

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE OPEN MEETING OF THE WELSH AMBULANCE SERVICES NHS TRUST BOARD, HELD on THURSDAY 10 JUNE 2021
Meeting Conducted via Teams

PRESENT:

Martin Woodford	Chair of the Board
Jason Killens	Chief Executive
Lee Brooks	Director of Operations
Keith Cox	Board Secretary
Emrys Davies	Non Executive Director
Professor Kevin Davies	Non Executive Director and Vice Chair
Bethan Evans	Non Executive Director
Estelle Hitchon	Director of Partnerships and Engagement
Paul Hollard	Non Executive Director
Nathan Holman	Trade Union Partner
Ceri Jackson	Non Executive Director
Navin Kalia	Deputy Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
Dr Brendan Lloyd	Medical Director
Rachel Marsh	Director of Planning and Performance (Part)
Hugh Parry	Trade Union Partner
Claire Roche	Executive Director of Quality and Nursing
Joga Singh	Non Executive Director
Andy Swinburn	Associate Director of Paramedicine
Chris Turley	Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
Martin Turner	Non Executive Director
Claire Vaughan	Director of Workforce & OD

IN ATTENDANCE

Hugh Bennett	Head of Planning and Performance
Jill Gill	Financial Accountant
Steve Owen	Corporate Governance Officer
Jeff Prescott	Corporate Governance Officer

47/21 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, he explained that the meeting was being recorded and although the public were not in attendance the full minutes would be made available as an open public record. The contents of the agenda, in the main, the Accounts, Accountability report and the Annual Performance report will be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Trust on 29 July 2021 at which the public will be invited to attend.

Apologies

Apologies were received from Andy Haywood, Director of Digital Services.

Declarations of interest

The standing declarations of interest were formally recorded in respect of:

Professor Kevin Davies, Independent Trustee of St John Cymru, Emrys Davies, retired member of Unite, Nathan Holman, Member of the Llannon Community Council and Ceri Jackson, a Trustee of the Stroke Association

RESOLVED: That the standing declarations and apologies as described above were formally recorded.

48/21 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS PROCESS

Annual Accounts

The Director of Finance and Corporate Resources Chris Turley, presented the annual accounts which had been reviewed and scrutinised at Audit Committee and were being submitted to the Board for approval.

He drew attention to the following key headlines:

1. Unlike last year, there had not been an extension to the deadline for the draft accounts and they had been submitted to Welsh Government and Audit Wales on 30 April 2021 for their consideration
2. All the statutory financial duties had been met and the Trust retained a surplus of £70k which was effectively a breakeven position; income was c£242m with a Net expenditure of c£242m. Reference was made to the breakdown of income and expenditure within the accounts
3. There had, overall, been an increase in income of £30m from the previous year, much of which related to the impact of Covid
4. The capital in year spend was delivered in line with the Capital Expenditure Limit as set by Welsh Government
5. Since being presented to Audit Committee two very minor presentational changes had been made to the accounts and these were highlighted in the covering report
6. An additional contingent liability was entered in the accounts which related to potential senior clinician pension contributions; the impact on the Trust was likely to be minimal
7. Impact of Covid-19. Details of the costs and income was illustrated in the accounts

8. Tangible fixed assets, the Net Book Value this year was £89m, the previous year it was £87m
9. Debtors, this had increased by £7m, £4m related to the Covid -19 bonus payment to staff which was paid in May but was required to be accounted for as expenditure in the accounts for the year 2020/21

Martin Turner, Chair of the Audit Committee gave an overview of discussion at the Audit Committee meeting on 3 June in respect of the accounts. The Committee had thanked Chris Turley and his team in particular Jill Gill and had recommended the accounts for approval. It was a credit to the team that the accounts presented were of high quality and also to the Trust for maintaining a breakeven balance. In terms of the Audit Wales opinion, the Committee noted this would be an unqualified opinion on the accounts which were considered to provide a true and fair view of the Trust's financial position for the 2020/21 financial year.

Accountability Report

Keith Cox presented the Accountability Report explaining that it consisted of three sections; the Corporate Governance report, the Remuneration and staff report and the Parliamentary accountability and audit report.

The report was subject to Audit Wales scrutiny and additionally as part of the scrutiny process, had been submitted to Welsh Government, any comments from both had been included into the report.

