

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHARITY
 COMMITTEE HELD ON 03 JULY 2025 AT CARDIFF MRD AND REMOTELY VIA
 MICROSOFT TEAMS**

Meeting started at 09:30

MEMBERS:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Julie Boalch	Assistant Director of Corporate Governance & Risk
Mark Harris	Assistant Director of Operations (NEPTS)
Estelle Hitchon	Director of Partnerships and Engagement
David Hopkins	Head of Charity
Jo Kelso	Head of Workforce Education and Development
Trish Mills	Director of Corporate Governance/Board Secretary
Steve Owen	Corporate Governance Officer
Alex Payne	Corporate Governance Manager
Jess Price	Head of Financial Accounting
Elain Roberts	Operations Quality Investigator (Lived experience, left after 20/25)
Andy Swinburn	Executive Director of Paramedicine
Chris Turley	Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
Damon Turner	Trade Union Partner
Marcus Viggers	Trade Union Partner
Kelly Wallace	Concerns Quality Assurance Manager (Lived experience, Left after 20/25)

APOLOGIES:

Lee Brooks	Executive Director of Operations
Hugh Parry	Trade Union Partner
Liz Rogers	Deputy Director of People and Culture

OBSERVERS:

Skye Banks	Compliance Administrator
Sarah Harland	Corporate Governance Officer

16/25 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Peter Curran welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies from Lee Brooks, Hugh Parry, and Liz Rogers.

The Committee RESOLVED To Note the apologies of Lee Brooks, Hugh Parry, and Liz Rogers.

17/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no other declarations of interest to those already included in the register of interests.

The Committee RESOLVED To note there were no other declarations of interest to those already included on the register of interest.

18/25 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND HIGHLIGHT REPORT

The Minutes of the 02 April 2025 meeting were confirmed as correct record.

The Highlight report of 02 April 2025 was received.

The Committee RESOLVED To:

- 1. Approve the minutes of the 02 April 2025 meeting as a correct record.**
- 2. Receive the Highlight report dated 02 April 2025.**

19/25 ACTION LOG

Action 65/24a Estelle and David would follow up on the conversation with Velindre regarding overall indemnity for the charity and bring back information to the committee. A document has been drafted in conjunction with Legal and Risk colleagues and will shortly be published on Siren. A link to the document will be sent to all Charity committee members after publication. David added that This action was proposed for closure. This action was proposed and agreed for closure.

Action 65/24b Estelle Hitchon and David Hopkins were asked to provide clear guidance for staff who undertake charitable fundraising activities, ensuring they are aware of any risks and the context in which these activities should take place. A document has been drafted in conjunction with Legal and Risk colleagues and will shortly be published on Siren. A link to the document will be sent to all Charity Committee members after publication. This action was proposed and agreed for closure.

Action 06/25 Charity Performance report: Trish Mills agreed to confirm the route for the approval of grant applications and return to the committee to confirm the position. She noted that the position previously discussed was that they would be signed off by the Executive Leadership Team, but advised she would clarify. Trish Mills has included the following statement in the revised Terms of Reference for the Charity Committee for 2025/26, as follows "Grant applications will be approved by the Executive Leadership Team, or by any other mechanism they determine. The outcomes of those applications will be reported to this committee for information, and the assurance on the monitoring thereof will be reported through the performance report." This amendment has been presented for approval by the committee (via chair's action) and will take effect once the revised terms of reference are approved by the Trust Board on the 29 May 2025. This action was proposed and agreed for closure.

Action 07/25 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, Action not due till October 2025. Chris Turley will provide further details at the next meeting.

Action 20/25 It was agreed that the dates of future Netball matches would be shared with Charity Committee members.

The Committee RESOLVED To Note the position of the action log.

20/25 BIDS PANEL LIVED EXPERIENCE – NHS CHARITIES TOGETHER SPORTS GRANT AWARD

Elain Roberts and Kelly Wallace gave a presentation which shared their experience and insight into setting up the WAST Netball Team.

