

# Contact us

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To find out more about  
being a governor, visit:  
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**Oxleas**  
NHS Foundation Trust



# Have your say on proposed changes to our Constitution

[oxleas.nhs.uk](http://oxleas.nhs.uk)

# Have your say on proposed changes to our Constitution

Our Constitution sets out how we operate as an organisation and the role our members and governors play in this. Any changes our governors propose to make to the Constitution which relate to our Council of Governors are put to a member vote.

At our Council of Governors meeting in December 2017, governors agreed to ask members about their proposal to make some changes to the structure of the Council.

## Why are our governors proposing to change Oxleas' Constitution?

We reorganised some of our service directorates in April 2017 to make our adult services more borough-focussed. As a result of this, our Service User/Carer and Staff Member constituencies no longer match our new directorate structures. In addition, our current Service User/Carer Constituency structure means that the interests of people in Forensic and Prison Services are represented by our

Working Age Adult Mental Health interest group.

Our Council of Governors is one of the largest in England and Wales. We have 42 governors, other Council of Governors range from 16 to 54 governors. Having a large Council of Governors does have benefits such as enabling us to have a broader and more representative Council, however this is also very expensive to run. We have a number of vacant posts and holding elections for each vacancy costs a lot of money.

Therefore, the purpose of the proposed re-structure is to:

- Re-align our Service User/Carer Constituency interest groups and Staff Constituency classes to our new directorates so that they can more closely represent their members' needs.
- Ensure all Service User/Carer interest groups are adequately represented by the Council of Governors (this includes the introduction of an interest group for Forensic and Prison Services).
- Ensure we have a full complement of governors on the Council of Governors.

## What are the proposed Constitution changes?

Members from our Public Constituencies (Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich and Rest of England) can vote on the following proposed change.

**To reduce the number of public governors from 13 to 10**

**Current:** We have a total of 13 governors in our Public Constituency. In Bexley, Bromley and Greenwich we have 4 governors representing members in each borough and 1 governor representing our Rest of England members.

**Proposed change:** To reduce the number of governors in our Bexley, Bromley and Greenwich Public Constituencies from 4 to 3 in each borough. This means we will have 10 public governors in total instead of 13.

**Why change?** We have had a number of Public Constituency vacancies over the past few years which have become increasingly difficult to fill and holding elections for each vacancy is expensive. By reducing the number of governors from 4 to 3 in each of the above boroughs we hope that we can more easily maintain a full complement of public governors and reduce our election costs, saving money for the trust.

Members from our Service User/Carer Constituency can vote on the following proposed change.

**To change some of our Service User/Carer Constituency interest groups**

**Current:** We have a total of 13 governors in our Service User/Carer Constituency representing the following interest groups:

- Adult Community Health – 4 governors
  - Carers – 1 governor
  - Children’s – 1 governor
  - Learning Disability – 1 governor
  - Older People’s Mental Health – 2 governors
  - Working Age Adult Mental Health\* – 4 governors
- \*also representing the interests of Forensic and Prison Services.

**Proposed change:** To re-organise the 3 Service User/Carer Constituency interest groups representing our adult services into borough-focussed interest groups to reflect the services provided in each borough.

To introduce an additional Service User/Carer interest group representing Forensic and Prison Services and to introduce 1 new governor on our Council of Governors to represent our new

Forensic and Prison Services members.

To increase the number of Service User/Carer Constituency governors in the Children’s interest group from 1 to 2 governors.

This means our new Service User/Carer Constituency interest groups will be:

Bexley Adult – represented by 2 governors (new interest group)

Bromley Adult – represented by 2 governors (new interest group)

Greenwich Adult – represented by 2 governors (new interest group)

Children’s – represented by 2 governors (an increase of 1 governor)

Learning Disability – represented by 1 governor (no change)

Forensic and Prisons – presented by 1 governor (new interest group)

Carer – represented by 1 governor (no change)

Our Service User/Carer governors will reduce in total from 13 to 11 governors.

