

**CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE OPEN MEETING OF THE WELSH AMBULANCE  
SERVICES NHS TRUST BOARD, HELD on THURSDAY 28 MAY 2020  
Meeting Conducted via Zoom**

**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
Bethan Evans	Non Executive Director
Pam Hall	Non Executive Director
Andy Haywood	Director of Digital Services
Estelle Hitchon	Director of Partnerships and Engagement
Paul Hollard	Non Executive Director
Nathan Holman	Trade Union Partner
Dr Brendan Lloyd	Medical Director
Rachel Marsh	Director of Planning and Performance
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
Damon Turner	Trade Union Partner
Martin Turner	Non Executive Director
Claire Vaughan	Director of Workforce & OD

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Mike Armstrong	Assistant Board Secretary
Julie Boalch	Corporate Governance Manager
Stephen Clarke	Head of Mental Health (Part)
Joel Garner	Communications Officer
Leanne Hawker	Head of Patient Experience and Community Involvement
Lois Hough	Head of External Communications
Fflur Jones	External Audit
Osian Lloyd	Internal Audit
Naomi Machin	Communications Officer
Steve Owen	Corporate Governance Officer
Jeff Prescott	Corporate Support Officer
Rachel Watling	Head of Internal Communications

**OBSERVERS/MEMBERS OF  
THE PUBLIC**

Sarah Atherton  
Bethan Barne  
Bob Barr  
Cheryl Carlisle  
Geraint Davies  
Keith Dorrington  
Catherine Goodwin  
Sean Hamilton  
Sian Howys  
Mandy Jenkins  
Superintendent Jones-John  
Isobel Jonmes  
Malcom Latham  
Victoria Madelin  
Rhodri Morgan  
Dennis Moss  
James Shaughnessy  
Glyn Thomas  
Alun Williams  
Helena Woodford

113 viewed on Facebook

### **APOLOGIES**

Chantal Patel

University Representative

## **48/20 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

### **Welcome and apologies**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and advised that it was an open session of the Board; it was being conducted through the medium of Zoom and being broadcasted on Facebook; a first for the Trust. He explained some of the administrative functions of Zoom for the benefit of Trust Board members and advised any members of the public that they would not be able to ask any questions as it was a meeting being held in public and not a public meeting

### **Apologies**

Apologies were recorded in respect of Chantal Patel, University representative

### **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 and Nathan Holman, Councillor of Llannon Community Council.

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

## **49/20 CHAIR INTRODUCTION AND UPDATE**

The Chair, on behalf of the Board placed on record the Trust's appreciation of the efforts made by all staff, particularly those on the front line and also thanked senior managers for their dedication and leadership during the pandemic. He then reflected on the sad loss of Paramedic Gerallt Davies due to Covid-19-19.

He recognised the importance of staying connected during this time and was thankful for the technology available to the Trust which had enabled staff and senior management to stay connected and hold productive discussions. It had also enabled Committees to continue to meet, albeit virtually, and to conduct normal Trust business.

There had been many positives which had arisen as a result the pandemic; dialogue with staff had improved, technology had shown different ways of working and there had been a real sense of togetherness and connection with Health Boards and the general public,

**RESOLVED: That the update was noted.**

## **50/20 CHIEF EXECUTIVE UPDATE - VERBAL**

The Chief Executive echoed the Chair's comments in respect of this new era of public engagement and transparency of the Trust's business with its first live streamed Trust Board meeting in public today. As the Trust continued to learn to work with this and other platforms it would inevitably help it to improve and shape the services provided by listening and connecting more widely with communities.

