

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHARITY  
 COMMITTEE HELD ON 2 APRIL 2025 AT CARDIFF MRD AND REMOTELY VIA  
 MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**MEMBERS:**

Peter Curran	Non-Executive Director (Committee Chair)
Ceri Jackson	Non-Executive Director (virtual)

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Rhiannon Beaumont-Wood	Non-Executive Director (virtual)
Julie Boalch	Assistant Director of Corporate Governance & Risk
Lee Brooks	Executive Director of Operations(virtual)
Estelle Hitchon	Director of Partnerships and Engagement
David Hopkins	Head of Charity
Caroline Jones	Corporate Governance Officer
Jo Kelso	Head of Workforce Education and Development (virtual)
Trish Mills	Director of Corporate Governance/Board Secretary(virtual)
Hugh Parry	Trade Union Partner (virtual)
Alex Payne	Corporate Governance Manager
Liz Rogers	Deputy Director of People and Culture Directorate (virtual) [joined during 06/25]
Andy Swinburn	Executive Director of Paramedicine (virtual)
Chris Turley	Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
Damon Turner	Trade Union Partner (virtual) [joined during 04/25]
Marcus Viggers	Trade Union Partner (virtual) [joined during 06/25]

**APOLOGIES:**

Jess Price	Head of Financial Accounting
Hannah Rowan	Non-Executive Director

## **01/25 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

Peter Curran welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies from Hannah Rowan and Jessica Price. Peter Curran welcomed Rhiannon Beaumont-Wood a new Non-Executive Director on the Trust Board who was attending as part of her induction. He also noted this was his first meeting of the Charity Committee as Chair.

## **02/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Estelle Hitchon declared her role as an independent member of Coleg Sirgâr, affiliated with the University of Wales Trinity St David. There were no other additional declarations to those already recorded on the Trust Register of Interests.

**RESOLVED: That no new declarations were received.**

## **03/25 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND HIGHLIGHT REPORT**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2025 were approved as a correct record subject to the removal of the words "pressure washers" in 71/24 (para 3) and the substitution of the word "may" in place of "will" in 72/24 (para 2).

### HIGHLIGHT REPORT

Peter Curran expressed his thanks to Ceri Jackson on her role as previous Committee Chair and noted that there had been insufficient time at the previous meeting for members to extend their thanks for the significant progress to date in this area under her guidance.

**RESOLVED: That**

- 1) the minutes of the meeting held on the 14 January 2025 were approved as a correct record subject to two minor amendments to 71/24 and 72/24 as set out above; and**
- 2) members expressed their thanks to Ceri Jackson as her role of Committee Chair.**

## **04/25 ACTION LOG AND FEEDBACK FROM CORPORATE TRUSTEE MEETING FROM CHAIR (JANUARY 2025)**

Action 65/24a was discussed in relation to the need for indemnity for the charity against claims, particularly associated with injuries sustained during charity supported sports activities. The action remained open.

Action 65/24b relating to guidance for those undertaking charitable fundraising activities was discussed and it was concluded that activities to fundraise for the charity would be undertaken on a voluntary basis and did not require indemnity, which would be made clear within the guidance once Legal and Risk colleagues had been sighted.

Hugh Parry raised a question about the kayaks which had been funded previously but were unable to be used. David Hopkins explained that the kayaks were deemed safety-critical equipment and that a decision had been made to dispose of them due to maintenance concerns. Discussions were ongoing regarding potentially donating them to a whitewater rafting centre, in exchange for free sessions for staff.

Rhiannon Beaumont-Wood mentioned potential indemnity issues relating to overseas work such as the Wales for Africa initiative. Estelle Hitchon confirmed there was not an active offer currently and therefore such indemnity issues were not relevant for the Trust.

#### FEEDBACK FROM CORPORATE TRUSTEE MEETING FROM CHAIR

The approval of the charity accounts for 2023/24 was the main item of business and these were filed by the deadline of 31 January 2025. The Trustee thanked Chris Turley and his team for their work.

#### **RESOLVED: That**

- 1) the action log was reviewed and updated as set out above; and**
- 2) the approval of the accounts by the Corporate Trustee was noted.**

#### **05/25 CHARITY STRATEGY UPDATE**

Estelle Hitchon introduced the item highlighting the strategic conversations initiated since David Hopkins took up post. The strategy aimed to set clear objectives for the charity's future. Members received an update on progress against the Charity's workplan since the January meeting.

David Hopkins referred to the theory of change which was presented at the January meeting in more detail, the need to simplify this and to get the strategic direction right. The focus was on the wording of the strategic objectives, with potential projects beneath and the links to the Trust's wider strategic ambition above.

