
**CONSTITUTION OF
COUNTRESS OF CHESTER HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST
(A PUBLIC BENEFIT CORPORATION)**

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**Amended pursuant to resolution of the Council of Governors dated 4th September
2012**

CONSTITUTION FOR AN NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

1 Definitions

- 1.1. Unless the contrary intention appears or the context otherwise requires, words or expressions contained in this constitution bear the same meaning as in the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003, the National Health Service Act 2006 as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012
- 1.2. References in this constitution to legislation include all amendments, replacements, or re-enactments made.
- 1.3. Headings are for ease of reference only and are not to affect interpretation.
- 1.4. Words importing the masculine gender only shall include the feminine gender; words importing the singular shall include the plural and vice-versa.
- 1.5. In this constitution:

“the 2012 Act”	means the the Health and Social Care Act 2012;
“the 2003 Act”	means the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003;
“the 1977 Act”	means the National Health Service Act 1977;
“appointed Governors”	means those Governors appointed by the appointing organisations
“appointing organisations”	means those organisations named in this constitution who are entitled to appoint Governors
“areas of the Foundation Trust”	means the four areas specified in Annex 1 which are (1) Ellesmere Port and Neston (2) Chester City and rural Cheshire (3) Flintshire and (4) wider area;
“authorisation”	means an authorisation given by the Independent Regulator
“Board of Directors”	means the Board of Directors as constituted in accordance with this constitution;
“Council of Governors”	means the Council of Governors (previously known as the Board of Governors prior to 30 th July 2012) “Director” means a member of the Board of Directors;

“elected Governors”	means those Governors elected by the public constituencies and the classes of the staff constituency;
“financial auditor”	means the person appointed to audit the accounts of the Foundation Trust, who is called the auditor in the 2003 Act;
“Financial year”	means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a period beginning with the date on which the Foundation Trust is authorised and ending with the next 31 March; and (b) each successive period of twelve months beginning with 1 April.
“the Foundation Trust”	means Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust;
“Monitor”	is the body corporate known as Monitor, as provided by Section 61 of the 2012 Act.;
“Local Authority Governor”	means a Governor appointed by one or more local authorities whose area includes the whole or part of one of the areas of the Foundation Trust;
“member”	means a member of the Foundation Trust;
“the NHS Trust”	means the Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Trust which made the application to become an NHS foundation trust
“partner”	means, in relation to another person, a member of the same household living together as a family unit;
“Partnership Governor”	means a member of the Council of Governors appointed by a partnership organisation;
“PCT Governor”	means a Governor appointed by a Primary Care Trust for which the Foundation Trust provides goods or services;
“Public Governor”	means a Governor elected by the members of one of the public constituencies;
“Secretary”	means the Secretary of the Foundation Trust or any other person appointed to perform the duties of the Secretary, including a joint, assistant or deputy secretary;
“Staff Governor”	means a Governor elected by the members of one of the classes of the staff constituency;

2 Name and status

- 2.1. The name of this Foundation Trust is to be “Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust”. The Foundation Trust is a public benefit corporation authorised under the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003.

3 Purpose

- 3.1. The principal purpose of the trust is the provision of goods and services for the purposes of the health service in England
- 3.2. The trust does not fulfil its principal purpose unless, in each financial year, its total income from the provision of goods and services for the purposes of the health service in England is greater than its total income from the provision of goods and services for any other purposes.
- 3.3. The trust may provide goods and services for any purposes related to—
 - 3.3.1. the provision of services provided to individuals for or in connection with the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of illness, and
 - 3.3.2. the promotion and protection of public health.
- 3.4. The trust may also carry on activities other than those mentioned in the above paragraph for the purpose of making additional income available in order better to carry on its principal purpose.

4 Powers

- 4.1. The Foundation Trust may do anything which appears to it to be necessary or desirable for the purposes of or in connection with its purpose.
- 4.2. In particular it may:
 - 4.2.1. acquire and dispose of property,
 - 4.2.2. enter into contracts,

- 4.2.3. accept gifts of property (including property to be held on trust for the purposes of the Foundation Trust or for any purposes relating to the health service),
- 4.2.4. employ staff.
- 4.3. Any power of the Foundation Trust to pay remuneration and allowances to any person includes the power to make arrangements for providing, or securing the provision of pensions or gratuities (including those payable by way of compensation for loss of employment or loss or reduction of pay).
- 4.4. The Foundation Trust may borrow money for the purposes of or in connection with its functions, subject to the limit published by Monitor from time to time.
- 4.5. The Foundation Trust may invest money (other than money held by it as trustee) for the purposes of or in connection with its functions. The investment may include investment by:
 - 4.5.1. forming, or participating in forming bodies corporate.
 - 4.5.2. otherwise acquiring membership of bodies corporate.
- 4.6. The Foundation Trust may give financial assistance (whether by way of loan, guarantee or otherwise) to any person for the purposes of or in connection with its functions.

5 **Commitments**

- 5.1 The Foundation Trust shall exercise its functions effectively, efficiently and economically.

Representative membership

- 5.2 The Foundation Trust shall at all times strive to ensure that taken as a whole its actual membership is representative of those eligible for membership. To this end:
 - 6.2.1 the Foundation Trust shall at all times have in place and pursue a membership strategy which shall be approved by the Council of Governors, and shall be reviewed by them from time to time, and at least every three years,
 - 6.2.2 the Council of Governors shall present to each annual members meeting
 - 6.2.2.1 a report on steps taken to secure that taken as a whole the actual membership of its public constituencies and of the classes of the staff constituency is representative of those eligible for such membership;
 - 6.2.2.2 the progress of the membership strategy;

6.2.2.3 any changes to the membership strategy.

Co-operation with Health bodies

- 6.3 In exercising its functions the Foundation Trust shall co-operate with Health Authorities, Special Health Authorities, Primary Care Trusts, NHS Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts.

Prohibiting distribution

- 6.4 The profits or surpluses of the Foundation Trust are not to be distributed either directly or indirectly in any way at all among members of the Foundation Trust.

7. Framework

- 7.1. The affairs of the Foundation Trust are to be conducted by the Board of Directors, the Council of Governors and the members in accordance with this constitution and the Foundation Trust's authorisation. The members, the Board of Directors and the Council of Governors are to have the roles and responsibilities set out in this constitution.

Members

- 7.2. Members may attend and participate at members meetings, vote in elections to, and stand for election for the Council of Governors, and take such other part in the affairs of the Foundation Trust as is provided in this constitution.

Board of Directors

- 7.3. The business of the Foundation Trust is to be managed by the Board of Directors, who shall exercise all the powers of the Foundation Trust subject to any contrary provisions of the Act as given effect by this constitution.

Council of Governors

- 7.4. The roles and responsibilities of the Council of Governors, which are to be carried out in accordance with this constitution and the Foundation Trust's authorisation are:

7.4.1. at a General Meeting

7.4.1.1. to appoint or remove the Chairman and the other non-executive Directors;

7.4.1.2. to approve an appointment (by the non-executive Directors) of the chief executive;

7.4.1.3. to decide the remuneration and allowances, and the other terms and conditions of office, of the non-executive Directors;

- 7.4.1.4. to appoint or remove the Foundation Trust's financial auditor;
- 7.4.1.5. to appoint or remove any other external auditor appointed to review and publish a report on any other aspect of the Foundation Trust's affairs;
- 7.4.1.6. to be presented with the annual accounts, any report of the financial auditor on them and the annual report;
- 7.4.2. to provide their views to the Board of Directors when the Board of Directors is preparing the document containing information about the Trust's forward planning.
- 7.4.3. to respond as appropriate when consulted by the Board of Directors in accordance with this constitution.
- 7.4.4. to undertake such functions as the Board of Directors shall from time to time request.
- 7.4.5. to prepare and from time to time to review the Foundation Trust's membership strategy, and its policy for the composition of the Council of Governors , and when appropriate to make recommendations.

8. Members

- 8.1. The members of the Foundation Trust are those individuals whose names are entered in the register of members. Every member is either a member of one of the public constituencies or a member of one of the classes of the staff constituency.
- 8.2. Subject to this constitution, membership is open to any individual who:
 - 8.2.1. is over sixteen years of age,
 - 8.2.2. is entitled under this constitution to be a member of one of the public constituencies or one of the classes of the staff constituency, and
 - 8.2.3. completes a membership application form in whatever form the Secretary specifies.

Public constituencies

- 8.3. There are four public constituencies corresponding to the four areas of the Trust specified in Annex 1. Membership of a public constituency is open to individuals
 - 8.3.1. who live in the relevant area of the Foundation Trust,
 - 8.3.2. who are not a member of another public constituency, and
 - 8.3.3. who are not eligible to be members of any of the classes of the staff constituency.

- 8.4. The minimum number of members of each of the public constituencies is to be four.

Staff constituency

- 8.5. The staff constituency is divided into **four** classes as follows:

- 8.5.1. doctors
- 8.5.2. nursing and midwifery (qualified)
- 8.5.3. allied healthcare professionals and technical/scientific
- 8.5.4. other.

- 8.6. Membership of one of the classes of the staff constituency is open to individuals:

- 8.6.1. who are employed under a contract of employment by the Foundation Trust and who either
 - 8.6.1.1. are employed by the Foundation Trust under a contract of employment which has no fixed term or a fixed term of at least 12 months, or
 - 8.6.1.2. who have been continuously employed by the Foundation Trust or the NHS Trust for at least 12 months; or
- 8.6.2. who are not so employed but who nevertheless exercise functions for the purposes of the Foundation Trust and who have exercised the functions for the purposes of the Foundation Trust for at least 12 months. For the avoidance of doubt, this does not include those who assist or provide services to the Foundation Trust on a voluntary basis.

- 8.7. The Secretary shall make a final decision about the class of which an individual is eligible to be a member.

- 8.8. A person who is eligible to be a member of one of the classes of the staff constituency may not become or continue as a member of any of the public constituencies, and may not become or continue as a member of more than one class of the staff constituency.

- 8.9. The minimum number of members of each class of the staff constituency is to be four.

- 8.10. Youth Associates are

- 8.10.1. individuals over 11 years old and less than 16 years old and who
 - 8.10.1.1. are otherwise entitled under this constitution to be a member of one of the public constituencies; and

8.10.1.2. apply to become a youth associate by completing an application form in whatever form the Secretary decides;

8.10.2. Staff Associates will be those who

8.10.2.1. are employed under a contract of employment by the Foundation Trust or who exercise functions for the Foundation Trust, but who are not eligible to become a member of one of the classes of the staff constituency by reason only that their contract of employment is for a fixed term of less than 12 months, or that they have not been continuously employed by the Foundation Trusts or the NHS Trust for 12 months, or that they have not exercised functions for the Foundation Trust for 12 months;

8.10.2.2. who apply to become a staff associate by completing a staff associate application form in whatever form the Secretary specifies.

8.11. Youth Associates and staff associates shall not be members of the Foundation Trust or have a right to vote, but shall be able to attend members meetings and receive the members newsletter at the discretion of the Council of Governors .

9 Disqualification from membership

9.1. A person may not become a member of the Foundation Trust if within the last five years they have been involved as a perpetrator in a serious incident of violence at any of the Foundation Trust's hospitals or facilities or against any of the Foundation Trust's employees or other persons who exercise functions for the purposes of the Foundation Trust, or against registered volunteers.

10 Termination of membership

10.1. A member shall cease to be a member if:

10.1.1. they resign by notice to the Secretary;

10.1.2. they die;

10.1.3. they are expelled from membership under this constitution;

10.1.4. they cease to be entitled under this constitution to be a member of any of the public constituencies, or of any of the classes of the staff constituency;

10.1.5. if it appears to the Secretary that they no longer wish to be a member of the Foundation Trust, and after enquiries made in

accordance with a process approved by the Council of Governors, they fail to demonstrate that they wish to continue to be a member of the Foundation Trust.

