



**Local Partnership Forum**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025 Virtual via Teams**

<b>Present</b>	<b>Role / representing Trade Union</b>
Carol Shillabeer (CS)	Chief Executive / Joint LPF Chair (Chairing)
Cath Jones (CJ)	NMC / Deputy Chair, Staff Side
Tracey Eccles (TE)	Workforce / Speak up Safely Lead Guardian
Dyfed Edwards (DE)	Chair, Health Board (part meeting)
Gareth Evans (GE)	Workforce & OD
Joanna Garrigan (JG)	Finance Director for Commissioning and Strategy (part meeting, deputising for Russell Caldicott)
Michelle Greene (MG)	Integrated Health Community Director (East)
Kay Hannigan (KH)	Associate Director People Services - Central
Ceri Harris (CH)	Head Of Equality and Human Rights
Andrea Hughes (AH)	Nursing Director, IHC East
Jacqui Hughes (JH)	Society of Radiographers
David Maslen-Jones (DMJ)	Assistant Director of Occupational Health, Safety and Security
Jane Moore (JM)	Executive Director for Public Health
William Nichols (WN)	Independent Member, Royal College of Nursing Steward
Debbie Payne (DP)	British Dietetics Association
Martin Piggott (MP)	Estates, Unite
Eleri Roberts (ER)	Deputising for Ffion Johnstone, IHC Director, West
Georgina Roberts (GR)	Associate Director for Workforce – West (deputising for Jason Brannan)
Stacey Roberts (SR)	Unison Branch Officer
Katie Sargent (KS)	Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement (part meeting)
Helen Stevens-Jones (HS-J)	Director Of Partnerships, Communications and Engagement
Paolo Tardivel (PT)	Director of Transformation and Improvement (part meeting)
Rebecca Testa (RT)	Head of Organisational Development
Kath White (KW)	Pharmacy / Learning RCN Representative - Observing
Stuart Whittaker (SW)	Unite (part meeting)
Susan Williams (SW)	CAMHS / RCN Representative
Iain Wilkie (IW)	Director of Mental Health & Learning Disabilities (part meeting)
Angela Wood (AW)	Executive Director of Nursing & Midwifery (part meeting)
Toni Wood (TW)	Midwife, Royal College of Midwives
Fiona Lewis (FL)	Corporate Business Officer, Minute taker

<b>PRELIMINARY MATTERS</b>	<b>Action by</b>
<b>Welcome and apologies</b>	
The Chair warmly welcomed everyone to the meeting, noting the following apologies:.	

<p>Jan Tomlinson Jason Brannan (Georgina Roberts to deputise) Pam Wenger Ian Donnelly Russell Caldicott (Joanna Garrigan to deputise) Helen Roberts Alison Kemp Alison Tardivel Amanda Chesworth David Barber Gareth Evans Geoffrey Armstrong Julia Clayton Vivienne Nelson Denise Roberts</p>	
<p><b>L25/01 Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>There were none.</p>	
<p><b>L25/02 Minutes of the previous meeting, held 10.09.24.</b></p> <p>The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>L25/03 Matters Arising and Action Log</b></p> <p>All actions to close agreed and updates were added to the Summary action Plan</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Item L24/15.2</b> Item deferred on February agenda. CS to speak to Pam Wenger to discuss whether this could be left to next meeting (May) or requires attention sooner.</li> <li>• <b>Item L24/24.3</b> Clarification to be sought from NWSSP as to the appropriate mileage reimbursement figure. Government figure is 45p/mile, however in draft Expenses Policy no figure is noted, but it redirects to the Agenda for Change, where it quotes is 59p/mile. Georgina Roberts and Kay Hannigan agreed to investigate and find when current 'draft' Expenses Policy due to be finalised.</li> <li>• <b>Item L24/24.3</b> Georgina Roberts and Martin Piggott to talk outside of meeting regarding the difficulties he is encountering accessing Expenses information, for GR to investigate and respond.</li> </ul>	<p><b>CS</b></p> <p><b>GR / KH</b></p> <p><b>GR</b></p>
<p><b>LEAD ITEMS</b></p>	
<p><b>L25/04 A Staff Story – The Impact of Inconsistent Application of Workforce Policies on Staff.</b></p> <p>The story was presented by Katie Sargent, Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement. The author wished to remain anonymous, however their experience linked to themes and practices that others have highlighted.</p>	

The story was from a member of staff relocating from the South of England, and it provided an insight into the impact of a situation caused by communications and processes of contract negotiations, extensions, revocations and their journey to securing a permanent contract.

