

**Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB)**  
**Confirmed Minutes of the People & Culture Committee**  
**held in Public on 10 April 2025**  
**in the Boardroom, Carlton Court, St Asaph and via Teams**

<b>Committee Members Present</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>
Dyfed Jones	Independent Member (Chair of People & Culture Committee)
Karen Balmer	Independent Member ( <i>part meeting</i> )
Clare Budden	Independent Member
<b>In Attendance</b>	
Tehmeena Ajmal	Chief Operating Officer
Jason Brannan	Deputy Director of People
Nesta Collingridge	Head of Risk Management ( <i>via Teams – part meeting</i> )
Dyfed Edwards	Chair of the Health Board
Dave Harries	Head of Internal Audit ( <i>via Teams</i> )
Eleri Hughes-Jones	Head of Welsh Language Services ( <i>part meeting</i> )
Stuart Keen	Director of Environment & Estates ( <i>via Teams</i> )
Teresa Owen	Executive Director of Allied Health Professionals & Health Science
Georgina Roberts	Senior Associate Director People Services
Katie Sargent	Associate Director – Employee Experience & Engagement ( <i>part meeting</i> )
Carol Shillabeer	Chief Executive
Pam Wenger	Director of Corporate Governance
<b>Committee Support</b>	
Philippa Peake-Jones	Head of Corporate Affairs
Laura Jones	Acting Corporate Governance Manager

<b>Agenda Item</b>
<b>OPENING BUSINESS</b>
<b>PC25/25 Welcome and Apologies</b>
Apologies were noted for Billy Nichols and Nick Graham.
<b>PC25/26 Declarations of Interest</b>
No declarations of interest were raised.
<b>PC25/27 Unconfirmed Minutes of Meeting held on 03.03.25</b>
It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 03.03.25 were a true and accurate record.
<b>PC25/28 Matters Arising &amp; Action Log</b>

The Committee reviewed the action log and agreed to close the actions that were proposed for closure.

## STAFF STORY

### PC25/29 Staff Story

The Committee received the staff story and the Associate Director of Employee Experience and Engagement highlighted:

- The theme for the staff story was based around Welsh language and focused on a Paediatric Speech and Language Therapist who works across Anglesey with children that require support with communication.
- The Therapist had some basic Welsh language skills and made steps to improve these skills to allow herself to provide services to the children she works with in their native language. This service is fundamental and vital to those families whose primary language is Welsh.
- Support has been provided for the Therapist to access and attend Welsh language courses within the Health Board and improve her skills.
- The benefits of staff learning Welsh is important across the Health Board, within all services to allow a better experience for patients.

In discussing the staff story, the Committee:

- Acknowledged the importance of the ability for staff to speak Welsh, in particular within the Speech and Language teams as this is key for some young children who speak in Welsh from day one.
- Agreed on the need to encourage staff to utilise the courses and support available as this has an impact and benefit on service delivery and provision.
- Highlighted the link to the Welsh language story shared at the Board meeting and the importance of encouraging staff to use their Welsh language skills to help others reach a level of fluency.
- Queried whether the Health Board could develop a minimum Welsh language expectation for all staff such as pronouncing names of people and places correctly.
- Stated this links to the work being completed around the induction programme and whether staff appointed into particular roles and grades should be enrolled on Welsh language courses when they start working for the Health Board. It was agreed that from an organisation perspective, this is a unique selling point.
- Suggested the Board are encouraged to speak more Welsh during the Board meetings as this is important in terms of leadership of the organisation and also links in to the Integrated Medium-Term Plan.
- Referred to the work that has been completed by Wrexham University around Welsh culture confirming that the Health Board are linking in to this.
- Confirmed that this aligns with the values and behaviours work and the identity of the Health Board to become a bi-lingual organisation.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **NOTED** the themes raised in the story around the use of the Welsh Language across the Health Board.

