Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Cover Sheet

Council of Governors Meeting: Wednesday 25 November 2026

CoG2026.21

Title:	**Performance, Workforce and Finance Committee Report**

Status:	**For Information**
History:	**Report from PWF to Council**

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Confidential:	**No**
Key Purpose:	**Assurance**

Performance, Workforce and Finance Committee Report

1. Purpose

1.1. This paper forms part of the Performance, Workforce and Finance Committee's regular reporting to Council of Governors, providing Council with a summarised report highlighting key Committee business and issues arising from its meetings.

2. Background

2.1. The remit of the Committee is to consider, for the Council of Governors, matters concerning the performance of the Trust against key standards and how the Trust's Board of Directors obtains assurance about this; matters concerning the planning and development of the Trust's workforce and how the Trust's Board of Directors obtains assurance about this; and matters concerning the Trust's financial position and planning and how its Board of Directors obtains assurance about this.

2.2. The Performance, Workforce and Finance Committee met on 9 October 2026 and considered a range of matters relating to the Trust's financial position, operational preparedness, litigation trends and the development of the Surgical Elective Centre (SEC).

3. Update on Financial Position

3.1. The Committee received an update from the Chief Finance Officer on the Trust's financial position. Members noted that the Trust remained behind plan following an adverse position in July, with a year-to-date deficit of £23 million after five months and an underlying recurrent deficit of approximately £9-9.5 million per month. Key pressures included the loss of non-recurrent funding, temporary staffing costs, increased sickness absence and delayed income associated with the opening of the Surgical Elective Centre.

3.2. Management actions were focused on reducing temporary staffing and non-pay expenditure while maintaining substantive recruitment. Members discussed the drivers of non-pay expenditure growth and the importance of addressing the Trust's underlying structural deficit. The Committee noted the update and requested a future report on discussions arising from the Board's planned strategy session regarding the Trust's structural financial position.

4. Winter Preparedness Plan 2026-27

4.1. The Committee reviewed the Trust's Winter Preparedness Plan, which had recently been approved by the Board. Members heard that the Trust was planning for sustained operational pressures over winter, focusing on improving patient flow, reducing delayed discharges and strengthening admission avoidance measures rather than introducing additional bed capacity. Discussion focused on discharge delays, medically optimised for discharge patients and the role of system partners in supporting operational resilience.

4.2. The Committee also considered the impact of extreme heat on hospital operations and welcomed the ongoing lessons-learned review. Members requested future updates on lessons learned from summer heat-related pressures and on readmission rates and patient pathways associated with Hospital at Home services.

5. Governor Briefing on Litigation Trends and Claims

5.1. The Committee received a briefing on litigation, claims and inquest activity. Members noted that 227 new clinical claims and potential claims had been recorded in 2024/25, with delays in diagnosis and treatment representing the most significant themes. Communication continued to be the most common learning theme identified through claims, while improvements in claims management and investigation processes had contributed to reductions in NHS Resolution reserves. The Committee also noted increases in inquest activity and discussed wider NHS trends, the impact of artificial intelligence on claims and subject access requests, and the management of litigation settlements.

5.2. Members welcomed the reduction in reserve values and the Trust's continued focus on organisational learning. The Committee requested that future reports include consideration of any seasonal trends in claims and incidents to support understanding of winter and summer operational pressures.

6. Briefing on Surgical Elective Centre (SEC)

6.1. The Committee received an update on the Surgical Elective Centre programme. Members noted that construction was substantially complete and that first patient activity was expected to commence in November 2026. The Centre would provide additional elective capacity and support wider service transformation through improvements in theatre productivity, scheduling and operational efficiency. Approximately 200 additional staff

had been recruited to support the initial phase of operation, with further recruitment planned ahead of the second phase in 2027.

6.2. The Committee welcomed the progress made and recognised the strategic importance of the development in improving elective capacity, patient experience and the Trust's long-term financial and operational sustainability. Members noted that further progress reports would be received as the programme entered its operational phase.

7. Conclusion

7.1. The Committee was assured regarding the matters presented and agreed a number of follow-up actions relating to the Trust's financial position, winter preparedness, Hospital at Home services and litigation reporting. The next meeting is scheduled for January 2027.

8. Recommendations

8.1. The Council is asked to note this report.