Trish Mills emphasised that maintaining and expanding the charity's position required significant structures and governance, which was the rationale behind the strategic enablers. Investing in this structure would yield important outputs including the establishment of a robust monitoring and evaluation process. This

process would ensure the impacts of the work would be monitored effectively and demonstrated in both internal and external communications. It was also noted that the current Theory of Change was not the sole communication strategy for staff and patients. There would be additional, more targeted and granular communications. For instance, the Chief Executive Officer Roadshows the following week would focus on listening to local teams to understand how the charity can support them, and how these teams could contribute to the charity through fundraising and ambassadorial roles. While the strategic document is crucial, it will be supplemented by other specific communications tailored to different audiences.

Ceri Jackson raised concerns about the use of the word "happier" in Objective one, questioning its subjectivity and appropriateness; whilst acknowledging there may be valid reasons for its inclusion. She viewed objective two positively with a focus on supporting at risk communities and promoting diversity, which aligned well with potential funding opportunities. Regarding Objective three, there was a suggestion to consider more basic patient care in addition to enhanced patient care, emphasising the balance between statutory funding and additionality. The term "innovation" was highlighted as relevant to enhanced patient care. These reflections were shared to invite further thoughts and feedback, with an overall appreciation for the work done so far. Both Damon Turner and Rhiannon Beaumont- Wood supported the use of the word "happier" linking it to broader strategies. Estelle Hitchon and David Hopkins agreed to review the wording and the inclusion of innovation.

The strategic objectives, and enablers and the theory of change were endorsed by the committee, subject to minor amendments to wording of the strategic objectives – as discussed. It was noted that the strategy would be presented to the Corporate Trustee for approval at its May 2025 meeting. The committee noted that this had been shared with Trade Union Partners at the Welsh Ambulance Services Partnership Team (WASPT) meeting in March.

The importance of the strategic enablers was emphasised to continue to strengthen governance, as was the monitoring of the objectives overall. These would be developed as the strategy comes through to the committee and the Corporate Trustee.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) The update on the charity's workplan was noted;**
- 2) That the Committee endorsed the three strategic objectives for the charity supported by five strategic enablers; and**
- 3) The theory of change was endorsed by the committee with some minor amendments to the wording of the objectives.**

## 06/25 CHARITY PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Charity Performance Report was received showing performance against the NHS Charity Together (NHSCT) grants as of the 28 February 2025. Since the report was written the Development Grant was now closed. This grant allowed the Trust to commission the initial report, the visual branding and some of the merchandise and assets. A broader launch of the brand was anticipated from 1 May.

The Stage 3 Recovery Grant, and Ambulance Grant were being administered according to their conditions with feedback from the next meeting with NHSCT being fed back to committee at its next meeting in July. Whilst there were some elements shown as amber; members were assured that there were mitigating plans to address these, and risks were considered.

Peter Curran enquired if the grants were subject to an audit of any kind. Chris Turley confirmed that, from a financial accounting perspective, Audit Wales had reviewed those grants that have spanned multiple years as part of their Independent Examination of the 2023/24 accounts. Discussions with NHSCT focusses on what can be done to assist the Trust to maximise the benefits.

Updates were received regarding future grant opportunities available from NHS Charities Together and synergies with our clinical model. These funds include the Community Resilience Fund, the Innovation Challenge, Work Wellbeing, and Greener Communities fund.

The Community Resilience Fund of £140k had been pre allocated to the charity but still required an application by the end of August. The application would be reviewed in the context of changes to Save a Life Cymru. Andy Swinburn supported the idea of targeting under-resourced communities and mentioned the high prevalence of public access defibrillators in Wales. He suggested using the funds to deploy defibrillators more strategically in areas with higher cardiac arrest rates, aligning with the charity's objectives.

Ceri Jackson highlighted the significant progress made with the ambulance grant, specifically mentioning the recruitment of 235 community welfare responders and the training of 124 of them. She emphasised the far-reaching impact of this progress and its alignment with the charity's strategic priorities. She also mentioned the Mind Over Mountains project, acknowledging the challenges in meeting some of the targets. She suggested that moving forward, targets should be set with a more realistic lens, as funders appreciate exceeding targets. David Hopkins agreed with Ceri Jackson's points, particularly about the Mind Over Mountains target. He acknowledged that the initial target was set based on the number of walks times the maximum capacity of those walks, which made it challenging to meet the target if even one person didn't turn up. He noted that this was a valuable lesson for future grant writing.