- 10.2. A member may be expelled by a resolution approved by not less than two-thirds of the Governors attending and voting at a General Meeting. The following procedure is to be adopted.
 - 10.2.1. Any member may complain to the Secretary that another member has acted in a way detrimental to the interests of the Foundation Trust.
 - 10.2.2. If a complaint is made, the Council of Governors may itself consider the complaint having taken such steps as it considers appropriate to ensure that each member's point of view is heard and may either:
 - 10.2.2.1. dismiss the complaint and take no further action; or
 - 10.2.2.2. for a period not exceeding twelve months suspend the rights of the member complained of to attend members meetings and vote under this constitution;
 - 10.2.2.3. arrange for a resolution to expel the member complained of to be considered at the next General Meeting of the Council of Governors.
 - 10.2.3. If a resolution to expel a member is to be considered at a General Meeting of the Council of Governors, details of the complaint must be sent to the member complained of not less than one calendar month before the meeting with an invitation to answer the complaint and attend the meeting.
 - 10.2.4. At the meeting the Council of Governors will consider evidence in support of the complaint and such evidence as the member complained of may wish to place before them.
 - 10.2.5. If the member complained of fails to attend the meeting without due cause the meeting may proceed in their absence.
- 10.3. A person expelled from membership will cease to be a member upon the declaration by the Chairman of the meeting that the resolution to expel them is carried.
- 10.4. No person who has been expelled from membership is to be re-admitted except by a resolution carried by the votes of two-thirds of the Council of Governors at a General Meeting.

11 **Members Meetings**

- 11.1. The Foundation Trust is to hold a members meeting (called the annual members meeting) within nine months of the end of each financial year.

- 11.2. All members meetings other than annual meetings are called special members meetings.
- 11.3. Members meetings are open to all members of the Foundation Trust, Governors and Directors, and representatives of the Trust's financial auditor, but not to members of the public unless the Council of Governors decides otherwise. The Council of Governors may invite representatives of the media, and any experts or advisors, whose attendance they consider to be in the best interests of the Foundation Trust to attend a members meeting.
- 11.4. All members meetings are to be convened by the Secretary by order of the Council of Governors.
- 11.5. The Council of Governors may decide where a members meeting is to be held and may also for the benefit of members:
 - 11.5.1. arrange for the annual members meeting to be held in different venues each year:
 - 11.5.2. make provisions for a members meeting to be held at different venues simultaneously or at different times. In making such provision the Council of Governors shall also fix an appropriate quorum for each venue, provided that the aggregate of the quorum requirements shall not be less than the quorum set out below.
- 11.6. At the annual members meeting:
 - 11.6.1. the Board of Directors shall present to the members:
 - 11.6.1.1. the annual accounts
 - 11.6.1.2. any report of the financial auditor
 - 11.6.1.3. any report of any other external auditor of the Foundation Trust's affairs
 - 11.6.1.4. forward planning information for the next financial year
 - 11.6.2. the Council of Governors shall present to the members
 - 11.6.2.1. a report on steps taken to secure that (taken as a whole) the actual membership of its public constituencies and of the classes of the staff constituency is representative of those eligible for such membership;
 - 11.6.2.2. the progress of the membership strategy
 - 11.6.2.3. any proposed changes to the policy for the composition of the Council of Governors and of the non-executive Directors

- 11.6.3. the results of the election and appointment of Governors and the appointment of non-executive Directors will be announced.
- 11.7. Notice of a members meeting is to be given:
 - 11.7.1. by notice to all members;
 - 11.7.2. by notice prominently displayed at the head office and at all of the Foundation Trust's places of business; and
 - 11.7.3. by notice on the Foundation Trust's websiteat least 14 clear days before the date of the meeting. The notice must:
 - 11.7.4. be given to the Council of Governors and the Board of Directors, and to the financial auditor;
 - 11.7.5. state whether the meeting is an annual or special members meeting;
 - 11.7.6. give the time, date and place of the meeting; and
 - 11.7.7. indicate the business to be dealt with at the meeting.
- 11.8. Before a members meeting can do business there must be a quorum present. Except where this constitution says otherwise a quorum is one member present from each of the Foundation Trust's constituencies.
- 11.9. The Foundation Trust may make arrangements for members to vote by post, or by using electronic communications.
- 11.10. It is the responsibility of the Council of Governors, the Chairman of the meeting and the Secretary to ensure that at any members meeting:
 - 11.10.1. the issues to be decided are clearly explained;
 - 11.10.2. sufficient information is provided to members to enable rational discussion to take place.
- 11.11. The Chairman of the Foundation Trust, or in their absence the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors, or in their absence one of the other non-executive Directors shall preside at all members meetings of the Foundation Trust. If neither the Chairman nor the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors, nor any other non-executive Directors present, the Council of Governors present shall elect one of their number to be Chairman and if there is only one Governor present and willing to act they shall be Chairman. If no Governor is willing to act as Chairman or if no Governor is present within fifteen minutes after the time appointed for holding the meeting, the members present and entitled to vote shall choose one of their number to be Chairman.
- 11.12. If no quorum is present within half an hour of the time fixed for the start of the meeting, the meeting shall stand adjourned to the same day in the next week at the same time and place or to such time and place as the

Council of Governors determine. If a quorum is not present within half an hour of the time fixed for the start of the adjourned meeting, the number of members present during the meeting is to be a quorum.

- 11.13. A resolution put to the vote at a members meeting shall be decided upon by a poll.
- 11.14. Every member present and every member who has voted by post or using electronic communications is to have one vote. In the case of an equality of votes the Chairman of the meeting is to have a second or casting vote.
- 11.15. The result of any vote will be declared by the Chairman and entered in the minute book. The minute book will be conclusive evidence of the result of the vote.

12. Council of Governors

- 12.1. The Foundation Trust is to have a Council of Governors. It is to consist of Public Governors, Staff Governors, PCT Governor, Local Authority Governors, and Partnership Governors.
- 12.2. The aggregate number of Public Governors is to be more than half of the total number of members of the Council of Governors.
- 12.3. The composition of the Council of Governors, subject to the 2003 Act, shall seek to ensure that
 - 12.3.1. the interests of the community served by the Foundation Trust are appropriately represented;
 - 12.3.2. the level of representation of the public constituencies, the classes of the staff constituency and the appointing organisations strikes an appropriate balance having regard to their legitimate interest in the Foundation Trust's affairsand to this end, the Council of Governors
 - 12.3.3. shall at all times maintain a policy for the composition of the Council of Governors which takes account of the membership strategy and
 - 12.3.4. shall from time to time and not less than every three years review the policy for the composition of the Council of Governors, and
 - 12.3.5. when appropriate shall propose amendments to this constitution.
- 12.4. The Council of Governors of the Foundation Trust is to comprise:
 - 12.4.1. **Fifteen** Public Governors from the following public constituencies;
 - 12.4.1.1. Ellesmere Port and Neston – **four** Public Governors

- 12.4.1.2. Chester City and rural Cheshire – **eight** Public Governors
- 12.4.1.3. Flintshire – **three** Public Governors
- 12.4.1.4. [wider area] - one Public Governor;
- 12.4.2. **Five** Staff Governors from the following classes;
 - 12.4.2.1. nursing and midwifery (qualified) –two Staff Governors
 - 12.4.2.2. doctors – one Staff Governor
 - 12.4.2.3. allied health professionals and technical/scientific – one Staff Governor
 - 12.4.2.4. other – one Staff Governor;
- 12.4.3. not more than one PCT Governor who may be appointed by Western Cheshire Primary Care Trust;
- 12.4.4. not more than four Local Authority Governors who may be appointed by Cheshire County Council, Chester City Council, Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council, and Flintshire County Council.
- 12.4.5. **five** Partnership Governors who may be appointed by partnership organisations.
- 12.5. The partnership organisations that may appoint a Partnership Governor are:
 - 12.5.1. Flintshire Local Health Board;
 - 12.5.2. University College Chester;
 - 12.5.3. Cheshire County Council (to appoint a representative of young people)
 - 12.5.4. Flintshire Community Health Council; and
 - 12.5.5. a Council for Voluntary Services.

Elected Governors

- 12.6. Public Governors are to be elected by members of their public constituency, and Staff Governors are to be elected by members of their class of the staff constituency. Each class/constituency may elect any of their number to be a governor in accordance with the provisions of this constitution.
- 12.7. If contested, the elections must be by secret ballot.
- 12.8. Elections shall be carried out in accordance with the rules set out in Annex 2. The Council of Governors will decide which of the two voting methods set out in Annex 2 is to be used.

- 12.9. A member of a public constituency may not vote at an election for a Public Governor unless within twenty-one days before they vote they have made a declaration in the form specified by the Secretary that they are qualified to vote as a member of the relevant public constituency. It is an offence to knowingly or recklessly make such a declaration which is false in a material particular.

PCT Governors

- 12.10. The Secretary, having consulted Western Cheshire Primary Care Trust, is to adopt a process for agreeing the appointment of a PCT Governor with that Primary Care Trust.

Local Authority Governors

- 12.11. The Secretary, having consulted Cheshire County Council, Chester City Council, Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council, and Flintshire County Council is to adopt a process for agreeing the appointment of Local Authority Governors with those local authorities.

Partnership Governors

- 12.12. The Partnership Governors are to be appointed by the partnership organisations, in accordance with a process agreed with the Secretary.

Appointment of Deputy Chairman of the Council of Governors

- 12.13. The Council of Governors shall appoint one of the Governors to be Deputy Chairman of the Council of Governors.

Terms of office for Governors

- 12.14. Elected Governors:

12.14.1. shall normally hold office for a period of three years commencing immediately after the annual members meeting at which their election is announced;

12.14.2. are eligible for re-election at the end of that period;

12.14.3. may not hold office for more than nine consecutive years.

- 12.15. Appointed Governors:

12.15.1. shall normally hold office for a period of three years commencing immediately after the annual members meeting at which their appointment is announced;

12.15.2. are eligible for re-appointment at the end of that period;

12.15.3. may not hold office for longer than nine consecutive years.

- 12.16. For the purposes of these provisions concerning terms of office for Governors, "year" means a period commencing immediately after the conclusion of the annual members meeting, and ending at the conclusion of the next annual members meeting.

Eligibility to be a Governor

- 12.17. A person may not become a Governor of the Foundation Trust, and if already holding such office will immediately cease to do so if:
- 12.17.1. they are under sixteen years of age;
 - 12.17.2. being a member of one of the public constituencies, they refuse to sign a declaration in the form specified by the Secretary of particulars of their qualification to vote as a member of the Foundation Trust, and that they are not prevented from being a member of the Council of Governors.
 - 12.17.3. they have been adjudged bankrupt or their estate has been sequestrated and in either case they have not been discharged;
 - 12.17.4. they have made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for, their creditors and have not been discharged in respect of it;
 - 12.17.5. 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;
 - 12.17.6. they have within the preceding two years been dismissed, otherwise than by reason of redundancy, from any paid employment with a health service body;
 - 12.17.7. they are a person whose tenure of office as the Chairman 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 interest;
 - 12.17.8. 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 have not subsequently had their name included in such a list.
- 12.18. A person may not become an elected Governor of the Foundation Trust, and if already holding such office will immediately cease to do so if:
- 12.18.1. they are a Director of the Foundation Trust, or a Governor, Governor or Director of an NHS Organisation or another NHS foundation trust;
 - 12.18.2. they are a member of a Patient's Forum of an NHS body;
 - 12.18.3. they are the spouse, partner, parent or child of a member of the Board of Directors of the Trust;

12.18.4. they are a member of a local authority's Scrutiny Committee covering health matters.

Termination of office and removal of Governors

12.19. A person holding office as a Governor shall immediately cease to do so if

12.19.1. they resign by notice in writing to the Secretary;

12.19.2. they fail to attend two consecutive meetings, unless the other Governors are satisfied that:

12.19.2.1. the absences were due to reasonable causes; and

12.19.2.2. they will be able to start attending meetings of the Foundation Trust again within such a period as they consider reasonable.

12.19.3. in the case of an elected Governor, they cease to be a member of the constituency or class of the constituency by which they were elected;

12.19.4. in the case of an appointed Governor, the appointing organisation terminates the appointment;

12.19.5. they have refused to undertake any training which the Council of Governors requires all Governors to undertake;

12.19.6. they have failed to sign and deliver to the Secretary a statement in the form required by the Secretary confirming acceptance of the code of conduct for Governors;

12.19.7. they are removed from the Council of Governors under the following provisions.

12.20. A Governor may be removed from the Council of Governors by a resolution approved by not less than three-quarters of the remaining Governors present and voting on the grounds that

12.20.1. they have committed a serious breach of the code of conduct, or

12.20.2. they have acted in a manner detrimental to the interests of the Foundation Trust, and

12.20.3. the Council of Governors consider that it is not in the best interests of the Foundation Trust for them to continue as a Governor.

Vacancies amongst Governors

12.21. Where a vacancy arises on the Council of Governors for any reason other than expiry of term of office, the following provisions will apply.

- 12.22. Where the vacancy arises amongst the appointed Governors, the Secretary shall request that the appointing organisation appoints a replacement to hold office for the remainder of the term of office.
- 12.23. Where the vacancy arises amongst the elected Governors, the Council of Governors shall be at liberty either:
- 12.23.1. to call an election within three months to fill the seat for the remainder of that term of office, or
- 12.23.2. to invite the next highest polling candidate for that seat at the most recent election, who is willing to take office to fill the seat until the next annual election, at which time the seat will fall vacant and subject to election for any unexpired period of the term of office.