The job insecurity caused by the situation, left the member of staff concerned about being able to pay rent and bills and possibly having to relocate if the contract ended suddenly. The lack of clarity and transparency of process from higher levels left the Member of staff feeling exhausted when the impact of the decisions were so significant to their livelihood and wellbeing; this left them feeling unvalued.

The report reflected that recent Workforce improvements, including the newly launched People Manager's Forums would support managers with similar issues and the Organisation Development Team extended their gratitude and appreciation to the staff member for sharing their experience.

Members were assured that fixed-Term Contracts are no longer entered into unless for maternity or long term sickness cover or a fixed-term project; Workforce were looking at all fixed-term contracts to ensure they were appropriate and where identified as not, moving staff to permanent positions. Payroll were noted as now asking more specific questions to identify and assist, should emergency payments be requested.

In discussing the story, Members were thankful for bringing this story to their attention and felt that good people might be lost unless improvements were made to the system and suggested that this story should be shared more widely and KS confirmed that the story had been shared with People & Culture Committee, for them to discuss at their next meeting. It was agreed that the Health Board needed to be able to respond and provide more flexible ways of working, whilst still affording security to staff.

The Group **noted** the themes raised in this story and considered what action might be taken to prevent similar experiences occurring.

## **L25/05 Items from Trade Union Partners / Escalations**

### **'Corridor care/ Escalation of these incidences and is the Health Board Auditing these incidences'.**

The response was provided by Angela Wood, Executive Director of Nursing and Midwifery, who highlighted the following:

- acknowledgement that the recent RCN report into these occurrences was very stark reading and that following this report, all Executive Directors of Nursing met with Helen Whiley, Director of RCN Wales and Sue Tranka, Chief Nursing Officer, to discuss the situation and identify what needed to be done to take things forward.

- AW recognized that the consistent capture of data nationally was proving difficult, with differing systems throughout Wales and that internally, work was taking place to get an electronic solution to the problems around the failings of Datix, so that data was adequately and consistently recorded.
- Staffing levels in Emergency Departments (EDs) had been increased to ensure an oversight of patients in corridors and waiting rooms; thus enabling dynamic, hour-by-hour assessments to take place.
- Following discussions with Sue Tranka, AW and her team had identified opportunities for the overnight situations, when ED had overflowing waiting rooms and corridors, examining the risk of moving patients onto an appropriately staffed wards as opposed to patients being cared for in corridors, thus sharing the load across the hospital.

On discussing the response, Members were advised that:

- waiting rooms and triages are monitored very closely and where required, extra staff made available to ensure that 15 minutes triaging takes place, thus enabling an understanding of risks within the department.
- Healthcare Inspectorate Wales had acknowledged the new systems in place in Ysbyty Glan Clwyd, where regular monitoring of patients in the waiting room takes place, and were working well.
- AW's team were looking at what could be done to encourage staff to use the Datix system, to make the process simpler.
- since August 2022, there has been a significant reduction in staff vacancy rates from 14% to 5.9%; greatly improved sickness and staff retention rates and a much-reduced ratio of agency to BCU staff on the wards.
- with staffing issues addressed, the flow and system perspectives were being addressed
- preliminary discussions had taken place about making more community care available to reduce pressures.

The Executive Director of Nursing and Midwifery's verbal response was **noted**.

*[Angela Wood left the meeting]*

### **L25/06 Annual Planning Cycle – Workshop**

Paolo Tardivel, Director of Transformation and Improvement, provided an update to The BCU Three Year Plan, highlighting the following:

- progress of the plan and emerging themes
- Cabinet Secretary's Health and Social Care priorities
- areas for collaboration within the plan
- Health Board priorities and strategic objectives

