

**CANDIDATE GUIDANCE NOTES**  
**FOR THE COMPLETION AND RETURN OF YOUR NOMINATION FORM**

These notes have been written to assist with the completion of the nomination form. Please read them carefully before completing the form. If after reading the notes, you require any further information or guidance on completing the nomination form or drafting your election statement or would like to check that you have completed the form correctly before you formally submit your nomination, you are encouraged to contact the Returning Officer on telephone **01462 617125** or by email [returning.officer@aea-elections.co.uk](mailto:returning.officer@aea-elections.co.uk)

**DEADLINE FOR RETURN OF NOMINATION FORMS**

Your completed nomination form must be received by the **Returning Officer, Association of Electoral Administrators, PO Box 288, Letchworth Garden City, SG6 9EP** no later than noon on **WEDNESDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2010**. Any nomination forms received after this time and date will be ruled invalid. Please be aware that there is no discretion within the election rules to extend the time for delivery of nomination forms for delays as a result of postal disputes or for any other reason. For this reason you are encouraged to return your completed nomination form as soon as possible. If you are posting your form, you are encouraged to keep a photocopy.

You may return your nomination form either by post (address above), by fax **01462 617125**, or by e-mail to [returning.officer@aea-elections.co.uk](mailto:returning.officer@aea-elections.co.uk) If posting the form, please ensure that you send the signed **original**. Please also ensure that the correct postage is applied to the envelope containing your returned nomination form, as insufficient postage may result in the document being held at the Royal Mail offices, which in turn may prevent the nomination paper being received in time by the Returning Officer. If you are faxing the form, your signature and all other details must be both visible and clear. Photographs may not be faxed. You are encouraged to type or word process your election statement to avoid any doubt which may occur with handwritten statements. It would also be helpful if you are able to email your personal statement and photograph (see page 2 of the nomination form) to the Returning Officer at [returning.officer@aea-elections.co.uk](mailto:returning.officer@aea-elections.co.uk)

The safe return of your form is the responsibility of you: - **the candidate**. We strongly recommend you check that the Returning Officer has received your nomination form, whether you post or fax it, by contacting the Returning Officer on Tel **01462 617125**, or by email to [returning.officer@aea-elections.co.uk](mailto:returning.officer@aea-elections.co.uk)

**CANDIDATES' DETAILS**

- ◆ In order to stand for election a candidate must:-
  1. Be a member of Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust in the constituency for which they are standing.
  2. Be at least 18 years of age at the date they are nominated for election.
  3. Not be prevented from being a member of the Council of Governors by paragraph 8 of Schedule 7 of the National Health Service Act 2006 or by any provision of the constitution of the Trust, copies of which are available at [www.midstaffs.nhs.uk](http://www.midstaffs.nhs.uk)
- ◆ You must complete all parts of the nomination form, as applicable, including the declaration of interests.
- ◆ Please ensure a daytime telephone number is provided at which you may be contacted in the event that there are any queries about the detail on your nomination paper. An email address is not compulsory but a useful means of contacting you should it be necessary.

**Election Statement – Preparation Instructions**

- You are asked to provide an election statement, on either page 2 of the nomination form, a separate sheet of paper (typed statements are preferred), or emailed as a word attachment to [returning.officer@aea-elections.co.uk](mailto:returning.officer@aea-elections.co.uk) clearly identifying to whom it relates.

- Your statement should describe why you think you should be elected. It will be reproduced and circulated to voters with the ballot paper.
- Your statement may be up to 150 words in length. Please state the total number of words used at the end of your election statement.
- In the interests of fairness, your statement will be reproduced exactly as it has been submitted. This means any grammatical or spelling errors will not be corrected. Please check it carefully before you submit it.
- It would help the Returning Officer if you could ensure that any handwriting is legible. The Returning Officer will not seek clarification of any illegible words and will make a best considered judgement of the same for reproduction in any documents sent to voters.
- The Returning Officer will take care to reproduce your election statement exactly as you submit it, however, inaccurate reproduction of your election statement will not invalidate the election process nor require the Returning Officer to reprint and recirculate statements. For this reason, you are strongly recommended you send your election statement by email as a word document.
- All candidates' details will be printed using a common typeface and type size font. Election statements will be produced in sentence case so the Returning Officer will also make a best considered judgement as to how to reproduce election statements that are submitted written in upper case.
- Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust and the Association of Electoral Administrators reserve the right to not to publish any statement if it is factually inaccurate or contains libelous material or other material which may be considered inappropriate.

