

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB)
Confirmed Minutes of the Health Board Meeting
held in Public on 25 September 2025
at Venue Cymru

Board Members present	
Name	Title
Dyfed Edwards	Chair
Emma Adamson	Associate Member (Chair of Healthcare Professionals Forum)
Tehmeena Ajmal	Chief Operating Officer
Clare Budden	Independent Member
Russell Caldicott	Executive Director of Finance
Urtha Felda	Independent Member
Dyfed Jones	Independent Member (part meeting)
Prof Mike Larvin	Independent Member
Peter Lewis	Associate Member (Chair of Stakeholder Reference Group)
Chris Lothian-Field	Independent Member
Dr Jane Moore	Executive Director of Public Health
Billy Nichols	Independent Member
Teresa Owen	Executive Director of Allied Health Professionals and Health Science
Carol Shillabeer	Chief Executive
Paolo Tardivel	Interim Executive Director of Transformation and Strategic Planning
Dr Caroline Turner	Independent Member
Rhian Watcyn Jones	Independent Member
Gareth Williams	Vice Chair
Angela Wood	Executive Director of Nursing and Midwifery
In Attendance	
Jason Brannan	Deputy Executive Director of People
Laura Jones	Acting Corporate Governance Manager
Stuart Keen	Director of Environment and Estates
Phylis Makurunje	Aspiring Board Member
Dr Karen Mottart	Integrated Health Community Medical Director (West)
Philippa Peake-Jones	Head of Corporate Governance
Helen Stevens-Jones	Director of Partnerships, Engagement & Communications
Pam Wenger	Director of Corporate Governance

PRELIMINARY MATTERS

25/160 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed Board Members, members of the public and those viewing online to the meeting.

Apologies were received for Fôn Roberts, Georgina Roberts (Jason Brannan deputising), Sreeman Andole (Karen Mottart deputising), Dylan Roberts and Stephen Powell.

The Chair welcomed Peter Lewis as the newly appointed Chair of the Stakeholder Reference Group as well as a member of the Board and Dr Karen Mottart deputising for the Executive Medical Director.

It was noted that Helen Stevens-Jones, the Director of Partnerships, Engagement & Communications would need to step out of the meeting early to represent the Board at the opening of the Maggie's North Wales Centre. The Chair shared well wishes to all those involved in the opening of the Centre.

25/161 Declarations of Interest Relating to the Agenda

No declarations of interest were received.

The Chair declared an interest in agenda item 25/171 Strategic Planning as he is a local resident of Penygroes and his GP surgery is covered in the item relating to the Well-Being Hubs (Penygroes).

25/162 Unconfirmed Minutes of the Health Board meetings held on 17 July 2025 (Annual General Meeting) and 31 July 2025.

Members received and agreed the unconfirmed minutes of the meetings held on 17 July 2025 and 31 July 2025 as a true and accurate record.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **AGREED** that the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 17 July 2025 and Health Board held on 31 July 2025 were a true and accurate record.

The following matters arising were highlighted:

Carol Shillabeer drew the Board's attention to minute reference 25/132 Accountable Officer Report – Accounting Issues of 2021/22. It was noted that Audit Wales had drawn to the Health Board's attention a technical drafting point in the report and therefore it was proposed to include the following footnote in the report:

- *Audit Wales conducts its audits using a risk-based approach. Following the identification of initial findings, the audit scope was extended to address areas where adverse findings had been noted. The purpose of this additional work was to obtain sufficient audit evidence to support the conclusion that the financial statements were free from material misstatement, with materiality set at £20.3 million.*

The Chief Executive referred to a matter raised by David Graves ahead of the Annual General Meeting in relation to Mental Health and Learning Disabilities. It was confirmed that a Mental Health Development Group is being established and the question raised will form part of the continuous discussions that will be held by the group, taking into account feedback provided by citizens. It was also agreed that the response to the question raised by David Graves would be reviewed to ensure that a full answer is provided.

Action:

- **25/162.1** Director of Corporate Governance to follow up the response to the question raised ahead of the Annual General Meeting by Mr. D Graves to ensure that a full response has been provided.

25/163 Action Log

Members received the action log and noted progress against the actions.

Corporate Governance Report: Emergency Medical Retrieval and Transport Service (EMRTS)

- In relation to action 25/142.1 it was noted that clarification had been sought outside of the meeting. Progress continues with the Court of Appeal and a response has been provided from the Corporate Governance Directorate. It was noted that an update had been provided before the Board and therefore the action could now be closed.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **AGREED** to close the actions that were proposed for closure.