Expenses and remuneration of Governors

- 12.24. The Foundation Trust may reimburse Governors for travelling and other costs and expenses at such rates as the Board of Directors decides. These are to be disclosed in the annual report.
- 12.25. Governors are not to receive remuneration.

Meetings of the Council of Governors

- 12.26. The Council of Governors is to meet at least three times in each financial year. Save in the case of emergencies or the need to conduct urgent business, the Secretary shall give at least fourteen days written notice of the date and place of every meeting of the Council of Governors to all Governors. Notice will also be published in a local newspaper or newspapers circulating in the area served by the Foundation Trust, and on the Foundation Trust's website.
- 12.27. Meetings of the Council of Governors may be called by the Secretary, or by the Chairman, or by ten Governors (including at least two elected Governors and two appointed Governors) who give written notice to the Secretary specifying the business to be carried out. The Secretary shall send a written notice to all Governors as soon as possible after receipt of such a request. The Secretary shall call a meeting on at least fourteen but not more than twenty-eight days' notice to discuss the specified business. If the Secretary fails to call such a meeting then the Chairman or four board members, whichever is the case, shall call such a meeting.
- 12.28. All meetings of the Council of Governors are to be General Meetings open to members of the public unless the Council of Governors decides otherwise in relation to all or part of a meeting for reasons of commercial confidentiality or on other proper grounds. The Chairman may exclude any member of the public from a meeting of the Council of Governors if they are interfering with or preventing the proper conduct of the meeting.
- 12.29. Twelve Governors including not less than four Public Governors, not less than one Staff Governor and not less than two appointed Governors shall form a quorum.

- 12.30. The Chairman of the Foundation Trust or, in their absence, the Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors, or in their absence one of the non-executive Directors is to preside at meetings of the Council of Governors. If the person presiding at any such meeting has a conflict of interest in relation to the business being discussed, the Deputy Chairman of the Council of Governors will chair that part of the meeting.
- 12.31. The Council of Governors may invite the Chief Executive or any other member or members of the Board of Directors, or a representative of the Foundation Trust's auditor or other advisors to attend a meeting of the Council of Governors.
- 12.32. The Council of Governors may agree that its members can participate in its meetings by telephone, video or computer link. Participation in a meeting in this manner shall be deemed to constitute presence in person at the meeting.
- 12.33. Subject to this constitution including the following provisions of this paragraph, questions arising at a meeting of the Council of Governors shall be decided by a majority of votes.
- 12.33.1. In case of an equality of votes the Deputy Chairman shall have a casting vote.
- 12.33.2. No resolution of the Council of Governors shall be passed if it is opposed by all of the Public Governors present.
- 12.34. The Council of Governors may not delegate any of its powers to a committee or sub-committee, but it may appoint committees consisting of its members, Directors, and other persons to assist the Council of Governors in carrying out its functions. The Council of Governors may, through the Secretary, request that advisors assist them or any committee they appoint in carrying out its duties.
- 12.35. All decisions taken in good faith at a meeting of the Council of Governors or of any committee shall be valid even if it is discovered subsequently that there was a defect in the calling of the meeting, or the appointment of the Governors attending the meeting.

Disclosure of interests

- 12.36. Any Governor who has a material interest in a matter as defined below shall declare such interest to the Council of Governors and:
- 12.36.1. shall withdraw from the meeting and play no part in the relevant discussion or decision
- 12.36.2. shall not vote on the issue (and if by inadvertence they do remain and vote, their vote shall not be counted).
- 12.37. Any Governor who fails to disclose any interest required to be disclosed under the preceding paragraph must permanently vacate their office if required to do so by a majority of the remaining Governors.
- 12.38. Subject to the exceptions below, a material interest is

- 12.38.1. any directorship of a company;
 - 12.38.2. any interest held by a Governor in any firm or company or business which, in connection with the matter, is trading with the Foundation Trust, or is likely to be considered as a potential trading partner with the Foundation Trust;
 - 12.38.3. any interest in an organisation providing health and social care services to the National Health Service;
 - 12.38.4. a position of authority in a charity or voluntary organisation in the field of health and social care.
- 12.39. The exceptions which shall not be treated as material interests are as follows:
- 12.39.1. shares not exceeding 2% of the total shares in issue held in any company whose shares are listed on any public exchange;
 - 12.39.2. an employment contract held by staff Governors;
 - 12.39.3. a contract with their PCT held by a PCT Governor;
 - 12.39.4. an employment contract with a local authority held by a local authority Governor;
 - 12.39.5. an employment contract with a partnership organisation held by a Partnership Governor.
- 12.40. The Council of Governors is to adopt its own standing orders for its practice and procedure, in particular for its procedure at meetings.

Declaration

- 12.41. An elected Governor may not vote at a meeting of the Council of Governors unless, before attending the meeting, they have made a declaration in the form specified by the Secretary of the particulars of their qualification to vote as a member of the Foundation Trust and that they are not prevented from being a member of the Council of Governors. An elected Governor shall be deemed to have confirmed the declaration upon attending any subsequent meeting of the Council of Governors, and every agenda for meetings of the Council of Governors will draw this to the attention of elected Governors.

13. Board of Directors

- 13.1. The Foundation Trust is to have a Board of Directors. It is to consist of executive and non-executive Directors.
- 13.2. The board is to include:
- 13.2.1. the following non-executive Directors:

13.2.1.1. a Chairman, who is to be appointed (and removed) by the Council of Governors at a General Meeting;

13.2.1.2. five other non-executive Directors who are to be appointed (and removed) by the Council of Governors at a General Meeting;

in each case subject to the approval of a majority of the Council of Governors (in the case of an appointment) present and voting at the meeting, and three-quarters of all of the members of the Council of Governors (in the case of a removal) voting at the meeting;

13.2.2. the following executive Directors:

13.2.2.1. a Chief Executive (who is the accounting officer), who is to be appointed (and removed) by the non-executive Directors, and whose appointment is subject to the approval of a majority of the members of the Council of Governors present and voting at a meeting;

13.2.2.2. a Finance Director, a registered medical practitioner or a registered dentist (within the meaning of the Dentists Act 1984), a registered nurse or registered midwife, and two other executive Directors, all of whom are to be appointed (and removed) by a committee consisting of the Chairman, the Chief Executive and the other non-executive Directors.

13.3. The Board of Directors shall elect one of the non-executive Directors to be Vice-Chairman of the Board. If the Chairman is unable to discharge their office as Chairman of the Foundation Trust, the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors shall be acting Chairman of the Foundation Trust.

13.4. Only a member of one of the public constituencies is eligible for appointment as a non-executive Director.

13.5. Non-executive Directors are to be appointed by the Council of Governors using the following procedure.

13.5.1. The Board of Directors will identify the skills and experience required for non-executive Directors.

13.5.2. Appropriate candidates (not more than five for each vacancy) will be identified by a Nominations Committee through a process of open competition, which take account of the policy maintained by the Council of Governors and the skills and experience required;

13.5.3. The Nominations Committee will comprise the Chairman of the Foundation Trust, two elected Governors and one Appointed Governor. The Chairman of another Foundation Trust will be

invited to act as an independent assessor to the Nominations Committee.

- 13.6. The removal of the Chairman or another non-executive Director shall be in accordance with the following procedures.
- 13.6.1. Any proposal for removal must be proposed by a Governor and seconded by not less than ten Governors including at least two elected Governors and two appointed Governors.
- 13.6.2. Written reasons for the proposal shall be provided to the non-executive Director in question, who shall be given the opportunity to respond to such reasons.
- 13.6.3. In making any decision to remove a non-executive Director, the Council of Governors shall take into account the annual appraisal carried out by the Chairman.
- 13.6.4. If any proposal to remove a non-executive Director is not approved at a meeting of the Council of Governors, no further proposal can be put forward to remove such non-executive Director based upon the same reasons within 12 months of the meeting.

Terms of Office

- 13.7. The Chairman and the non-executive Directors are to be appointed for a period of office in accordance with the terms and conditions of office decided by the Council of Governors at a General Meeting. Any re-appointment of a non-executive Director by the Council of Governors shall be subject to a satisfactory appraisal carried out in accordance with procedures which the Board of Directors have approved.
- 13.8. The remuneration committee of non-executive Directors shall decide the terms and conditions of office including remuneration and allowances of all the executive Directors.

Disqualification

- 13.9. A person may not become or continue as a Director of the Foundation Trust if:
- 13.9.1. they are a member of the Council of Governors, or a Governor, Governor or Director of an NHS body or another NHS Foundation Trust;
- 13.9.2. they are a member of a Patient's Forum of an NHS Organisation;
- 13.9.3. they are the spouse, partner, parent or child of a member of the Board of Directors of the Foundation Trust;
- 13.9.4. they are a member of a local authority's Scrutiny Committee covering health matters.

- 13.9.5. they have been adjudged bankrupt or their estate has been sequestrated and in either case they have not been discharged;
- 13.9.6. they have made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a Trust deed for, their creditors and have not been discharged in respect of it;
- 13.9.7. 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;
- 13.9.8. they are the subject of a disqualification order made under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986;
- 13.9.9. in the case of a non-executive Director, they are no longer a member of one of the public constituencies;
- 13.9.10. they are a person whose tenure of office as a Chairman 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 interest;
- 13.9.11. 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 have not subsequently had their name included on such a list;
- 13.9.12. they have within the preceding two years been dismissed, otherwise than by reason of redundancy, from any paid employment with a health service body;
- 13.9.13. in the case of a non-executive Director they have refused to fulfil any training requirement established by the Board of Directors;
or
- 13.9.14. they have refused to sign and deliver to the Secretary a statement in the form required by the Board of Directors confirming acceptance of the code of conduct for Directors.

Committees and delegation

- 13.10. The Board of Directors may delegate any of its powers to a committee of Directors or to an executive Director.
- 13.11. The Board of Directors shall appoint a committee of three non-executive Directors to monitor the exercise of the financial auditor's functions.
- 13.12. The Board of Directors shall appoint a remuneration committee of non-executive Directors to decide the remuneration and allowances, and the other terms and conditions of office, of the executive Directors.

Meeting of Directors

- 13.13. Save in the case of emergencies or the need to conduct urgent business, the Secretary shall give at least fourteen days written notice of the date and place of every meeting of the Board of Directors to all Directors.
- 13.14. Four times in every Financial Year, the meeting of the Board of Directors shall be open to members of the public unless the Board of Directors decides otherwise in relation to all or part of such meeting for reasons of commercial confidentiality or on other proper grounds. Other meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held in private. The Chairman may exclude any member of the public from a meeting of the Board of Directors if they are interfering with or preventing the proper conduct of the meeting.
- 13.15. Meetings of the Board of Directors are called by the Secretary, or by the Chairman, or by four Directors who give written notice to the Secretary specifying the business to be carried out. The Secretary shall send a written notice to all Directors as soon as possible after receipt of such a request. The Secretary shall call a meeting on at least fourteen but not more than twenty-eight days' notice to discuss the specified business. If the Secretary fails to call such a meeting then the Chairman or four Directors, whichever is the case, shall call such a meeting.
- 13.16. Four Directors including not less than two executive Directors (one of whom must be the Chief Executive or the Deputy Chief Executive, and not less than two non-executive Directors (one of whom must be the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman of the Board) shall form a quorum.
- 13.17. The Board of Directors may agree that its members can participate in its meetings by telephone, video or computer link. Participation in a meeting in this manner shall be deemed to constitute presence in person at the meeting.
- 13.18. The Chairman of the Foundation Trust or, in their absence, the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors, is to chair meetings of the Board of Directors.
- 13.19. Subject to the following provisions of this paragraph, questions arising at a meeting of the Board of Directors shall be decided by a majority of votes.
- 13.19.1. In case of an equality of votes the Chairman shall have a second and casting vote.
- 13.19.2. No resolution of the Board of Directors shall be passed if it is opposed by all of the non-executive Directors present or by all of the executive Directors present.
- 13.20. The Board of Directors is to adopt Standing Orders covering the proceedings and business of its meetings. The proceedings shall not however be invalidated by any vacancy of its membership, or defect in a Director's appointment.