Lee Brooks emphasised the importance of ensuring synergy between groups and avoiding internal competition within the Trust. He highlighted the need to bring all parties together to maximise opportunities and avoid pitching one group against another. David Hopkins acknowledged Lee Brooks' point and mentioned that the charity's objectives were designed to support the trust and emphasise collaboration. He noted that the charity could not achieve its goals alone and aimed to financially support the Trust's work.

Ceri Jackson suggested that the next application should be signed off by the Executive Team to ensure alignment and synergy. She stressed the importance of having complete alignment and proper governance in the bid processes, recommending that the Executive team sign off on applications before they come to the Charity Committee. Trish Mills noted the previous discussions regarding approval of grant applications, and that she would take an action to confirm what was previously agreed. She recalled that grant applications were intended to be signed off by the Executive Leadership Team rather than being brought to the Charity Committee. Trish advised that she would verify the position previously discussed and confirm it with the committee.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the Committee noted the progress of the Charity's active grants and noted the key risks and mitigations in place; and**
- 2) The Committee noted that the Charity intends to apply for the NHSCT Community Resilience Fund in 2025.**

## **07/25 CHARITY FUNDS FINANCE REPORT**

Chris Turley highlighted two main points from the report which included:

- 1) The balance of funds held as of 28 February 2025 which was £783,964 and comprised of £214,394 unrestricted funds; £179,429 in designated funds; and £390,141 in restricted funds.
- 2) Between 01 April 2024 to 28 February 2025, the unit price of the charity's investments had increased by 2.61%, resulting in an overall gain of .c£7.3k. despite a slight dip in February. The charity current holds 1,090.14 units at a unit price of £263.7826, giving a total market value of £287.5k. The overall trend with the investments remains positive.

It was noted that the current financial position of the charity is as expected, with figures aligning with historical trends and activities. While the charity had considered seeking higher returns with greater risk in the past, a risk-averse approach was considered to be preferable, especially with donated money; and any changes to the investment strategy would require careful consideration. The

committee discussed the charity's position regarding reserves and indicated that it could be helpful to return to both the reserves policy and discussions regarding investment approaches in the coming months. The committee received the charity finance update and noted the detail provided.

**RESOLVED: That**

- 1) the detail of the fund balances held at 28 February 2025 were noted; and;**
- 2) the update on the COIF Charity Investment Fund was noted.**

## **08/25 DRAFT 2025/26 FUNDRAISING TARGETS AND EXPENDITURE BUDGETS**

The discussion began with an acknowledgment from Estelle Hitchon that the current initiative was unprecedented, requiring a systematic approach to identify potential opportunities. The presented paper served as an initial framework, with the understanding that the figures provided were preliminary estimates. The volatility of both the market and the fundraising environment was highlighted, noting the challenges of diversifying income streams from a low starting point. While the ambition was high, there may be a need to temper expectations.

David Hopkins began by focusing on Appendix 1, which detailed the rationale behind the current stage of planning. He stressed that documenting the charity's ambitions and expected outcomes from staff investment was crucial. The volatility in income, particularly from legacies and NHS charities together, was highlighted. The summary of income projections showed actual figures based on audited accounts, revealing significant volatility. Most donations received since early 2020 came from NHS Charities Together, which were now nearly spent. Their grant-giving strategy was shifting to fewer, smaller, and more competitive grants. The financial model must adapt, as significant six-figure sums from NHS Charities Together were unlikely in the near future, except for the pre-allocated amount for ambulance charities through the Omaze Award and Community Resilience grant in 2025-26. This pre-allocated figure of £142,000 was considered more certain than other grants, provided an acceptable application is submitted.

For the financial year 2025-26, the breakdown included both income and estimated expenditure. Notably, several grants, particularly from NHS Charities Together, and restricted legacies have already been recognised as income. The planned spending of these funds will result in a planned in-year deficit. Many income estimates on the charitable activity were provisional, with efforts to spend these funds in a controlled manner based on bids. Some legacies, such as those from Barmouth and Colwyn Bay, were expected to carry forward into 2026-27 to ensure the restricted terms were satisfied.

David Hopkins also touched on the unpredictability of legacies in the charity sector, despite recent large six-figure legacies. It was noted that even with immediate fundraising efforts, significant results from legacies might not be seen

for at least ten years. Consequently, conservative estimates were made, with any large legacy considered an unexpected benefit. Legacies tended to be restricted, often designated for specific purposes. The plan focused on growing trust and foundations, voluntary donations, and community fundraising to mitigate the volatility of legacy income and changes in NHS Charities Together. This approach aimed to ensure a steady upward trajectory in overall income, despite potential dips in specific years.