- **CONSIDERED** what action might be taken to learn from and emulate what colleagues like Lucy and teams like the Speech and Language Therapy Team (West) are undertaking.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### PC25/30 Welsh Language Standards Compliance Paper

In presenting the report, the Executive Director of Allied Health Professionals and Health Science highlighted:

- The report is a baseline paper focusing on compliance, Welsh language standards and how the organisation can create a bi-lingual approach to Welsh language.
- The paper provides a high-level overview of Welsh language legislative compliance across all three Integrated Health Communities (IHCs) within the Health Board.
- The main areas of concern were classed as 'front-line services' where patients access services for the first time, either over the phone or at reception areas. This is an area that has been raised by the Welsh Language Commissioner as part of their Concerns and Investigations Procedures.
- The Welsh Language Team are working to identify actions and provide support for individual teams and services over the next twelve months to develop tailored training for reception staff, create a bilingual skills procedure and produce additional Standard Operating Procedures for specific service areas.
- General issues were also highlighted around lack of clarity of what is required in terms of Welsh language for example holding meetings bilingually.
- An increase in use of the Welsh language links in with increased visibility to normalise the use of Welsh language across the organisation rather than it being seen as an additional area.

In discussing the report, the Committee:

- Suggested the need to test whether staff are engaging with the offer to learn Welsh and using this within the working environment. It was confirmed that the Team do conduct quarterly mystery shopper exercises where they target front line services to ensure Welsh speakers are available and bilingual signs and posters are being displayed. This is reported to the Welsh Language Strategic Forum on a quarterly basis. An Annual Report is also developed to highlight progress throughout the year and a review of letters is taking place to ensure all general letters are bilingual.
- Confirmed that in terms of electronic communication, there has been a focus from the Welsh Language Commissioner on the Health Board's website and work has taken place with the Communications Team in this area.
- Queried whether an action plan is being developed to address the issues highlighted in the report and it was confirmed that this is currently being produced.
- Highlighted the use of Artificial Intelligence and how this could be utilised to offer more services using the Welsh language. It was confirmed that the Corporate Governance Directorate are reviewing how technology can be utilised in the corporate space to streamline ways of working.
- Suggested that an action plan focusing on compliance as well as reference to the Board meetings and translation requirements would be useful to provide assurance going forward.

- Agreed to continue to monitor progress in this area at the People & Culture Committee.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **RECEIVED** the report for assurance

### **PC25/31 Strategic Occupational Health and Safety Group Chair's Report**

In presenting the report, the Deputy Director of People highlighted:

- The update identified a number of key risks.
- There are currently long waits for access to counselling services, the Team are currently working to provide other areas of access such as telephone consultation to reduce waiting times.
- A business case is being developed to address how the organisation deliver Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) which links to training requirements for the Health and Safety Team.
- There are currently issues in relation to Manual Handling Training and an action plan is being developed to address this and increase compliance.
- The Health and Safety Executive will be making two site visits in the next quarter to both the Ablett Unit and Hergest relating to ligature and assault.
- There has been a vacancy in the Head of Staff and Well-being post, an experienced Clinical Psychologist has now been appointed to lead the Staff and Well-being Team.

In discussing the report, the Committee:

- Noted that the report had not been agreed by the Chief Executive Officer who was the Chair of the Group and that future reports would provide a more comprehensive overview of the progress and the risks;
- Highlighted the significant amount of work that needs to be completed in terms of Health and Safety, leadership and management in this area. The Director of Environment and Estates is making progress, this is included in the three-year plan and going forward, there is a need to assess the biggest risks that need to be addressed.
- Suggested the approach requires a more strategic paper highlighting risks and actions to allow the Committee to have a valuable discussion and receive assurance in this area.
- Agreed that a strategic paper is presented to the next Committee.

#### **Action:**

- **PC25/31.1** Bring a strategic paper back to the Committee which addresses the key issues, risks and actions.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **NOTED** the update.

### **PC25/32 People Operations Report**

Members received the report and noted the progress. In presenting the report, the Deputy Director of People highlighted:

- The report continues to develop and provide further data.
- The turnover rate has remained steady over the last three months however this is down 0.6% on the same period last year for Registered Nursing staff groups.
- The Health Board continue to have the lowest reported sickness absence levels across NHS Wales however sickness remains a challenge and there is a need to have a tight focus in this area.
- Level 1 mandatory training compliance remains above target and there is currently a focus on challenges accessing manual handling training.
- The time to recruit meet the target of 58.4 days across February 2025 and this is comparative with other Health Boards.
- The report will develop further as the Team work closely with the values and behaviours workstream.
- There is a need to review further areas including flexible working, partial retirement and rosters.
- Over the past twelve months, the Team have been focussing on employee harm through the conduct process and there has been a significant reduction in the number of staff going through the disciplinary process.