Conflicts of Interest of Directors

- 13.21. Any Director who has a material interest in a matter as defined below shall declare such interest to the Board of Directors and:
- 13.21.1. shall withdraw from the meeting and play no part in the relevant discussion or decision and
 - 13.21.2. shall not vote on the issue (and if by inadvertence they do remain and vote, their vote shall not be counted).
- 13.22. Details of any such interest shall be recorded in the register of the interests of Directors.
- 13.23. Any Director who fails to disclose any interest required to be disclosed under the preceding paragraph must permanently vacate their office if required to do so by a majority of the remaining Directors and (in the case of a non-executive Director) by the requisite majority of the Council of Governors.
- 13.24. A material interest is
- 13.24.1. any directorship of a company;
 - 13.24.2. any interest (excluding a holding of shares in a company whose shares are listed on any public exchange where the holding is less than 2% of the total shares in issue) held by a Director in any firm or company or business which, in connection with the matter, is trading with the Foundation Trust, or is likely to be considered as a potential trading partner with the Foundation Trust;
 - 13.24.3. any interest in an organisation providing health and social care services to the National Health Service;
 - 13.24.4. a position of authority in a charity or voluntary organisation in the field of health and social care.

Expenses

- 13.25. The Foundation Trust may reimburse executive Directors travelling and other costs and expenses at such rates as the executive remuneration committee of non-executive Directors decides. These are to be disclosed in the annual report.
- 13.26. The remuneration and allowances for Directors are to be disclosed in bands in the annual report.

14. Secretary

- 14.1. The Foundation Trust shall have a Secretary who may be an employee. The Secretary may not be a Governor, or the Chief Executive or the Finance Director. The Secretary's functions shall include:

- 14.1.1. acting as Secretary to the Council of Governors and the Board of Directors, and any committees;
 - 14.1.2. summoning and attending all members meetings, meetings of the Council of Governors and the Board of Directors, and keeping the minutes of those meetings;
 - 14.1.3. keeping the register of members and other registers and books required by this constitution to be kept;
 - 14.1.4. having charge of the Foundation Trust's seal;
 - 14.1.5. publishing to members in an appropriate form information which they should have about the Foundation Trust's affairs;
 - 14.1.6. preparing and sending to Monitor and any other statutory body all returns which are required to be made.
- 14.2. Minutes of every members meeting, of every meeting of the Council of Governors and of every meeting of the Board of Directors are to be kept. Minutes of meetings will be read at the next meeting and signed by the Chairman of that meeting. The signed minutes will be conclusive evidence of the events of the meeting.
- 14.3. The Secretary is to be appointed and removed by the Board of Directors.

15. Registers

- 15.1. The Foundation Trust is to have:
- 15.1.1. a register of members showing, in respect of each member:
 - 15.1.1.1. the constituency to which they belong;
 - 15.1.1.2. any address which they have authorised the Foundation Trust to use for the purposes of any communications.
 - 15.1.2. a register of members of the Council of Governors;
 - 15.1.3. a register of Directors;
 - 15.1.4. a register of interests of Governors;
 - 15.1.5. a register of interests of the Directors.
- 15.2. The Secretary shall remove from the register of members the name of any member who ceases to be entitled to be a member under the provisions of this constitution.
- 15.3. The Secretary is to send to Monitor a list of persons who were first elected or appointed as Governors and Directors.

16. Public Documents

- 16.1. The following documents of the Foundation Trust are to be available for inspection by members of the public free of charge at all reasonable times, and shall be available on the Foundation Trust's website:
 - 16.1.1. a copy of the current constitution;
 - 16.1.2. a copy of the current authorisation;
 - 16.1.3. a copy of the latest annual accounts and of any report of the financial auditor on them;
 - 16.1.4. a copy of the report of any other external auditor of the Trust's affairs appointed by the Council of Governors;
 - 16.1.5. a copy of the latest annual report;
 - 16.1.6. a copy of the latest information as to its forward planning;
 - 16.1.7. a copy of the Foundation Trust's membership development strategy;
 - 16.1.8. a copy of the Foundation Trust's policy for the composition of the Council of Governors ;
 - 16.1.9. a copy of any notice given under section 23 of the 2003 Act (regulator's notice to failing NHS Foundation Trust).
- 16.2. The registers (but not the addresses of members of the Foundation Trust) shall be made available for inspection by members of the public, except in circumstances prescribed by regulations; and so far as they are required to be available they are to be available free of charge at all reasonable times.
- 16.3. Any person who requests it is to be provided with a copy or extract from any of the above documents or registers. The Foundation Trust may impose a reasonable charge for providing the copy or extract, but a member is entitled to a copy or extract from the registers free of charge.

17. Financial Auditor and Other External Auditors

- 17.1. The Foundation Trust is to have a financial auditor and is to provide the financial auditor with every facility and all information which he may reasonably require for the purposes of his functions under Part 1 of the 2003 Act.
- 17.2. A person may only be appointed as the financial auditor if they (or in the case of a firm of each of its members) are a member of one or more of the bodies referred to in paragraph 23 (4) of Schedule 1 to the 2003 Act.
- 17.3. An officer of the Audit Commission may be appointed with the agreement of the Commission. Where an officer of the Audit Commission is

appointed as auditor, the Commission is to charge the Foundation Trust such fees for their services as will cover the full cost of providing them.

- 17.4. The Council of Governors at a General Meeting shall appoint or remove the Foundation Trust's financial auditor.
- 17.5. The financial auditor is to carry out their duties in accordance with Schedule 5 to the 2003 Act and in accordance with any directions given by the Independent Regulator on standards, procedures and techniques to be adopted.
- 17.6. The Board of Directors may resolve that external auditors be appointed to review and publish a report on any other aspect of the Foundation Trust's performance. Any such auditors are to be appointed by the Council of Governors.

18. Accounts

- 18.1. The Trust must keep proper accounts and proper records in relation to the accounts.
- 18.2. Monitor may with the approval of the Secretary of State give directions to the Trust as to the content and form of its accounts.
- 18.3. The accounts are to be audited by the Foundation Trust's financial auditor.
- 18.4. The following documents will be made available to the Comptroller and Auditor General for examination at his request:
 - 18.4.1. the accounts;
 - 18.4.2. any records relating to them; and
 - 18.4.3. any report of the financial auditor on them.
- 18.5. The Foundation Trust is to prepare in respect of each financial year annual accounts in such form as Monitor may with the approval of the Secretary of State direct.
- 18.6. In preparing its annual accounts, the Foundation Trust is to comply with any directions given by Monitor with the approval of the Secretary of State as to:
 - 18.6.1. the methods and principles according to which the accounts are to be prepared;
 - 18.6.2. the information to be given in the accounts;
- 18.7. The annual accounts, any report of the financial auditor on them, and the annual report are to be presented to the Council of Governors at a General Meeting.

- 18.8. The Foundation Trust shall:
 - 18.8.1. lay a copy of the annual accounts, and any report of the financial auditor on them, before Parliament; and
 - 18.8.2. once it has done so, send copies of those documents to the Monitor.
- 18.9. Responsibility for complying with the requirements set out in paragraphs 18.4, 18.5 and 18.7 above shall be delegated to the accounting officer.

19. Annual reports, forward plans and non-NHS work

- 19.1. The Foundation Trust is to prepare annual reports and send them to the Independent Regulator.
- 19.2. The reports are to give:
 - 19.2.1. information on any steps taken by the Foundation Trust to secure that (taken as a whole) the actual membership of its public constituencies and of the classes of the staff constituency is representative of those eligible for such membership; and
 - 19.2.2. any other information the Independent Regulator requires.
- 19.3. The Foundation Trust is to comply with any decision Monitor makes as to:
 - 19.3.1. the form of the reports;
 - 19.3.2. when the reports are to be sent to him;
 - 19.3.3. the periods to which the reports are to relate.
- 19.4. The Foundation Trust is to give information as to its forward planning in respect of each financial year to Monitor. The document containing this information is to be prepared by the Directors, and in preparing the document, the Board of Directors must have regard to the views of the Council of Governors
- 19.5. Each forward plan must include information about –
 - 19.5.1. the activities other than the provision of goods and services for the purposes of the health service in England that the trust proposes to carry on, and
 - 19.5.2. the income it expects to receive from doing so

- 19.6. Where a forward plan contains a proposal that the trust carry on an activity of a kind mentioned in sub-paragraph 19.5.1 the Council of Governors must –
- 19.6.1. determine whether it is satisfied that the carrying on of the activity will not to any significant extent interfere with the fulfillment by the trust of its principal purpose or the performance of its other functions, and
 - 19.6.2. notify the directors of the trust of its determination.
- 19.7. A trust which proposes to increase by 5% or more the proportion of its total income in any financial year attributable to activities other than the provision of goods and services for the purposes of the health service in England may implement the proposal only if more than half of the members of the council of governors of the trust voting approve its implementation.

20. Indemnity

- 20.1. Members of the Council of Governors and the Board of Directors and the Secretary who act honestly and in good faith will not have to meet out of their personal resources any personal civil liability which is incurred in the execution or purported execution of their functions, save where they have acted recklessly. Any costs arising in this way will be met by the Foundation Trust. The Foundation Trust will ensure adequate cover is in place for the benefit of the Council of Governors and the Board of Directors.

21. Execution of documents

- 21.1. A document purporting to be duly executed under the Foundation Trust's seal or to be signed on its behalf is to be received in evidence and, unless the contrary is proved, taken to be so executed or signed.
- 21.2. The Foundation Trust is to have a seal, but this is not to be affixed except under the authority of the Board of Directors.

22. Dispute Resolution Procedures

- 22.1. Every unresolved dispute which arises out of this constitution between the Foundation Trust and:
- 22.1.1. a member; or
 - 22.1.2. any person aggrieved who has ceased to be a member within the six months prior to the date of the dispute; or

22.1.3. any person bringing a claim under this constitution; or

22.1.4. an office-holder of the Foundation Trust

is to be submitted to an arbitrator agreed by the parties or in the absence of agreement to be nominated by the Chairman. The arbitrator's decision will be binding and conclusive on all parties.

22.2. Any person bringing a dispute must, if required to do so, deposit with the Foundation Trust a reasonable sum (not exceeding £250) to be determined by the Council of Governors and approved by the Secretary. The arbitrator will decide how the costs of the arbitration will be paid and what should be done with the deposit.

23. Amendment Of The Constitution

23.1. No amendment shall be made to this constitution unless:

23.1.1 it has been approved by three quarters of the Council of Governors present and voting at a meeting of the Council of Governors; and

23.1.2 it has been approved by Monitor

24. Mergers

24.1. The Foundation Trust may in accordance with section 27 of the 2003 Act apply to the regulator jointly with another NHS Foundation Trust or an NHS Trust for authorisation of the dissolution of the Foundation Trust and the transfer of some or all of their property and liabilities to a new NHS Foundation Trust established under that section. Such application shall only be made if a majority of those members of the Foundation Trust voting at a meeting of the members shall have approved the making of such an application.

25. Dissolution Of The Foundation Trust

25.1. The Foundation Trust may not be dissolved except by order of the Secretary of State for Health, in accordance with the 2003 Act.

26. Head Office

26.1 The Foundation Trust's head office is at Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Liverpool Road, Chester CH2 1UL

26. Notices

- 26.1. Any notice required by this constitution to be given shall be given in writing or shall be given using electronic communications to an address for the time being notified for that purpose. "Address" in relation to electronic communications includes any number or address used for the purposes of such communications.
- 26.2. Proof that an envelope containing a notice was properly addressed, prepaid and posted shall be conclusive evidence that the notice was given. A notice shall be treated as delivered 48 hours after the envelope containing it was posted or, in the case of a notice contained in an electronic communication, 48 hours after it was sent.

Transition Schedule

27. Council of Governors

- 27.1. Not less than one third of the initial Public Governors who polled the highest votes will serve a term of office ending at the conclusion of the annual members meeting in 2007; not less than a third of the initial Public Governors who polled the next highest number of votes will serve a term of office ending at the conclusion of the annual members meeting in 2006; the remaining Public Governors serve a term of office ending at the conclusion of the annual members meeting in 2005.
- 27.2. The second highest polling candidate in the nursing and midwifery (qualified) class of the staff constituency will serve a term of office ending at the conclusion of the annual members meeting in 2006; the remaining initial Staff Governors shall serve a term of office ending at the conclusion of the annual members meeting in 2007.
- 27.3. There will be no elections or appointments to take effect at the conclusion of the annual members meeting in 2004, unless any of the places on the Council of Governors remained unfilled following the initial elections held before the Foundation Trusts was authorised.
- 28.4. In calculating the periods of three years and nine years for the purposes of eligibility to seek re-election or to be reappointed as Governors under this constitution, the period between their election or appointment as initial Governors and the conclusion of the annual members meeting in 2004 shall be ignored.

