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Ymddiriedolaeth Brifysgol GIG  
Gwasanaethau Ambiwylans Cymru  
Welsh Ambulance Services  
University NHS Trust

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE  
(OPEN SESSION) HELD ON 18 NOVEMBER 2025  
IN THE CARDIFF MAKE READY DEPOT AND VIA TEAMS**

**Meeting started at 09:30**

**PRESENT:**

Jayne Beeslee	Non-Executive Director and Chair
Peter Curran	Non-Executive Director
Bethan Evans	Non-Executive Director

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Hugh Bennett	Assistant Director, Commissioning and Performance
Judith Bryce	Assistant Director of Operations
Julie Boalch	Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and Risk (Joined at Item 89/25)
Matt Dugdale	Head of Commercial Development
Carl Kneeshaw	Director of People
Osian Lloyd	Head of Internal Audit
Trish Mills	Director of Corporate Governance/Board Secretary
David Murphy	Audit Wales (Joined at Item 85/25 and left at 86/25)
Steve Owen	Corporate Governance Officer
Hugh Parry	Trade Union Partner (Left at Item 85/25 and rejoined at 84/25)
Alex Payne	Corporate Governance Manager
Ed Roberts	Assistant Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
Jonny Sammut	Director of Digital Services
Damon Turner	Trade Union Partner
Liam Williams	Executive Director of Quality and Nursing
Emma Wood	Chief Executive

**APOLOGIES:**

Lee Brooks	Executive Director of Operations
James Houston	Assistant Director of Planning and Transformation Strategy, Planning & Performance
Fflur Jones	Audit Wales
Rachel Marsh	Executive Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance
Chris Turley	Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources

## 80/25 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Jayne Beeslee 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 Register of Interests.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the open session held on 16 September 2025 were considered by the Committee and subject to an amendment to the finance section confirmed as a correct record.

**Matters Arising:** Action originated from the Quality, Patient Experience and Safety Committee (QuEST) meeting on 4 November 2025: Patient Story. The Putting Things Right Report and Alison Clarke's lived experience highlighted the ongoing high demand for Non Emergency Patient Transport Services (NEPTS), which continued to generate complaints about unmet patient needs. Despite support through emotional mapping, enhanced data visibility, and efforts to encourage on-the-spot resolution, complaint levels have not declined. QuEST Committee Members discussed the impact on patient care and have asked the Finance and Performance Committee (FPC) to review current actions and plans to improve service delivery, particularly around eligibility criteria and the challenges patients face due to cancellations and limited capacity. Bethan Evans, the Chair of QuEST, suggested that a thorough examination of this issue would be valuable and that it would be more appropriately addressed at the FPC.

### **Action Log:**

Action 53/25: Quality and Performance Management Framework (QPMF) Logic Benefits Map. *In terms of the QPMF benefits map and the benefits measures it was agreed that the QPMF Steering Group would consider this in further detail. It was agreed an update would be provided at the next meeting following discussion at the QPMG Steering Group.* The meeting was held on 7 October 2025, and a mock-up of the revised benefits map was currently being considered by the FPC Chair. Members recognised that the Chair of FPC and Peter Curran would review the revised benefits in further detail, and it was agreed that a further update would be provided at the FPC meeting on 20 January 2026. Action to remain open

Action 67/25: Phase 2 Go Live of Clinical Model Transformation. *It was agreed that ahead of the extraordinary board meeting (23 October 2025), an extraordinary meeting of the Quality, Patient Experience and Safety Committee (QUEST) will be held to consider the QIA and EqIA, Trish Mills would arrange the Extraordinary QuEST meeting.* The QuEST Extraordinary Meeting was arranged and took place on 10 October 2025. Action closed.

Action 68/25: Monthly Integrated Quality Performance Report (MIQPR). *It was agreed that Jonny Sammut would collaborate with Mark Thomas to explore ways to enhance the presentation of the visuals in the report for improved clarity.* A wider update of the MIQPR is in progress. Hugh Bennett noted that he and Jonny Sammut will attend a meeting on Monday, 24 November 2025, to hear Non Executive Director (NED) feedback. The MIQPR

visuals will be updated prior to this meeting. It was agreed that this action can now be closed.