Kelly told the Committee that she ran a Friday evening social netball league in Swansea, which many ambulance staff attend. The idea of creating an ambulance netball team was popular, but previous efforts had struggled. With guidance from David Hopkins, Head of Chairity, they found a grant, applied, and successfully established the team.

Elain informed the Committee she played Netball for Wales from age 14 to 22 and competed with the Cardiff Dragons (formerly Celtic Dragons) in the Super League. Elain has coached for a decade, including at Cardiff University and with the Welsh University squad, as well as various other teams. She also worked as a physio, offering additional expertise. After a four-year break due to health reasons, Elain returned to playing netball through Kelly's team, which inspired her to help form a new team for ambulance service colleagues involved in the league.

In January 2025, once funding was approved, they quickly set up the WAST Team by using an early time slot before the Friday League. Securing the venue was straightforward, and the grant covered weekly court hire through October 2025, allowing to combine training from 6–7 pm with participation in the Friday League. This has boosted player confidence and in June, we played a competitive match against a Bridgend League team. We also partnered with Conga and designed inclusive kits featuring both our charity and team logos.

The funding received was vital in establishing the WAST Netball Team, ensuring court availability and inclusivity for all staff members. The team has adapted training to accommodate diverse needs and fosters an inclusive environment.

Trish Mills asked if there was a mixed league in the Swansea area or were there any plans to start one. Elaine explained that Wales does not have a great deal of mixed leagues as yet, but it was being considered going forward.

Peter Curran asked whether this had attracted women who may not have previously participated in physical activity, and if it has encouraged them to join the team. Elaine stated that some individuals who had not played netball since school saw this and expressed an interest in joining the team.

Andy Swinburn raised a question about the group's finances, pointing out that the current funds were limited and projected to last until mid-October, which would align with the end of court hire based on current expenditures. Kelly explained that discussions with participating players indicated general agreement to contribute a small amount each. There has been consensus among players that, as the remaining funds decrease, individuals could regularly contribute a minimal weekly amount to cover ongoing court hire expenses. Additionally, organising a mixed tournament in the past generated £500, which covered approximately 12 weeks of court hire and could potentially support activities through 2026 if repeated.

Ceri Jackson asked if there was any advice for the Committee on how the Trust could encourage more staff and volunteers to pursue similar opportunities. Kelly suggested that, from their perspective, improved personal communication to staff would be an important factor in enabling this to happen. She added that being passionate about the project was also a bonus.

Hannah Rowan suggested that from a fundraising approach, perhaps for specific tournaments or events, funds could be split so part directly supports the team, and another portion supports a wider fund, allowing broader use. She also thanked Kelly and Elaine for the clear presentation structure. The financial breakdown and distinction between one off expenses and ongoing costs were particularly helpful, as were the impact statements.

Following a query on team numbers, Elain explained that currently, the team has around 25 members, though not everyone was available each week, so attendance varied. For upcoming matches, a poll was taken to see who was available and if more players were available, we could organise two matches. The option for extra games, especially on Fridays, was always open, so there will always be opportunities to play. She added that the teams fixtures list would be advertised.

The Chair thanked Kelly and Elain for their presentation, acknowledging the impact that a relatively small level of investment could have and the positive impact on the wellbeing of our people which was demonstrated.

The Committee RESOLVED To note the presentation.

21/25 CHARITY STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN (2 YEARS)

During a meeting of the Corporate Trustee on 29 May 2025, the Charity's Strategic Objectives and Enablers were approved. It was decided that a Charity Delivery Plan would be developed to outline the practical steps necessary to achieve the Charity's Strategic Objectives.

David Hopkins advised the Committee that the plan highlighted three main objectives focused on staff wellbeing, community resilience, and enhanced patient care, alongside strategic enablers for governance, income generation and communications.