In discussing the report, the Committee:

- Requested that the data being presented in the report is as current as possible.
- Referred to PADR's and suggested there is a shift in focus to the outcomes of the reviews in terms of opportunities to discuss career progression and getting staff on career pathways.
- Queried the international recruitment data and suggested further information is provided. It was confirmed that more work is needed in this area to understand the data in more detail.
- Suggested the Committee do a deep dive into sickness at the next meeting and focus on specific themes going forward to allow the Committee to have detailed discussions to enable progress in specific areas.
- Discussed the culture dashboard in relation to performance, it was confirmed that there is a need to start addressing the outcomes in line with the workforce plan and triangulating this work to link in with PADR's.
- Confirmed that the Director of Performance and Commissioning will be addressing performance across all areas and this will align with the integrated performance framework. There is a need to set different targets across the organisation for different areas as some will be unable to reach a certain percentage.

**Action:**

- **PC25/32.1** Arrange a deep dive into sickness for the next meeting in June 2025 and going forward, focus on specific themes at each meeting to enable detailed discussion.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **NOTED** the current position and provided feedback regarding **ASSURANCE** required as a result of the reported positions contained in the report.



## PC25/33 NHS Wales Staff Survey 2024

The Committee received the report and the Associate Director of Employee Experience and Engagement highlighted:

- The Committee have previously discussed the response rate and how to encourage more staff to participate in the survey and this has been reflected in the report.
- The quantitative data was received at the end of January 2025 and the qualitative data was received at the end of February 2025 along with over 1000 separate comments received from staff.
- There has been some positive feedback where staff feel valued by their teams and line managers. There has also been some negative feedback in terms of poor leadership and management as well as poor behaviour not being challenged.
- Further work is required to collate themes that have been raised.
- The results have been shared with staff survey leads who have access to the dashboards to inform local action plans and respond to issues within local teams.

In discussing the report, the Committee:

- Acknowledged the need to address leadership and management noting the need for this to filter down from the top of the organisation and stating that an informal Executive session is being held to focus on the approach.
- Stated that line managers will need to be provided with support to ensure issues are addressed locally and staff can see their input is making a difference.
- Agreed that the report is complex, the Team are collating the required information for services and managers and a suite of documentation is being developed to provide support.
- Highlighted that the response rate of 17% shows that 83% of the workforce have not shared their views therefore a higher response rate is needed to gain a wider understanding.
- Suggested the need to focus on the change in scores for the organisation rather than compare to the All-Wales figures.
- Noted areas of improvement but also recognised that the Health Board are in a period of major change therefore there is a need to keep track of improvement trends as we move forward.
- Discussed the importance of how the information is fed back to staff and noting the bigger context for the Board to report back to the front line.
- Stated that a communication plan is vital to ensure the results are shared internally and externally in a timely manner including a response from the Board stating how this link to the values and behaviours workstream. It was suggested this could be done via the May Board meeting.
- Queried the data relating to harassment and bullying and the need to review this in further detail to gain an understanding in this area.

### Action:

- **PC25/33.1** Include the Staff Survey on the agenda for the Board meeting in May 2025.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **NOTED** the results and themes raised by over 3,500 staff who completed the survey in November 2024.
- **CONSIDER** what action might be taken in response to what colleagues are telling us and how local ownership of acting on results can be achieved.

*Katie Sargent left the meeting*

### **PC25/34 Foundations for the Future Programme**

The Chief Executive provided a verbal update highlighting:

- Foundations for the Future is one of the four current major programmes in the organisation and the aim is to enable the organisation to become highly effective.
- The discovery phase was published in November 2024 and highlighted seven key themes including structures, accountability and responsibility.
- The design phase has now commenced and is based around five key pillars, senior leads have been identified for each pillar and are highlighted below:
  - Strategic (to include 10 year strategy, IMTP, high strategy intent) Interim Executive Director of Transformation & Strategic Planning
  - Culture (to include culture change programme, team working and organisational approach to change) Deputy Director of People
  - People (to include organisational development tools and skills) Executive Director of Nursing & Midwifery
  - Structures (to include remit and function) Executive Director of Allied Health Professionals & Health Science
  - Process (to include audit and governance pathways) Director of Corporate Governance and Executive Director of Finance
- The pillars focus more broadly than structures as there are additional elements that also need to be taken into consideration to allow for strategic change.
- A clear scope and high-level approach have been developed focussing on benefits realisation and the aim is to take a high-level design outline to the Board in May 2025.
- Further detail will be developed throughout the Summer to ensure a clear message is being delivered across the organisation.

