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WELSH AMBULANCE SERVICES NHS TRUST

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TRUST BOARD OF THE WELSH AMBULANCE SERVICES NHS TRUST HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2010 AT COLEG POWYS, NEWTOWN

PRESENT

Trust Board

Mr S Fletcher Non Executive Director and Chairman
Mr M Cassidy Deputy Chief Executive
Mr S Castledine Non Executive Director
Mrs C Cookson Non Executive Director
Mr D Evans Non Executive Director
Dr K Fitzpatrick Non Executive Director
Mr P James Non Executive Director
Ms S Jones Clinical Director
Mr J Morgan Non-Executive Director
Mr A Murray Chief Executive
Mr P Price Non-Executive Director
Mr T Woodhead Director of Finance

Trust Board Representatives

Mrs J Davies Director of Workforce and Organisational Development
Mr N Heal Staff Side Representative (RCN)
Mr J Huxley Assistant Corporate Secretary
Mr D Jackland Director of ICT
Mr A Jenkins Consultant Paramedic
Mr R John Staff Side Representative (UNITE)
Mr J Jones Corporate Accountant
Mr D Jones-Morris Regional Director, North
Mr M Jose Staff Side Representative (UNISON)
Mrs A Kedward Associate Nurse Director
Mr G McLean Unscheduled Care Lead
Mr S Pryor Interim Director of Ambulance Services
Mr G Roberts Interim Regional Director, South East
Mrs D Sharp Corporate Secretary
Ms S Thorpe Staff Side Representative (GMB)
Mr N Waskett Medical Adviser
Apologies

Mr B Roberts  Staff Side Representative (UNITE)
Region

Prior to the formal business of the meeting, the Chairman presented Mrs Angela Hughes, Chief Executive of the Wales Air Ambulance Service, with an award, on behalf of the Trust, for the work and support provided by the Air Ambulance Service in responding to emergency incidents. Mrs Hughes thanked the Trust for the award.

The Chairman also informed members that this was the final meeting to be attended by Clare Cookson, as Vice Chair of the Board, before her appointment as a Non Executive Director of the Trust expires on 31 March 2010. On behalf of everyone associated with the Trust, past and present, the Chairman thanked Clare for her support and contribution to the work of the Board and wished her the very best in the future.

The Chairman confirmed that Mr Peter Price was to assume the Vice Chair position with effect from 1 April 2010.

01/10 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

RESOLVED: That

(1) the minutes of the meeting of the Trust Board held on 9 December 2009 be confirmed as a correct record;

(2) the urgent business approved by the Chairman under the procedures contained in Standing Order No 5.2 relating to the secondment of the Interim Director of Ambulance Services and the integration of the Memorandum and Articles of Association for the NHS Confederation, be noted; and

(3) the position with regard to Pandemic Flu and the reporting at future meetings of the Board of the lessons learned following the outbreak, be noted.

02/10 PATIENT EXPERIENCES

The Board opened the meeting by reviewing a DVD presentation of an actual incident involving the Trust.

The case related to the level of communication between Ambulance Control and the paramedic (s) at the scene and whether staff had received the appropriate
training and had the equipment on the vehicle to be able to offer the best possible care to the patient.

Upon discussing the circumstances of the case, members were reassured that the lessons from the case had been identified and, in addition to the provision of appropriate additional training and equipment, discussions had been held with hospitals in the North Region to obtain advanced warning that patients with certain conditions were being discharged and would need individual care and equipment at home.

It was emphasised that patient experiences and working with them to provide a care package/programme was the way forward for the Trust and should result in a benefit to all parties involved, both in terms of patient outcomes and financial cost to the Trust.

RESOLVED:

That the DVD providing the Board with an example of a patient experience, and the resulting discussion on its contents, be received

03/10 PATIENT SAFETY/1000 LIVES CAMPAIGN UPDATE

The Clinical Director presented a report which provided an overview of developments within the Trust relating to the work of the Patient Safety/Clinical Risk Team, the 1,000 Lives Campaign, Partners in Healthcare, in addition to individual topics under the Clinical Directorate’s responsibility, including developing strategies and current initiatives.

Members of the Board asked a number of questions to clarify individual issues. One issue was to ensure that the Executive walkrounds continued and regular feedback was presented to the Board. Specific reference was also made to the station audits which would shortly be completed in all regions, the results of which would be considered by the Clinical Governance Committee in March and the Board in April.