Members were assured that the component parts of the plan would deliver the Charity strategy. David highlighted the importance of articulating the fundraising strategy which underpinned the plan and would ensure focused fundraising efforts. Progress on the delivery plan will be reported biannually, with the next update scheduled for January 2026.

David Hopkins explained that it was originally planned to present a fundraising plan for approval at this meeting, but recruitment delays for the Fundraising and Communications Officer have delayed this. Despite the absence of a formal plan, active fundraising continued, for example, the recent £7k fundraiser for the Wish ambulance.

Ceri Jackson was interested to discover to what extent has feedback received from staff, including those shared during the Chief Executive Road Shows and other interactions been incorporated into the plan. David Hopkins confirmed he had effectively incorporated staff feedback, particularly regarding their priorities for staff well-being and their expressed needs.

Hannah acknowledged the delay in recruiting the Fundraising and Communications Officer and asked for an update on how this delay has affected operations, as well as the plan for addressing the time lost. David Hopkins advised that without a dedicated staff member, this was difficult, but hiring for the role soon will allow greater focus on both strategy and operations. Estelle Hitchon explained that a conditional offer has been made to a candidate, pending completion of required checks.

Mark Harris praised the significant improvements in the charity's operations and professionalism over the past year. He noted the increased awareness and ease of giving donations, highlighting the positive changes under David's guidance. Mark shared a quote from a family expressing gratitude for the Wish Ambulance service, emphasising the charity's impact.

Estelle Hitchon added that the feedback from Mark Harris regarding the Wish ambulance was particularly valuable, especially in highlighting the charity funding processes. The goal remained to facilitate easier engagement for staff, patients, and the public with the charity. It was important to acknowledge the iterative nature of the charity's strategic development and the associated risks.

The Chair sought assurance that the financial targets for the year would still be met and would not be compromised or at risk due to the delay in the new staff member starting. David confirmed that the conservative estimates for community fundraising accounted for the potential delay, and he was confident that the targets could still be reached.

The Chair suggested that it could be helpful for the activities within the Plan be given a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) status, as this would provide a clear snapshot of progress. David agreed and noted that future iterations would include this detail.

The Committee approved the Charity Strategy Delivery Plan 2025-27 aimed at achieving the Charity's Strategic Objectives and Enablers over the next two years.

The Committee RESOLVED To Approve the Charity Delivery Plan 2025-27.

22/25 CHARITY PERFORMANCE REPORT

Estelle Hitchon presented the Charity Performance Report with an update on the Charity's three active NHS Charities Together (NHSCT) grants: Development Grant, Stage 3 Recovery Grant and the Ambulance Grant.

1. The Development Grant project has been completed with a total spend of £30,007, resulting in a small overspend of £26, funded from unrestricted funds.

2. Stage 3 Recovery Grant Progress: As of May 2025, £62,782 has been spent out of £88,000 awarded, with various projects ongoing, including a Volunteer Development Programme and Mind over Mountains.
3. The Ambulance Grant has recruited 235 Community First Responders to date, with a target of 400 by February 2026. The project has been extended due to recruitment delays.
4. All grants were being administered according to their conditions; however, there was one red target within the Stage 3 Recovery Grant relating to Mind Over Mountains, and the target remained unlikely to be met. This will not affect future funding decisions and there were currently no proposals to fund any further walks beyond the final planned date of 11 October 2025.
5. Updates were received regarding future grant opportunities available from NHS Charities Together and aimed at enhancing community health and wellbeing. These funds include the Community Resilience Fund, the Innovation Challenge, Work Wellbeing, and Greener Communities fund.

David Hopkins provided further information on the Mind of the Mountains project. Mind over Mountains was committed to continuing the project until the funds ended in October. Currently, there were no plans to fund additional walks beyond October, but peer-led walking groups were beginning to emerge through sports grants.