Discussions took place regarding the following themes:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress with technological improvements, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the implementation of Electronic Healthcare Records (EHRs). It was noted that AI was already being used in certain areas, in particular diagnostic and administrative areas. It was acknowledged that Wales was behind England in the implementation of EHRs, however it was also noted that particular focus was being made to speed up the implementation of Mental Health ESRs, following receipt of funding from Welsh Government.</li> <li>• The possible refresh of the All-Wales App – ‘My A&amp;E Live’, which provides the public with real-time information concerning waiting times in local Minor Injuries Units and Emergency Departments (EDs). PT to investigate how to publicise the App.</li> <li>• The need for honest discussions with not only the North Wales public but nationally, concerning managing expectations, self-help and prevention as well as what people believe are the priorities. It was noted that the Organisation’s ongoing engagement with the public, through community events including hosting the Annual General Meeting within the community, discussions with carers and families, the Well North Wales initiative, all of which helped to assure the public and shape how the Organisation builds health and care around communities</li> <li>• The need to focus on building community capacity, to avoid some preventable admissions to EDs.</li> <li>• Members were reassured that the Workforce team had worked alongside the Transformation team, supporting the Impact Assessment for the Operations Plan submissions for each of the sub-objectives, this had helped identify areas that required strengthening in the final draft.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>L25/06.1</b> PT to discuss with Digital team how to encourage use of the My A&amp;E App.</li> </ul> <p><i>[Paolo Tardivel left the meeting]</i></p>	PT
<b>5 MINUTE COMFORT BREAK</b>	
<p><b>L25/07 Foundations for the Future</b></p> <p>Carol Shillabeer, Chief Executive, provided a verbal update, noting that the Discovery stage of the programme was complete; concluding in the publication of the Discovery Report in November 2024. This report included a great deal of valuable feedback and assessment of the key themes included in Special Measures, independent reviews and reviews from national bodies, in terms of their interactions with the Health Board.</p> <p>The team was actively into the Design phase, with sessions having already taken place, and the Chair wished to thank staff for their positive contributions to the process, which helped to shape the design of the Foundations for the Future (formerly known as the Operating Model) going forward. It was anticipated that parts of this would be tested mid-March, following which feedback would be digested, with the anticipation that the Design stage would be completed by the end of May.</p> <p>Georgina Roberts provided colleagues with the link to the Discovery Report, which included a questionnaire covering questions asked in the Design workshops.</p>	

<p>Colleagues were encouraged to ask teammates to complete the questionnaire and to provide anonymous contributions, if they so wished.</p> <p><a href="https://nhs.wales365.sharepoint.com/sites/BCU_OBS/SitePages/Foundations-for-the-Future-%E2%80%93-your-opportunity-to-shape-how-we-work.aspx">https://nhs.wales365.sharepoint.com/sites/BCU_OBS/SitePages/Foundations-for-the-Future-%E2%80%93-your-opportunity-to-shape-how-we-work.aspx</a>.</p> <p>Members were assured that when the Organisation gets to the stage where organisational change is required, it will look to do this in partnership with the trade unions.</p> <p>Following the update, it was suggested that the current approach was being pitched at too high a level for most members of staff and might discourage some staff from contributing. CS and GR to reflect on how this might be addressed as they acknowledged that the main drivers were to ensure that the Organisation arranged itself in the best way possible to deliver the best services for patients and to ensure that staff have the best possible conditions to deliver that service.</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <p><b>L25/07.1</b> CS and GR to reflect on how to pitch the approach, with simpler language to aid engagement with the majority of staff members.</p> <p>The Foundations for the Future Verbal Update was <b>received</b>.</p>	<p><b>CS/GR</b></p>
<p><b>L25/08 Review Cycle of Business and Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>Item Deferred.</p>	
<p><b>L25/09 CEO Briefing – Organisation Progress and Special Measures Verbal Update</b></p> <p>Carol Shillabeer, Chief Executive, provided a verbal update and promised to circulate her Board Reports, which include more detail concerning alignment to Board’s five strategic objectives. She highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The establishment of an Executive Committee of the Board, which helps to demonstrate a higher level of openness and transparency, will publish a bi-monthly report into Executive Committee’s activities.</li> <li>• The structured Assessment Review, recently carried out by Audit Wales, looked at the Organisation’s governance, planning and finance and indicated important progress was being made, particularly in the fields of Corporate Governance and Finance.</li> <li>• The huge strides in terms of responding to complaints, which had resulted in the Health Board going from worst to best-performing in Wales. 50% of complaints refer to access to care, hence the focus on long waiting times and urgent emergency care.</li> <li>• The work involved in developing the Citizen’s Experience Report, a new Board report which demonstrated how the Citizens’ experiences were put at the heart of the work carried out by the Board. The report displayed how feedback was translated into action.</li> </ul>	<p><b>CS</b></p>

- Welsh Government awarded the Health Board the funding to facilitate Mental Health Electronic Healthcare Records, which demonstrated the support received from Government to Mental Health Services.
- It was noted that
  - Jane Moore had been formally appointed as the Executive Director for Public Health,
  - Russell Caldicott had been appointed Executive Director of Finance
  - Chris Stockport, Executive Director of Strategy and Transformation, would be leaving the Health Board at the end of February, to take up a Chief Medical Officer role in the Isle of Man
  - Stuart Keen had commenced in his role as Director of Environment and Estates
- CS and the Board wished to thank colleagues for the resilience shown in dealing with the effects of recent storms and severe water shortages

Members received assurance from CS that questions had been asked concerning the recent discovery of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in Wrexham Maelor Hospital (WMH), following on from what had been described as a comprehensive review of all building control plans, carried out in December 2023, to identify the use of RAAC in all of the building plans. The Health Board had been advised in 2023 that the only building where RAAC had been discovered was Bryn-y-Neudd, however following further visual inspections being deployed by a different company, this had uncovered the situation at WMH, which despite not being of a concrete construction, did have a small element of concrete within it. CS agreed to share the formal advice she had received.