In discussing the report, the Committee:

- Recognised the significant amount of work in this space and the support required from the Board going forward.
- Suggested the core structure proposals are socialised as soon as possible.
- Referred to the design workshops that have been taking place and the need for further consultation with staff as requested during the workshop sessions.
- Acknowledged that the core function of this programme is to enable the Health Board to deliver better services for the population of North Wales.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **NOTED** the update.

*Carol Shillabeer and Teresa Owen left the meeting*



## GOVERNANCE AND ASSURANCE

### PC25/35 Audit Wales Workforce Planning Review

Members received the report and the Deputy Director of People highlighted:

- The previous iterations of the review have been to the Committee and this is the final version.
- When the Health Board went into Special Measures, there was no specific workforce planning function in place. This has now been addressed and a workforce planning manager and workforce planning analyst have now been appointed.
- The Team have completed the recommendations included in the review and adopted the All-Wales HEIW workforce planning toolkit.
- There are now resources in place to support the IHCs and Divisions to develop their workforce plans.
- The Audit Committee will monitor progress, the recommendations will remain open until Audit Wales are satisfied that the actions have been completed and assurance on progress will be reported via the People and Culture Committee.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **NOTED** the current update provided and progress against the actions to date.
- **PROVIDED** feedback and observations regarding the update shared at this time.

### PC25/36 Board Assurance Framework

Members received the report and the Head of Risk Management highlighted:

- The Board Assurance Framework was approved by the Board in January 2025.
- The Team are now starting to score levels of assurance against levels of risk and propose ratings to the Committee.
- Limited assurance ratings are common for the majority of risks and this outlines a more cautious approach.
- To achieve a reasonable rating, the Committee would need to be satisfied that the majority of gaps in controls have been addressed.

In discussing the report, the Committee:

- Agreed with the assessment but queried the number of actions that are delayed suggesting realistic timeframes need to be implemented.
- Confirmed that this will be reviewed in further detail once the new plan has been approved by the Board.
- Noted that the Committee accepted the ratings but requested further detail at the next meeting.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **RECEIVE ASSURANCE** for the progression of the corporate risks to which the Committee has overall accountability.

*Nesta Collingridge left the meeting*

### PC25/37 Committee Governance

Members received the report and the Director of Corporate Governance highlighted:

- The Terms for Reference for all Committees are being reviewed, the document is in a different format and follows the model template.
- A Self-Assessment for each Committee is being developed and circulated to allow members to share their views and provide feedback.

In discussing the Terms of Reference, the Committee:

- Suggested reference is made to employee relations, employee engagement and social partnerships.
- Noted that Welsh Language should be separate to equality and diversity.
- In relation to 3.12, this should be for all registrants, not just professionals.
- Referred to Welsh culture and how that sits within the Terms of Reference.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **APPROVED** the Terms of Reference.

#### FOR INFORMATION

##### PC25/38 Summary of Business to be Reported from Private

It was resolved that the Committee **NOTED** the report.

##### PC25/39 Committee Forward Workplan

It was resolved that the Committee **NOTED** the forward workplan for information.

#### CLOSING BUSINESS

##### PC25/40 Agree Items for Referral to Board / Other Committees

It was agreed to alert the Board that the Committee received the NHS Wales Staff Survey 2024 results and these will be received at Board in May 2025.

##### PC25/41 Review of Meeting Effectiveness

As part of the discussion, the Committee:

- Agreed there had been valuable input into the discussion around the focus of the Committee.
- Suggested deeper focus may be required in certain areas for example basing the People Operations Report on specific themes for discussion.

##### PC25/42 Date of next meeting

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2025, 9.30-12.30pm

##### Resolution to Exclude the Press and Public

'Those representatives of the press and other members of the public be excluded from the remainder of this meeting having regard to the confidential nature of the business to be

transacted, publicity on which would be prejudicial to the public interest in accordance with Section 1(2) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.'