**Committee Highlight Report:** The Committee highlight report dated 16 September 2025 was received.

**The Committee:**

- 1. Approved the minutes of the Finance and Performance Committee held on 16 September 2025 subject to a minor amendment to the finance section regarding duplication of text.**
- 2. Considered the Action log and noted the update as described above.**
- 3. Received the Committee highlight report dated 16 September 2025.**

**81/25 OPERATIONS UPDATE**

Judith Bryce updated the Committee on several points:

The Manchester Arena inquiry will be discussed further during today's closed session. However, it was worth noting that the Trust had its fifth scrutiny session with the Commissioners in September and was now expecting their response by December 2025.

On 07 October 2025, the Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) participated in *Exercise Tendley 2*, a multi-agency major incident scenario planned and delivered by South Wales Police. The exercise simulated a multi-vehicle road traffic collision involving a coach carrying high-risk football supporters and featured 40 live casualty actors.

The HART drone was now being utilised regularly in a training environment to ensure pilots maintain regular flying hours. In August, the drone capability was successfully demonstrated to the Senior Leadership Team, with live streaming.

The Trust's support for Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS) has concluded and since its inception on 07 April 2025, the Trust had dealt with over twenty-two thousand calls.

While recruitment and retention was stable in some regions, pressures arose when ambulances were diverted to urban centres during hospital handover delays, reducing rural coverage. A task and finish group was addressing these issues, including recruitment, retention, and tailored operational procedures.

The Committee acknowledged that work was also underway to strengthen the Trust's rural service offer to ensure equitable response times and outcomes.

Members also noted that hospital handover delays contributed to staff overruns, affecting well-being and increasing costs, particularly in rural settings. The forthcoming "release to respond" policy will require rapid adaptation by health boards.

Hugh Bennett added he was currently engaged in several modelling projects focused on shift overruns. The team was actively supporting operations and colleagues and were undertaking additional modelling to explore potential strategies for addressing overruns.

Members anticipated further deterioration in handover delays in the coming weeks due to the current level of infections and the likelihood that these will continue to rise. The next few months were therefore expected to present significant challenges for the Trust and health boards.

Emma Wood added that in terms of the Wait-45 initiative, both the cabinet Secretary and the NHS Chief Executive have recently raised the issue in the media. An official response will be released during the winter, so health boards must start preparing now; and will probably have four to five weeks to get ready. The situation was clearly unsustainable, so it was critical that they use this preparation period to figure out what changes were necessary to address this issue.

Hugh Parry expressed concern regarding shift overruns, noting a significant disparity between rural and urban areas, which was having an overall impact on the Trust.

Trish Mills recommended that a broader discussion should be held to determine the most appropriate forum to discuss this issue, given the various impacts involved. She will evaluate which forum is best suited for this discussion, considering the comments and concerns raised, and will seek input and assurance from each Committee based on their respective perspectives.

**The Committee noted the update.**

## **82/25 FINANCIAL POSITION FOR MONTH FIVE AND MONTH SIX 2025/26**

### **MONTH SIX 2025/26**

The month 6 position was noted, and the committee took assurance from the update. The Trust was reporting a revenue year to date deficit of £186k and a small in month surplus of £43k for month 6 2025/26. In line with the balanced financial plan approved as part of the 2025-28 IMTP the Trust is forecasting to breakeven by the year-end. Gross savings of £4.260m have been achieved in month 6 against the target of £4.216m

### **MONTH SEVEN 2025/26**

A PowerPoint presentation update was given by Ed Roberts who provided the Committee with the following details:

The committee noted that for month 7 the Trust was showing a revenue overspend of £135k but delivered an in-month surplus of £51k. Capital expenditure plans continue to be progressed with plans to fully achieve in year.