The main part was the Corporate Governance report which contained the Annual Governance Statement; and this included governance structures and how the Trust managed risks. Furthermore, a reasonable assurance opinion had been provided by the Internal Auditors in terms of how the Trust had performed from a governance perspective.

Another key document was the Remuneration and staff report which gave details of senior manager salaries and staff numbers including sickness figures.

A note of thanks was recorded for Mike Armstrong in preparing the report.

Comments:

Martin Turner added that it was a well written and concise report providing an easy read.

The Chair, on behalf of the Board asked that a note of thanks be recorded for Jill Gill, Mike Armstrong and others involved and expressed appreciation for their efforts in producing the high quality reports.

RESOLVED: That the Trust's Annual Accounts and Accountability Report for 2020/21 were adopted and approved by the Trust Board.

Chris Turley advised that the final version of the report had been presented to the Audit Committee on 3 June and remained extant for the Board.

It was intended that Audit Wales would be providing an unqualified opinion on the accounts

A small number of recommended improvements for the next financial year had been recorded which was consistent with previous years

RESOLVED: That the Audit Wales opinion was received and noted.

50/21 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/2021

Prior to presenting the report Hugh Bennett explained that it was produced in line with the NHS Wales requirements and drew the Board's attention to the following key metrics:

1. There were 56 Serious Adverse Incidents during the reporting year, compared with 42 from the previous year
2. The percentage of 111 calls received by the Trust that were classed as being abandoned was 11% - the target was 5%
3. The 999 call answering performance had exceeded the target with 95% of calls being answered within three seconds
4. The red response target to reach patients within eight minutes was achieved in four of the 12 months
5. Unit hours production; this had improved from the previous year
6. Sickness absence was reported as 7.36%, which considering the pandemic was relatively low
7. In terms of Covid vaccinations, 78% of frontline staff had received their first or second vaccine as at 31 March 2021
8. Fewer hours had been lost to hospital handover delays than the previous year
9. 45% of emergency patients were conveyed to ED's compared to 46% the previous year

Comments:

1. Was there any value in looking at the performance outside the 65%? Jason Killens confirmed that the Trust was over the 65% in terms of the nine minute target and advised that this would be illustrated at the AGM
2. Serious Adverse Incidents, were these related to the health system or was it much wider including social care? Claire Roche acknowledged that the whole systems included the social care aspect. Anecdotally she

informed the Board that she had met with Cardiff City Council and focussed a discussion on dealing with social care issues in the Community

3. Following a query regarding process, the Board recognised that the report timeframe precluded its presentation at a Committee prior to the Board; noting that a great deal of information was included within the Annual report
4. Going forward, Members felt it would be useful to cross reference performance outcomes which were included as part of the IMTP process
5. The Board acknowledged the well-presented report which gave an accurate overview of performance over the past year; noting there had clearly been challenges faced by the Trust during the pandemic
6. Members agreed that it would be sensible for the Chairs Working Group to consider the Annual Performance report process in terms of sign off and how it interfaced with each of the Committees

The Chair suggested that at the forthcoming AGM, any key learning points from the year be illustrated as part of the update. He added that the formal escalation process the Trust conducted due to the service pressures should be highlighted at the AGM for the public's attention

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Annual Performance Report was approved; and**
- (2) a note of thanks was recorded for Hugh Bennett and his team for compiling the report.**

51/21 ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

Estelle Hitchon explained that the purpose of the report was to provide the narrative that fastened together the three statutory reports; the performance report, the accountability report and the financial statements and notes together

This year's report differed slightly from previous years in that it reflected revised Welsh Government guidance and contained a chronicle of the pandemic and its impact upon the Trust

Members noted that following a very minor amendment, the report had been approved by Audit Wales and was due for submission to Welsh Government tomorrow

Comments:

1. The Board acknowledged it was a well written document and recorded a note of thanks to Estelle and her team

2. Should details of the Welsh language and the environment be captured within the report? Keith Cox advised that the Welsh language was mentioned to within the accountability report. In terms of the environment and sustainability report Estelle advised that this had not been required for this financial year in the WG issued Manual for Accounts. Whilst this was expected to be a one off, the detail that would have been included this had continued to be captured and can be provided as a link to the final published version of the Annual Report.
3. The Chair commented that at the AGM, the Trust should highlight more of the IMTP deliverables that were successful, including the Grange hospital and the 111 service

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report was approved.

Date of next meeting: 29 July 2021