A new annual budget of £15,000 for the Bursary Panel was proposed to address previous uncertainties in grant awarding. Additionally, a request was made for the charity committee to delegate a budget of £13,500 for core fundraising costs directly to David Hopkins, which is an adjustment to the current process which requires applying to the Bids Panel. This delegation request is intended to facilitate necessary fundraising expenditures and ensure transparency, such as the annual membership fee for NHS Charities Together, which was essential for benefiting from grants like the Community Resilience grant.

Chris Turley noted that financial planning for the charity differed significantly from that of the Trust, particularly in terms of committed spend and the ability to carry balances forward. The charity's financial planning does not adhere to the same annual cycles as the Trust, allowing for more flexibility.

Chris Turley noted that following discussions, the original steep income projections were moderated to balance ambition with realism. There was a consensus on the need to avoid over-promising and under-delivering in the first year. The revised plan represented a fair compromise, incorporating ambition while tempering expectations due to factors such as the timing of new staff recruitment.

Peter Curran raised the idea of having multiple scenarios for income projections, such as best case, worst case, and most realistic estimates, to better account for volatility. It was noted that while the current projection line was positive and showed growth, it might be beneficial to include scenarios above and below this line to represent different outcomes. The importance of having a clear, agreed-upon figure was emphasised, along with the positive return on investment. The charity's need to cover increasing salary costs for David Hopkins and other posts was highlighted, stressing the importance of ensuring sufficient income to meet these expenses. The ambition in the income projection was appreciated, and the suggestion to consider multiple scenarios was noted as a valuable thought.

The 2025/26 fundraising targets and expenditure plans were discussed and endorsed and would be presented at the May meeting for Corporate Trustee approval. The overall trajectory showed a gradual increase in income, despite a dip expected in 2026-2027 due to changes in NHS Charities Together's grant-

giving strategy.

This was the first fundraising and expenditure plan for the charity, and it was welcomed. Members emphasised the importance of monitoring and evaluating the charity's performance against these targets, with regular updates to ensure alignment with the strategic direction. Chris Turley stated that future iterations of the finance update would incorporate necessary information for the committee, with references to the annual plan. Although monthly profiling, as done with Trust budgets, was not suggested, there would be consideration of how to present this information effectively.

Ceri Jackson's asked whether the agreed timeline and funding to support the charity were discussed at the ELT meeting, and if there was any flexibility in sustaining the funding for a little bit longer if the deadline was missed. Estelle Hitchon acknowledged that the Head of Charity was six months into a two-year term, with ongoing conversations about longer-term scenarios. David Hopkins' significant contribution in the first six months was highlighted, noting that the charity's current position would not be as strong without him. The importance of evaluating the cost-benefit of his role in the longer term was noted, although final decisions were yet to be made.

Future reviews would assess how closely the plan is being delivered and the actual return on investment. The current figures reflect the existing arrangement, including central services, potential increment points, and a nominal figure for inflation. The need for ongoing evaluation and adjustment was recognised, ensuring the charity's financial planning remained responsive to changing circumstances.

**RESOLVED: That**

- 1) The charity endorsed the expenditure plans for 2025/26 for Corporate Trustee approval in May;**
- 2) The Corporate Trustee be asked to note the plans for years two and three;**
- 3) An annual amount of £15k was agreed for Bursary Panel applications; and;**
- 4) A delegated budget of £13,580 towards core fundraising costs was approved and formally delegated to David Hopkins as the Head of Charity.**

**09/25 CHARITY RISK REGISTER**

Julie Boalch gave a verbal update on the development of the charity's risk register. The risk register was being developed to closely align with the charity's strategic objectives and enablers, ensuring that potential risks were identified and managed effectively to support the achievement of these goals.

Several key risks were highlighted, including the resourcing and capacity to manage the charity, compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks, and the ability to meet fundraising targets. Other risks identified include the governance and management of funds, grants administration, and financial controls on expenditure.

The discussion emphasised the importance of having a robust risk register to guide the charity's operations and ensure that potential challenges were proactively managed. A detailed update, including a copy of the risk register, would be presented at the next meeting to provide further insights into the identified risks and the measures being taken to address them.

Julie Boalch stated that she is working closely with David Hopkins on the development of the charity risks. Overall, the development of the risk register was a critical step in professionalising the charity's operations and ensuring that it could effectively navigate potential challenges while achieving its strategic objectives.

