

THE NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

MEMBERS COUNCIL

ELECTION TIMETABLE

1. INTRODUCTION

Governors will recall that the election timetable was approved at the November 2007, to address a number of Governor posts which had fallen vacant through resignations or as a consequence of the expiry of one-year terms of office. This paper advises of progress with the elections.

2. NUMBER OF SEATS

The following seats are being contested:

*Expired One-year Terms*

Public – Constituency 1 (Newcastle upon Tyne)	1 post
Public – Constituency 2 (Northumberland, Tyne & Wear exc. Newcastle)	1 post
Public – Constituency 3 (Co Durham and Tees Valley and beyond)	1 post

*Vacancies through Resignations*

Public – Constituency 1 (Newcastle upon Tyne)	2 posts
Public – Constituency 2 (Northumberland, Tyne & Wear exc. Newcastle)	2 posts
Staff – Management, Admin & Clerical and Chaplaincy	1 post

For the avoidance of doubt, those elected in this round of elections will be appointed for a three-year term, as the one- and two-year posts when the Trust achieved Foundation status were to ensure there would be an annual turnover of one third of the Public Governorships.

3. ELECTION TIMETABLE

The timetable remains as previously advised:

DAY	NOTES	DATE
27	Notice of Poll published by ERS provided to Trust.	Tuesday 15th January
28	Voting packs despatched by ERS to members.	<b>Wednesday 16th January</b>
49	Closing date for election.	Thursday 7th February
50	ERS provide results/report to Trust.	Friday 8th February

It can be seen that the timetable allows 21 days for ballot papers to be returned.

#### 4. NOMINATIONS RECEIVED

Governors will recall that any properly registered Member of the Trust is able to nominate themselves for election in the appropriate constituency. By the closing date of 18<sup>th</sup> December 2007, the following valid nominations had been received:

Public – Constituency 1 (Newcastle upon Tyne)	53
Public – Constituency 2 (Northumberland, Tyne & Wear exc. Newcastle)	32
Public – Constituency 3 (Co Durham and Tees Valley and beyond)	7
Staff – Management, Admin & Clerical and Chaplaincy	1

It can be seen that there is very healthy competition for the Public seats. In the case of the Staff seat, the receipt of a single nomination effectively means that, subject to final validation, the nominee is returned unopposed.

Both Electoral Reform Services (ERS) and the Trust received complaints from three Members that their nominations arrived at ERS late and were rejected. In two of the three cases, the form had been posted just the day before the closing date and Royal Mail was definitely at fault in one instance of failing to deliver by the guaranteed time using Special Delivery. In the third instance, the Member claimed to have submitted the form six days prior to the closing date but was unable to produce any proof of postage. In the absence of such evidence, there was no choice but to reject the nomination.

Advice was sought from ERS as to whether the instance where there was proof that Royal Mail had failed to deliver by the guaranteed deadline could be admitted. However, breaching the rules with regard to the deadline, regardless of the cause, was frowned upon, not least because there was the potential to open up scope for further cases of pleading of “late delivery” to be considered. The complainants were all advised that there would be further opportunities later in the year, as elections will need to be held in anticipation of the expiry of the two-year terms of office, on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2008.

#### 5. RECOMMENDATION

To note the progress of the election timetable and to receive a report on the results at the next meeting.

**Steven Reed**  
**Trust Secretary**  
**10<sup>th</sup> January 2008**