

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE (OPEN SESSION) HELD ON 21 March 2023 VIA TEAMS

PRESENT:

Joga Singh	Non-Executive Director and Chair of Committee
Bethan Evans	Non-Executive Director
Kevin Davies	Non-Executive Director

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mark Harris	Assistant Director of Ambulance Care (Item 23/23 only)
Lisa Harte	Internal Audit
Navin Kalia	Deputy Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
Angie Lewis	Director of Workforce and Organisational Development
Rachel Marsh	Executive Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance
Trish Mills	Board Secretary
Steve Owen	Corporate Governance Officer
Hugh Parry	Trade Union Partner
Madrun Parry-Jones	Finance Graduate
Alex Payne	Corporate Governance Manager
Leanne Smith	Interim Director of Digital Services
Chris Turley	Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
Liam Williams	Executive Director of Quality and Nursing

APOLOGIES:

Lee Brooks	Executive Director of Operations
Ceri Jackson	Non-Executive Director
Damon Turner	Trade Union Representative

14/23 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and reminded attendees that the meeting was being audio recorded. Members noted that any declarations of interest were contained within the Trust's declarations of interest register. Apologies were received from Lee Brooks, Ceri Jackson and Damon Turner.

Minutes

The minutes of the open session held on 16 January 2023 were considered by the Committee and confirmed as a correct record.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2023 were confirmed as a correct record

15/23 OPERATIONS QUARTERLY REPORT

The Committee noted there was no further update to the report presented.

Comments:

Members noted there continued to be increasing system pressures.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the report.

16/23 FINANCIAL POSITION MONTH 11

The Committee received a presentation from Navin Kalia on the financial position for Month 11, 2022/23.

- The cumulative year to date (M11) revenue financial position was a small underspend against budget of £0.012m.
- The forecast for 2022/23 is one of breakeven.
- Gross savings of £4.025m have been achieved against a year to date target of £3.942m.
- A breakdown of the financial performance by each directorate was provided.
- In terms of financial risks, these have now all been removed.
- £12.485m of capital has been spent/accounted for against a budget of £27.212m.
- Welsh Government have confirmed that the submission date for the draft accounts is 5 May 2023. Audit Wales have confirmed that their audit certification deadline has been extended to 31 July 2023.

Comments

The Committee asked for further assurance in terms of whether all the capital funding will be spent by the end of the financial year. Navin Kalia explained that several ongoing projects were due completion shortly and that, he estimated, would be close to achieving the full spend.

Members queried whether the funding allocated for Covid -19 would continue on a recurring basis. Navin Kalia explained that currently the funding would continue however the categories of spend fluctuated. He added that going forward it was possible that Covid-19 spend would be absorbed in to the Trust's normal base funding.

RESOLVED: The Committee noted:

- (1) and gained assurance in relation to the Month 11 revenue and capital financial position and performance of the Trust as at 28 February 2023, along with current risks and mitigation plans;**
- (2) the delivery of the 2022/23 savings plan as at Month 11, and the context of this within the overall financial position of the Trust;**
- (3) the Audit Wales extended audit certification deadline to 31 July 2023 for 2022/23 accounts; and**
- (4) a detailed paper on the financial position will be presented to the Board at its 30 March meeting.**

Trish Mills advised the Committee that the principal risks in the Annexes had been presented to the Trust Board on 26 January 2023. The risk review schedule and governance routes agreed by the Audit Committee have been delayed due to current operational pressures including industrial action, as well as absence in the team. Reference was made to the 5 higher rated risks scoring no higher than 16 assigned to the Committee for oversight; risks 139, 245, 458, 260 and 543. These will be fully updated at the next meeting.

Comments:

Trish Mills added there was more work required on the strategic risk register to align it with the long term vision of the Trust.

The Committee recognised that potentially the level of financial risk for next year will be higher than normal. Navin Kalia agreed that the level of risk should be elevated as currently there was a significant amount of funding not yet agreed.

The Committee held a discussion on risk 139 (Failure to Deliver our Statutory Financial Duties in accordance with legislation) and it was agreed that a focused discussion on this risk would be presented to the next meeting.

RESOLVED: The Committee accepted the status of the 10 corporate risks which it has been assigned to oversee the management of. The Committee received the relevant sections of the Board Assurance Framework and noted the ongoing mitigating controls.

INTEGRATED MEDIUM TERM PLAN (IMTP) 2022-2025 PROGRESS REPORT

Rachel Marsh explained that the purpose of the report was to update the Committee on the progress and delivery of actions in the IMTP 2022-25 to date in Q4 2022/23, including the Accountability Conditions set by Welsh Government.