**Why change?** We reorganised some of our service directorates in April 2017 to make our adult services more borough-focussed. This means that in Bexley and Greenwich, our Adult Community Health, Working Age Adult Mental Health and Older People’s Mental Health Services now sit together in each borough as Bexley Care (which includes Oxleas’ adult services working in partnership with Bexley Council’s social care) and Greenwich Adult Services. In Bromley, Working Age Adult Mental Health and Older People’s Mental Health services sit together as Bromley Adult Services.

Re-organising the 3 Service User/Carer Constituency interest groups representing our adult services will enable more borough-focussed discussions and links with members and help the governors to build relationships with these new adult directorates.

The interests of Forensic and Prison Service members are currently represented by our Working Age Adult Mental Health interest group members and governors.

As we provide a wide range of forensic and prison services in Kent and South East London we want to ensure that the interests of service users and carers in these services are adequately represented and have a voice on our Council of Governors.

To increase the number of Service User/Carer Constituency governors in the Children's interest group

from 1 to 2 governors. The Children and Young People's Directorate is a large, trust-wide directorate providing a wide range of physical and mental health services across Bexley, Bromley and Greenwich.

Members from our Staff Constituency can vote on the following proposed change.

**To change some of our Staff Constituency classes to mirror our directorate structures**

**Current:** We have a total of 7 governors in our Staff Constituency representing the following classes:

Adult Community Health Services – 1 governor

Children's Services – 1 governor

Corporate and Partners – 1 governor

Forensic and Prison Health Services – 1 governor

Learning Disability Services – 1 governor

Older People's Mental Health – 1 governor

Working Age Adult Mental Health – 1 governor

**Proposed change:** To reorganise our 3 existing Staff Constituency classes representing our adult services and to align these to our new adult directorates in each borough.

This means our new Staff Constituency classes will be:

Bexley Adult – represented by 1 governor (new class)

Bromley Adult – represented by 1 governor (new class)

Greenwich Adult – represented by 1 governor (new class)

Children's – represented by 1 governor (no change)

Corporate and Partners – represented by 1 governor (no change)

Learning Disability – represented by 1 governor (no change)

Forensic and Prisons – represented by 1 governor (no change)

### **Why change?**

Following the reorganisation of our service directorates in April 2017, our existing Adult Community Health, Working Age Adult Mental Health and Older People's Mental Health staff classes are no longer relevant to our Council structure.

In Bexley and Greenwich, Adult Community Health, Working Age Adult Mental Health and Older People's Mental Health services now sit together in each borough as Bexley Care and Greenwich Adult Services. In Bromley, Working Age Adult Mental Health and Older People's Mental Health services sit together as Bromley Adult Services.

Re-organising the Staff Constituency classes as described above will enable more borough-focussed discussions and build links between staff governors and their members.

### **How will the proposed changes affect my membership?**

#### **Public members**

If you are a Public member living in Bexley, Bromley or Greenwich you will have fewer Public governors to represent you. This is the only change proposed.

#### **Service User/Carer members**

If you are a Service User/Carer member in the Adult Community Health, Older People's Mental Health or Working Age Adult Mental Health interest groups, we will move your membership to either the Bexley Adult, Bromley Adult or Greenwich Adult interest groups depending on the borough in which you live.

If you would prefer to belong to a different interest group you can do so, or you can move to a Public Constituency if you prefer, just let us know if you would like to change. Any Service User/Carer adult interest group members living outside the Bexley, Bromley or Greenwich area will need to decide whether they wish to belong to any of the new borough adult interest groups, or transfer their membership to the Public Rest of England Constituency if they are eligible to do so.

If you are a Service User/Carer member in the Children's, Carer or Learning Disability interest groups, there will be no change to your interest group.

