FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE
HIGHLIGHT REPORT TO BOARD

This report provides the Board with key escalation and discussion points at the last committee meeting. A full list of items discussed appears at the end of the report to enable members to raise any questions to the Chair which have not been drawn out in the report. The papers for these meetings can be found by following this link to the committee page on the Trust website.

Trust Board Meeting Date	26 November 2026
committee Meeting Date	17 November 2026
Chair	Jayne Beeslee

KEY ESCALATION AND DISCUSSION POINTS

ALERT

(Alert the Board to areas of attention)

1. No alerts for the board's attention arose from this meeting.

ADVISE

(Detail any areas of on-going monitoring, approvals, or new developments to be communicated)

2. The **membership of the committee was extended** to Ross Whitehead, Programme Director, Finance and Sustainability and Andy Swinburn, Chief Clinical Officer is also now a member of the committee.

3. The Committee noted a more positive position on the **Manchester Arena Inquiry** (MAI), with the Joint Commissioning Committee (JCC) recognising that the majority of the Trust's proposed preparedness and capability enhancements were reasonable and proportionate. However, the proposed frontline asset uplift remained unresolved, including additional 24/7 emergency ambulance crews, workforce and fleet to support recall-to-duty arrangements. A clearer route forward was emerging through the JCC-supported demand and capacity review to be commissioned by WAST, which will incorporate the resilience assumptions arising from our work in relation to the Inquiry, alongside JCC participation in the steering group. Assurance was also received that the risk should not be held by WAST alone, with the JCC committed to developing its own MAI risk, supported by the Trust's risk framing. While further tangible progress remained dependent on investment, the Committee welcomed the stronger alignment through commissioning, risk and future IMTP planning.

Financial Sustainability Programme

4. The Committee noted that the Financial Sustainability Programme, first established in 2022 in response to a challenging financial environment, had been refreshed and reshaped on a number of occasions, most recently to broaden its focus beyond savings and cost reduction towards longer-term organisational sustainability. Recognising that a programme of this scale required dedicated senior

leadership capacity, a Programme Director had now been appointed to provide greater pace, drive and programme discipline.

5. This evolving programme was described as having four principal objectives: delivering targeted cost reduction; improving productivity and efficiency; increasing income through commercial opportunities; and developing a longer-term approach to financial planning and organisational sustainability. The respective workstreams have distinct scope but interrelated ambitions with some being more developed and mature in terms of delivery. These are being taken forward through four corresponding workstreams: targeted cost reduction, productivity, commercial delivery and future financial planning. Importantly, the programme is not, in itself, the Trust's financial plan or the sole means by which financial balance is achieved. Wider financial governance, budgetary management, controls and grip continue to underpin the Trust's overall financial position. Committee expressed wide support for the programme and expressly encouraged the maintenance of the current momentum to leverage flexibility for future organisational sustainability.

6. Commercial development was recognised as an important component of the programme, with the ambition to generate sustainable additional income and maximise opportunities from the Trust's assets and capabilities. The committee reviewed the commercial development plan in more detail in the private session given commercial sensitivities.

7. **Members reflected** positively on the quality of discussion and constructive challenge, particularly around balancing finance, performance and quality. The value of strengthening links across committees was recognised, alongside the significant improvement in the clarity and presentation of committee papers, with the IMTP assurance report highlighted as a particularly strong example.

ASSURE

(Detail here assurance items the committee receives)

The following items will also be presented to board at their next meeting however members may benefit from the following points of discussion from the committee:

Financial Position

8. Financial performance months 6 and 7 2026/27 was reviewed and that detail will be in the board meeting on 26 November. Of note from the committee:
   - In considering the risk relating to failure to deliver the Trust's statutory financial duties (Risk 139), the committee noted that the financial position required continued active management to deliver the forecast year end position. Increased fuel costs had effectively absorbed available contingency, while the approximately £2.5m Welsh Risk Pool exposure technically remained a risk until the year-end position was confirmed; notwithstanding assurances from Welsh Government that it would be covered in-year. Committee members recognised the strong financial management demonstrated across the Trust and the importance of maintaining this discipline to secure the year-end balanced position.
   - Members considered whether savings attributed to vacancy management could genuinely be regarded as recurrent. Reassurance was given that budgets had been reduced on a recurrent basis and that some vacancy savings represented permanent establishment reductions, while

recognising that normal recruitment gaps created some variation in delivery of savings on a a recurring basis . There was confidence that the underlying recurrent budget reduction would carry forward in terms of savings delivery into 2027/28.