25/164 Experience Item

The Executive Director of Nursing & Midwifery introduced the experience item and a video presentation was shared with the Board:

- The story was based on a Rapid Diagnosis Clinic where patients have been invited to participate in a research study to help improve cancer diagnosis by analysing information collected during routine care.
- The importance of participating in research was highlighted as an area that can help to improve diagnosis for the benefit of patients.
- The Health Board have invested in research across the organisation and a wide range of studies has been undertaken throughout the year.

In discussing the video presentation, the Board:

- Acknowledged the potential opportunities for joint research with the North Wales Medical School and Universities to embrace technology and innovation.
- Highlighted the research taking place across General Practitioner Practices noting that the West End Medical Centre have recently been involved in medical trials.
- Noted that work is taking place on the Research and Development Annual Report to identify the next steps required and start to develop a fully integrated approach and this will be presented to a future Board meeting.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **NOTED** the Experience item.

25/165 Chair's Report

The Board received the report and the Chair highlighted:

- The recruitment process is taking place to appoint a new Independent Member for Finance and who will Chair Audit Committee. Urtha Felda was thanked for her work stepping in to chair the Committee as the Vice Chair.
- Peter Lewis has taken up the role as Chair of the Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) and represents the group as an Associate Member of the Board.
- The Informal Board in August Session provided an opportunity to discuss the priorities set by Welsh Government. There was a strong emphasis on achieving targets as well as a need to make changes in the short term to ensure timely access to services.

- The Board also reflected on the need to ensure long term, sustainable change is taking place to create an organisation that provides an excellent service for the population of North Wales on a continuous basis in order to serve the needs of the communities in the future.
- A recent visit has taken place to HMP Berwyn where 160 Health Board staff work to support prisoners' health. The prison service is under the oversight of the UK Government whilst the health and well-being element sits with Welsh Government and the Health Board. It is important that we maintain a close link with staff working in the prison.
- An event took place in the Menai Unit, Ysbyty Gwynedd to unveil the HIV awareness quilt which has been created in a number of workshops across the region. It was noted that the quilt will be displayed within the Health Board and the Head of Equality and Human Rights was thanked for her work in this area.
- The Creative Well Forum was recently launched in Denbigh. This work provides an opportunity for activities to support health and well-being and illustrates the work taking place within the creative sector.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **DISCUSSED** and **NOTED** the content of the report.

25/166 Chief Executive's Report

The Board received the report and the Chief Executive highlighted:

- Jacqueline Totterdell has been appointed by Welsh Government as the new Director General for Health, Social Care and Early Years which is a dual role incorporating the NHS Wales Chief Executive role commencing in early October 2025.
- The Welsh Government have provided formal feedback on the Health Board's Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMTP) for 2025–28 noting the increased emphasis on strategic planning and a shift to create sustainable change for the future.
- The Cabinet Secretary has announced plans aimed at increasing transparency across the health system and the Health Board will put in place additional mechanisms to address these actions.
- Progress is being made in relation to the eight specialities categorised as challenged services. There have been significant improvements in the provision of oncology services and the opening of the Maggie's North Wales Centre will provide an additional layer of support in this area.

In discussing the report, the Board:

- Recognised the reduction in services being provided by St David's Hospice particularly affecting Holyhead. It was noted that work is taking place locally with Anglesey County Council to identify opportunities to provide care closer to home.
- Referred to the launch of the new Masters of Pharmacy (MPharm) programme at Bangor University highlighting the collaborative work taking place across primary, secondary and community care.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **DISCUSSED** and **NOTED** the content of the report.

25/167 Vice Chair's Report

The Board received the report and the Vice Chair highlighted:

- A range of visits have recently been undertaken and there is extensive work taking place across the Health Board.

In discussing the report, the Board:

- Acknowledged the excellent facilities being provided by the Substance Misuse Service noting the positive benefits the service provides to support the people of North Wales.
- Noted that the Planning, Population Health and Partnerships Committee have an item on substance misuse at the next meeting in October 2025. This is a collaborative workstream highlighting the importance of services working together to provide support within communities.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **DISCUSSED** and **NOTED** the content of the report.

25/168 Citizen Experience Report

The Board received the report and the Director of Partnerships, Communications and Engagement highlighted:

- The format of the report has been revised to reflect the progress of work that has taken place during the quarter.
- Citizen feedback remains consistent in relation to the impact of long waiting times and variations in access to care which are areas that cause distress for patients.
- There is a need for the Board to ensure citizen voices are being heard and are shaping the priorities and decisions that are being made as well as holding the Health Board to account.
- There are areas where feedback has already driven change and this can be noted in bereavement care where specialist nurses have been appointed to ensure families are experiencing more compassionate, structured support at the most difficult times.
- The Health Board have undertaken targeted engagement on service change in relation to Tywyn and Penley and this process provides assurance that the citizen voice is central to decisions being made about the future of these services.
- There is a need to ensure the citizen voice is also central to the early development of the Health Board's new strategy and clinical services plan.