The Committee were advised there had been some areas of work which had been paused or had less focus on them. The areas of work which had been focused on included:

- Reducing avoidable harm and death
- Reducing waiting times for an ambulance response
- 111 service
- Managing the industrial action
- Recruitment and wellbeing
- Long term strategy

There were a small number of actions which remained Red (urgent attention required) and Rachel Marsh outlined those in more detail for the Committee's attention:

- Handover delays
- Salus programme
- Roll out of mobile data vehicle solution
- Delivery of the Quality Strategy

Comments:

The Committee requested that specific detail on each of the Red actions was shown in future updates.

Members recognised there were some positive aspects in the report and acknowledged, despite the ongoing challenges, the good work across the Trust.

In terms of the Quality metrics, it was queried what the timeline was for these metrics. Liam Williams advised that at this stage this information was not available and was due for discussion at the next Board Development day.

The Committee also noted that the IMTP Delivery Internal Audit was as a reasonable assurance rating with no high rated recommendations.

RESOLVED: The Committee noted the update against WAST's IMTP Accountability Conditions and the overall delivery of the IMTP.

19/23 INTEGRATED MEDIUM TERM PLAN (IMTP) 2023-2026 and FINANCIAL PLAN 2023/24

IMTP 2023-2026

Rachel Marsh explained the document was still in draft format and drew the Committee's attention to the following key areas:

- In terms of the organisational purpose and subject to final agreement this has been drafted as 'To Support, To Serve, To Save.
- The six goals programme for Urgent and Emergency Care were all designed to ensure that the Trust provided the right care in the right place, the first time. The six goals had been established to support improvements in the emergency care system.
- The overriding objective and critical priority for the Trust was to try and reduce the long waits and to improve call answering times within the 111 services.
- There was also a focus on improving the overall patient experiences and the workplace experience for staff.
- In terms of improving the workplace experience, this was being articulated in the developing 'people and culture plan'. Following several roadshows, there were three specific areas where staff had shown their greatest frustration; improve flexible working, eradicate shift overruns and to improve the overall digital experience.
- Other areas of work included; delivering on the Duty of Quality and Candour, environmental sustainability and digital.
- The Minister for Health and Social Services who has set several priorities, will receive a template from the Trust which will summarise the work undertaken to achieve those priorities. Other health organisations across Wales will be completing the same template and this will allow the Minister to have an overall picture.
- In terms of the actual document there was still further work to ensure all the tables were completed and there was a consistent style of language and grammar throughout.
- There were several targets in terms of performance metrics that Commissioners were expecting to be achieved. These included red and amber response times, consult and close rates, sickness absence and 111 call answering times.

Comments:

The Committee approved the plan recognising there was still further work required and in particular noted that the Trust had listened to and acted upon the workforce comments from recent roadshows. Angie Lewis added that she appreciated some of the digital aspects within the Trust could be improved, especially the Electronic Staff Record in which the Trust was endeavouring to make more user friendly.

Members also recognised the huge amount of work carried out by Trust staff under challenging circumstances. They discussed the importance of retaining staff and in particular their wellbeing.

The Committee held a discussion which considered the importance of working collaboratively with partners across Wales in order to successfully achieve the ambition set out in the plan. Furthermore, Members also suggested that the impact of the Duty of Quality and Candour be expressed in more detail within the narrative of the plan; for example, what would it deliver for patients and what would be the impact on front line staff.

It was queried whether the plan could be scaled down in a particular way in that it targeted specific individual groups, as it was felt the large document may not be read in entirety by all staff. Rachel Marsh advised this approach was fully supported and agreed to liaise Trade Union partners to develop the most effective method to disseminate the relevant information to particular departments.

RESOLVED: The Committee:

- (1) noted the progress made in developing this year's IMTP; and**
- (2) endorsed the IMTP subject to any final amendments following EASC and proof reading ahead of sign off at Trust Board on 30 March 2023.**

Draft 2023/24 Financial Plan

Navin Kalia gave the Committee a presentation and drew the Committee's attention to the following areas:

- The latest financial position forecast was a gap to break even of £10.5m.
- The Trust continues to wait for confirmation that the £6m funding for the 100 Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) staff will be received.
- If the £6m funding was not made available for the next financial year the Trust would need to immediately activate a reduction programme to manage this.
- There were several areas whereby the Trust was considering ways to balance the budget and create further savings, subject to assuming the funding for the 100 WTE was received; this was an extensive list which set out a whole range of ideas and included reviewing external contracts and reviewing some of the services provided by the Trust which could be ceased.
- Assuming the £6m in funding and the £3.4m of savings already identified plus the residual savings of £2.6m yet to be identified a balanced budget should be able to be achieved.
- From an all Wales perspective, the current position for 2023/24 was a gap of around £0.6bn.
- In terms of capital funding for 2023/24, the Trust will receive a discretionary allocation of £4.843m. In addition to the discretionary allocation the Trust was expecting to receive £18.441m for approved schemes. Furthermore the Trust was

awaiting a response to the funding request £18.760m for the replacement of 108 operational vehicles.