He drew attention to the following key areas:

1. Operating arrangements for next three to six months had been published which focused around four themes: the ability to respond flexibly; the restart of important programmes; supporting staff; and learning from and keeping those new initiatives that had worked
2. There had been work focusing on working with Trade Union partners regarding Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and ensuring workplaces were Covid-19 secure. This has included the boosting of the local NHS supply chain stock to the Trust; orders of new personal issue face masks for staff who failed fit testing and site specific risk assessments in the CCC estate
3. Military aid would continue for a further six weeks in both vehicle decontamination and non-clinical emergency ambulance driving roles
4. Future recovery and resilience phases - Going forward there would be several phases the Trust will embark upon to return to some form of normal business. These will include the debriefing phase, planning for future phases and recovery and resilience planning. There would, over the next six to twelve months, be a number of "response" and "monitoring" phases. The regular number of key groups and delivery cells meetings had been curtailed.
5. A plan for a gradual return to some workplaces from mid to late June was underway providing those workplaces were Covid-19-19 secure

6. Work was ongoing to deliver year one of the EMS demand and capacity review in terms of recruiting which was progressing positively
7. A new EMT conversion course, being conducted virtually was due to commence in July
8. Work was underway regarding delivery and roll out of the electronic Patient Clinical Record (ePCR)
9. Red 8 performance for May was currently at 70.2% and May would therefore deliver in excess of the minimum standard nationally
10. A new application had recently been released, 'Consultant Connect' which enabled clinicians to talk to other clinicians directly about their patient in the hospital setting
11. Further to the Chair's comments in thanking staff, the Chief Executive reiterated his personal thanks to all staff during this pandemic. and also mentioned staff who were in intensive care as a result of Covid-19-19

#### **Comments:**

1. Was the Trust involving the police when there had been incidents of violence against staff? Jason Killens advised that the Trust had a zero tolerance and perused action against people who were violent and aggressive towards staff and had seen a number of them jailed for such offences. Claire Vaughan added that the Trust worked closely with the police and Crown Prosecution Service to ensure the safety of staff. Claire Roche remarked that there had been significant media interest in these incidents and although in the minority, the impact on affected staff was long lasting.
2. There had been concerns about the lack of people going to A&E, was this likely to change once restrictions were eased? Jason Killens advised that in the last 14 days the Trust had seen a steady increase in non-Covid-19 related calls such as chest pains etc. Lee Brooks added that 111 services had seen a significant increase in activity at the beginning of the pandemic which had now reduced. There had been a small and steady increase in non-Covid-19 related calls since April but this remained down compared to pre-pandemic levels. Jason Killens added that the overall message was that the NHS remained open for business and would continue to be there for those in need of medical assistance.
3. Dr Brendan Lloyd commented that calls relating to mental health were anticipated to increase significantly following lock down measures being eased; the Trust would factor this into any future planning going forward

**RESOLVED: That the update was noted.**

## **51/20 PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

### **Minutes**

The Minutes of the closed session of the Trust Board held on 30 April 2020 and 18 May 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

#### Action Log:

Number 29 and 30 - Application for University status – Estelle Hitchon updated the Committee advising that the application would be re-considered and Welsh Government (WG) would reconsider this in September. Keith Cox advised that work was ongoing in terms of preparation work, i.e. Terms of Reference. Items to remain on the log

Number 31 and 32 – Rachel Marsh explained that the IMTP was on the agenda today but not a normal quarterly update, these actions to remain on the log.

Number 33 – Claire Roche advised that the patient safety report, containing details of open PTR actions, would be presented at the next Trust Board meeting. Remain on log

Number 34 – Revised Standing Orders, query why HEIW was not included. Keith Cox advised this had been raised with WG but a response was still awaited. Remain on log.

Number 35 – To develop the Trust's thinking, next steps and strategies around violence and aggression – Claire Vaughan gave an update explaining that this would be considered at the P and C committee in July, with an update to the Board on 1 October 2020

Number 36 – Pilot services initiative, Claire Roche explained that this had been paused due to Covid-19-19, an update would be provided at a future Board meeting

The Chair asked for the status column within the log to be populated and updated for the June Trust Board meeting.

#### **RESOLVED: That**

- (1) the minutes of the meeting of the closed session of the Board held on 26 March 2020 and 18 May 2020 were confirmed as a correct record; and**
- (2) the action log was considered and updated as described above.**

#### **52/20 DISCHARGING BOARD AND COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES DURING COVID-19-19**

Keith Cox gave an overview of the governance arrangements during the pandemic advising the Board of meetings that had taken place and those that had been rearranged.