In discussing the report, the Board:

- Queried how the Board can be assured that feedback received is being shared with those responsible for delivering actions. It was confirmed that some feedback is shared directly through nursing services, enabling regular facilitation of change. In addition, parallel work is being undertaken by teams across the organisation. This area will be further explored by the Planning, Population Health and Partnerships Committee, with a focus on how feedback can be captured in greater detail to ensure the Health Board is embedding sustainable change based on the insights received.
- Emphasised the importance of incorporating feedback into planning to enable the Health Board to clearly demonstrate the link between feedback received and improvements made. It was noted that the relationship between complaints, engagement, and service design is critical, as it highlights how feedback has been acted upon to drive positive changes in services.
- Indicated the importance of providing a response to citizens who share feedback to ensure they continue to do this and also share the outcome of their feedback with friends and family. It was noted that responses are provided in some areas but not consistently across the organisation and this requires development.

- Noted that the Betsi Way Engagement Framework is a key document that will shape how the organisation engages with the population and staff, ensuring that their contributions inform service design. It was confirmed that this framework will be discussed in greater detail at the next meeting of the Planning, Population Health and Partnerships Committee, as the work must incorporate input from staff, the public, and the third sector.
- Noted that the Planning, Population Health and Partnerships Committee held a Development Session focussed on health, wellbeing and health inequality. This area of work is an important thread that needs to flow through all areas including the strategic work, ten-year plan, clinical services plan and the Integrated Medium-Term Plan.
- Acknowledged the importance of opportunities to engage with primary care services to ensure the citizen voice is being heard as well as engaging with primary care providers. It was noted that work is taking place within the primary care space, this is a pivotal area for delivery in terms of prevention, reducing capacity in acute settings and working closely with communities and the third sector.
- Reflected on the improvements made in relation to dealing with complaints and the actions being taken as a result of issues being raised. Thematic reviews are now taking place across the organisation to discuss how specific concerns raised can be addressed across the Health Board to ensure learning is captured and good practice is shared widely with teams.
- Noted the connection between the Citizens Experience Report and the Staff Experience and Engagement Report and the need to embed engagement throughout the organisation and via the service plans and major change programmes.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **NOTED** the Citizen Engagement Report; and
- **RECEIVED ASSURANCE** that the citizen voice is shaping transformation and decision-making, not only operational improvements.

STRATEGIC ITEMS

25/169 Chair's Assurance Report - Planning, Population Health and Partnerships Committee

The Board received the report and the Chair of the Planning, Population Health and Partnerships (PPHP) Committee highlighted:

- The Committee received an update on the Digital, Data and Technology Programmes and the Data Roadmap at the last meeting. The paper identified the programmes that are being led both internally and externally by Digital Healthcare Wales (DHCW).
- The Committee noted that there are several risks associated with the programmes in relation to delivery, budgets and the complexity of the programmes and these concerns were reflected in the review of the risks. The Board were alerted to this issue as there may be difficulties in taking forward programmes where the aim is to deliver more digitally enabled services to improve patient experience.
- The Committee held a Development Session on 24 September 2025 focussed on improving the health and wellbeing of the population noting that this work will contribute to the ten-year strategy. This provided a good basis for discussion and actions were agreed which included the need for broader discussion with the Board. Going forward there is a need to consider how the Committee will provide a focus on primary care, identify key performance indicators and hold further informal development sessions to discuss primary care and other areas in more detail.
- The Winter Resilience Plan for 2025/26 was reviewed and supported and the Committee welcomed plans for enhanced collaborative working and touch points with key partners.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **NOTED** the content of the report.

25/170 Urgent and Emergency Care

The Board received the Urgent and Emergency Care Major Change Programme Report and draft Winter Resilience Plan 2025/26. The Chief Operating Officer highlighted:

- In relation to Urgent and Emergency Care, the work is currently based around the national six goals programme and there is potential to reframe the programme going forward.
- The programme highlights the medium to longer term change required to improve patient outcomes however there are difficulties in ensuring relevant staff are able to step out of the service to develop plans and progress the work required to make sustainable improvements.
- Dr Karen Mottart has been assigned as the clinical lead for the programme and the key areas of focus will be to establish a single point of access, ensure consistent front door services are available and develop one model of care across all three sites.
- The Health Board employ committed, passionate staff working in extremely challenging environments and extensive work is required in this area to make significant changes.
- In relation to the Winter Resilience Plan, it was confirmed that a regional integrated self assessment relating to the provision of safe care over Winter has been undertaken, coordinated by the Regional Partnership Board. The self-assessment has been submitted, and a full plan is expected to be completed by 31 October 2025.
- This area of work is being managed in conjunction with regional partners to ensure business continuity plans are in place across services as well as improving collaboration and information sharing to align services across health and social care providers.