### **Detailed rules relating to statement preparation**

- a) Every word no matter how small e.g. "I", "or", "and", "the" etc will be counted as one word.
- b) Numbers in a block will be treated as one word e.g. "1989", "1/128", "1988/89" and "1988/1989."
- c) Any acronyms or groups of initials will be treated as one word. For example NHS would count as one word. If, however, full titles for acronyms or groups of words are used then they will count as separate words. For example National Health Service will count as three words.
- d) Compound words or hyphenated words will be treated as one word.
- e) Selected words or sentences can be emboldened, capitalised, underlined or placed in italics.
- f) The use of bullet points and numbering to make separate points is allowed and these will not be counted as words.
- g) Words or phrases can be centered or indented. Boxes around particular words or phrases will not, however, be reproduced.
- h) Your statement may be up to one hundred and fifty words (150 words) in length (subject to the definitions given in the points above). Any part of the statement exceeding that one hundred and fifty word limit shall not be reproduced, and the wording 'statement cut at word count' will be inserted at the end of the statement.

### **Declaration of Interests and Declaration of Eligibility – to be completed by the candidate**

- These sections must be completed for your nomination to be valid.

### **Additional Information**

- ◆ Candidates will be listed in alphabetical order of surname on the ballot paper. A candidate's first name will also be listed but not their title.
- ◆ No details relating to educational, professional or distinguished awards and achievements received by a candidate will be published as part of their name on any paperwork published by the Returning Officer i.e. BSc, OBE etc. Should a candidate choose to include this information in the body of their election statement then this will be acceptable.
- ◆ The following information will be published on each candidate in the election paperwork, which will be circulated with the ballot papers:-
  1. An election statement (compulsory)
  2. Declaration of interests (compulsory)
- ◆ Please ensure that you complete the form correctly and sign it, as failure to do so may invalidate your nomination.

## **GOVERNORS' CODE OF CONDUCT**

Your attention is drawn to the following extracts from the code of conduct by which all governors will be expected to abide.

### **The Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust is an apolitical organisation**

All members of The Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Council of Governors will:

- a) Abide by the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan), which are:

#### Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or friends.

#### Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in their performance of their official duties.

#### Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

#### Accountability

Holders of the public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

#### Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

#### Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

#### Leadership

Holders of the public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

These principles apply to all aspects of public life.

- b) Adhere to the Trust's rules and policies and support its objectives, in particular those of retaining Foundation status and developing a successful Trust.
- c) Act in the best interests of the Trust at all times.
- d) Contribute to the workings of the Council of Governors in order for it to fulfil its role and function.
- e) Recognise that their role is a collective one. Governors exercise collective decision making.
- f) Note that the functions allocated to Governors are not of a managerial nature.
- g) Respect the confidentiality of the information they are made privy to as a result of their being a Governor.
- h) Act with utmost integrity and objectivity and in the best interests of the Trust in performing their duties. They should not use their position for personal advantage or seek to gain preferential treatment.

- i) Have a responsibility to attend meetings of the Council of Governors. Governors are expected to attend for the duration of the meeting.
- j) Adhere to the highest standards of conduct in the performance of their duties. In respect of their interaction with others, they are required to:
  - Adhere to good practice in respect of the conduct of meetings and respect the views of other Governors.
  - Be mindful of conduct which could be deemed to be unfair or discriminatory.
  - Treat the Board of Directors and other employees with respect and in accordance with the Trust's policies.
  - Recognise that the Governors and Management have a common purpose i.e. the success of the Trust and adopt a team approach.
  - Governors should conduct themselves in such a manner as to reflect positively on the Trust. When attending external meetings or any other events at which they are present it is important for Governors to be ambassadors for the Trust
- k) Be accountable to the membership and should demonstrate this by attending Members meetings and other key events, which provide opportunities to interface with the membership.