He further added that it was essential good governance was maintained and would stand up to any future scrutiny. Overall, only two committees had been suspended with others being moved to alternative dates. During this time, three Chairs actions meetings had taken place to address urgent issues which had arisen. On the whole, the Trust can be assured that good governance had been maintained throughout.

In terms of the guidance received from Welsh Government, assurance can be taken that this had been adhered to.

#### Comments:

1. Chris Turley added there was more focus now on ensuring good financial governance and the Trust had been particularly strong in this area, the monitoring of which was carried out by the Finance and Performance committee.
2. The Chair of Audit Committee Pam Hall, commented that the Audit Committee meeting had been deferred to 18 June 2020 due to the change in the annual accounts timetable issued by WG. In the interim, close liaison had been maintained with the Board Secretary and both internal and external auditors.
3. In terms of the Quest Committee, the Chair Emrys Davies advised that the Committee had recently met and the governance had been focused and the requirements from WG had been maintained
4. Paul Hollard, Chair of the People and Culture Committee (P and C) assured the Board that whilst the meeting scheduled in April had been postponed to 2 June 2020, several P and C issues had been discussed at other Committees
5. Jason Killens assured the Board that the appropriate due diligence in terms of overall governance had, and continued to be undertaken.
6. Keith Cox explained that a robust structure of record keeping was in place to capture the decisions being made during the pandemic.

**RESOLVED: That the Trust Board noted and commented on how Board and Committee responsibilities have been discharged by the Trust during the Covid-19-19 pandemic response phase.**

## **53/20 PATIENT/STAFF STORY**

Steve Clarke, the Trust's Head of Mental Health spoke to the Board about his experiences during the pandemic following his redeployment to the Clinical Contact Centre (CCC). He emphasised the importance of recognising Mental Health issues when a caller contacted the Trust and the services which could be offered. The addition of mental health nurses to the CCC had given the Trust the ability to offer a more substantial service. This had allowed more focus on mental health callers and ensuring they were receiving the appropriate help and support.

The team had received very positive feedback from colleagues in the CCC who were appreciative of the work they did and recognised the increased need for such services at this time. Steve Clarke recognised that when considering mental health and the impact of the pandemic, it was important to include Trust staff within that group as everyone was vulnerable to incidents of mental health, not just members of the public.

The Trust now has a good infrastructure and was well placed to deliver mental health support, especially now that this service was expected to see additional demand.

A mental health keep talking portal had been set up with a target of reaching 50% of the workforce by the end of the calendar year; this had now been met with the platform now being widely known and used amongst staff. It also gave staff immediate access to online therapy.

## Comments:

1. What was the key learning of the last ten weeks and what were the top three things that the Trust could do to improve services and support? Steve Clarke explained that the Trust had a Mental Health access review to see how people were accessing care and this traced their journeys to discover how experiences of support could be improved.

The demand was significantly different to that of the Police whereby the Trust was seeing new callers as opposed to callers who were already known to mental health services. A significant amount of support could be given telephonically; examples given included sourcing food, housing and other support services to help those in crisis.

In terms of improving services and support, fostering and instilling a culture of Wellbeing was vital to addressing mental health.

Jason Killens was keen to see, through the Executive Management Team (EMT), an update on the measures being taken to improve mental health support to staff. Claire Roche advised that the evaluation of the learning would be presented to the EMT in due course. Claire Vaughan added that the Trust was in the process of refreshing its approach to contact and engagement in terms of mental health.

2. The proactive approach towards mental health was very positive and it should be borne in mind that once the worst of the pandemic was over the impact across Wales from a mental health perspective would be prevalent

The Board acknowledged and thanked Steve Clarke and his team for their support during the pandemic and looked forward to the outcome of the further work being undertaken.

**RESOLVED: That the update was noted.**

## **54/20 STRATEGIC EQUALITY OBJECTIVES, ANNUAL REPORT AND GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING**

Claire Vaughan gave an update on the Trust's Strategic Equality Objectives (SEO) adding that the Trust was required to publish an annual equality report and gender pay gap report. Due to Covid-19 the previously scheduled reporting dates had been suspended.