- The Committee were provided with the next steps which detailed the timelines to submission culminating in the financial plan being submitted to Welsh Government by 31 March 2023.

Comments:

The Committee discussed the challenges associated with achieving a balanced budget and the overall situation across NHS Wales.

A discussion ensued in which the Committee considered the continuing provision of non-emergency services transport particularly in terms of how savings could be made going forward. Chris Turley added that it could be possible to save money by cancelling some of the external contracts which provide this transport for patients.

Members recognised that the level of risk in being able to submit a balanced budget for 2023/24 was extremely high and expressed their apprehension and nervousness in doing so.

The Committee queried the level of confidence in terms of receiving the £6m for the WTE staff. Rachel Marsh advised it was still a risk and following regular discussion with the Chief Ambulance Services Commissioner (CASC), was reasonably confident it would be received. Chris Turley explained that should the money not be forthcoming there may be a requirement to freeze current recruitment. Angie Lewis added that the current Industrial Action has added further challenges and cost implications.

Rachel Marsh explained there may be some elements within the IMTP that may be difficult to achieve due to external factors beyond the Trust's control, and also a lack of additional resource. As an example in respect of 111 call answering times there was a need to re-roster and to this successfully, as with the EMS side, external resources would be required and this would attract further costs.

The Committee acknowledged there would be external factors outside of the Trust's gift which would affect successful delivery of the IMTP and the 2023-24 financial plan.

RESOLVED: The Committee noted:

- (1) the progress made in producing the draft financial plan and identifying savings for 23/24;**
- (2) the balance of risk in relation to the 100 WTE £6m and the challenging savings program of £6m WAST will need to deliver in order to reach a balanced financial plan by 31st March 2024; and**
- (3) the requirement to submit a balanced financial plan for sign off to Trust Board on 30 March in order to meet the submission deadline of 31 March 2023 to Welsh Government.**

20/23 MONTHLY INTEGRATED QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

Rachel Marsh explained that the purpose of the update was to provide an integrated dashboard (Our Patients, Our People, Value and Partnerships/System Contribution) focused on the "vital few" key metrics. This report covered the period January to February 2023.

In terms of highlights from the report, the Committee's attention was drawn to the following areas:

- It should be noted that the February data was still a draft position until confirmed through publication by the statistical department in Wales.
- 999 answering times have been challenging through significant increases in call demand throughout the year; however, in January 2023 the median and 65th percentile performance were good and the 95th percentile performance returned to three second answer times, not seen since May 2021.
- 111 call answering performance remains below expected times. December 2022 saw unprecedented levels of demand and very low performance. However, performance improved in January and February 2023 to 34.8% and 28.7% respectively, but remained substantially below the target of 95%.
- 111 Clinical response times continued to see achievement of the clinical call back times for the highest priority 111 calls.
- Ambulance Response times performance in the Red 8 minute category for February 2023 was 50.9%, an improvement when compared to January 2023, but still far below the target of 65%.
- During periods of Industrial Action (IA), it was noted that generally at the start of IA demand had decreased, hospital handover delays had decreased and performance improved; however towards the latter end of IA performance declined.
- Trust sickness absence: the Trust's overall sickness percentage was 10.64% in December 2022 and improved to 8.94% in January 2023.

Comments:

The Committee welcomed the report noting the positives and recognising there were still challenges facing the Trust for it to achieve its target for several performance metrics; adding that whilst there was an improving trend in some areas, the overall situation was still of concern. Bethan Evans, Chair of the Quality, Patient experience and Safety (Quest) Committee commented that Quest Committee continued to monitor and scrutinise the clinical indicators in greater detail.

Members further discussed the contents of the report adding that it would be useful to understand any lessons learned and any actions or processes that could improve the overall service delivery. Rachel Marsh agreed that for the next meeting a deep dive on clinical call back answering times would be included in the update.

Liam Williams gave an overview of the work being conducted by Improvement Cymru through the Safer Care Collaborative at each of the Health Boards for example working with care homes; and this should see a greater synergy across Wales for service improvement.

Following a query in terms of why compliance with statutory and mandatory training was below ideal performance, Rachel Marsh explained that a new course had recently been added which had brought the overall average compliance figures down. Angie Lewis added that in future reports an updated narrative on compliance figures would be added.