- Members recognised that securing further recurrent savings would require increasingly difficult choices. The need to balance the Trust's financial duties with its duty of quality was strongly emphasised. Quality impact assessments should therefore be integral to the development of savings proposals from the outset, with the board given early sight of potentially challenging or unpalatable choices so that the financial and quality implications could be considered together.

Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMTP)

9. Discussion in relation to strategic objectives 1, 3 and 6 highlighted organisational capacity and prioritisation as a recurring concern, with dependency mapping and further prioritisation being undertaken as part of the development of the 2027/28 IMTP to ensure that planned commitments are realistic and deliverable.

10. Particular attention was given to NEPTS, where the committee explored the relationship between productivity, quality and financial benefits. The improvement work, including revised rostering, is expected to create capacity for around 300 additional journeys per week, helping to address unmet need and reduce cancellations. The committee noted that this sits alongside financial savings from NEPTS and reflected a deliberate approach whereby productivity gains support improved service quality while separate savings measures contribute to financial balance, with quality impact assessment used to ensure the two are considered together.

11. The committee also considered the low-confidence rating for the all-Wales data-sharing deliverable, noting that progress is largely dependent on arrangements outside the Trust's direct control. Work is therefore underway to reshape the deliverable for the next IMTP and develop a more locally controlled alternative, including targeted data linkage with health boards to better understand patient journeys and outcomes.

Monthly Integrated Quality and Performance Review (MIQPR) August/September 2026)

12. The committee noted that, despite progress against a number of improvement actions, several key measures remained below the desired level and sought greater clarity on when improvement should realistically be expected and whether existing targets remained appropriate. It was noted that modelling for a number of EMS measures is being retuned using a full year of data from the new clinical model, with updated modelling expected in January 2027. This should enable clearer trajectories to be established and demonstrate the anticipated impact of individual improvement actions on performance.

13. Particular concern was raised regarding the NHS 111 service, where demand had increased significantly, including by around 20–25% in recent months compared with the previous year, with consequent deterioration in call abandonment and significant unmet demand. The committee heard that the current establishment would not enable achievement of the 10–15% abandonment target at prevailing demand levels, even with further efficiency measures. The changing pattern of demand, including increased in-hours use and potential deflection from primary care, was considered indicative of a wider question about the future role, specification and resourcing of 111. The committee

supported continued engagement with commissioners and wider NHS Wales strategic forums, alongside consideration of whether current targets and assumptions should be recalibrated as the evidence and modelling develop.

The following items are presented only to this committee, and therefore broader assurance is provided to the board as follows:

14. The committee received an update on the **digital portfolio**, and noted the following:
    - The Digital Oversight Group was embedding well, with processes refined following feedback from its initial meetings. Directorate-wide scoring had been introduced to strengthen organisational input into the prioritisation of digital requests.
    - Digital workforce capacity had strengthened, with key appointments to the digital front-end team expected to enable greater pace of delivery.
    - Members welcomed progress on AI governance, noting that the Trust's developing approach was being aligned with the emerging national framework. This was considered important given the growing use of AI and its potential contribution to productivity and financial sustainability.
    - Members highlighted the importance of digital resilience and business continuity, particularly following the recent Microsoft outage and a short power interruption at Vantage Point House. Existing contingency arrangements had responded effectively, but it was acknowledged that increasing reliance on digital services, AI and automated workflows would require robust and regularly tested fallback arrangements.

15. Additionally, members received **feedback on the use of ALBOT,** which was mixed but constructive; with around half of surveyed users reporting a positive experience. Further work was required to understand benefits realisation, including whether ALBOT was meeting users' needs and its impact on telephone 111 demand, with strengthened capacity within the digital front-end team expected to support continued development and improvement of the service. The feedback is available in the public papers from this meeting.