She spoke about the gender pay gap and recognised that the majority of the Trust's staff were male. It was noted that there were a number of external factors to consider such as traditional family roles and child care but the Trust was making good progress towards closing the gender pay gap. The Trust was continuing to engage with partners and had seen an increase in the recruitment of female staff members.

Members attention was drawn to the following:

1. The SEO's were being submitted for approval and Claire Vaughan gave assurance that the Welsh version was currently being translated.

2. The Data reports followed a standard format but required further work to connect with other data sources in the Trust which would enable for more sophisticated analysis and understanding. The Trust was working with colleagues to improve and make the data more accessible
3. Gender pay gap report, this was a measure that showed the average difference of average earnings between men and women. The work force was predominantly male, and the report highlighted that more women were being employed in the Trust and being encouraged to apply for leadership roles.

## Comments

1. Treating People Fairly Plan, and the phrase 'work in partnership' – could this be expanded to explain who the partners were? Claire Vaughan explained that considerable work was being conducted by Leanne Hawker, in which there was engagement amongst others with the Equality Commission and several other key stakeholders across communities, whilst trying to make the plan as accessible as possible.
2. Measurement indicators for each of the objectives, assurance was asked if they were feasible. Claire Vaughan commented that the primary concern was data from the Electronic Staff Register was still relatively basic. Further work was being undertaken to improve the data and consideration on this would be further discussed at the next meeting of the People and Culture Committee meeting.
3. Following a query in terms of the tables relating to nationalities, Claire Vaughan explained that these were the standard categories issued nationally; the Trust was unable to influence this particular data
4. In terms of mentoring for female staff what was the Trust doing? Estelle Hitchon gave details of how the Trust was providing support in this area
5. As the Trust developed and delivered the strategy would it look to broaden the number of partners? Claire Vaughan explained that a great deal of work was taking place across directorates; Claire Roche added that communicating and engaging with harder to reach groups was being focused on. Estelle Hitchon informed the Board there was an opportunity to connect with people in a different way; and the Trust should harness the technology going forward

Jason Killens, on behalf of the Board, thanked Claire Vaughan and her team in developing and leading the work. The objectives for the next four years will enable the Trust to develop a culture that was inclusive and diverse.

**RESOLVED: That the Board noted and endorsed the reports.**

## **55/20 PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

### **2020/21 IMTP Progress Report**

Rachel Marsh provided the Committee with an overview on progress and drew attention to the following:



1. Delivery of the demand and capacity programme – The Trust was looking to recruit 571 staff in total this year in order to deliver turnover and increase the workforce by 136, 57% of this had already been achieved
2. Welsh Government have introduced a quarterly operational framework and the Trust has produced its plan for Quarter one. This covered both existing IMTP priorities and learning from Covid-19 response.
3. The Trust was now considering which areas within the IMTP that could be delivered; a report would be presented at the June Board meeting to include an update on the recovery phase of the IMTP

Comments:

1. In terms of the objective regarding providing care closer to home and avoid transporting patients to hospital; what were the Trust's views on the clinical governance aspects of 'Consultant Connect', an Application designed to make clinician to clinician communication uncomplicated. Dr Brendan Lloyd commented that this system was being used in England and informed the Board that it was steadily being rolled out across Wales, with Swansea Bay being the first to go live. Dr Lloyd explained in more detail how the application worked and gave a list of those pathways which the Trust would be linked into, for example Emergency medicine, elderly care and stroke care. He added it was very early days and would be submitting update reports through the Quest Committee
2. Following a question regarding the opening of the Grange hospital. Rachel Marsh stated that originally it had been scheduled to be open in March 2021, however, work was ongoing to facilitate a revised date
3. Lee Brooks commented that now was a great opportunity to take forward the new innovations that had emerged during the past few weeks

**RESOLVED: That**

- (1) the progress made on key IMTP deliverables in Q1 to date, in light of the COVID-19-19 pandemic response was noted; and**
- (2) the approach to flexible recovery planning which will inform any changes to the milestones and actions required to deliver the IMTP, with a fuller review to be brought back to the June Board meeting was noted.**

**Monthly Integrated Quality and Performance Report - April 2020**

Rachel Marsh explained that the report highlighted the Trust's position as at the end of April 2020. It did not consist of the full data as normal but gave a sense of the status of the top ten indicators; a more comprehensive report would be presented in due course.

