Leadership at LUHFT
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The natural instinct in a time of severe financial constraint, a merger of hospitals and a pandemic crisis would be to rely on what has worked in the past and make everything as comfortable as possible. However, in such a context leadership matters more than ever, so Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (the Trust) formed a partnership with Liverpool Business School (LBS) department of Leadership and Organisational Development to actively develop leaders for the new future, whilst making a measurable difference in the workplace. Amid unprecedented turmoil our aim was to deal with live issues which, if not addressed, would prevent us moving forwards effectively for our community.

The structure of the Trust had changed, and not all leaders had the necessary skills to be able to work in the volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) environment. Expectations on NHS leaders were higher than ever before, and moving at a quicker speed, with fewer staff, less money, increased targets and higher demand.

At the same time nationally the NHS People Plan highlighted the importance of visible senior clinical leadership in enabling and assuring the delivery of high-quality patient care. We recognised in the Trust that clinicians, due to their non-managerial background and strong technical expertise, were often reluctant or ill-prepared to take up leadership positions.

The joint integrated model developed with LBS is the result of the partnership formed in times of constraint and flourishing in times of crisis, with a mission to develop outcomes for the future.

- A significant intervention was needed with scale across the merged Trusts, designed collaboratively to ensure critical needs of the Trust and city region were met.
- Balancing tools and techniques to enable immediate action, and evidenced based research to challenge and stretch, encourage different thinking.
- Founded on connectedness and the development of social networks to underpin culture change
- Impact evaluation built in to deliver meaningful outcomes to strategic challenges
This is all enabled by a shared leadership approach to lead change, instil confidence act compassionately, and create the conditions for quality and innovation to thrive.

A flexible and technology-enabled approach were vital given the challenges of the key staff involved and subsequent lockdowns and social distancing. The focus was on facilitation, enquiry, interaction and effective evidence-based theories and models.

The success of the live projects which emerged is attributable to learning and confidence development on the programme, staff commitment, senior level support, strength and resilience.

These are just a flavour of the projects our leaders achieved. See Appendix 1 for more details.