RESOLVED: Noting the comments above, the report was considered and provided sufficient assurance of progress against the 24 key performance indicators detailed, which demonstrate how the Trust was performing against the following areas of focus: - Our Patients (Quality, Safety and Patient Experience); Our People; Finance and Value; and Partnerships and System Contribution.

Trish Mills informed the Committee that 14 questionnaires had been sent out and 5 responses had been received. Whilst this was a low uptake, the detail in the responses was of great value and attention was drawn to the following:

- In terms of presenting it had been suggested that a third of the time be attributed to the paper with the other two thirds allocated to challenge and scrutiny.
- Development of a Board visit Standard Operating Procedure which will allow the Board to be more visible.
- The Agenda for meetings now includes an Item called 'Reflection: Summary of Decisions and Actions', and this will assist in continuous improvement of committee effectiveness going forward.
- It was suggested that a Non-Executive Director with a financial background be nominated to attend this Committee; this has been raised with the Trust Board Chair.
- Continuing with bi-monthly meetings was felt to be appropriate given that meetings were generally held the week before Board meetings.
- There were several changes to the Terms of Reference (TOR) which the Committee were given details and this included adding the Director of Workforce and OD as a prescribed attendee of the Committee.
- Reference was made to the annual report which highlighted the extensive amount of work the Committee had undertaken throughout the year.

Comments:

In terms of cyber resilience it was agreed, initially, that this Committee was the right one to receive updates on a regular basis; Trish Mills would review the cycle of business and consider when the Committee should receive regular updates. Leanne Smith explained that cyber was discussed regularly at the digital directors peer group meetings on a monthly basis and suggested updates from those meetings may be useful for the Committee.

RESOLVED: The Committee;

- (1) reviewed and endorsed changes to the Terms of Reference;**
- (2) confirmed the proposed changes to operating arrangements in response to issues raised in questionnaires;**
- (3) set priorities for the Committee for 2022/23; and**
- (4) approved the annual report noting it required some further adjustment after this meeting.**

INTERNAL AUDIT TRACKER REPORT AND RELATED AUDITS

Trish Mills presented the report to the Committee advising them that the actual tracker was not available for this meeting.

In terms of Internal Audits, there were two being presented for the Committee's review which both received a reasonable assurance rating;

- Immediate Release Directions
- IMTP Delivery

Comments:

In respect of the Immediate Release Directions (IRD) review, and in particular it was noted that 73% of the declined directions were not escalated to the Operational Delivery Unit. Liam Williams explained that the Trust will agree a process to record all the Amber 1 declined IRD's and report this based on themes and trends. This analysis will seek to identify areas of concern for the Trust and relevant Health Boards to rectify going forward.

RESOLVED: The Committee noted the update.

23/23

PROPOSED CHANGE TO NON-EMERGENCY PATIENT TRANSPORT SERVICE (NEPTS) PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Mark Harris explained that the report detailed a refresh of the NEPTS performance parameters.

After discussion with commissioners at the Ambulance Care Transformation board and in other fora, it had been agreed that, in the absence of the additional funding required and as the current performance standards were relatively old, a refresh of the current performance standards was required.

A Demand and Capacity review for NEPTS was undertaken and this gave rise to the requirement for a review of the current rosters as well as a different approach in terms of how the service was delivered.

It should also be noted that the change to these parameters (with the exception of Oncology transport) represented an improved patient experience with a shift in focus towards transport arriving prior to a patient's appointment.

This proposal had been submitted to the Operations Directorate Senior Leadership Team who supported the proposal and Executive Management Team where it was approved subject to support from the Commissioner. Mark Harris was confident that Commissioner support would be provided.

RESOLVED: the Committee noted, subject to Chief Ambulance Services Commissioner (CASC) acceptance, the proposed change to the current Non Emergency Patient Transfer Services (NEPTS) performance parameters from 1 April 2023.

24/23

JANUARY COMMITTEE AAA REPORT

The report was submitted for noting.

RESOLVED: The report was noted.

25/23

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS AND DECISIONS MADE AND KEY MESSAGES FOR BOARD

The Chair advised the Committee that the Board Secretary would prepare the update report for the Trust Board. He summarised the actions going forward which included; noting that of significance was the IMTP and financial plan. In addition it was noted the Audit Tracker would be updated for the next meeting and there would be a deep dive on Risk 139 at the next meeting.

26/23 ANY OTHER BUSINESS/REFLECTIONS

The Committee reiterated their thanks to the finance team for their work and their endeavour in aiming to achieve a balanced budget for the next year under challenging circumstances.

The Committee noted that the timing allocation for each agenda item was generally adhered to allowing extra time to focus and discuss the more significant issues.

Date of Next Meeting: 15 May 2023