Comments:

1. It would be useful to understand some of the nuances and variations across Wales and understand where the challenges existed

2. In terms of the approved IMTP, there would be a requirement for some areas within it to change, how flexible were WG in regard to this? Rachel Marsh explained that formal guidance had not yet been received from WG; much of the IMTP was extant but there would be a degree of flexibility.
3. Lee Brooks gave an overview of the red performance data explaining the challenges in determining whether the level of demand experienced during the winter period would continue.
4. Was the increase in the percentage of calls triaged by a nurse advisor which ended in transfer to alternative care advice Covid-19-19 related? Lee Brooks advised it was due to the increased volume of calls associated with Covid-19-19 symptoms and application of self-care options other than ambulance response, this had presented the shift in percentage

**RESOLVED: That the performance outlined in the April Monthly Integrated Quality and Performance Report was discussed and noted.**

## **56/20 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AS AT MONTH 01 2020/21**

Chris Turley provided the Board with an update on the financial performance of the Trust for Month One of the 2020/21 Financial year.

This was set against delegated budgets translated into the detail required from the IMTP financial plan and the Board approved budget for 2020/21. Detailed delegated budget meetings between the CEO and senior budget holders were now to be held.

The Trust entered the year in a fairly healthy position financially although noted that it had since faced significant costs due to the pandemic.

Chris Turley drew attention to the following points:

1. The draft accounts for 2019/20 had been submitted to Audit Wales, and would be presented to the Audit committee on 18 June 2020 and the subsequent Board meeting on 25 June 2020 for approval.
2. By quarter one a much more comprehensive position would be available
3. Capital – A detailed discussion was held at the last Finance and Performance (F and P) Committee meeting which considered what commitments would be brought forward and what the plan was going forward, with a detailed initial capital plan to be presented to the next Trust Board meeting.
4. Covid-19-19 costs, £1.4m in month one; there was a risk that all costs identified as Covid-19-19 related may not be fully refunded. There will clearly be scrutiny from WG in respect of these costs

Comments:

Martin Turner, Chair of F and P added that whilst WG had been very supportive and encouraging it was still a challenging year to achieve the savings target. In terms of the Capital programme there was a requirement to agree this as a Board going forward. There

was a need to focus more on the top issues affecting the Trust, F and P Committee would be scrutinising and focussing on this data

**RESOLVED: That**

- (1) the Month one revenue and capital financial position and performance of the Trust as at 30 April 2020 was noted; and**
- (2) the Month one Welsh Government monitoring return submissions included with Appendix 1 (as required by WG) were noted.**

**57/20 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER EXTRAORDINARY QUARTERLY REPORT, QUARTER 4 , 2019/20 AND PART Q1 2020/21 (COVID-19-19)**

Claire Roche presented the report explaining that it was an extraordinary report and that due to Covid-19-19 the CRR had not been through the normal scrutiny and monitoring process; notwithstanding this, it was recently presented at the Executive Management Team (EMT) and the Quest Committee.

Since Quest, a number of risks had undergone an assessment and therefore this report provided an up to date report of risks currently sitting on the Corporate Risk Register.

