

**Minutes of a meeting of the Charitable Trust Funds Committee held on
Monday, 26th January 2026 at 09.30 a.m.**

PRESENT

Mrs M. Corkey, Non-Executive Director/Committee Chair

Mr R. Lynas, Non-Executive Director

Mrs G. Browne, Non-Executive Director

IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs V. Toal, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development

Mrs C. Marks, Executive Director of Finance, Procurement and Estates

Mrs A. Rutherford, Assistant Director of Financial Services

Ms L. Esler, Charitable Trust Funds Manager

Mr D. McClements, Director of Surgery and clinical services (left meeting at 10:30)

Mrs T. Reid, Director of Medicine and Unscheduled Care (left meeting at 10:30)

Mr B. Creighton Committee Admin (Minutes)

APOLOGIES

Mrs F. Jones, Corporate Financial Accountant

Communications Team Representative

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME

Mrs Corkey welcomed everyone to the meeting stating that microphones need to be used for recording and transcription purposes.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Mrs Corkey asked members to declare any potential conflicts of interests in relation to items on the agenda. None were received and the business of the meeting proceeded.

3. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

No Chairs business was noted

4. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 20th January 2026

The minutes of the meeting on 26th January 2026 Approved with only one change that was suggested by Mrs V. Toal.

Action. Mr B Creighton to amend minutes

5. MATTERS ARISING

Matters arising were noted as completed with one item regarding website traffic information still noted as outstanding due to communications team staffing changes. This item was agreed to be deferred until next meeting.

Southern Trust Logo Update: The committee confirmed that the new Southern Trust logo has been added to all videos and promotional articles, and website updates have been completed.

Website Traffic Report Status: The report on website traffic is pending due to the absence of the comms team, with Paula, the comms manager, expected to provide a full report at the next meeting.

Missed Appointment Donation Promotion Decision: the chair discussed the potential negative implications of promoting a £50 donation for missed appointments, such as creating pressure on those unable to pay or sending the wrong message, and the committee agreed not to promote this initiative.

Alternative Strategies for Missed Appointments: The committee considered strategies used by other Trusts, such as highlighting the cost of missed appointments in communications, and agreed to pursue similar awareness efforts without referencing donations.

Actions :

Communications Team to provide the full report on website traffic for the next meeting. (Comms team)

Draft and send out communication highlighting the cost of missed appointments (without mentioning donations to the CTF) for review and distribution. (Mrs L. Esler/ Communications Team)

6. Communications Update

In the absence of a communications team representative Mrs Esler gave a verbal update on this item. The committee discussed ongoing challenges with communications team staffing, the recent departure of key staff, and progress on a new external video to promote charitable trust funds, incorporating feedback on content and terminology. The committee noted the turnover of two communications appointments in the past year, discussed the recent interviews for a new appointment, and acknowledged efforts to maintain progress in the interim. The committee reviewed the script and content of a new video introducing Charitable Trust Funds, intended for external audiences on digital screens and social media, and agreed it was ready for launch pending minor edits. Mrs V. Toal and others suggested edits to the video, including updating references to maternity services, using 'patients and service users' instead of just 'patients,' and ensuring the Charitable Trust Funds logo appears at the start. The committee planned to align the video launch with an internal 'Chat with the Chief' session, targeting the end of the first week or second Tuesday in February, with edits to be completed beforehand.

Action

Make the suggested changes to the CTF video script (including updates on maternity services, language around patients/service users, and inclusion of the CTF logo) and proceed with the launch aligned with "Chat with the Chief.". (Mrs L. Esler)

Investigate and report on the social media reach of other trusts for comparison with current data. (Communications team)

7. Finance Report for the period ended 30th November 2025

Mrs L. Esler spoke to this item noting a drop in legacy income, a rise in corporate donations, ongoing rationalisation of legacy funds, and the need to realign spending towards patient-focused initiatives. The committee noted a significant decrease in legacy income but a notable increase in corporate donations, with overall donations (excluding grants) rising compared to the previous year.

Several expenditure requests were declined due to ineligibility, and the committee is actively reducing the number of legacy funds, moving from 200 to 181, with further reductions pending. Major projects such as the dementia

garden and outpatient refurbishment have been delayed due to weather conditions, with hopes to commence in early spring; some projects are still at the business case stage. The committee noted that spending on staff remains higher than on patient areas and agreed to focus future planning on increasing patient-focused expenditure. The committee discussed the need for directors to be more proactive in submitting eligible applications and considered limiting the budget for staff training to encourage more patient-focused spending.