28. Board of Directors

- 28.1. The power to appoint the initial Chairman of the Foundation Trust is to be exercised by appointing the Chairman of the NHS Trust, if they wish to be appointed.

- 28.2. The power to appoint the other initial non-executive Directors of the Foundation Trust is to be exercised, so far as possible, by appointing any of the non-executive Directors of the NHS Trust.
- 28.3. An initial non-executive Director appointed in this way does not have to be a member of a public constituency.
- 28.4. A Chairman or non-executive Director appointed in accordance with these provisions is to be appointed for the unexpired period of their term of office with the NHS Trust; but if on any such appointment, that period is less than 12 months, they are to be appointed for 12 months.
- 28.5. The initial remuneration and allowances of the initial executive Directors are to be determined by a committee of the non-executive Directors of the NHS Trust.
- 28.6. The power to appoint the initial Chief Executive of the Foundation Trust is to be exercised by appointing the Chief Executive of the NHS Trust, if they wish to be appointed. Such appointment does not require the approval of the Council of Governors.
- 28.7. The Board of Directors of the NHS Trust shall appoint the first Secretary of the Foundation Trust.

29. Approval of Membership Strategy etc.

- 29.1. The Board of Directors of the NHS Trust will prepare and approve the first membership strategy, and the first policy for the composition of the Council of Governors .
- 29.2. These will be reviewed by the Council of Governors following the election and appointment of the initial Governors.
- 29.3. For the purposes of the period before the NHS Trust becomes the Foundation Trust,
 - 29.3.1. elections shall be carried out in accordance with the rules set out in Annex 2, using the first past the post method of voting;
 - 29.3.2. the Chief Executive will approve
 - 29.3.2.1. membership application forms and associate membership application forms;
 - 29.3.2.2. a form of declaration required by section 36 (1) of the 2003 Act;
 - 29.3.2.3. a form of declaration required by section 36 (2) of the 2003 Act; and
 - 29.3.2.4. a form of declaration required by section 36 (3) of the 2003 Act;

- 29.3.2.5. a form confirming acceptance of a code of conduct for Governors;
- 29.3.3. the Chief Executive will consult and agree arrangements with the appointing organisations for the appointment of appointed Governors;
- 29.3.4. the Chief Executive shall make a final decision about the class of the staff constituency of which an individual is eligible to be a member.

Annex

1. AREAS OF THE FOUNDATION TRUST
2. ELECTION RULES

ANNEX 1

COUNTESS OF CHESTER HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

**PUBLIC CONSTITUENCIES – COMPOSITION BY
ELECTORAL WARD**

**CHESTER CITY AND RURAL CHESHIRE PUBLIC
CONSTITUENCY comprises:**

ALL ELECTORAL WARDS WITHIN CHESTER CITY COUNCIL

THE FOLLOWING ELECTORAL WARDS OF VALE ROYAL BOROUGH COUNCIL:

FRODSHAM

HELSEBY

TARPORLEY

THE FOLLOWING ELECTORAL WARDS OF CREWE & NANTWICH BOROUGH
COUNCIL:

BUNBURY

AUDLEM

WRENBURY

**ELLESMERE PORT & NESTON PUBLIC CONSTITUENCY
comprises:**

ALL ELECTORAL WARDS WITHIN ELLESMERE PORT & NESTON BOROUGH
COUNCIL

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY PUBLIC CONSTITUENCY comprises:

ALL ELECTORAL WARDS WITHIN FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

WIDER AREA PUBLIC CONSTITUENCY comprises:

ALL ELECTORAL WARDS IN WIRRAL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

ELECTORAL WARDS IN VALE ROYAL BOROUGH COUNCIL EXCLUDING:

FRODSHAM

HELBY

TARPORLEY

ELECTORAL WARDS IN CREWE & NANTWICH BOROUGH COUNCIL EXCLUDING:

BUNBURY

AUDLEM

WRENBURY

ALL ELECTORAL WARDS IN HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

ALL ELECTORAL WARDS IN WREXHAM COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Annex 2

Countess of Chester NHS Foundation Trust (Council of Governors) Model Election Rules

Part 1 - Interpretation

1. Interpretation

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Part 1 - Interpretation

1. Interpretation – (1) In these rules, unless the context otherwise requires -

“corporation” means the public benefit corporation subject to this constitution;

“election” means an election by a constituency, or by a class within a constituency, to fill a vacancy among one or more posts on the council of governors;

“the regulator” means the Independent Regulator for NHS foundation trusts; and

“the 2003 Act” means the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003.

(2) Other expressions used in these rules and in Schedule 1 to the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 have the same meaning in these rules as in that Schedule.

Part 2 – Timetable for election

2. Timetable - The proceedings at an election shall be conducted in accordance with the following timetable.

Proceeding	Time
Publication of notice of election	Not later than the fortieth day before the day of the close of the poll.
Final day for delivery of nomination papers to returning	Not later than the twenty eighth day before the day of the close of the

officer		poll.
Publication of statement of nominated candidates		Not later than the twenty seventh day before the day of the close of the poll.
Final day for delivery of notices of withdrawals by candidates from election		Not later than twenty fifth day before the day of the close of the poll.
Notice of the poll		Not later than the fifteenth day before the day of the close of the poll.
Close of the poll		By 5.00pm on the final day of the election.

3. Computation of time - (1) In computing any period of time for the purposes of the timetable -

- (a) a Saturday or Sunday;
- (b) Christmas day, Good Friday, or a bank holiday, or
- (c) a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning,

shall be disregarded, and any such day shall not be treated as a day for the purpose of any proceedings up to the completion of the poll, nor shall the returning officer be obliged to proceed with the counting of votes on such a day.

(2) In this rule, “bank holiday” means a day which is a bank holiday under the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971 in England and Wales.

Part 3 – Returning officer

4. Returning officer – (1) Subject to rule 65, the returning officer for an election is to be appointed by the corporation.

(2) Where two or more elections are to be held concurrently, the same returning officer may be appointed for all those elections.

5. Staff – Subject to rule 65, the returning officer may appoint and pay such staff, including such technical advisers, as he or she considers necessary for the purposes of the election.

6. Expenditure - The corporation is to pay the returning officer –

- (a) any expenses incurred by that officer in the exercise of his or her functions under these rules,
- (b) such remuneration and other expenses as the corporation may determine.

7. Duty of corporation – The corporation is to co-operate with the returning officer in the exercise of his or her functions under these rules.

Part 4 - Stages Common to Contested and Uncontested Elections

8. Notice of election – The returning officer is to publish a notice of the election stating –

- (a) the constituency, or class within a constituency, for which the election is being held,

- (b) the number of members of the council of governors to be elected from that constituency, or class with that constituency,
- (c) the details of any nomination committee that has been established by the corporation,
- (d) the address and times at which nomination papers may be obtained;
- (e) the address for return of nomination papers, and the final date that they must be delivered to the returning officer,
- (f) the contact details of the returning officer, and
- (g) the date of the close of the poll in the event of a contest.

9. Nomination of candidates – (1) Each candidate must be nominated on a separate nomination paper.

(2) The returning officer -

- (a) is to supply any member of the corporation with as many nomination papers as may be required, and
- (b) is to prepare a nomination paper for signature at the request of any member of the corporation,

but it is not necessary for a nomination to be on a form supplied by the returning officer.

10. Candidate's particulars – (1) The nomination paper must state the candidate's -

- (a) full names,
- (b) contact address in full, and
- (c) constituency, or class within a constituency, which the candidate is a member of.

11. Subscription of nomination paper – (1) The nomination paper must be subscribed by at least [two] supporters.

(2) Each supporter must –

- (a) be a member of the same constituency, or class within a constituency, to which the candidate belongs, and
- (b) state his or her constituency, or class within a constituency, on the nomination paper.

(3) A member of the corporation must not subscribe more than one nomination paper.

(4) If a member of the corporation subscribes more than one nomination paper in contravention of paragraph (3), then the second and any further subscriptions received by the returning officer are invalid.

(5) Where a member of the corporation subscribes a nomination paper, and the candidate nominated in the paper dies or withdraws before the paper is received by the returning officer, then nothing in paragraphs (3) or (4) prevents that member from subscribing the nomination paper of another candidate.

12. Declaration of interests – The nomination paper must state –

- (a) any financial interest that the candidate has in the corporation, and
- (b) whether the candidate is a member of a political party, and if so, which party,

and if the candidate has no such interests, the paper must include a statement to that effect.

13. Declaration of eligibility – (1) The nomination paper must include a declaration made by the candidate –

- (a) of the particulars of his or her qualification to vote as a member of the constituency, or class within a constituency, for which the election is being held, and
- (b) that he or she is not prevented from being a member of the Council of Governors by [provision 12.18] in this constitution.

(2) The declaration must be made by the candidate within 6 months of the close of the poll to be valid for the purposes of section 36(2) of the 2003 Act.

14. Signature of candidate – The nomination paper must be signed and dated by the candidate, indicating that –

- (a) the candidate consents to being nominated in the paper,
- (b) the statement of the interests of the candidate in the paper, as required by rule 12, is true and correct, and
- (c) the declaration of eligibility required by rule 13 is true and correct.

15. Decisions as to validity of nomination papers – (1) Where a nomination paper is received by the returning officer in accordance with these rules, the candidate is deemed to stand for election as nominated unless and until -

- (a) the returning officer decides that the nomination paper is invalid,
- (b) proof is given to the returning officer's satisfaction that the candidate has died, or
- (c) the candidate withdraws.

(2) The returning officer is entitled to decide that a nomination paper is invalid only on one of the following grounds -

- (a) that the paper is not received on or before the final date for return of nomination papers, as specified in the notice of the election,
- (b) that the paper does not contain the candidate's particulars, as required by rule 10;
- (c) that the paper is not subscribed as required by rule 11,
- (d) that the paper does not contain a declaration of the interests of the candidate, as required by rule 12,
- (e) that the paper does not include a declaration of eligibility as required by rule 13, or

- (f) that the paper is not signed and dated by the candidate, as required by rule 14.

(3) The returning officer is to examine each nomination paper as soon as is practicable after he or she has received it, and decide whether the candidate has been validly nominated.

(4) Where the returning officer decides that a nomination paper is invalid, he or she must endorse this on the paper, stating the reasons for the decision.

(5) The returning officer is to send notice of the decision as to whether a nomination paper is valid or invalid to the candidate, at the contact address given in the candidate's nomination paper.

16. Publication of statement of nominated candidates – (1) The returning officer is to prepare and publish a statement showing the candidates who are standing for election as nominated.

(2) The statement must show –

- (a) the name, contact address, and constituency or class within a constituency of each candidate standing as nominated, and
- (b) the statement of interests of each candidate standing as nominated,

as given in their nomination paper.

(3) The statement must list the candidates standing for election [in random order / in alphabetical order].

(4) If a candidate has been nominated by more than one nomination paper, the returning officer is to take the particulars required by this rule from one of the papers selected by the candidate, or by the returning officer in default of the candidate.

(5) The returning officer must send a copy of the statement of nominated candidates and copies of the nomination papers to the corporation as soon as is practicable after publishing the statement.

17. Inspection of statement of nominated candidates and nomination papers – (1) The corporation is to make the statement of nominated candidates and the nomination papers supplied by the returning officer under rule 16(5) available for inspection by members of the public free of charge at all reasonable times.

(2) If a person requests a copy or extract of the statement of nominated candidates or the nomination papers, the corporation is to provide that person with the copy or extract free of charge.

18. Withdrawal of candidates - A candidate may withdraw from election on or before the final day for withdrawal by candidates, by giving the returning officer a notice of withdrawal which is signed by that candidate and attested by a witness.

19. Method of election – (1) If the number of candidates remaining validly nominated for an election after any withdrawals under these rules is greater than the number of members to be elected to the Council of Governors, a poll is to be taken in accordance with Parts 5 and 6 of these rules.

(2) If the number of candidates remaining validly nominated for an election after any withdrawals under these rules is equal to the number of members to be elected to the council of governors, those candidates are to be declared elected in accordance with Part 7 of these rules.

(3) If the number of candidates remaining validly nominated for an election after any withdrawals under these rules is less than the number of members to be elected to be council of governors, then –

- (a) the candidates who remain validly nominated are to be declared elected in accordance with Part 7 of these rules, and
- (b) the returning officer is to order a new election to fill any vacancy which remains unfilled, on a day appointed by him or her in consultation with the corporation.

Part 5 – Contested elections

20. Poll to be taken by ballot – (1) The votes at the poll must be given by ballot.

(2) The votes are to be counted and the result of the poll determined in accordance with Part 6 of these rules.