The key financial risks included the volatility of handover delays and quantifying the cost of shift overruns, which could impact the forecast if they deteriorate over Winter, as well as ongoing uncertainties around the Welsh Risk Pool costs; with a potential additional cost pressure of £330k not yet confirmed.

The Committee also noted the importance of managing the timing of capital spend, given the significant outflows expected in the final months of the year; but received assurance that all procurement and delivery plans were in place.

In line with the Financial Savings Plan the target was £4.9m and the Trust achieved £4.97m and so an overachievement of circa £68,000, which again was positive given the pressures being seen across the rest of the system.

The public sector payment policy was on track for month 7 and the Trust had achieved 98.7% against the 95% target.

Most directorates were currently rated Amber for financial performance, which was generally positive. There have been some changes, but none were cause for concern.

The Trust continues to report the primary risks identified in month 7, consistent with previous months. However, following a reassessment based on the most recent intelligence available, the total reported risk now amounted to £2.5m.

With respect to savings, the Trust continued to exceed expectations both for the current month and cumulatively for the year. While the forecast assumes the Trust will meet the £8.5m savings target by year end, appropriate schemes were being actively pursued with potential for further overachievement.

There was some movement between recurrent and non-recurrent items, and as usual, there were noticeable changes in savings schemes. These adjustments were currently balanced according to forecasts, and further changes were anticipated as the financial year progressed.

Ed Roberts highlighted the capital forecast and as previously noted, the total budget for the year was £30.19m, comprising £5.948m from discretionary sources and £24.242m from all-Wales funding, the majority of which supported the vehicle replacement programme for 2025/2026. He added that all projects were currently on schedule.

Peter Curran queried if it had been determined when reduced shifts result in cashable savings, rather than just efficiency gains and has an analysis been done in this regard. Ed Roberts advised this was based on a shift by shift basis and based on rosters and therefore would be difficult to determine exactly. It was agreed that Ed Roberts would discuss this with Peter Curran in more detail outside of the meeting.

Members held a discussion which considered the recurrent and non-recurrent savings identified with the committee emphasising the importance of focusing on sustainable, recurrent savings. They also recognised the need to maintain close oversight of key risks

and the impact of operational pressures on financial performance was emphasised for future monitoring.

Jonny Sammut informed members that discussions were ongoing with Welsh Government about several discretionary schemes for end-of-year funding. Eight proposals have been submitted totalling approximately £1.7m, covering replacements for PCs and laptops, Wi-Fi improvements, server data storage upgrades, and video conferencing equipment, all aimed at addressing ongoing staff challenges.

Members reviewed the financial implications of shift overruns for the Trust and agreed that an analysis of this matter would be included in the Finance Report at the upcoming Committee meeting in January 2026.

### **The Committee:**

- 1. Noted and gained assurance in relation to the Month 6 revenue financial position and performance of the Trust as of 30 September 2025.**
- 2. Noted the delivery of the 2025/26 savings plan, and the context of this within the overall financial position of the Trust.**
- 3. Noted the capital programme for 2025/26.**
- 4. Noted the Month 6 Welsh Government monitoring returns submission (as required by WG).**
- 5. Noted the Month 7 position.**

## **83/25 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE GROUP MEETING UPDATE**

Carl Kneeshaw presented the report and gave substantive assurance on the Financial Sustainability Programme, which had focused on strengthening long-term financial resilience.

He added that the group has reorganised into three streams: opportunity identification, commercial strategy, and financial planning, with an emphasis on embedding accountability across all directorates. A commercial strategy steering group will be formed, and the committee endorsed the aim to deliver a plan by the next fiscal year.

Furthermore, external partnerships, particularly in digital and technology, were being explored to drive income and innovation. Next year's savings target was at least £9m, potentially rising to £10–15m. Carl added that directorates were modelling plans accordingly, with all proposals subject to board approval and alignment with strategic priorities.

In terms of the Administrative and Service review, Carl confirmed that all 24 recommendations from the original 2023 review have been implemented and incorporated into indirect plans with any outstanding items closed.