#### **Staff members**

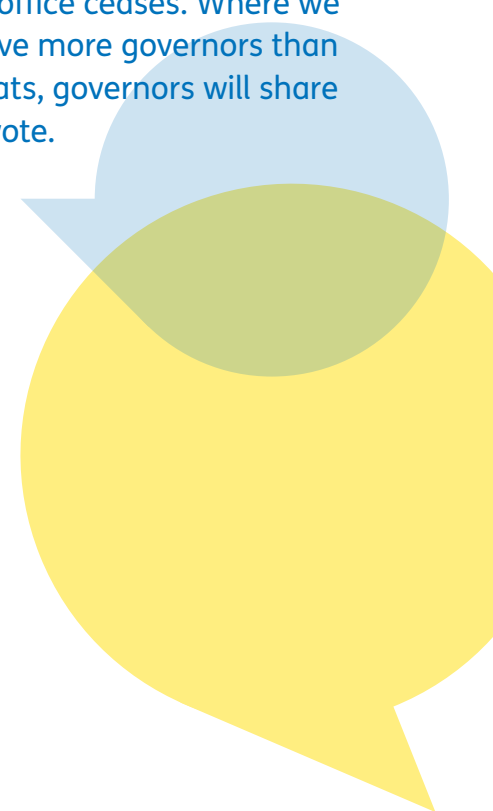
This means that if you were a staff member in the Adult Community Health, Older People's Mental Health or Working Age Adult Mental Health staff classes, we will move your membership to either the Bexley Adult, Bromley Adult or Greenwich Adult classes depending on the borough in which you work.

If you are a staff member in the Children, Corporate and Partners, Forensic and Prisons or Learning Disability classes, there will be no change to your staff class.

#### **What will happen to our current governors?**

No governor will lose their seat on the Council of Governors following implementation of the changes, however some Service User/Carer governors may move to slightly different interest groups within the Service User/Carer Constituency and some staff

governors may move to an alternative staff class. If we find we have more governors than seats in a particular interest group or staff class, the governors concerned will be allowed to continue in their preferred interest group or staff class until their term of office ceases. Where we have more governors than seats, governors will share a vote.





## How do I vote?

In order to vote in person, you will need to attend our Special Members' Meeting on Friday, 29 June 2018 (see enclosed invitation) which will also be a celebration of 70 years of the NHS. You will be given a ballot paper when you arrive. Voting will be open from 10.30–11.30am. To cast your vote or to ask any questions about the proposed changes and what they mean for you, please visit the Electoral Reform Services (ERS) stand.

If you are unable to come along on 29 June 2018, you can vote by post. To do so, please contact Oxleas' Membership team by no later than Monday, 11 June 2018 by emailing [oxl-tr.foundationtrust@nhs.net](mailto:oxl-tr.foundationtrust@nhs.net) or calling 0300 123 1541\* to request a ballot paper.

The Membership team will pass your name, address and constituency details to ERS who will post a ballot paper

to you. You should return your completed ballot paper to ERS by no later than 5pm on Wednesday, 27 June 2018.

## How will the voting work?

As a member, you belong to one of three constituencies – Public, Service User/Carer or Staff. This was chosen when you first joined the trust. Where the proposed change affects only one constituency, only members of that constituency can vote on that change. We will be able to tell you what constituency you belong to on the day. There will be three ballot forms, which will be colour coded.

Public members will be given a coloured paper to vote:

- To reduce the number of Public governors from 13 to 10.

Service User/Carer members will be given a coloured paper to vote:

- To change some of our Service User/Carer Constituency interest groups and reduce the Service User/Carer governors from 13 to 11.

Staff members will be given a coloured paper to vote:

- To change some of our Staff Constituency classes to mirror our directorate structures.

Voting is optional, although we do urge you to make your vote count.

## Is the ballot independent?

Yes, the ballot is being run independently by Electoral Reform Services on behalf of Oxleas and the results returned by an ERS representative. The results will be formally announced at our Annual Members' Meeting in September 2018.

## What happens next?

If members vote the changes through at the Special Members' Meeting in June 2018, we will immediately re-align our existing governors and go to election to fill any vacancies on the new Council of Governors structure resulting from this member vote.

If you have any questions about these proposed changes, you can email us at [oxl-tr.foundationtrust@nhs.net](mailto:oxl-tr.foundationtrust@nhs.net) or call us on 0300 123 1541\*.

\*calls to this number are the same as making a local call from a landline and are usually included within your inclusive minutes if calling from a mobile.