In discussing the report, the Board:

- Noted the recent discussions held by the Regional Partnership Board, which emphasised the importance of proactive and collaborative working to ensure consistent, incremental progress that builds public confidence. It was noted that ongoing conversations with partners will be reflected in future planning.
- Noted the need for collective ownership across the organisation, particularly in addressing system-wide flow challenges. It was acknowledged that issues vary across sites, and a formalised, consistent approach to implementation is required to achieve meaningful results.
- Noted the progress in other parts of Wales and sought assurances that the Health Board is learning from areas where changes are delivering positive outcomes. The scale of the challenge facing the Health Board was recognised, particularly the harm caused by patients waiting for extended periods in ambulances and Emergency Departments. There is also a need to redirect patients who could be more appropriately cared for in Minor Injury and Ailment Units, which requires a consistent and reliable service offer.
- Acknowledged the urgency of the situation, with a call for the Board to act as a unified body to implement immediate and tangible changes that deliver the level of care the people of North Wales deserve. This area is one of the four major change programmes for the Board, and it was noted that previous efforts have not delivered sufficient impact. A renewed focus on consistently delivering the basics every day is essential to achieving marginal gains.
- Agreed that there was an urgent need to modernise access to healthcare, which will involve reshaping primary and community care services. The imbalance between demand and capacity was highlighted, and improving flow across the system is seen as a key lever to address this issue.

- Questioned how flow within the hospitals across the Health Board will be addressed differently, given the persistent number of patients waiting to be discharged. It was confirmed that Welsh Government is investing in Local Authorities to expand community care, alongside further investment in primary care. Priorities include reducing length of stay and developing consistent, simplified models of care across the organisation. A focus on timely implementation and recovery planning where actions are not delivered was also stressed.
- Noted that there are opportunities to do things differently, highlighting the importance of consistent action across all shifts and days in relation to the Winter Resilience Plan. There is a need to review community care pathways and ensure safe discharge options are available. Additionally, support must be provided to prevent individuals from reaching crisis points where Emergency Department attendance becomes the only option.
- Agreed there was a need for a standardised approach across the Health Board and sought assurances on what tangible changes would be visible in the coming months. It was confirmed that, from 1 October 2025, Welsh Government will introduce a requirement to reduce ambulance handover times to 45 minutes. This change is expected to be evident across the organisation.
- Noted that the Integrated Performance Executive Delivery Group will focus on key performance indicators related to patient flow through Emergency Departments. This work will be closely aligned with the Citizen Experience Report and the feedback received, which will help assess whether the changes being implemented are resulting in improved patient care.
- Agreed that the information related to this area of work should be presented to the Board more regularly to support oversight and assurance and an update on Urgent and Emergency Care and ambulance handovers should be presented to the next meeting.
- Agreed that the Winter Resilience Plan remains work in progress and agreed to delegate to the Executive Committee for finalisation with oversight provided at the Planning, Partnership and Population Health Committee.

Actions:

- **25/170.1** An update on Urgent and Emergency Care and ambulance handovers to be presented to the next meeting of the Board in November 2025.
- **25/170.2** Planning, Population Health and Partnerships Committee to review the final version of the Winter Resilience Plan 2025/26 at its meeting in October 2025.
- **25/170.3** The final approved submission of the Winter Resilience Plan 2025/26 to be circulated to Board members outside of the meeting.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **RECEIVED ASSURANCE** from the report provided and the actions being taken within the Urgent and Emergency Care Major Change Programme.
- **REVIEWED** the Winter Resilience Plan for 2025/26.