**Key risks:**

1. Number 69, lack of preparedness for infectious diseases, specifically around the Fit testing compliance of respiratory protective masks for front line staff. The risk had undergone a major review and the risk score had significantly reduced; the EMT has recommended that this risk now sat within the Quality directorate risk register and be removed from the CRR
2. New risk, number 303, this concerned the recognition of the donning of PPE which could adversely affect the timeliness to respond to patients who required resuscitation. The risk was being reviewed on a regular basis in conjunction with medical and clinical colleagues. Work was on-going to seek to mitigate the risk by practical rapid donning arrangements
3. Numbers 223 and 224, both related to the usual pressures within the system; one being the ability to attend to patients in the community and the other about the risk to the patient presenting at ED as a result of delays being encountered outside A and E departments. These were also being reviewed, both have reduced significantly and had reached their target score

**Comments**

1. Number 69, lack of preparedness for infectious diseases, confused as to why this would be de- escalated to a directorate risk register given there may be further spikes in the pandemic? Claire Roche explained this was a specific risk around Fit testing and further explained that a new risk assessment would need to be undertaken. Members noted that the Command and Control structure managed the risks in real time

2. Jason Killens commented on the reasons for the overall improved output and better patient experiences. In terms of the use of PPE, it was inevitable there would be a delay to some patients depending on the circumstances. Andy Swinburn gave an overview on the training being undertaken to speed up the process regarding the donning of high level PPE which would alleviate the delay in response. Jason Killens commented that the Trust was continually remaining agile to current and any new risks emerging

**RESOLVED: That the Trust Board received and noted the Corporate Risk Register.**

## **58/20 COVID-19-19 QUALITY GOVERNANCE SPECIAL REPORT**

Claire Roche presented the report advising the Board that it had already been presented at the recent Quest meeting.

The report outlined how the Trust had maintained and discharged its responsibility for quality while continuing to focus on patient safety, patient experience and the health, safety and wellbeing of all those involved within the Trust.

Comments:

1. Emrys Davies, Chair of Quest informed the Board that the report had been discussed at length and the assurance gained was in line with WG expectation. The Committee was satisfied and impressed with the way the Trust had been able to adapt, develop and change its operation and performance to the challenges faced.
2. Members commended the CEO and the team on the regular update meetings for staff which had and would continue to improve working relationships; this was reiterated by Estelle Hitchon adding it was a great opportunity to solidify the connectivity with staff and the public on a range of issues going forward.
3. Had any content of the report been included in the Trust's submission to the Health and Social Care Committee by way of evidence in terms of the impact of the pandemic? Estelle Hitchon advised that she would cross reference with the report to ensure the relevant content was included.
4. Clarification was sought in terms of the number of Covid-19 related incidents entered on Datix (Software that records incidents) Claire Roche explained that Datix had been updated to record all incidents relating to Covid-19-19. The main types of incidents being reported related to communication issues between various departments and staff PPE issues

**RESOLVED: That the report was noted.**

## **59/20 CONSENT ITEMS**

### **Update from Committees**

Quest:

Emrys Davies drew attention to the following areas:

1. Outlined the work being carried out by the Patient Experience Community Involvement team
2. Infection Prevention Control work had stepped up significantly due to the pandemic
3. Complaints handling and Coroners activity continued
4. Safeguarding processes were still in place and were operational

Finance and Performance:

Martin Turner advised that meetings had been held albeit with limited agendas. There had been a focus on the priority areas. There was a meeting in June which would consider the Capital programme

The Audit and People and Culture Committee had not met recently

### **Minutes of Committees**

1. Quality, Patient Safety and Experience Committee meeting held on 25 February 2020
2. Finance and Performance Committee meeting held on 18 March 2020
3. Remuneration Committee meeting held on 27 June 2019, 8 August 2019, 17 December 2019, 7 February 2020 and 31 March 2020

**RESOLVED: That the Committee updates were noted and the Minutes of the above meetings were endorsed.**

### **60/20 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Lee Brooks thanked the Non Executive Directors, Community First Responders and voluntary car drivers for their contributions during the pandemic. Estelle Hitchon commented that a social media campaign to recognise volunteers was underway
2. Chris Turley made reference to a Desktop audit on ISO 14001, (effective environmental management) in which the Trust's accreditation had been extended for another 12 months

The Board recorded a note of thanks to all those involved in organising the Zoom event.

**RESOLVED: That the AOB was noted.**

**Date of next meeting: 25 June 2020**