Carl confirmed that the new Head of Commercial Development, Matt Dugdale, joined the Trust on 6 October 2025 and he has commenced work on drafting a commercial plan. The plan will be developed around a more sustainable approach utilising applicable ideas and profitable opportunities. The Head of Commercial Development will now work with the Executive Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance to establish a Commercial Steering Group to develop what good looks like and a forecast of what income may be possible from commercial development.

Following the contract agreement with Omnicell in September 2021, the Trust selected the Supply X Inventory Management System for rollout across NHS Wales, beginning with five Make Ready Depots (MRDs). A dedicated working group, including stakeholders from the Trust and NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership, oversaw the implementation. Supply X integrates with Oracle to automate stock control and optimise inventory levels and has now been successfully deployed across all five MRD sites, with full stocktakes completed.

Going forward, Members acknowledged that senior leaders within the Trust will be reminded of their financial sustainability responsibilities and updated on governance activities within Opportunities, Commercial, and Financial Planning groups. The Trust's financial status and initial settlement information for 2025/26 will be provided, along with group discussions on cost-saving models. Furthermore, implementation of the new governance structure will progress, including forming the Commercial Development and Projects Opportunities Groups, while work continued the Service Review and Supply X.

Matt Dugdale added there was a lot of opportunities within the commercial space and his team was moving at pace and will share plans to the Committee in future updates.

Bethan Evans requested information regarding the timeline for developing this commercial plan and sought clarification about any potential external collaborators. Matt Dugdale commented that the plan will be in place for the start of the new fiscal year. In terms of partnerships the Trust would be looking at partners in Wales and in the digital space and the national bodies such as innovate UK that might help with funding streams linked to research and development as well.

Peter Curran queried how this group was coordinating with ELT and those handling budget models and the IMTP. This year, £8.5m was set as the financial sustainability goal. He asked when and how will next year's target be determined, and what criteria ensure it was reasonable.

Emma Wood mentioned that we do not yet know the settlement amount, but it will probably be around £9m. Ultimately, where the budget ends up will be decided by the board and Directorates will be asked to model their share of the savings plan. The Financial Sustainability Group needs to conduct testing, going through various scenario plans and aligning them with the IMTP, then reporting back to the board. Ultimately, all major decisions and responsibilities will rest with the board.

Ed Roberts commented that modelling has begun for all known costs for the year, including full-year impacts and inflationary increases. It was noted that ICT costs were rising faster than expected, so that was being factored in. The finance team was preparing projections for December, whilst awaiting the Welsh Government's allocation letter, which was likely to signal a nearly flat uplift of around 2.2%, including pay awards.

The Chair asked that in future papers, it would be helpful to include a brief reminder of the governance structure, as its development was important. The Committee will look forward to upcoming papers, including financial sustainability updates, which were expected at least every other meeting. However, if there were any January updates, even a short paper would be appreciated given how quickly things were progressing this financial year.

### **The Committee took assurance from the update.**

## **84/25 MONTHLY INTEGRATED QUALITY PERFORMANCE REPORT – AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2025**

Hugh Bennett outlined the main points of the report:

1. The overall performance remained broadly stable, with improvements in patient cancellations, consult and close rates, and handover delays. Whilst performance has improved, winter pressures will be challenging.
2. The 999 call answering times during September 2025 saw the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile decreasing to 18 seconds, compared to 23 seconds in August 2025.
3. 111 Clinical response: clinical ring back times for patients with the highest priority remained above target at 99.1%. Response times for lower priority calls showed a minimal decrease, reducing to 71.4% and 65.1% for P2CT and P3CT respectively.
4. Major upcoming changes include new clinical response categories (orange, yellow, green, the biggest change in a decade) and rostering reviews in Q4.
5. A JCC commissioning review was underway, offering an opportunity to clarify operational realities, particularly handover delays.
6. Early data shows a positive link between reduced handover hours and jobs per shift, though further analysis and benchmarking were needed.

Bethan Evans inquired if the Trust was prepared to start phase two and was everything in place to deliver the expected performance. Hugh Bennett responded by stating that as vice chair of the core categorisation task and Finish group, he was chairing the meeting this afternoon; the group will review the final checklist and go through the operations order outlining all the necessary arrangements.