16. The committee received an update on the **information governance** position, controls and improvement activity. It was noted that there is continued pressure in relation to Subject Access Request (SAR) and Freedom of Information (FOI) compliance, including the timeliness and ageing of outstanding requests and associated workforce pressures. Members noted that ELT had agreed a short-term improvement programme across SARs and FOIs to address underlying process and resilience issues, with continued oversight through the Information Governance Steering Group.

17. The **shift overruns internal audit report** (reasonable assurance) was received by way of information, noting that the People and Culture Committee will oversee the actions.

18. The **audit tracker** Q2 report was received with one audit action on a final date. This related to the Audit Wales Urgent and Emergency Care report and in particular the 111 website. Members were assured that the extension of time to complete the action did not materially increase the risk.

19. In **private session** members discussed the submission to Welsh Government of the vehicle procurement business justification case and endorsed this for board approval. Due to sensitivities, the emergency preparedness, response and resilience annual report 2025/26 and the incident response plan were also taken in private session, along with the report and risk on cyber management.

RISKS

Risk Management: The committee reviewed the principal risks for its remit and noted that the risks within its remit had been substantively considered through the preceding agenda discussions and welcomed the introduction of a new Information Governance risk domain within the risk assessment framework, strengthening consideration of information governance impacts when assessing organisational risk. There are no escalations for the board. The risks within the remit of the committee are as follows: -

Risk 260 *A significant and sustained cyber-attack on WAST, NHS Wales and interdependent networks resulting in denial of service and loss of critical systems* remains at a score of 20 (4x5).

Risk 641 *The Trust's inability to implement the learning from all relevant Manchester Arena Inquiry (MAI) recommendations impacting its response to a major incident/mass casualty incident* remains static at a score of 20 (4x5).

Risk 671 *Unauthorised or Inappropriate use of AI technologies* remains at a score of 16 (4x4) during this review period remains at a score of 16 (4x4).

Risk 690 *SAR and Disclosure of Records Compliance* remains at a score of 16 (4x4), despite a potential reduction in score being discussed by the ELT remains at a score of 16 (4x4).

Risk 594 *The Trust's inability to provide a civil contingency response in the event of a major incident and maintain business continuity causing patient harm and death* remains at a score of 15 (3x5) following exhaustion of internal mitigations.

Risk 139 *Failure to Deliver our Statutory Financial Duties* remains at a score of 12 (3x4) in line with the financial position for 2026/27.

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*. Members were asked to note that the ELT considered proposals to reframe this risk to focus on the commissioning and contractual framework, including clear expectations, accountability and funding arrangements, and the associated impact on the delivery of safe and effective services.

COMMITTEE AGENDA FOR MEETING		
Financial performance months 6 and 7	Financial sustainability report	IMTP
Manchester Arena Inquiry update	MIQPR	Digital reporting
Risk management and BAF	IG report	Audit tracker Q2
Q2 Operations report	Shift overruns internal audit	

COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE						
Name	**19 May 2026**	**21 Jul 2026**	**15 Sep 2026[1]**	**17 Nov 2026[2]**	**19 Jan 2027**	**16 Mar 2027**
Jayne Beeslee (Chair)						

[1] Emma Wood was in attendance for this meeting
[2] Phil Berrington, Trust Board Chair, joined for this meeting

COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE						
Bethan Evans			[3]			
Peter Curran		Until item 8[4]				
Chris Turley		[5]				
Rachel Marsh		James Houston				
Lee Brooks		Mark Harris				
Liam Williams						
Director of People		Liz Rogers	Bev Flood			
Jonny Sammut		Leanne Smith		Leanne Smith		
Trish Mills	Julie Boalch					
Hugh Parry	Until 12:40					
Damon Turner						
Matt Dugdale						
Penny Durrant						
Ross Whitehead						
Andy Swinburyn						

	Attended
	Deputy attended
	Apologies received
	No longer member

[3] Not in the meeting for items 9 to 12
[4] Colin Dennis and Emma Wood were in attendance for this meeting also
[5] Jason Collins was in attendance for this meeting