**Action:**

**L25/09.1** CS to share the Board's CEO reports.

**L25/09.2** CS to share the formal advice the Organisation had received following the discovery of RAAC in Wrexham.

The verbal briefing on Organisation Progress and Special Measures was **noted**.

**ROUTINE REPORTING**

**L25/10 The Workforce and Organisational Directorate Overview Report**

Georgina Roberts, Associate Director of People Services (West), presented the report and highlighted the following:

- Attendance Management – instances of absence continued to rise, due mainly to an increase in respiratory illnesses, as reflected by the public
- A reduction in uptake of immunisations. Members were asked for suggestions as to how to promote the uptake. It was suggested that the Strategic Health and Wellbeing Group, which had existed pre-Covid, where TU partners and managers met to promote health and wellbeing, might be reformed. GR agreed to investigate.
- GR noted the progress in the reduction of disciplinary cases – from 60 cases in January 2024 to 22 cases by the end of December 2024.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GR thanked colleagues for their continued support in the process of updating and maintaining Workforce Policies.</li> <li>Following discussions between the LPF joint Chairs, concern had been raised about the Job Evaluation processes within the Organisation, which had resulted in CS requesting Internal Audit carry out an audit of the practice. CS and GR to discuss outside the meeting the results of the audit and look at mechanisms to encourage managers to allow job matching training, when TU representative request release from duties to carry this out.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>L25/10.1</b> GR to investigate reinstating the Strategic Health and Wellbeing Group</li> <li><b>L25/02.2</b> CS, GR and Jan Tomlinson to discuss outside the meeting the findings of the internal audit into Job Evaluations.</li> </ul> <p>The Workforce and Organisational Directorate Overview Report was <b>noted</b>.</p>	<p><b>GR</b> <b>CS/GR</b> <b>JT</b></p>
<p><b>L25/11 Finance Report M9</b></p> <p>Joanna Garrigan, Finance Director for Commissioning and Strategy, presented the M9 Finance report, noting the key headlines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Year-to-date financial position exceeded the level of planned deficit for close of the financial year, by £8.3m. This will need to be recovered over the remainder of the financial year, by minimising expenditure and keeping control of emerging pressures to recover the overspend against plan.</li> <li>Proposals put forward by services were not forecasted to deliver the required savings, which resulted in the enforcement of further control mechanisms such as stopping any non-patient facing agency posts and the control of non-clinical supplies.</li> <li>All departments of the Health Board have been set spend reduction targets for between Month 9 and the end of the financial year.</li> </ul> <p>Following presentation of the report, discussion ensued regarding concerns regarding the impact of the reduction of administration staff in patient booking services, which would have a direct impact on patient care and services. Assurance was provided regarding the mechanisms put in place to examine exceptional cases, to ensure this did not happen.</p> <p>Assurance was provided by the Chairman of the Board, Dyfed Edwards, that the Health Board recognised the impact of cancelling agency staff, and that the Board was appreciative of staff efforts in this regard. It was noted that the whole of Wales was undergoing a crisis in public funding pressures and that Welsh Government required the Health Board to provide balanced budgets and that with concerted effort, this targets were attainable.</p> <p>The Finance Report <b>was noted</b>.</p>	
<p><b>FOR INFORMATION</b></p>	

<p><b>L25/12</b> Chief Executive's Update Report..</p> <p>Carol Shillabeer, Chief Executive,</p> <p>The Chief Executive's report was <b>noted</b>.</p>	
<p><b>L25/13 Minutes of the People and Culture Committee Meeting held 10.10.24</b></p> <p>The Minutes of the People and Culture Committee Meeting held on 10.10.24 were <b>noted</b>.</p>	
<p><b>CLOSING BUSINESS</b></p>	
<p><b>L25/14 Review of Meeting's Effectiveness</b></p> <p>.</p>	
<p><b>L25/15 Date of next meeting</b></p> <p><i>1.00pm, Tuesday, 6th May 2025</i></p> <p><u>Future meetings:</u> <i>5<sup>th</sup> August 2025</i> <i>4<sup>th</sup> November 2025</i> <i>3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026</i></p>	

*[Meeting closed at 16.45]*