25/171 Strategic Planning

The Board received the Key Programmes Report, Annual Delivery Plan 2025/26 Quarter 1 Progress Report and the updated business case for the Royal Alexandra Hospital Health and Well-being Hub and the Executive Director of Transformation and Strategic Planning, Chief Operating Officer and Director of Environment and Estates highlighted the following in relation to each report:

Key Programmes Report

- The Board received the report which provides a strategic overview of the fifteen programmes currently within the Health Board's portfolio, alongside the four major change programmes approved in May 2025.
- To support alignment with service change and planned improvements, the programmes have been grouped into five categories. The approach to programme development and management continues to evolve, with ongoing work to configure underpinning workstreams to ensure the full breadth of service transformation is addressed.
- The Board was updated on the **Radiology Informatics System Programme (RISP)**, which aims to implement a modern radiology system across North Wales. The system went live on 8 September 2025, following collaboration with Digital Health and Care Wales (DHCW). While some initial issues were reported, full implementation is expected to significantly modernise radiology services and improve the quality of care.
- In relation to the **Llandudno Planned Care Hub**, the programme is currently in the implementation phase. A clinically endorsed model has been agreed, and capital expenditure has exceeded the control total but remains within the contingency threshold. The programme aims to complete works by 19 January 2026, with the Hub expected to become operational in late January or early February 2026.

Annual Delivery Plan 2025/26 Quarter 1 Progress Report

- The report provides an overview against the quarter one deliverables. There has been a shift in focus from calculating the number of actions completed to gaining a more strategic overview of outcomes in relation to delivery and this area of work is progressing.
- There has been a completion rate of 67% against the deliverables due by the end of quarter one with four deliverables off track against the original committed timescale. Mitigating plans are in place to conclude these deliverables by the end of quarter two.
- There has been real progress across a number of areas and these include governance, quality management system (QMS), environment, estates, culture and leadership. Future reports will provide greater clarity and narrative on the broader impact of delivery.

Royal Alexandra Hospital Health and Well-being Hub

- The aim of the project is to improve local and integrated service provision within Rhyl and the surrounding areas by providing services closer to the community.
- The service will include a community reablement facility, a Minor Injuries and Ailments Unit (MIAU), a radiology service, three relocated dental surgical procedure rooms and a community cafe, office and Third Sector hub.
- The service will provide a multi agency approach, increase the range of local services available, help to facilitate patient flow and reduce attendances at Emergency Departments.
- The development has been split into two phases, the first is the modular phase and the second will focus on the main building and further discussion is required in relation to phase two.
- The first phase follows a modern method of construction, a supplier has been commissioned, due governance is in place, and the revenue and capital elements are within budget.
- Subject to planning and Welsh Government approval, the aim is to commence work in January / March 2026.

In discussing the three reports, the Board:

- Noted that several of the **Annual Delivery Plan** objectives have moved from one quarter to another. It was suggested that any slippage should be clearly recorded, with reasons for delay identified to support transparency and effective oversight.

- Noted that some objectives are dependent on external organisations, and as such, a degree of flexibility may be required. The Board was assured that further detail on these dependencies and progress will be provided in future reports to support continued monitoring and assurance.
- Recognised the ongoing work to develop the **Royal Alexandra Hospital Health and Well-being Hub** and the services for the local population that offers an alternative to Emergency Department admission and provides a sustainable facility for the future.
- Noted thanks to the Central Integrated Health Community team for their efforts in delivering care closer to home and establishing an important facility at the heart of the community.
- Noted and agreed the inclusion of a much-needed Minor Injuries and Ailments Unit (MIAU) will enhance local service provision. It was also acknowledged that phase two of the project may present opportunities for wider service redesign.
- Confirmed the catchment area for the service will primarily target local residents, it will also be available to the wider population across Conwy and Denbighshire, based on demand.
- Supported in principle the **Royal Alexandra Hospital Health and Well-being Hub** subject to consideration of the commercial case that would be considered in the Private Board meeting and reported to the next Public Board meeting.

Action:

- **25/171.1** The commercial case of the Royal Alexandra Hospital Health and Well-being Hub to be considered in the Private September Board meeting and reported to the next Public Board meeting in November 2025.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **RECEIVED ASSURANCE** on the progress made in relation to the Key Programmes Report since the last update including improved oversight and assurance arrangements.
- **AGREED** to continue to receive these more strategic updates at every other Board meeting and for the Planning, Population Health and Partnerships Committee and the Strategic Planning and Service Change Group to continue to undertake more detailed scrutiny on behalf of the Board.
- **RECEIVED ASSURANCE** on the progress made in relation to the Annual Delivery Plan during Quarter 1 along with the challenges highlighted.
- **APPROVED** the change controls outlined within the paper.
- **SUPPORTED** the revised Business Case (Addendum to 2021 Full Business Case for RAH Phase 1), for onward submission to WG for approval and funding subject to consideration of the commercial case in the Private Board.

25/172 Foundations for the Future Presentation

The Board received a presentation on the Foundations for the Future Major Change Programme. It was noted that the **Discovery Phase** has been completed, and work is now progressing through the **Design Phase**. Key themes have been identified, with broader organisational elements being considered alongside structural design.