21. The ballot paper – (1) The ballot of each voter is to consist of a ballot paper with the persons remaining validly nominated for an election after any withdrawals under these rules, and no others, inserted in the paper.

(2) Every ballot paper must specify –

- (a) the name of the corporation,
- (b) the constituency, or class within a constituency, for which the election is being held,
- (c) the number of members of the council of governors to be elected from that constituency, or class within that constituency,
- (d) the names and other particulars of the candidates standing for election, with the details and order being the same as in the statement of nominated candidates,
- (e) instructions on how to vote,
- (f) that the ballot paper is to be returned by post, with the address for its return and the date of the close of the poll, and
- (g) the contact details of the returning officer.

(3) Each ballot paper must have a unique identifier.

(4) Each ballot paper must have features incorporated into it to prevent it from being reproduced.

22. The declaration of identity – (1) A declaration of identity must be issued with each ballot paper.

(2) The declaration of identity is to include a declaration –

- (a) that the voter is the person to whom the ballot paper was addressed,
- (b) that the voter has not marked or returned any other voting paper in the election, and
- (c) of the particulars of that member's qualification to vote as a member of the constituency or class within a constituency for which the election is being held.

(3) The declaration of identity is to include space for –

- (a) the name of the voter,
- (b) the address of the voter,
- (c) the voter's signature, and
- (d) the date that the declaration was made by the voter.

(4) The declaration of identity must caution the voter that, if it is not returned with the ballot paper, or if it is returned without being correctly completed, the voter's ballot paper may be invalid.

(5) The declaration of identity must be signed by the voter within six months of the close of the poll to be valid for the purposes of section 36(1) of the 2003 Act.

Action to be taken before the poll

23. List of eligible voters – (1) The corporation is to provide the returning officer with a list of the members of the constituency or class within a constituency for which the election is being held who do not come within rule 27 (the "list of eligible voters"), as soon as is reasonably practicable after the final date for the delivery of notices of withdrawals by candidates from an election.

(2) The list is to include, for each member, a mailing address where his or her ballot paper is to be sent.

24. Notice of poll - The returning officer is to publish a notice of the poll stating–

- (a) the name of the corporation,
- (b) the constituency, or class within a constituency, for which the election is being held,
- (c) the number of members of the council of governors to be elected from that constituency, or class with that constituency,
- (d) the names, contact addresses, and other particulars of the candidates standing for election, with the details and order being the same as in the statement of nominated candidates,
- (e) that the ballot papers for the election are to be issued and returned by post,
- (f) the address for return of the ballot papers, and the date of the close of the poll,
- (g) the address and final dates for applications for replacement ballot papers, and
- (h) the contact details of the returning officer.

25. Issue of voting documents by returning officer – (1) As soon as is reasonably practicable on or after the publication of the notice of the poll, the returning officer is to send the following documents to each member of the corporation named in the list of eligible voters–

- (a) a ballot paper,
- (b) a ballot paper envelope,
- (c) a declaration of identity,
- (d) information about each candidate standing for election, pursuant to rule 60 of these rules, and
- (e) a covering envelope.

(2) The documents are to be sent to the mailing address for each member, as specified in the list of eligible voters.

26. Ballot paper envelope and covering envelope – (1) The ballot paper envelope must have clear instructions to the voter printed on it, instructing the voter to seal the ballot paper inside the envelope once the ballot paper has been marked.

(2) The covering envelope is to have –

- (a) the address for return of the ballot paper printed on it, and
- (b) pre-paid postage for return to that address.

(3) There should be clear instructions, either printed on the covering envelope or elsewhere, instructing the voter to seal the following documents inside the covering envelope and return it to the returning officer –

- (a) the completed declaration of identity, and
- (b) the ballot paper envelope, with the ballot paper sealed inside it.

The poll

27. Eligibility to vote – An individual who becomes a member of the corporation–

- (a) on the final date for the delivery of notices of withdrawals by candidates from an election, or
- (b) on any subsequent day of the election,

is not eligible to vote in that election.

28. Voting by persons who require assistance – (1) The returning officer is to put in place arrangements to enable requests for assistance to vote to be made.

(2) Where the returning officer receives a request from a voter who requires assistance to vote, the returning officer is to make such arrangements as he or she considers necessary to enable that voter to vote.

29. Spoilt ballot papers (1) – If a voter has inadvertently dealt with his or her ballot paper in such a manner that it cannot be conveniently be used as a ballot paper (referred to a

“spoilt ballot paper”), that voter may apply to the returning officer for a replacement ballot paper.

(2) On receiving an application, the returning officer is to obtain the details of the unique identifier on the spoilt ballot paper, if he or she can obtain it.

(3) The returning officer may not issue a replacement ballot paper for a spoilt ballot paper unless he or she –

- (a) is satisfied as to the voter’s identity, and
- (b) has ensured that the declaration of identity attached to the original ballot paper has not been returned.

(4) After issuing a replacement ballot paper for a spoilt ballot paper, the returning officer shall enter in a list (“the list of spoilt ballot papers”) –

- (a) the name of the voter, and
- (b) the details of the unique identifier of the spoilt ballot paper (if that officer was able to obtain it), and
- (c) the details of the unique identifier of the replacement ballot paper.

30. Lost ballot papers – (1) Where a voter has not received his or her ballot paper by the fourth day before the close of the poll, that voter may apply to the returning officer for a replacement ballot paper.

(2) The returning officer may not issue a replacement ballot paper for a lost ballot paper unless he or she –

- (a) is satisfied as to the voter’s identity,
- (b) has no reason to doubt that the voter did not receive the original ballot paper, and
- (c) has ensured that the declaration of identity attached to the original ballot paper has not been returned.

(3) After issuing a replacement ballot paper for a lost ballot paper, the returning officer shall enter in a list (“the list of lost ballot papers”) –

- (a) the name of the voter, and
- (b) the details of the unique identifier of the replacement ballot paper.

31. Double voting and personation – (1) If a person applies for a replacement ballot paper under rule 29 or 30 and a declaration of identity has already been received by the returning officer in the name of that voter, the returning officer may not issue a replacement ballot paper unless, in addition to the requirements imposed rule 29(3) or 30(2), he or she is also satisfied that that person has not already voted in the election, notwithstanding the fact that a declaration of identity has already been received by the returning officer in the name of that voter.

(2) After issuing a replacement ballot paper under this rule, the returning officer shall enter in a list (“the list of tendered ballot papers”) –

- (a) the name of the voter, and

- (b) the details of the unique identifier of the replacement ballot paper issued under this rule.

32. Declaration of identity for replacement ballot papers – (1) A declaration of identity must be issued with each replacement ballot paper.

(2) The declaration of identity is to include a declaration –

- (a) that the voter has not voted in the election with any ballot paper other than the ballot paper being returned with the declaration, and
- (b) of the particulars of that member's qualification to vote as a member of the constituency, or class within a constituency, for which the election is being held.

(3) The declaration of identity is to include space for –

- (a) the name of the voter,
- (b) the address of the voter,
- (c) the voter's signature, and
- (d) the date that the declaration was made by the voter.

(4) The declaration of identity must caution the voter that, if it is not returned with the ballot paper, or if it is returned without being correctly completed, the replacement ballot paper may be invalid.

(5) The declaration of identity must be signed by the voter within six months of the close of the poll to be valid for the purposes of section 36(1) of the 2003 Act.

Procedure for receipt of envelopes

33. Receipt of voting documents – (1) Where the returning officer receives a –

- (a) covering envelope, or
- (b) any other envelope containing a declaration of identity, a ballot paper envelope, or a ballot paper,

before the close of the poll, that officer is to open it as soon as is practicable; and rules 34 and 35 are to apply.

(2) The returning officer may open any ballot paper envelope for the purposes of rules 34 and 35, but must make arrangements to ensure that no person obtains or communicates information as to –

- (a) the candidate for whom a voter has voted, or
- (b) the unique identifier on a ballot paper.

(3) The returning officer must make arrangements to ensure the safety and security of the ballot papers and other documents.

34. Validity of ballot paper – (1) A ballot paper shall not be taken to be duly returned unless the returning officer is satisfied that it has been returned before the close of the poll, with a declaration of identity that has been correctly completed, signed, and dated.

(2) Where the returning officer is satisfied that paragraph (1) has been fulfilled, he or she is to –

- (a) put the declaration of identity in a separate packet, and
- (b) put the ballot paper aside for counting after the close of the poll.

(3) Where the returning officer is not satisfied that paragraph (1) has been fulfilled, he or she is to –

- (a) mark the ballot paper “disqualified”,
- (b) if there is a declaration of identity accompanying the ballot paper, mark it as “disqualified” and attach it the ballot paper,
- (c) record the unique identifier on the ballot paper in a list (the “list of disqualified documents”); and
- (d) place the document or documents in a separate packet.

35. Declaration of identity but no ballot paper – Where the returning officer receives a declaration of identity but no ballot paper, the returning officer is to –

- (a) mark the declaration of identity “disqualified”,
- (b) record the name of the voter in the list of disqualified documents, indicating that a declaration of identity was received from the voter without a ballot paper; and
- (c) place the declaration of identity in a separate packet.

36. Sealing of packets – As soon as is possible after the completion of the procedure under rules 34 and 35, the returning officer is to seal the packets containing–

- (a) the disqualified documents, together with the list of disqualified documents inside it,
- (b) the declarations of identity,
- (c) the list of spoiled ballot papers,
- (d) the list of lost ballot papers,
- (e) the list of eligible voters, and
- (f) the list of tendered ballot papers.

Part 6 - Counting the votes

stv37. Interpretation of Part 6 – In Part 6 of these rules –

“continuing candidate” means any candidate not deemed to be elected, and not excluded,

“count” means all the operations involved in counting of the first preferences recorded for candidates, the transfer of the surpluses of elected candidates, and the transfer of the votes of the excluded candidates,

“deemed to be elected” means deemed to be elected for the purposes of counting of votes but without prejudice to the declaration of the result of the poll,

“mark” means a figure, an identifiable written word, or a mark such as “X”,

“non-transferable vote” means a ballot paper –

- (a) on which no second or subsequent preference is recorded for a continuing candidate, or
- (b) which is excluded by the returning officer under rule stv44(4) below,

“preference” as used in the following contexts has the meaning assigned below–

- (a) “first preference” means the figure “1” or any mark or word which clearly indicates a first (or only) preference,
- (b) “next available preference” means a preference which is the second, or as the case may be, subsequent preference recorded in consecutive order for a continuing candidate (any candidate who is deemed to be elected or is excluded thereby being ignored); and
- (c) in this context, a “second preference” is shown by the figure “2” or any mark or word which clearly indicates a second preference, and a third preference by the figure “3” or any mark or word which clearly indicates a third preference, and so on,

“quota” means the number calculated in accordance with rule stv42 below,

“surplus” means the number of votes by which the total number of votes for any candidate (whether first preference or transferred votes, or a combination of both) exceeds the quota; but references in these rules to the transfer of the surplus means the transfer (at a transfer value) of all transferable papers from the candidate who has the surplus,

“stage of the count” means –

- (a) the determination of the first preference vote of each candidate,
- (b) the transfer of a surplus of a candidate deemed to be elected, or
- (c) the exclusion of one or more candidates at any given time,

“transferable paper” means a ballot paper on which, following a first preference, a second or subsequent preference is recorded in consecutive numerical order for a continuing candidate,

“transferred vote” means a vote derived from a ballot paper on which a second or subsequent preference is recorded for the candidate to whom that paper has been transferred, and

“transfer value” means the value of a transferred vote calculated in accordance with paragraph (4) or (7) of rule stv43 below.

38. Arrangements for counting of the votes – The returning officer is to make arrangements for counting the votes as soon as is practicable after the close of the poll.

39. The count – (1) The returning officer is to –

- (a) count and record the number of ballot papers that have been returned, and
- (b) count the votes according to the provisions in this Part of the rules.

(2) The returning officer, while counting and recording the number of ballot papers and counting the votes, must make arrangements to ensure that no person obtains or communicates information as to the unique identifier on a ballot paper.

(3) The returning officer is to proceed continuously with counting the votes as far as is practicable.

stv40. Rejected ballot papers – (1) Any ballot paper –

- (a) which does not bear the features that have been incorporated into the other ballot papers to prevent them from being reproduced,
- (b) on which the figure “1” standing alone is not placed so as to indicate a first preference for any candidate,
- (c) on which anything is written or marked by which the voter can be identified except the unique identifier, or
- (d) which is unmarked or rejected because of uncertainty,

shall be rejected and not counted, but the ballot paper shall not be rejected by reason only of carrying the words “one”, “two”, “three” and so on, or any other mark instead of a figure if, in the opinion of the returning officer, the word or mark clearly indicates a preference or preferences.