**The Committee Considered the August/September 2025 Integrated Quality and Performance Report, and the actions being taken and determined that the report provided sufficient assurance.**

## **85/25 DIGITAL REPORTING**

The Digital KPIs relating to data and analytics, ICT systems, digital services, projects & programmes, and details on the progress against the Digital Plan were presented. Of note:

Digital teams face significant pressure from competing priorities and limited capacity whilst the teams continue to prioritise the Clinical Model Transformation.

Additional capacity in the digital team will be in place with 26 roles at various stages of the recruitment process. Several challenges had been posed by high volumes of applications, a large proportion of which were AI generated, which was being felt across all directorates. A related risk is being developed.

The Trust were engaging in a national project to unify the multiple Directories of Service managed around NHS Wales.

With the new Head of Digital Business Change & Benefits due to commence in post early December, the final arrangements were in preparation for Digital Trial Information Platform (DTIP). This included the development of the triage and prioritisation process, Key Performance Indicators (KPI)s and governance (including the Terms of Reference, standing agenda items and membership)

Jonny Sammut suggested a future deep-dive session on AI-driven cyber threats for the committee, given the fast-moving nature of these risks and the need for better understanding and questioning, which was supported by the chair.

Peter Curran asked about recruitment risks and IT department future proofing. Jonny Sammut commented that delays were affecting the Trust, with shortlisting 300 applications being a major effort. The Trust was using AI to assist, but it takes time and often highlights candidates who look good on paper, making it challenging to identify real talent. The Team was working with the Director of People to address this issue.

**The Committee acknowledged the contents of the paper and agreed it provided assurance on the progress of the Digital Plan activities, IMTP commitments and CMT involvement of the Digital Directorate teams.**

## **86/25 INFORMATION GOVERNANCE REPORT**

Jonny Sammut introduced the Information Governance (IG) Report which highlighted key updates including the IG toolkit compliance at 90% which was commended. Other issues of note included:

Dormant account numbers have been significantly reduced from around 3,000 to 464, with ongoing work to refine definitions.

New Key Performance Indicators (KPI)s have been introduced for reporting timeliness and data quality awareness. The latest version of the KPI report sees the addition of new Data Quality metrics related to the timeliness of reporting to Commissioners and Welsh Government, as well as monitoring of the new Data Quality awareness training which was released Trust-wide early October.

Recent data breaches linked to social media use have prompted a new awareness campaign. Additionally, a proposal was made to run a deepfake simulation campaign to test staff awareness of cyber threats that may come through various media and communication channels.

IG Copilot Assistant: a Copilot AI-agent has been developed and was being trialled to support the IG team with data protection query related demand. The tool allows users to ask questions and provides tailored guidance, including direct links to internal and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) resources.

Expired Mandatory Training: in August, 290 members of staff were identified as having overdue mandatory IG training and therefore were non-compliant. After reminder letters were sent, the number reduced to 194; however, some of these staff members have not completed their mandatory IG training for several years, so further communication and escalation was deemed necessary.

WhatsApp usage: there have been several recent data breaches involving the use of WhatsApp, raising concerns about its widespread use for sharing of sensitive information between colleagues.

The Trust's Records Team was under extreme pressure, with a 34% increase in records requests in September 2025 compared to September 2024.

The Committee discussed the data breaches on WhatsApp usage and inquired about the wider use of social media. Jonny Sammut advised that a range of advisory statements have been issued on Siren, the policy was up to date and will be brought up at a WAST live session going forward.

Damon Turner added that the Trust must be mindful that staff were using their own mobile devices.

**The Committee Considered the contents of the paper and were assured it gave assurance on the progress of the Trust's Information Governance arrangements and related specialist activities for Data Quality, Records Management, Freedom of Information requests and Information Security.**

## **87/25 INTERNAL AUDIT: IMTP DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES (Q1 -Q2)**

Hugh Bennett presented the internal audit report on the IMTP development process which had been given a substantial assurance rating. A single IMTP Development Group now coordinates planning across directorates through existing governance structures.