**RESOLVED: that**

**1) the progress to date was noted; and**

**2) a full detailed update would be presented at the next meeting.**

## **10/25 COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW 2024/25 FOLLOW UP**

Following the discussions at the January committee meeting, the Mentimeter results, and feedback were incorporated into the annual report. The report initially presented in January had gaps due to the absence of discussions on effectiveness. The Mentimeter results were circulated and included in the new "reading room" section in Ibabs, designed to provide additional information without requiring decisions or discussions.

An amendment was noted, correcting the delegated authority amounts for the Bursary and Bids panels. The clean terms of reference were included for approval, with marked-up versions available in the reading room. Further changes may be proposed at the next meeting regarding grant approval and endorsement of income and expenditure.

Suggestions for committee membership included adding someone from the volunteer team and the Head of Commercial when appointed. Lee Brooks confirmed that the volunteer could be sought from the Volunteer Steering Group and that he would progress this request. It was noted to be important to be clear that the charity does not include volunteer fundraising activities, however.

Concerns were raised about the quorum requirement of three non-executive directors – if the membership of the committee included three non-executive directors -, and it was noted that this will be considered further – as it affects the operation of all board committees. This will be taken forward by the Board Secretary.

The committee was encouraged to consider its priorities for 2025-26, with a suggestion to limit these to two, given the existing reporting commitments. Proposed priorities included governance around the Bids and Bursary Panels' operating arrangements, including their new terms of reference, and potentially rolling over the development session planned for this year. These suggested priorities were agreed by the committee.

Following this discussion, the committee agreed the committee annual report for 2024/25, endorsed the changes to the committee terms of reference for 2025/26, and approved the cycle of business for 2025/26. It was noted that these documents would be presented to the Trust Board in May, following review by the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee in early May.

**RESOLVED: That**

- 1) The annual report 2024/25 was approved;**
- 2) The changes to the terms of reference were approved;**
- 3) The 2025/26 cycle of business was approved; and**
- 4) The committee priorities for 2025/26 were agreed which were:**
  - a) governance around the Bids and Bursary Panels' operating arrangements, including their new terms of reference**
  - b) the planned development session be rolled over to this year;**

**11/25 BIDS PANEL HIGHLIGHT REPORT**

The AAA reports from Bids Panel meetings held on 24 February and 6 March were received. There were no bids over £5,000 for the committee to approve, and four bids related to replacement televisions for Tenby, Knighton, Ferndale and Barmouth stations were approved at circa £500 each.

Further work was underway to ensure all funds awarded had been spent and a quarterly report would now be received by the Bids Panel to effectively monitor this. Revised processes that required funding to be spent within 12 months was being introduced.

Julie Boalch presented revised terms of reference for the Bids Panel, for consideration. Ceri Jackson requested that reference should be made to the appeals process, be it that there wasn't one or include the process if there was. Julie acknowledged that, although there had been no appeals in the past, it was a valid point. She suggested making a minor amendment to the terms of reference

to either include a process for handling appeals or make it clear that there was no appeals process. This adjustment would be considered if the committee supported the terms of reference with this slight modification. Historically, there had been no appeals, but the inclusion of this provision would ensure preparedness for any future occurrences. The panel's revised terms of reference were approved.

Members thanked Julie Boalch, Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and Risk, for her work in chairing and steering the panel over the last three years. Leanne Smith, Assistant Director of Digital – Data and Analytics, would take the Chair of the Bids Panel from April onwards.

**RESOLVED: That**

- 1) the Bids Panel updates, relating to the meetings on 24 February and 6 March 2025 were noted;**
- 2) the revised terms of reference for Bids Panel were approved; and**
- 3) Thanks to Julie Boalch for chairing the Bids Panel was noted.**

## **12/25 BURSARY PANEL HIGHLIGHT REPORT**

The Bursary Panel met in January 2025 and approved allocation of funding for two applications: one part funding an MSc Advanced Clinical Practice to the value of £3,000, and one-part funding an MSc Professional Practice to the value of £1,188.

The terms of reference review had not yet taken place; however, a meeting was scheduled for this on 14 April, and these would be presented to the next meeting of the committee. It was noted that a number of applications that failed to meet the threshold were due to the Statutory and Mandatory training requirement not being up to date.

**RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the position.**

## **13/25 REFLECTIONS AND SUMMARY OF DECISIONS/ACTIONS**

Members reflected that the hybrid format worked well and commented on the professionalisation of the charity and the progress made over the last 12 to 18 months. It was noted that this was the first meeting with Peter Curran as the Chair, and it was agreed that the meeting was well chaired.

## **14/25 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None discussed.

## **15/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for 3 July 2025.