The design model is built around **five strategic pillars**, developed through a continuous engagement approach, including ongoing dialogue and input from subject matter experts. The programme is focused on delivering measurable benefits, reducing the gap between management and frontline services, ensuring clear strategic direction from the Board, and promoting a consistent approach to improving outcomes.

Updates were provided on each workstream:

- **Strategy:** The Integrated Planning Framework will be presented to the Board in November 2025. Oversight of this workstream sits with the Planning, Population Health and Partnerships Committee.
- **Culture:** Progress is being made on the culture change programme, which will also be considered by the Board in November 2025. Oversight is provided by the People and Culture Committee.
- **People:** This workstream focuses on investing in Health Board colleagues, with further development required around workforce planning. Oversight is provided by the People and Culture Committee.
- **Processes:** This workstream includes seven key areas, such as the decision making framework. Oversight will be shared across multiple Committees.
- **Structures:** Work is underway to design efficient organisational structures, considering roles, remits, and reporting lines. The high level design has been completed, with detailed design work scheduled for October and November 2025. Oversight is provided by multiple Committees, with regular reporting to the People and Culture Committee.

In discussing the report, the Board:

- Acknowledged that increasing autonomy and accountability for managers represents a significant cultural shift for staff across the organisation. It was noted that appropriate support will be essential to ensure staff are equipped with the necessary skills and competencies to lead and deliver effectively within this new approach.
- Recognised that the development of a clear organisational structure will help define roles and responsibilities, supporting the delivery of high quality services for the people of North Wales.

It was resolved that the Board

- **NOTED** the content of the presentation.

25/173 Chair's Assurance Report - Quality, Safety and Experience Committee

The Board received the report and the Vice Chair of the Quality, Safety and Experience (QSE) Committee highlighted:

- The Committee received a patient story highlighting the important role that play specialists undertake when supporting children and families with additional learning needs.
- The Integrated Quality Report highlighted an improved position in relation to complaints which highlights a positive step forward.
- The Committee received a detailed update on the progress being made in relation to challenged services.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **NOTED** the content of the report.

25/174 Improving Quality Report

The Board received the report and the Executive Director of Nursing and Midwifery and the Executive Director of Allied Health Professionals and Health Science highlighted:

- Progress relating to Nationally Reportable Incidents (NRIs), noting that the Health Board continues to perform above other Health Boards in Wales in terms of incident turnaround times.

- One Never Event was reported in June 2025. It was confirmed that no significant harm occurred to the patient involved.
- Continued improvement in the complaints process, with the team currently resolving complaints within 19 working days on average compared to the target of 30 day on average.
- Deep dive reviews have been undertaken in the Women's and Midwifery Service and the Mental Health and Learning Disability (MHL) Service. Emerging themes are being analysed, with further evaluations planned in other service areas.
- Positive progress was reported in reducing community-onset infections, supported by increased staff training and a review of isolation capacity to reduce transmission risks.
- Development of the Quality Management System is progressing, with work now moving towards the implementation phase.
- Noted that no Prevention of Future Death (PFD) Notices have been reported, and there has been a significant reduction in the number of overdue Learning from Events Reports (LFERs).

In discussing the report, the Board:

- Noted that the Quality, Safety and Experience Committee has recently focused on clinical effectiveness and mortality reviews. The associated report highlighted improved outcomes across a range of areas, reflecting the positive progress being made.
- Noted the inclusion of enhanced data and trend analysis, which will now be reported consistently. This approach will enable more detailed insights into specific areas and support targeted improvement.
- Noted that the Executive Team will hold a dedicated session to explore how best practice can be implemented systematically across the organisation, ensuring a consistent service offer across all regions of the Health Board.

The Chief Executive expressed her gratitude to a family who shared a difficult experience, noting that their feedback is helping to shape improvements in patient experience going forward.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **NOTED** the content of the report.

25/175 Chair's Assurance Report - Performance, Finance and Information Governance Committee

The Board received the report and the Chair of the Performance, Finance and Information Governance (PFIG) Committee highlighted:

- The Committee received the Audit Wales report on Planned Care noting the need to focus on the balance between insourcing and outsourcing at the same time as addressing the fundamental issues.
- The next meeting of the Committee will have a focus on theatre utilisation to gain a greater understanding in this area.
- Work is taking place to develop the format of the Integrated Performance Report.

In discussing the report, the Board:

- Referred to the Board Assurance Framework and the need for the objectives to be smarter which is an area that has also been discussed by the Audit Committee. It was confirmed that this was raised as part of the last Structured Assessment and is an area that remains outstanding to allow the Health Board to move into the strategic space. Once the strategy has been developed, the objectives can be amended accordingly to align to the strategic direction of the organisation.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **NOTED** the content of the report.