The overall process reflected political uncertainty post-2026 elections and a difficult financial outlook. To address change fatigue and capacity constraints, the focus had shifted to consolidating priorities and realising benefits, informed by staff and board feedback. Engagement was now embedded in existing meetings with increased board involvement. Directorates have reviewed deliverables for completion, rollover, or cessation, and identified new priorities. Despite capacity challenges, development remained on track for submission by 31 March 2026.

Trish Mills had received assurance that the three recommendations within the report were expected to be completed by the December deadlines.

### **The Committee received the Internal Audit Report on IMTP Development Practices (Q1-Q2)**

## **88/25 INTEGRATED MEDIUM TERM PLAN (IMTP) PROGRESS REPORT AND DEVELOPING THE 2026/27 INTEGRATED MEDIUM TERM PLAN (IMTP) (REFRESHED APPROACH)**

Hugh Bennett presented the Committee with the Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMTP) Q2 Assurance Report with a focus for this committee on the outcome measures for the strategic objectives (what good looks like) and the go live assurance process for phase two of the Ambulance Performance Framework.

The Clinical Model Transformation (CMT) Programme was progressing well, with key documents and processes now embedded. While the programme advanced at pace and IMTP deliverables showed positive progress, organisational capacity continued to be a constraint.

Hugh Bennett assured Members that all plans were in place and progressing well for go-live of phase 2 of the CMT in December 2025.

The Chair addressed comments about being too critical regarding "amber" ratings, noting there was nothing wrong with an amber rating. This category drew needed attention and was not common in programme management, which usually used only green or amber.

Judith Bryce, in addressing the Trust's level of preparedness for phase two advised that the team was fully briefed on the operations plan and a comprehensive command structure has been established.

The Chair asked what 'good' should look like and why the Trust focused on certain areas. Trish Mills explained that, based on the IMTP, it was defined what 'good' means for each strategic objective to enable measurement and clarify discussions about strategic risk.

### **Developing the 2026/27 Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMTP) (refreshed approach)**

Hugh Bennett explained that the purpose of this paper was to provide the Committee with an update and overview of the urgent work undertaken to refresh the organisational approach to develop the 2026/27 Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMTP).

It was to be noted that the planning guidance has been developed at pace and was included in draft form for information, following an initial review by the Strategic Transformation Board (STB) on 03 November 2025. A final review was required with key groups in readiness for final sign off and approval at the next STB meeting

#### **The Committee:**

- 1. Noted progress for the quarter 2 IMTP deliverables (CMT & Directorate level reported deliverables).**
- 2. Noted the Go Live approach for implementing Phase 2 of the Ambulance Performance Framework.**
- 3. Noted the 'What good looks like' outcome measures.**
- 4. Noted the update provided in this report in terms of Developing the 2026/27 Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMTP) (refreshed approach)**
- 5. Noted the IMTP development approach described in the draft IMTP Planning Guidance (subject to further refinement and approval).**

### **89/25 COMMITTEE QUALITY AND GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

Trish Mills reminded Members that the Committee has held the first part of its Quality Governance Review (formerly effectiveness review) for 2025/26.

Most major changes to the committee's terms of reference will be deferred until after the external board effectiveness review, however members agreed that the commercial partnerships element of the Academic Partnerships Committee's remit appropriately sat in this committee.

The improvements in quality and volume of reports were recognised. The presence and contribution of Non-Executive Directors were consistently valued, with positive feedback on their breadth of experience, scrutiny, and support, which strengthened the committee's operations.

The review will be driven by key project objectives:

- Aligning committee remits more closely to the six strategic objectives
- Improving efficiency and effectiveness in governance

- Reducing meeting frequency and alleviating quorum/Non-Executive Director (NED) availability pressures
- Ensuring strong scrutiny, challenge, and support through increased NED attendance on key committees
- Balancing workloads and minimising disruption during a period of executive transition

Members were keen to ensure that duplication with the board and other committees was avoided. The Committee terms of reference were approved, and the committee's annual report will be reviewed in March 2026.