Actions

Meet with directors to discuss and promote plans for increasing expenditure on patient-focused areas and reducing staff-focused spend, and ensure directors are aware of committee expectations. (Mrs L. Esler)

Propose and implement a limit on the percentage of the budget that can be spent on staff training in the next year's expenditure plans. (Mrs L. Esler)

8. Update on preparations for CCNI registration

Mrs L. Esler detailed the completion of stage one in terms of preparation for the Trust achieving CCNI status noting the challenges with legacy fund documentation, and next steps involving governance documents and trustee procedures. Stage one of the CCNI registration project, which involved extensive paperwork and mapping legacy funds to directorates, facing challenges due to limited historical documentation. Unlike other trusts, the trust had previously restructured legacy funds, requiring a deeper historical review to substantiate the original purposes of funds. Mrs Esler is preparing a public benefit statement and updated governance documents for approval, aiming for readiness by March, with deadlines dependent on external bodies. Mrs Esler clarified that trust board members will be registered as trustees and indemnified, and plans to develop clear procedures and policies, learning from other trusts' experiences.

Actions

Prepare and bring forward the public benefit statement and new governance document for committee approval in March, in line with CCNI registration requirements. (Mrs Esler)

9. NICIFC Investment Report

Mrs Esler presented the NICIFC investment report, highlighting a recovery in share prices, a strategic drawdown of £1.5 million to fund staff support and

the Banvale project, and the current value and management of the investment portfolio. The committee noted an increase in share prices and successfully drew down £1.5 million at a favourable rate to fund upcoming projects, with the funds now in an interest-bearing account. The remaining investment portfolio is valued at £4.2 million, still above cost price, and investment management fees have decreased compared to the previous year.

10. Annual Financial Administration Charge to CTFs

Mrs Esler explained the increase in the annual administration charge due to CCNI registration costs and staffing changes, and the committee unanimously approved the updated charge. The administration charge increased from £91,000 to £106,000, primarily due to the end of external funding for CCNI registration and the redistribution of staff costs. The committee unanimously approved the new administration charge after clarifying the breakdown and pending final confirmation from Belfast.

11. Update on CTFs Finance Work Plan

Mrs Esler updated the committee on Charitable Trust Fund activities, including the completion of positive story sharing, ongoing efforts to encourage legacy fund expenditure, and the development of training for fund managers and trustees. The committee has shared four out of six planned positive stories from Charitable Trust Funds, with the remaining two scheduled before year end. Training for the comms team and trustees is being developed, with broader rollout delayed until policy changes are finalized. The committee continues to provide guidance to fund managers on application processes and fund administration.

12. Revised Charitable Trust Funds Policy

Mrs Esler stated this item is an update on progress on updating the Charitable Trust Fund governing documents of policy and procedures. Work is underway on updating the SHSCT CTF documentation, informed by Belfast Health and Social Care Trust governing documentation following CCNI registration, by CCNI guidance, Trustee training received and fund structure changes. We wish this documentation to be fit for purpose for CCNI registration, allowing CTF Committee to understand and agree the changes required well in advance. Whilst the work has advanced, it is not sufficiently complete to present to CTF Committee in January 2026.

Our proposal is to complete this for end of February to allow circulation well in advance of CTF Committee on 30th March 2026.

13. Update On Staff Support Fund

Mrs V. Toal provided an update on the Bannvale site health and well-being hub project, detailing delays due to value engineering, revised tender timelines, and enabling works scheduled for early 2026. The main works tender for the Banville site is expected to be issued in mid-February, with contractor appointment anticipated in late March and site commencement in April 2026, subject to a successful tender process. Enabling works, including car parking and electrical services, are scheduled for February and March, with the project facing constraints due to planning requirements and site limitations.

14. Committee Self-Assessment

The chair and committee members discussed the results of the committee self-assessment survey, agreed to further analyse, feedback and clarify procedures, and reviewed the terms of reference, considering adjustments to director attendance and representation.

Action

Follow up meeting regarding Committee Self Assessment with Mrs M Corkey, Mrs L. Esler, Mr S. Wallace and Mr B. Creighton

15. Corporate Risk Register

This paper was for information only there where no risks involved in the Charitable funds.

16. Committee Terms of Reference

Mrs Corkey stated that the committee has went through the terms of reference and is content but feels there is a committee workshop needed between now and the next meeting to discuss whether the attendance requirements of directors need changed to be more balanced and for accountability.

Terms of reference approved however noted these may be subject to minor changes pending feedback during the course of the committees work in 2026

17. Items for Trust Board Escalation

There were no items to escalate to trust board

18. Any Other Business

No other business noted.

Mrs M. Corkey recorded thanks to everyone for their contribution to today's meeting confirmed the date for the next meeting.

The meeting concluded at 10:50 a.m.