

## **Board Development**

### **What our client wanted**

Dorset HealthCare had been subject to Monitor special measures, and had substantially changed its board membership. It required an assessment of development needs and then design and delivery of a board development programme to underpin its effective operation as a Foundation Trust.

### **What Frontline did**

We initially carried out a board leadership assessment to identify development needs. This included one-to-one strategic conversations with all board members, observation of board, committee and executive team meetings, summary report, and facilitated board workshop to share ownership of findings and gain insight to development needs. Our one-to-one conversations were shaped around getting board member views on three core questions: What are the issues that the board faces? How does the board go about discussing and making decision on these issues? What is your role in this decision making process and on the board?

We then designed a bespoke board development programme that had the following features:

- Using real-time board issues to tease out board learning
- Maximising the allocated time set aside for board meetings and workshops
- Theming board development around a series of inter-related topics
- Integrating development into other initiatives such as OD, strategy, risk assurance
- Using observation and feedback to underpin learning
- Facilitated development for teams of executives, non-executives and committee chairs
- Mentoring and coaching for board members on a call-off basis

The programme also draws on the recommendations of Monitor and governance best practice.

### **What difference we made**

This programme is on-going. It has been tailored to the needs of new board members, and has been shown to be adaptable to the needs of the trust as it improves its services to patients and communities.