Hannah Rowan referred to an underspend originally allocated for a project administrator noting this was managed within existing trust staff instead and sought clarity on who handled this work and how it was funded. David Hopkins added that in terms of the project administrator, he understood this was initially designed to support Mind over Mountains and the sports grants, the former has since been delivered by the Organisational Development (OD) Team. The sports grants have been delivered by his team and the finance assistant.

The Committee RESOLVED To NOTE the progress of the Charity's active grants and noted the key risks and mitigations in place for the Charity's active NHS Charities Together grants.

23/25 CHARITY FUNDS FINANCE REPORT

Chris Turley advised that the report provided the Committee with an update on fund balances held, along with an update on the Common Investment Fund (COIF) Charity Investment Fund Accumulation Units held by the charity, including a valuation as of 31 May 2025.

The summary of accounts for the financial year 2024-25 showed a total income

of £66,838 and total expenditure of £246,517, which when taken alongside a small investment loss of £5,567 resulted in a net movement of (£185,246). This will now form the basis of the Charity's 2024-25 accounts, which will be drafted and subject to an Independent Examination by Audit Wales.

In terms of the new financial year, 2025-26, total income in the first two months to the end of May 2025 was £5,799 while total expenditure reached £36,859, leading to a net movement of (£31,060). The balance of funds held as of 31 May 2025 was £730,580 comprised of £210,429 unrestricted funds: £177,867 in designated funds, and £342,284 in restricted funds.

Between 01 April 2025 and 31 May 2025, the unit price of the charity's investments had increased by 0.45%, resulting in an overall small gain of c£1.1k. The charity current held 1,090.14 units at a unit price of £252.9766, giving a total market value of £275.8k. The overall trend with the investments remains positive and the lowest risk. The investment strategy aligned with the charity's risk appetite, focusing on low-risk options to ensure stability.

As discussed in prior Charity Committee meetings, the monitoring of long-term investments had increased from weekly to daily during recent market volatility, enabling prompt responses if needed. Despite some losses and gains, total equity remained above £48.8k throughout. Now that the market has stabilised, weekly monitoring and fund updates have resumed.

Peter Curran asked whether the risk exposure was consistent with the stated risk appetite. He also inquired if investment advisors have established specific allocations in equities and gilts to align with investment objectives. Chris Turley added that from his perspective, the investment discussed was considered to have the lowest risk available. While pursuing higher-risk options for greater returns has previously been discussed, even the safest investments have shown volatility during this period due to market fluctuations. The current approach aligned with industry standards followed by the NHS and other charities.

Ceri Jackson referred to the earlier point about risk in relation to the arrangement between Trust funds and Charity funds, commenting that it may be useful to include a brief statement in the finance report outlining progress on this matter.

The Committee RESOLVED To Note the contents of the finance report.

24/25 RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT - CHARITY RISK REGISTER

Julie Boalch updated the Committee on the development of the Charity's Risk Register CHRR. The Risk Register had been 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.

The risks outlined in Annex 1 of the report's risk summary were thoroughly reviewed, discussed, and evaluated by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) prior to this meeting. The ELT proposed adding two new risks to the CHRR, detailed in Annex 2. These were CHAR-003 *Non-compliance with legal and regulatory framework* and CHAR-005 *Inadequate internal processes and governance structures to meet grant conditions*, which were presented for approval today. The Chair queried how risk management was integrated into the everyday decision-making within the Charity. Estelle Hitchon advised that several risks were central to current considerations, especially as the benefits achieved through awarded funding was evaluated. She was particularly mindful of the risks associated with income generation and fundraising.

David Hopkins added that action items from each risk assessment were incorporated into the delivery plan. This approach guaranteed alignment between the actions identified in the risk assessments and those in the delivery plan, ensuring full integration within the charity's operations.

Trish Mills noted that the Charity Risk Register has been long-awaited and was in a strong position. However, it would take time to mature, due to limited resources and ongoing strategic work within the Trust.

