# Press Release | 10 February 2022

**Acting Chairman appointed to lead next chapter of QEH’s improvement journey**

Graham Ward, an experienced business and commercial director with four decades of experience in the public and private sectors, has been appointed as the Acting Chairman at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust after a competitive recruitment exercise and approval by the Governors’ Council.

This follows the news that the Trust’s current Chairman, Professor Steve Barnett, is leaving the Trust at the end of March 2022 to take up the role of Chairman at North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust – his local hospital – after three-and-a-half years at QEH.

A Non-Executive Director at QEH since August 2019, Graham has been an important part of the Trust’s impressive journey of improvement over the last three years.

Graham is a Chartered Accountant who worked in the accountancy profession and industry before moving into management consultancy where he worked for 16 years with PwC and Deloitte as a senior director and then as Commercial Director at the University of Nottingham, a position he held for 9 years until October 2013.

He has extensive NHS Non-Executive Director experience starting in November 2004 at Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust followed by Nottingham City PCT/CCG from March 2007 until November 2015. Graham was then appointed in December 2015 as a Non-Executive Director at Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, where he is now Vice Chairman with the Trust improving to ‘Good’ overall by the CQC from Special Measures during his time there.

Commenting on Graham’s appointment as Acting Chairman, which will be for a period of up to 12 months, the Trust’s Lead Governor, Esme Corner OBE, said: “Graham brings to this role a wealth of experience and a track record of delivering improvements to patient and staff experience at Trusts in a number of systems. Recognising our requirement to sustain our progress and maintain momentum with our impressive improvement journey, I have confidence that this appointment will ensure there is continuity of the strong leadership that is needed as we turn our attention to the next stage of our exciting future.”

“I am grateful to the staff, Governors, patients and external stakeholders and partners who were an important part of the recruitment process. Thank you to Professor Steve Barnett for the significant contributions he has made to our improvement journey over the last three-and-a-half years. I wish him well in his new role at North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust.”

Graham said: “It is a privilege to be appointed Acting Chairman at QEH. This organisation is very much on the up and we now prepare to enter the next chapter of our improvement journey so we can move closer to achieving our vision of becoming the best rural District General Hospital for patient care and staff experience, building on the very strong foundations that are now in place thanks to the hard work of Team QEH over the last three years.”

Graham will commence in post as Acting Chairman on 1 April 2022 following a handover period.

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