(2) The returning officer is to endorse the word “rejected” on any ballot paper which under this rule is not to be counted.

(3) The returning officer is to draw up a statement showing the number of ballot papers rejected by him or her under each of the subparagraphs (a) to (d) of paragraph (1).

fpp40. Rejected ballot papers – (1) Any ballot paper –

- (a) which does not bear the features that have been incorporated into the other ballot papers to prevent them from being reproduced,
- (b) on which votes are given for more candidates than the voter is entitled to vote,
- (c) on which anything is written or marked by which the voter can be identified except the unique identifier, or
- (d) which is unmarked or rejected because of uncertainty,

shall, subject to paragraphs (2) and (3) below, be rejected and not counted.

(2) Where the voter is entitled to vote for more than one candidate, a ballot paper is not to be rejected because of uncertainty in respect of any vote where no uncertainty arises, and that vote is to be counted.

(3) A ballot paper on which a vote is marked –

- (a) elsewhere than in the proper place,
- (b) otherwise than by means of a clear mark,
- (c) by more than one mark,

is not to be rejected for such reason (either wholly or in respect of that vote) if an intention that the vote shall be for one or other of the candidates clearly appears, and the way the paper is marked does not itself identify the voter and it is not shown that he or she can be identified by it.

(4) The returning officer is to –

- (a) endorse the word “rejected” on any ballot paper which under this rule is not to be counted, and
- (b) in the case of a ballot paper on which any vote is counted under paragraph (2) or (3) above, endorse the words “rejected in part” on the ballot paper and indicate which vote or votes have been counted.

(5) The returning officer is to draw up a statement showing the number of rejected ballot papers under the following headings –

- (a) does not bear proper features that have been incorporated into the ballot paper,
- (b) voting for more candidates than the voter is entitled to,
- (c) writing or mark by which voter could be identified, and
- (d) unmarked or rejected because of uncertainty,

and, where applicable, each heading must record the number of ballot papers rejected in part.

stv41. First stage – (1) The returning officer is to sort the ballot papers into parcels according to the candidates for whom the first preference votes are given.

(2) The returning officer is to then count the number of first preference votes given on ballot papers for each candidate, and is to record those numbers.

(3) The returning officer is to also ascertain and record the number of valid ballot papers.

stv42. The quota – (1) The returning officer is to divide the number of valid ballot papers by a number exceeding by one the number of members to be elected.

(2) The result, increased by one, of the division under paragraph (1) above (any fraction being disregarded) shall be the number of votes sufficient to secure the election of a candidate (in these rules referred to as “the quota”).

(3) At any stage of the count a candidate whose total votes equals or exceeds the quota shall be deemed to be elected, except that any election where there is only one vacancy a candidate shall not be deemed to be elected until the procedure set out in paragraphs (1) to (3) of rule stv45 has been complied with.

stv43. Transfer of votes – (1) Where the number of first preference votes for any candidate exceeds the quota, the returning officer is to sort all the ballot papers on which first preference votes are given for that candidate into sub-parcels so that they are grouped –

- (a) according to next available preference given on those papers for any continuing candidate, or
- (b) where no such preference is given, as the sub-parcel of non-transferable votes.

(2) The returning officer is to count the number of ballot papers in each parcel referred to in paragraph (1) above.

(3) The returning officer is, in accordance with this rule and rule stv44 below, to transfer each sub-parcel of ballot papers referred to in paragraph (1)(a) to the candidate for whom the next available preference is given on those papers.

(4) The vote on each ballot paper transferred under paragraph (3) above shall be at a value ("the transfer value") which –

- (a) reduces the value of each vote transferred so that the total value of all such votes does not exceed the surplus, and
- (b) is calculated by dividing the surplus of the candidate from whom the votes are being transferred by the total number of the ballot papers on which those votes are given, the calculation being made to two decimal places (ignoring the remainder if any).

(5) Where at the end of any stage of the count involving the transfer of ballot papers, the number of votes for any candidate exceeds the quota, the returning officer is to sort the ballot papers in the sub-parcel of transferred votes which was last received by that candidate into separate sub-parcels so that they are grouped –

- (a) according to the next available preference given on those papers for any continuing candidate, or
- (b) where no such preference is given, as the sub-parcel of non-transferable votes.

(6) The returning officer is, in accordance with this rule and rule stv44 below, to transfer each sub-parcel of ballot papers referred to in paragraph (5)(a) to the candidate for whom the next available preference is given on those papers.

(7) The vote on each ballot paper transferred under paragraph (6) shall be at –

- (a) a transfer value calculated as set out in paragraph (4)(b) above, or
- (b) at the value at which that vote was received by the candidate from whom it is now being transferred,

whichever is the less.

(8) Each transfer of a surplus constitutes a stage in the count.

(9) Subject to paragraph (10), the returning officer shall proceed to transfer transferable papers until no candidate who is deemed to be elected has a surplus or all the vacancies have been filled.

(10) Transferable papers shall not be liable to be transferred where any surplus or surpluses which, at a particular stage of the count, have not already been transferred, are –

- (a) less than the difference between the total vote then credited to the continuing candidate with the lowest recorded vote and the vote of the candidate with the next lowest recorded vote, or
- (b) less than the difference between the total votes of the two or more continuing candidates, credited at that stage of the count with the lowest recorded total numbers of votes and the candidate next above such candidates.

(11) This rule does not apply at an election where there is only one vacancy.

stv44. Supplementary provisions on transfer – (1) If, at any stage of the count, two or more candidates have surpluses, the transferable papers of the candidate with the highest surplus shall be transferred first, and if –

- (a) The surpluses determined in respect of two or more candidates are equal, the transferable papers of the candidate who had the highest recorded vote at the earliest preceding stage at which they had unequal votes shall be transferred first, and
- (b) the votes credited to two or more candidates were equal at all stages of the count, the returning officer shall decide between those candidates by lot, and the transferable papers of the candidate on whom the lot falls shall be transferred first.

(2) The returning officer shall, on each transfer of transferable papers under rule stv43 above –

- (a) record the total value of the votes transferred to each candidate,
- (b) add that value to the previous total of votes recorded for each candidate and record the new total,
- (c) record as non-transferable votes the difference between the surplus and the total transfer value of the transferred votes and add that difference to the previously recorded total of non-transferable votes, and
- (d) compare—
 - (i) the total number of votes then recorded for all of the candidates, together with the total number of non-transferable votes, with
 - (ii) the recorded total of valid first preference votes.

(3) All ballot papers transferred under rule stv43 or stv45 shall be clearly marked, either individually or as a sub-parcel, so as to indicate the transfer value recorded at that time to each vote on that paper or, as the case may be, all the papers in that sub-parcel.

(4) Where a ballot paper is so marked that it is unclear to the returning officer at any stage of the count under rule stv43 or stv45 for which candidate the next preference is recorded, the returning officer shall treat any vote on that ballot paper as a non-transferable vote; and votes on a ballot paper shall be so treated where, for example, the names of two or more candidates (whether continuing candidates or not) are so marked that, in the opinion of the returning officer, the same order of preference is indicated or the numerical sequence is broken.

stv45. Exclusion of candidates – (1) If—

- (a) all transferable papers which under the provisions of rule stv43 above (including that rule as applied by paragraph (11) below) and this rule are required to be transferred, have been transferred, and
- (b) subject to rule stv46 below, one or more vacancies remain to be filled,

the returning officer shall exclude from the election at that stage the candidate with the then lowest vote (or, where paragraph (12) below applies, the candidates with the then lowest votes).

(2) The returning officer shall sort all the ballot papers on which first preference votes are given for the candidate or candidates excluded under paragraph (1) above into two sub-parcels so that they are grouped as—

- (a) ballot papers on which a next available preference is given, and
- (b) ballot papers on which no such preference is given (thereby including ballot papers on which preferences are given only for candidates who are deemed to be elected or are excluded).

(3) The returning officer shall, in accordance with this rule and rule stv44 above, transfer each sub-parcel of ballot papers referred to in paragraph (2)(a) above to the candidate for whom the next available preference is given on those papers.

(4) The exclusion of a candidate, or of two or more candidates together, constitutes a further stage of the count.

(5) If, subject to rule stv46 below, one or more vacancies still remain to be filled, the returning officer shall then sort the transferable papers, if any, which had been transferred to any candidate excluded under paragraph (1) above into sub-parcels according to their transfer value.

(6) The returning officer shall transfer those papers in the sub-parcel of transferable papers with the highest transfer value to the continuing candidates in accordance with the next available preferences given on those papers (thereby passing over candidates who are deemed to be elected or are excluded).

(7) The vote on each transferable paper transferred under paragraph (6) above shall be at the value at which that vote was received by the candidate excluded under paragraph (1) above.

(8) Any papers on which no next available preferences have been expressed shall be set aside as non-transferable votes.

(9) After the returning officer has completed the transfer of the ballot papers in the sub-parcel of ballot papers with the highest transfer value he or she shall proceed to transfer in the same way the sub-parcel of ballot papers with the next highest value and so on until he has dealt with each sub-parcel of a candidate excluded under paragraph (1) above.

(10) The returning officer shall after each stage of the count completed under this rule—

- (a) record –
 - (i) the total value of votes, or
 - (ii) the total transfer value of votes transferred to each candidate,

- (b) add that total to the previous total of votes recorded for each candidate and record the new total,
- (c) record the value of non-transferable votes and add that value to the previous non-transferable votes total, and
- (d) compare—
 - (i) the total number of votes then recorded for each candidate together with the total number of non-transferable votes, with
 - (ii) the recorded total of valid first preference votes.

(11) If after a transfer of votes under any provision of this rule, a candidate has a surplus, that surplus shall be dealt with in accordance with paragraphs (5) to (10) of rule stv43 and rule stv44.

(12) Where the total of the votes of the two or more lowest candidates, together with any surpluses not transferred, is less than the number of votes credited to the next lowest candidate, the returning officer shall in one operation exclude such two or more candidates.

(13) If when a candidate has to be excluded under this rule, two or more candidates each have the same number of votes and are lowest—

- (a) regard shall be had to the total number of votes credited to those candidates at the earliest stage of the count at which they had an unequal number of votes and the candidate with the lowest number of votes at that stage shall be excluded, and
- (b) where the number of votes credited to those candidates was equal at all stages, the returning officer shall decide between the candidates by lot and the candidate on whom the lot falls shall be excluded.

stv46. Filling of last vacancies – (1) Where the number of continuing candidates is equal to the number of vacancies remaining unfilled the continuing candidates shall thereupon be deemed to be elected.

(2) Where only one vacancy remains unfilled and the votes of any one continuing candidate are equal to or greater than the total of votes credited to other continuing candidates together with any surplus not transferred, the candidate shall thereupon be deemed to be elected.

(3) Where the last vacancies can be filled under this rule, no further transfer of votes shall be made.

stv47. Order of election of candidates – (1) The order in which candidates whose votes equal or exceed the quota are deemed to be elected shall be the order in which their respective surpluses were transferred, or would have been transferred but for rule stv43(10) above.

(2) A candidate credited with a number of votes equal to, and not greater than, the quota shall, for the purposes of this rule, be regarded as having had the smallest surplus at the stage of the count at which he obtained the quota.

(3) Where the surpluses of two or more candidates are equal and are not required to be transferred, regard shall be had to the total number of votes credited to such candidates at the earliest stage of the count at which they had an unequal number of votes and the surplus

of the candidate who had the greatest number of votes at that stage shall be deemed to be the largest.

(4) Where the number of votes credited to two or more candidates were equal at all stages of the count, the returning officer shall decide between them by lot and the candidate on whom the lot falls shall be deemed to have been elected first.

fpp47. Equality of votes – Where, after the counting of votes is completed, an equality of votes is found to exist between any candidates and the addition of a vote would entitle any of those candidates to be declared elected, the returning officer is to decide between those candidates by a lot, and proceed as if the candidate on whom the lot falls had received an additional vote.

Part 7 – Final proceedings in contested and uncontested elections

fpp48. Declaration of result for contested elections – (1) In a contested election, when the result of the poll has been ascertained, the returning officer is to –

- (a) declare the candidate or candidates whom more votes have been given than for the other candidates, up to the number of vacancies to be filled on the council of governors from the constituency, or class within a constituency, for which the election is being held to be elected,
- (b) give notice of the name of each candidate who he or she has declared elected–
 - (i) where the election is held under a proposed constitution pursuant to powers conferred on the Countess of Chester NHS trust by section 4(4) of the 2003 Act, to the chairman of the NHS trust, or
 - (ii) in any other case, to the chairman of the corporation; and
- (c) give public notice of the name of each candidate whom he or she has declared elected.