Trish Mills added that it will be recommended to the Audit, risk and Assurance Committee (ARAC) that the following changes to the Board's committee framework take effect from 1 April 2026, with any material changes deferred until the external provider has reported back to the Board on committee structures:

- The Academic Partnership Committee (APC) will continue to meet twice annually in 2026/27, with a focus on the research and development portfolio. This was agreed at the APC meeting on 7 October.
- APC delegated responsibilities relating to education partnerships and collaboration will transfer to PCC and those related to commercialisation will transfer to FPC.
- Four NEDs will be asked to attend each of the following committees: Finance and Performance Committee (FPC), Quality, Patient Safety and Experience Committee (QUEST), People and Culture Committee (PCC) and ARAC. This will ensure a quorum of three per meeting. The board skills mix has been updated, and the Trust Chair and NEDs will hold discussions in October on their committee commitments.
- Minor changes are proposed for the QUEST committee with the transfer of value based healthcare from FPC.
- No changes are proposed for the Charity or Remuneration Committees.

Trish Mills referenced the questions that were asked during the recent survey

1. Are there any changes you wish to see to the terms of reference
2. Are there any changes you would like to see to the committee's membership
3. What works well in this committee
4. What improvements would you recommend

Members noted that the answers to these questions were contained in the report and further discussed each one in more detail during the meeting.

Trish Mills added that standing orders require the Trust to review the committee's effectiveness every year, and they must be documented in the annual report.

Trish Mills presented the FPC Terms of reference drawing out salient points for their attention which were approved.

The Chair, reflecting on the comments, raised a valid point that the Committee has effectively managed situations where actions were taken from the QuEST Committee at this meeting, and she recalled in the past six months, the Committee also assigned an action to the PCC. This demonstrated the ability to handle those points of intersection appropriately.

The Chair further added that in terms of development, it was important to balance the committee's overall needs with those of individuals, especially for new Non-Executive Directors who face a steep learning curve. The goal was to distinguish between gaining specific knowledge and understanding the broader dynamics and behaviours that make us an effective committee and board. I appreciate all the work done so far and look forward to seeing the results.

The Committee recorded a note of thanks to Trish Mills and her team for their efforts behind the scenes in producing this work.

### **The Committee:**

- 1. Noted the wider board committee framework changes proposed and provide feedback on the recommendations.**
- 2. Noted the responses to the survey, inviting members who did not have an opportunity to complete the survey to provide further feedback.**
- 3. Approved changes to the terms of reference.**

## **90/25 RISK MANAGEMENT AND BOARD ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK REPORT**

The committee received the Risk and Board Assurance Framework report noting that all risks have undergone their quarterly review, with no material changes to scores.

Financial risks were discussed throughout in the context of ongoing pressures, including the need to revisit Risk 139. (*Failure to Deliver our Statutory Financial Duties in accordance with legislation*)

Members acknowledged that financial risks were significant, especially given the challenging outlook highlighting the pivotal role the committee will play in navigating the future financial situation.

Risk 100 (*Failure to persuade JCC/Health Boards about WAST's ambitions and reach agreement on actions to deliver appropriate levels of patient safety and experience*) will be reviewed for possible integration into the new stakeholder risk, which has been disaggregated from the Trust's reputational risk.

Members discussed the ongoing work to distinguish and score risks and factors that were within the Trust's control versus those that were externally monitored, with research on best practices underway for scoring these dimensions. Risk 542 (*Failure to deliver the*

Welsh Government NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Action Plan) will be presented at the next meeting showcasing the new approach.

Peter Curran requested an update on future risk developments, such as the decarbonisation risk. Julie Boalch responded that a workshop was planned and research on scoring was in progress; although this will not affect the overall risk score, it will provide better insights into how the score was changing. The decarbonisation risk will be discussed at the January meeting, where the new template will highlight factors both within and outside of the Trust's control.