Ceri Jackson noted that this is an important component of organisational health, focusing on overall charity performance and risk management. She mentioned that this contributes to good governance and sustainability. She also expressed appreciation for the quality of the work presented.

The Committee received the Charity Risk Register. It also approved the inclusion of the risks CHAR-003 *Non-compliance with legal and regulatory framework* and CHAR-005 *Inadequate internal processes and governance structures to meet grant conditions* on to the register. Furthermore, the Committee approved the closure of CHAR -001 *Lack of resource and capacity to manage the Charity* noting that the risk had been mitigated.

The Committee RESOLVED To:

- 1. Receive the new Charity Risk Register.**
- 2. Approve the inclusion of CHAR-003 and CHAR-005 on the register.**
- 3. Approve the closure of CHAR-001 noting that the risk has been mitigated, and the residual risk has been included in CHAR-008.**

25/25 BIDS PANEL HIGHLIGHT REPORTS – 02 APRIL 2025, 16 MAY 2025 AND 23 MAY 2025

Leanne Smith reported that all recent bids were approved within Panel limits, with none requiring approval by the Charity Committee. Three extraordinary meetings

of the Panel took place in April and May; followed by the scheduled June meeting, all of which covered a total of 10 bids. Of these, eight were approved, one was redirected to the Bursary Panel, and one bid which related to pressure washers, was rejected.

Furthermore, Leanne highlighted that further legal advice has clarified liability regarding the issue around kayaks, which have since been securely stored, reducing immediate risk. Secondly, although a final decision on the Barmouth restricted funds was not reached at the 04 June Bids Panel meeting due to insufficient detail and lack of staff consultation, subsequent discussions with the Locality Manager and staff in Barmouth have resulted in a draft proposal being put forward.

Julie Boalch confirmed that the ELT had discussed the Barmouth restricted funds in detail, and she would address these further proposals with David and Leanne after the meeting. David Hopkins confirmed he had met with the Barmouth Locality Manager, and the current proposal was to fund a dedicated training room in the available space.

Ceri Jackson sought clarity on the decision-making process, specifically regarding its efficiency and the level of assurance provided throughout that process. Julie Boalch explained that the Bids panels have collaborated for an extended period, operating within a structured governance framework that allowed every member the opportunity to provide input on each bid. If members were unable to attend a meeting, they could still share their feedback, including their approval status and rationale.

The Committee RESOLVED To receive the Bids Panel Highlight reports from 02 April 2025, 16 May 2025, and 23 May 2025.

26/25 BURSARY PANEL HIGHLIGHT REPORT – 14 APRIL 2025

Jo Kelso informed the Committee the panel had met on 14 April 2025, the primary agenda items being a review of the terms of reference, presented for approval, and the planned opening of the first of two bursary application windows.

David Hopkins, following a query on communicating to staff regarding applications, commented that the Communications Team has been very supportive, with the message reaching more staff. Compared to October 2024, when many staff were unaware of the charity, April 2025 saw greater awareness, with staff seeking information and expressing interest in grants.

The Committee received the highlight report and approved the Bursary Panel terms of reference.

The Committee RESOLVED To receive the highlight report and approve the terms of reference for the Bursary Panel.

27/25 COMMITTEE PRIORITIES & CYCLE OF BUSINESS MONITORING REPORT 2025/26

There were no matters to escalate with respect to the priorities.

The Committee RESOLVED To note the Committee priorities and the 2025/26 cycle of business monitoring report.

28/25 REFLECTIONS AND SUMMARY OF DECISIONS/ACTIONS

Members provided positive feedback regarding the development, integration, and alignment of the Charity's operations, including areas such as strategy, risk management, delivery plans, and finance. They stressed the significance of establishing robust foundations to support the Charity's ongoing success and recognised the approach to resource allocation across both the Trust and Charity.

29/25 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

30/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 2 OCTOBER 2025

Meeting closed at: 11:55