth mindset and ask curious questions with necessary persistence.
- Hold the executive team to account for the delivery of the Trust's strategy and the performance of the Trust, while providing guidance and support.
- In accordance with agreed Board procedures, monitor the performance and conduct of management in meeting agreed goals and objectives and statutory responsibilities, including the preparation of annual reports and annual accounts and other statutory duties.
- Be assured that financial information is accurate and that financial controls and risk management systems are robust and fit for purpose.
- In respect of any particular Board committee role – to chair committee meetings, liaise with relevant executives and other members of the relevant teams as required, and provide assurance to the Board and Council of Governors on the work of the committee.
- Take an active part in other committees established by the Board of Directors to exercise delegated responsibility.
- As a member of Board committees, appoint, remove, support, encourage and where appropriate 'mentor' senior executives.

- Have a role in advising the Chair in succession planning of both non-executive and senior executive directors.
- Bring independent judgement and experience based on a senior Board and governance expertise to apply for the benefit of Trust, its stakeholders, and its wider community.
- Assist fellow directors in setting the Trust's strategic aims, ensuring that the necessary financial and human resources are in place for the Trust to meet its objectives, and that performance is effectively monitored and reviewed.
- Assist fellow directors in providing entrepreneurial leadership within a framework of prudent and effective controls, which enable risk to be assessed and managed.
- Engage positively and collaboratively in Board discussion of agenda items and act as an ambassador for the Trust in engagement with stakeholders including the local community, dealing with the media when appropriate.
- Work collaboratively with the Council of Governors to enable them to fulfil their statutory role and represent the views of their members and stakeholders.
- Attend Council of Governors meetings and governor committee meetings as agreed with the Trust's Chair, Committee Chair, or Council of Governors.
- Contribute positively to discussions and activity around the Trust Provider Collaborative (TPC) and the Group Model with Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (ASPH) as required – including inputting in TPC and Group strategy, gaining assurance on TPC and Group governance and performance, and supporting effective discussions between TPC and Group trusts.
- A contribution may also be necessary in crisis leadership or in periods of particular instability (for which some advance preparation may be required).

Video: Joining our Royal Surrey Family



Time commitment

The Deputy Chair is expected to commit 4-5 days per month to Trust activities.

This includes attending meetings of the Council of Governors, Board, and committees, as relevant to the role. Meeting attendance required for this role is as follows:

- Council of Governors meetings – second or third Thursday of every third month (beginning in March), between 17:00-21:00, may be in person and virtual
- Trust Board meetings & seminars – last Thursday of every month (except August and December), full day, in person
- Board committee to chair – to be determined with the Chair
- Board committee to attend – to be determined with the Chair

Remaining time will be spread across the month undertaking other activities, including reading meeting papers and wider information, agreeing agendas, proofing minutes, writing Chair's summary reports to Board, and divisional/service visits.

The Deputy Chair may be asked to attend additional committees as required to take on additional responsibilities to support the Chair and non-executive director team. These may include shorter and less frequent meetings such as the Remuneration Committee or Governance Working Group.

Further reading

The following websites and documents will provide you with useful background into the NHS and the Trust:

- www.royalsurrey.nhs.uk – The Trust's website includes information such as business plans, annual reports and further information about services.
- www.england.nhs.uk – The NHS England website, the regulator of healthcare providers.
- www.cqc.org.uk – The Care Quality Commission website, the quality regulator for the health and social care sector.
- www.kingsfund.org.uk/insight-and-analysis/projects/nhs-in-nutshell – The King's Fund resources for understanding the NHS in England, particularly policy, finance and performance.

Person Specification

Essential criteria

- Membership of the Foundation Trust (see Trust's [website](#) for membership qualification).
- Meet the Fit and Proper Person regulations.
- Educated to degree level, or able to demonstrate an equivalent qualification or level of experience.
- Experience of operating at senior or Board-level within a large and/or complex public sector organisation.
- Experience in a senior management role, ideally with strategic and delivery experience of a broad range of communications disciplines.
- Other specific knowledge and expertise particularly including communication and the ability to support collaboration with partners across the Trust Provider Collaborative and group model.
- This individual will most likely have worked at executive Board level and will bring experience and seniority of view to provide guidance on their area of expertise to the wider Board, and challenge and support to Executives involved in these areas.
- High-level communication and/or mediation skills.
- The ability to solve complex problems in a calm and considered manner.
- The ability to maintain an objective perspective, considering all perspectives in order to form a resolution to any difficulties or disagreements between members of the Board, Council of Governors, and senior managers.
- The capacity to understand the needs of our patient community, the roles and responsibilities of the Council of Governors, and the statutory and regulatory requirements, risk management, and Board assurance processes.
- The capability to chair the Board effectively if required.
- The competencies required to be effective in this Board-level role:
 - The **Seven Nolan Principles of Public Life** – selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership
 - Patient and community focus
 - Strategic direction
 - High level of commitment to providing quality service and care to service users, carers and the community and to tackling health inequalities
 - The ability to think and plan ahead, balancing needs and constraints
 - Holding to account, and ability to probe and challenge constructively
 - Effective influencing, persuasion, and communication
 - Team working and commitment to working as a team member
 - Self-belief and drive
 - The motivation to improve NHS performance and confidence to accept new challenges
 - Intellectual flexibility
 - The ability to think clearly and react creatively

Desirable criteria

An understanding of NHS structures and governance.

How to Apply

The closing date for applications is **19 April 2026**.

Applications should include:

- A **covering letter** explaining why the appointment interests you, how you meet the appointment criteria and what you specifically would bring to the post (**no more than two pages**).
- A **Curriculum Vitae (CV)** with education and professional qualifications and full employment history. Please include daytime and evening telephone contact numbers and email addresses. The CV should include names and contact details of three referees. References will not be taken without your permission (**no more than three pages**).
- You will need the following reference code: **ROYSUR/DEPCHAIR/0326**

All applications will be acknowledged.

For an informal conversation about the post, please contact Rhiannon Smith or Jenny Adrian at our recruitment partners, Hunter Healthcare by email: jadrian@hunter-healthcare.com or phone: **07939 250362**

[CLICK HERE TO APPLY ONLINE ➔](#)

Key dates:

Closing date	19 April 2026
Longlisting	21 April 2026
Shortlisting	w/c 4 May 2026
Stakeholder sessions	15 and 20 May 2026 (MS Teams)
Interview panel	21 May 2026 (In person at RSFT)





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