25/176 Integrated Performance Report

The Board received the Performance Report and the Chief Executive provided the following update:

- Work is underway to develop a revised format for the report to ensure performance information is presented in a clear and accessible manner. It was noted that quality related data will be integrated into the new **Integrated Quality Report** to support a more comprehensive view of organisational performance.
- **Access and activity** remain the most significant challenges. While there have been marginal improvements in Urgent and Emergency Care, these gains have not been sustained at the level required to meet the needs of the North Wales population.
- The Board was advised of the upcoming Welsh Government requirement to reduce ambulance handover times to **45 minutes**, effective from 1 October 2025. This will be a key area of focus across the system.
- **Planned care** continues to be a major concern. Despite additional support from Welsh Government, the high volume of long waiting patients places considerable pressure on services, and this remains a challenging agenda.
- In relation to **diagnostics**, the target to eliminate waits over eight weeks is unlikely to be met.
- Performance in **Children's and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)** and **Neurodivergence** remains stable but continues to be difficult. Improvements are being made, particularly in assessment processes.

In discussing the report, the Board:

- Noted the competing demands in delivering outpatient appointments alongside addressing long waiting patients. Members queried the organisational impact of these pressures. It was confirmed that while additional resources are being deployed, this brings significant operational strain and heightened expectations. The Board recognised the need for transformational change in service management to sustain and improve performance. A high level report was proposed to outline the actions underway to progress both areas concurrently.
- Queried progress in relation to Falls. It was confirmed that this remains a relatively static area of performance. However, robust falls assessments and detailed reviews are being undertaken to identify specific areas for improvement.
- Acknowledged the importance of innovative practice in sustaining improvements. The Board emphasised the need to adopt, adapt, and scale innovation across the organisation. Major change programmes were highlighted as key enablers in driving forward this agenda.

Action:

- **25/176.1** A high level summary report to be produced highlighting the current performance against the changes that are taking place to transform the way services are managed to maintain sustainable change.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **REVIEWED** the contents of the report.
- **IDENTIFIED** additional action required to provide assurance.

25/177 Finance Report

The Board received the report, and the Executive Director of Finance highlighted the following key points:

- The financial position remains challenging across Wales, with all Health Boards currently reporting a year-to-date deficit.
- As of 31 August 2025, the Health Board is reporting a year-to-date deficit of £13.6 million, with additional potential financial pressures identified.
- Health Boards are being asked to accommodate the Welsh Risk Pool share agreement; however, current resources are insufficient to meet this requirement.
- A savings target of £40.0 million has been set for delivery in 2025/26. Welsh Government has requested assurance regarding the achievement of this target. Work is ongoing to identify and review further savings options.
- Correspondence has been received from Welsh Government indicating that further allocation may be made available if the financial plan is successfully delivered.
- Work is also underway in relation to the capital programme, which will be considered in more detail by the Performance, Finance and Information Governance Committee.

In discussing the report, the Board:

- Queried the potential for identifying savings through transformation. It was noted that the Value and Sustainability Major Change Programme is expected to drive service improvements and generate financial savings. The outcomes of this work will be presented at the next Board meeting.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **RECEIVED** and **SCRUTINISED** the report.

GOVERNANCE, RISK AND ASSURANCE

25/178 Chair's Assurance Report: Audit Committee

The Board received the report, and the Vice Chair of the Audit Committee highlighted the following:

- The valuable work undertaken by Internal Audit and Audit Wales, which continues to support improvements across the organisation. It was noted that a wide range of Internal Audit reports were reviewed at the Committee's most recent meeting.
- The Committee received the Audit Wales Planned Care Report, which will be monitored through the Performance, Finance and Information Governance Committee and the Quality, Safety and Experience Committee to ensure appropriate oversight and assurance in specific areas.

It was resolved that the Board

- **NOTED** the content of the report.

25/179 Governance and Accountability Framework

The Board received the joint report from the Director of Corporate Governance and Executive Director of Finance, which included:

- A review of the Scheme of Reservation and Delegation and proposed amendments to the Standing Financial Instructions, reflecting recent changes introduced by the Procurement Act.

The Director of Corporate Governance highlighted:

- The Scheme of Reservation and Delegation has been reformatted to simplify decision making processes, aligning with the key themes of the Foundations for the Future programme.
- The documentation has been reviewed with Internal Audit and Audit Wales, and presented to the Audit Committee. It forms part of broader organisational improvements to enhance operational governance across the Health Board.
- Certain elements remain unchanged, including matters reserved for the Board and those requiring Welsh Government approval under specific contractual arrangements.
- A set of principles has been developed to clarify delegation responsibilities, supported by a tiered system aligned with the Oracle approval framework.
- Further work is required to define the tier below the Executive Committee, which will be progressed in line with the Foundations for the Future programme.