Jonny Sammut suggested a future deep-dive session on AI-driven cyber threats for the committee, given the fast-moving nature of these risks and the need for better understanding and questioning.

Judith Bryce advised that on 28 October 2025 the Operations Directorate reviewed the Risk 223 (*the Trust's inability to reach patients in the community causing patient harm and death*) and made the recommendation in reducing the score from the likelihood of harm occurring from 25 to 20. Julie Boalch suggested that this should probably be included in the FPC AAA, since reductions in scores need to follow governance protocols involving the ELT, which will meet in December. The Committee should consider adding a note under "risk" in the AAA to indicate that a reduction in risk was anticipated. This issue can then be addressed more formally during the next review. Trish Mills suggested it would be more appropriate for this to be reported through the QuEST AAA because Risk 223 was monitored by that committee.

**The Committee Considered the contents of the report including:**

- a. The controls in place against the risks.**
- b. The actions described to further mitigate the risks.**

**91/25 AUDIT TRACKER - SEPTEMBER 2025 (2025/26 Q2)**

Trish Mills updated the Committee on the audit tracker for Q2 with good progress on closures. Where there were extensions of dates members were assured that they were appropriate and realistic.

In terms of the External Audit recommendations, one had been closed with two not due during this cycle.

Peter Curran inquired if the revised due dates on the vehicle accident management recommendations, by December any update are they likely to be implemented  
Judith Bryce advised a group was looking at this and was acutely aware of deadlines and was confident this would be achieved.

## **The Committee:**

- 1. Received assurance on the monitoring of management actions to address recommendations in the Tracker and the rationale for the closure of actions.**
- 2. Raised minor concerns regarding the impact on the risks raised in audits by extending the dates for completion of management actions relating to the Vehicle Accident Management audit.**
- 3. Noted the progress reported against the remaining 2024/25 Data Quality internal audit recommendations which now concludes the actions associated with this audit.**

## **92/25 POLICY FOR APPROVAL**

Trish Mills explained that the Estates, Environmental and Facilities Management Policy was with the Committee for approval and had followed a robust governance process.

Trish Mills added the Trust was aiming to streamline policy approvals by delegating most decisions and only bringing essential policies. A review of this process was planned for next year and will be discussed with the ELT; more details will follow. For now, this policy was here for approval, though there was strong interest in shifting policies away due to the thorough oversight they already received.

The Chair advised the Committee should focus on policies that were more strategic.

**The Committee approved the Estates, Environmental and Facilities Management Policy.**

## **93/25 COMMITTEE CYCLE OF BUSINESS MONITORING REPORT AND PRIORITIES UPDATE**

Trish Mills advised that the Committee's annual priorities were reviewed and were progressing well.

**The Committee noted the update to the Committee Cycle of Business Monitoring Report and Committee Priorities.**

## **94/25 REFLECTION: SUMMARY OF DECISIONS AND ACTIONS**

The Chair drew out the actions that were agreed during the meeting.

- 1. Operations Update - Impact of Shift Overruns:** Trish Mills proposed a wider discussion on the most suitable forum, taking into account various impacts on the shift overruns both from a rural and urban perspective and will determine where to discuss this. The discussion will also ensure that each Committee's perspective is addressed.



2. Finance report - Shift overruns cost analysis - Members reviewed the financial implications of shift overruns for the Trust and agreed that an analysis of this matter would be included in the Finance Report at the upcoming Committee meeting in January 2026.
3. Digital Reporting - Jonny Sammut suggested a future deep-dive session on AI-driven cyber threats for the committee, given the fast-moving nature of these risks and the need for better understanding and questioning.

Members reflected that that the committee was currently well-positioned, with strong in-year financial management and effective agenda planning, but faced significant future challenges such as financial pressures, cyber risks, and changes within Welsh Government.

The committee's pivotal role in steering through these headwinds while also grasping opportunities for innovation and resource optimisation was acknowledged. The effective and efficient flow of the meeting was commended; with discussions regarding risk management embedded throughout.

**Meeting concluded at 12:50**

**Date of Next Meeting: 20 January 2026**