(2) The returning officer is to make –

- (a) the total number of votes given for each candidate (whether elected or not), and
- (b) the number of rejected ballot papers under each of the headings in rule fpp40(5),

available on request.

stv48. Declaration of result for contested elections – (1) In a contested election, when the result of the poll has been ascertained, the returning officer is to—

- (a) declare the candidates who are deemed to be elected under Part 6 of these rules as elected,
- (b) give notice of the name of each candidate who he or she has declared elected –
 - (i) where the election is held under a proposed constitution pursuant to powers conferred on the Countess of Chester NHS foundation trust by section 4(4) of the 2003 Act, to the chairman of the NHS trust, or
 - (ii) in any other case, to the chairman of the corporation, and

- (c) give public notice of the name of each candidate who he or she has declared elected.

(2) The returning officer is to make –

- (a) the number of first preference votes for each candidate whether elected or not,
- (b) any transfer of votes,
- (c) the total number of votes for each candidate at each stage of the count at which such transfer took place,
- (d) the order in which the successful candidates were elected, and
- (e) the number of rejected ballot papers under each of the headings in rule stv40(1),

available on request.

49. Declaration of result for uncontested elections – In an uncontested election, the returning officer is to as soon as is practicable after final day for the delivery of notices of withdrawals by candidates from the election –

- (a) declare the candidate or candidates remaining validly nominated to be elected,
- (b) give notice of the name of each candidate who he or she has declared elected to the chairman of the corporation, and
- (c) give public notice of the name of each candidate who he or she has declared elected.

Part 8 – Disposal of documents

50. Sealing up of documents relating to the poll – (1) On completion of the counting at a contested election, the returning officer is to seal up the following documents in separate packets –

- (a) the counted ballot papers,
- (b) the ballot papers endorsed with “rejected in part”,
- (c) the rejected ballot papers, and
- (d) the statement of rejected ballot papers.

(2) The returning officer must not open the sealed packets of –

- (a) the disqualified documents, with the list of disqualified documents inside it,
- (b) the declarations of identity,
- (c) the list of spoilt ballot papers,
- (d) the list of lost ballot papers,
- (e) the list of eligible voters, and
- (f) the list of tendered ballot papers.

(3) The returning officer must endorse on each packet a description of –

- (a) its contents,
- (b) the date of the publication of notice of the election,
- (c) the name of the corporation to which the election relates, and
- (d) the constituency, or class within a constituency, to which the election relates.

51. Delivery of documents – Once the documents relating to the poll have been sealed up and endorsed pursuant to rule 50, the returning officer is to forward them to the chair of the corporation.

52. Forwarding of documents received after close of the poll – Where –

- (a) any voting documents are received by the returning officer after the close of the poll, or
- (b) any envelopes addressed to eligible voters are returned as undelivered too late to be resent, or
- (c) any applications for replacement ballot papers are made too late to enable new ballot papers to be issued,

the returning officer is to put them in a separate packet, seal it up, and endorse and forward it to the chairman of the corporation.

53. Retention and public inspection of documents – (1) The corporation is to retain the documents relating to an election that are forwarded to the chair by the returning officer under these rules for one year, and then, unless otherwise directed by the regulator, cause them to be destroyed.

(2) With the exception of the documents listed in rule 54(1), the documents relating to an election that are held by the corporation shall be available for inspection by members of the public at all reasonable times.

(3) A person may request a copy or extract from the documents relating to an election that are held by the corporation, and the corporation is to provide it, and may impose a reasonable charge for doing so.

54. Application for inspection of certain documents relating to an election – (1) The corporation may not allow the inspection of, or the opening of any sealed packet containing –

- (a) any rejected ballot papers, including ballot papers rejected in part,
- (b) any disqualified documents, or the list of disqualified documents,
- (c) any counted ballot papers,
- (d) any declarations of identity, or
- (e) the list of eligible voters,

by any person without the consent of the regulator.

(2) A person may apply to the regulator to inspect any of the documents listed in (1), and the regulator may only consent to such inspection if it is satisfied that it is necessary for the purpose of questioning an election pursuant to Part 11.

(3) The regulator's consent may be on any terms or conditions that it thinks necessary, including conditions as to –

- (a) persons,
- (b) time,
- (c) place and mode of inspection,
- (d) production or opening,

and the corporation must only make the documents available for inspection in accordance with those terms and conditions.

(4) On an application to inspect any of the documents listed in paragraph (1), –

- (a) in giving its consent, the regulator, and
- (b) and making the documents available for inspection, the corporation,

must ensure that the way in which the vote of any particular member has been given shall not be disclosed, until it has been established –

- (i) that his or her vote was given, and
- (ii) that the regulator has declared that the vote was invalid.

Part 9 – Death of a candidate during a contested election

fpp55. Countermand or abandonment of poll on death of candidate – (1) If, at a contested election, proof is given to the returning officer's satisfaction before the result of the election is declared that one of the persons named or to be named as a candidate has died, then the returning officer is to

- (a) countermand notice of the poll, or, if ballot papers have been issued, direct that the poll be abandoned, and
- (b) order a new election, on a date to be appointed by him or her in consultation with the corporation, within the period of 35 days, computed in accordance with rule 3 of these rules, beginning with the day that the poll was countermanded or abandoned.

(2) Where a new election is ordered under paragraph (1), no fresh nomination is necessary for any candidate who was validly nominated for the election where the poll was countermanded or abandoned.

(3) Where a poll is abandoned under paragraph (1)(a), paragraphs (4) to (9) are to apply.

(4) The returning officer shall not take any step or further step to open envelopes or deal with their contents in accordance with rules 34 and 35, and is to make up separate sealed packets in accordance with rule 36.

(5) The returning officer is to –

- (a) count and record the number of ballot papers that have been received, and
- (b) seal up the ballot papers into packets, along with the records of the number of ballot papers.

(6) The returning officer is to endorse on each packet a description of –

- (a) its contents,
- (b) the date of the publication of notice of the election,
- (c) the name of the corporation to which the election relates, and
- (d) the constituency, or class within a constituency, to which the election relates.

(7) Once the documents relating to the poll have been sealed up and endorsed pursuant to paragraphs (4) to (6), the returning officer is to deliver them to the chairman of the corporation, and rules 53 and 54 are to apply.

stv55. Countermand or abandonment of poll on death of candidate – (1) If, at a contested election, proof is given to the returning officer's satisfaction before the result of the election is declared that one of the persons named or to be named as a candidate has died, then the returning officer is to –

- (a) publish a notice stating that the candidate has died, and
- (b) if the death is proved after the close of the poll, proceed with the counting of the votes as if that candidate had been excluded from the count so that –
 - (i) ballot papers which only have a first preference recorded for the candidate that has died, and no preferences for any other candidates, are not to be counted, and
 - (ii) ballot papers which have preferences recorded for other candidates are to be counted according to the consecutive order of those preferences, passing over preferences marked for the candidate who has died.

(2) The ballot papers which have preferences recorded for the candidate who has died are to be sealed with the other counted ballot papers pursuant to rule 50(1)(a).

Part 10 – Election expenses and publicity

Election expenses

56. Election expenses – Any expenses incurred, or payments made, for the purposes of an election which contravene this Part are an electoral irregularity, which may only be questioned in an application to the regulator under Part 11 of these rules.

57 Expenses and payments by candidates - A candidate may not incur any expenses or make a payment (of whatever nature) for the purposes of an election, other than expenses or payments that relate to –

- (a) personal expenses,
- (b) travelling expenses, and expenses incurred while living away from home, and
- (c) expenses for stationery, postage, telephone, internet (or any similar means of communication) and other petty expenses, to a limit of [£100].

58. Election expenses incurred by other persons – (1) No person may -

- (a) incur any expenses or make a payment (of whatever nature) for the purposes of a candidate's election, whether on that candidate's behalf or otherwise, or
- (b) give a candidate or his or her family any money or property (whether as a gift, donation, loan, or otherwise) to meet or contribute to expenses incurred by or on behalf of the candidate for the purposes of an election.

(2) Nothing in this rule is to prevent the corporation from incurring such expenses, and making such payments, as it considers necessary pursuant to rules 59 and 60.

Publicity

59. Publicity about election by the corporation – (1) The corporation may –

- (a) compile and distribute such information about the candidates, and
- (b) organise and hold such meetings to enable the candidates to speak and respond to questions,

as it considers necessary.

(2) Any information provided by the corporation about the candidates, including information compiled by the corporation under rule 60, must be –

- (a) objective, balanced and fair,
- (b) equivalent in size and content for all candidates,
- (c) compiled and distributed in consultation with all of the candidates standing for election, and
- (d) must not seek to promote or procure the election of a specific candidate or candidates, at the expense of the electoral prospects of one or more other candidates.

(3) Where the corporation proposes to hold a meeting to enable the candidates to speak, the corporation must ensure that all of the candidates are invited to attend, and in organising and holding such a meeting, the corporation must not seek to promote or procure the election of a specific candidate or candidates at the expense of the electoral prospects of one or more other candidates.

60. Information about candidates for inclusion with voting documents - (1) The corporation must compile information about the candidates standing for election, to be distributed by the returning officer pursuant to rule 25 of these rules.

(2) The information must consist of –

- (a) a statement submitted by the candidate of no more than [250] words, [and]
- [(b) a photograph of the candidate.]

61. Meaning of “for the purposes of an election” - (1) In this Part, the phrase “for the purposes of an election” means with a view to, or otherwise in connection with, promoting or procuring a candidate's election, including the prejudicing of another candidate's electoral prospects; and the phrase “for the purposes of a candidate's election” is to be construed accordingly.

(2) The provision by any individual of his or her own services voluntarily, on his or her own time, and free of charge is not to be considered an expense for the purposes of this Part.

Part 11 – Questioning elections and the consequence of irregularities

62. Application to question an election – (1) An application alleging a breach of these rules, including an electoral irregularity under Part 10, may be made to the regulator.

(2) An application may only be made once the outcome of the election has been declared by the returning officer.

(3) An application may only be made to the regulator by -

- (a) a person who voted at the election or who claimed to have had the right to vote, or
- (b) a candidate, or a person claiming to have had a right to be elected at the election.

(4) The application must –

- (a) describe the alleged breach of the rules or electoral irregularity, and
- (b) be in such a form as the regulator may require.

(5) The application must be presented in writing within 21 days of the declaration of the result of the election.

(6) If the regulator requests further information from the applicant, then that person must provide it as soon as is reasonably practicable.

(7) The regulator shall delegate the determination of an application to a person or persons to be nominated for that purpose by the regulator.

(8) The determination by the person or persons nominated in accordance with Rule 62(7) shall be binding on and shall be given effect by the corporation, the applicant, the members of the constituency (or class within a constituency) and the candidate (if any) to which the application relates.

(9) The regulator may prescribe rules of procedure for the determination of an application, including costs.

Part 12 – Miscellaneous

63. Secrecy – (1) The following persons –

- (a) the returning officer,
- (b) the returning officer's staff,

must maintain and aid in maintaining the secrecy of the voting and the counting of the votes, and must not, except for some purpose authorised by law, communicate to any person any information as to –

- (i) the name of any member of the corporation who has or has not been given a ballot paper or voted,

- (ii) the unique identifier on any ballot paper,
- (iii) the candidate for whom any person has voted for on any particular ballot paper.

(2) No person may obtain or attempt to obtain information as to the candidate for whom a voter is about to vote or has voted, or communicate such information to any person at any time, including the unique identifier on a ballot paper given to a voter.

(3) The returning officer is to make such arrangements as he or she thinks fit to ensure that the individuals that are affected by this provision are aware of the duties it imposes.

64. Prohibition of disclosure of vote – No person who has voted at an election shall, in any legal or other proceeding to question the election, be required to state who he or she has voted for.

65. Disqualification – A person may not be appointed as a returning officer, or as staff of the returning officer pursuant to these rules, if that person is –

- (a) a member of the corporation,
- (b) an employee of the corporation,
- (c) a director of the corporation, or
- (d) employed by or on behalf of a person who has been nominated for election.

66. Delay in postal service through industrial action or unforeseen event – If industrial action, or some other unforeseen event, results in a delay in –

- (a) the delivery of the documents in rule 25, or
- (b) the return of the ballot papers and declarations of identity,

the returning officer may extend the time between the publication of the notice of the poll and the close of the poll, with the agreement of the regulator.