In discussing the report, the Board:

- Queried the process for developing business cases. It was confirmed that this has been considered by the Executive Committee in the context of business case development and service planning. Further work is required, and an update will be brought to a future informal Board meeting.
- Acknowledged that this forms part of a broader programme of work, including the development of a decision making framework. This will align with the Integrated Medium Term Plan and the strategic planning work currently underway.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **NOTED** the report and **APPROVED** the proposed changes to the Scheme of Reservation and Delegation.
- **APPROVED** the Standing Financial Instructions in line with Welsh Government direction to incorporate the changes to the procurement act.
- **AGREED** that further refinements to the Scheme of Delegation will be consideration by the Executive Committee and then approval brought back through to the Audit Committee and Board.

25/180 Corporate Governance Report

The Board received the report and the Director of Corporate Governance highlighted the following:

- The report provides a comprehensive update on key governance matters. A further Chair's Action has recently taken place and will be presented to the next Board meeting for ratification.
- All Committees have now received the outcomes of their self-assessments, along with a copy of the Annual Report. These documents are included in the supporting pack. Where areas for improvement have been identified, they will be incorporated into the Corporate Governance Improvement Plan.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **NOTED** the content of the report.
- **NOTED** the affixing of the common seal as outlined in this report.
- **NOTED** the matters considered in the Private Board meeting on 31 July 2025.
- **RATIFIED** the response to the Hywel Dda Consultation as agreed by the Chair following discussion at the Informal Board in August 2025.

- **RATIFIED** the approvals of Approved Clinicians and Section 12(2) Doctors in line with national guidance.

25/181 Chairs Assurance Report - People and Culture Committee

The Board received the report and the Vice Chair of the People and Culture Committee highlighted:

- The Committee reviewed the Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act and approved the Strengthening Social Partnership Annual Report 2024/25 for onward submission to Welsh Government. This work is crucial for relationships across the Health Board.

It was resolved that the Board

- **NOTED** the content of the report.

25/182 Annual Reports

The Board received a range of Annual Reports and highlighted the following:

Health, Safety and Security Annual Performance Report 2024-25

There has been a shift in the approach in terms of governance and reporting and this is starting to feed in from the Health and Safety Executive. Concerns were raised in relation to the high level of violence against staff and it was agreed that support is required to renew the zero tolerance message as there is no acceptable level in this area.

Welsh Language Services Annual Monitoring Report 2024-25

The Monitoring Report and the 'More than words' Report were included under this item. The Health Board is making progress in relation to the Welsh Language standards and work is taking place to identify the gaps and put systems in place. Training is wide spread across the organisation and uptake continues to increase. Staff are encouraged to support the use of the Welsh Language across the Health Board.

Strategic Equality Annual Report 2024-25

The report demonstrates that a wide range of work is taking place in addition to the requirements of the statutory duty. The work completed to date has focussed on building a level of engagement with equality team and going forward the key priorities will be to reduce inequality, improve data and close the gender pay gap.

Duty of Candour Annual Report 2024-25

This is the second time the report has been presented since the Duty of Candour came into effect in April 2023. The report identifies the progress being made and links in with the integrate concerns policy where robust processes are being put in place.

Putting Things Right Annual Report 2024-25

The report identifies themes and trends in relation to a number of reported incidents. Improvement work is taking place and further information is presented on a regular basis as part of the Improving Quality Report.

It was resolved that the Board

- **APPROVED** the following Annual Reports:
 - Health, Safety and Security Annual Performance Report 2024-25
 - Welsh Language Services Annual Monitoring Report 2024-25

- Strategic Equality Annual Report 2024-25
- Duty of Candour Annual Report 2024-25
- Putting Things Right Annual Report 2024-25

25/183 Committees and Advisory Group Chair's Reports:

The Board received the Chair's Reports from the following Committees and Advisory Groups:

- Mental Health Legislation Committee
- Charitable Funds Committee
- Stakeholder Reference Group
- Local Partnership Forum
- Executive Committee

In relation to the Stakeholder Reference Group, it was noted that the September meeting had been the first meeting chaired by Peter Lewis as the newly appointed Chair of the group. The aim going forward is for members of the group to share the information being discussed and gain feedback from the wider constitutes to enhance two way discussion in this space.

It was resolved that the Board:

- **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** the reports.

CLOSING BUSINESS

25/147 Date of Next Meeting:

Thursday 27 November 2025 at 9.30am

25/148 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."