The Board was informed that there was a considerable amount of joint working between the Operations and Clinical Directorates in triaging calls, to the point that over 73% of calls were being managed by nursing staff.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the content of the report be noted; and

(2) executive patient safety walkrounds be continued.
04/10 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

The Interim Director of Ambulance Services presented a significantly revised Corporate Risk Register following careful discussion as to its contents by the Executive Team. The register now focussed on the high level risks that the Trust currently faced and the Board was invited to consider and agree the register as the basis for regular monitoring by the Executive Team and the Board itself.

Upon considering the risk register, members questioned whether it was feasible to provide refresher/mandatory training to all staff by the end of March 2010. In response, the programme was to be delivered on a phased basis, commencing with technician staff, who, at present, represented the highest training risk to the Trust.

The Board also discussed the implications of legislative risks the Trust faced which would manifest themselves in a number of individual functions within Directorates. The discussion centred upon how the Trust responded to individual risks which, if not resolved, could lead in failure in the Trust meeting its legislative responsibilities.

Reference was also made to risks 007 and 010 which needed some adjustment on account of mitigation reducing the likelihood of the risk materialising, without impact on the severity of the risk.

RESOLVED:

That the strategic and corporate risk register be agreed and the details be considered at future meetings of the Risk Management and Modernisation Committee and high level risks by the Board.

05/10 FINANCIAL POSITION AT 31 DECEMBER 2009 (MONTH 9)

The Director of Finance reported that at the end of December 2009, the Trust was reporting an adverse variance of £0.984m, against a cumulative budget of £113m, an overspend of 0.86%.

The report summarised the Trust's income and expenditure position, provided further details of the actual and forecasted under/overspend for 2009/10 and outlined the income assumptions for that year. The report also listed the key financial risks together with the financial performance of each Region, summarising the key issues arising from their individual circumstances.

The Board noted specifically that Month 9 financial statements had been completed having regard to the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) which had reduced the Trust's net assets on the balance sheet by approximately £9.2m.
Members of the Board asked a number of questions on the detail within the report and sought clarification on the pay overspend in the Central & West Region and on the reasons for it. In response, the Director of Finance reported that the Central & West Region had a number of difficult issues with regard to meeting performance targets and also had specific in year issues this year which would not re-occur.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the latest financial position for the period ending 31 December 2009, be noted;

(2) the virement of budgets to reflect International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS adjustments, be approved; and

(3) budget processes be included as an item of business at the Board Development Session on 24 March 2010.

06/10 MANAGEMENT REVIEW UPDATE

The Chief Executive briefed the Board on progress with the implementation of the Management Review. The report circulated to members covered the position in relation to Executive posts, the development of staffing structures below the executive tier and the current situation preparing job descriptions and the banding of posts.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the update report be noted; and

(2) a more detailed report be presented at the next meeting of the Board to include confirmation that the changed priorities agreed in the Management Review have been reflected in the actual structure and also the stated savings to be accrued from the review have been achieved.

07/10 DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY

Following the Board’s support to develop a Leadership and Management Strategy, the Director of Workforce and Organisational Development presented an update on the implementation of the strategy. It was recognised in the report that any training and development programme that was to be introduced would require the necessary resources and in this regard budgets were currently being considered for next year. The report provided detailed information on progress,
the next steps to support the strategy and included a framework within which the role out of the programme would be managed.

Specific reference was made to the importance of training middle managers and also to recognise the role of managers in adopting policies and procedures in relation to the welfare of staff eg discipline and grievance. The ability of the organisation to ensure that staff were released from duty to attend training programmes was a crucial factor in the success of the whole initiative and, therefore, needed to be carefully planned.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the contents of this paper be noted;

(2) the implementation of the Leadership and Management Competency Framework and its ongoing development be supported;

(3) the Board continue to support the delivery of the Management Skills Learning Programme;

(4) subject to the appropriate budget allocation, the provision of resources in relation to building leadership assessment capacity and delivery of leadership programmes be supported; and

(5) the Director of Workforce and Organisational Development be asked to note and consider the points raised in the discussion and highlighted in the minute above.

08/10 TIME TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Director of ICT presented a report which confirmed that the programme status had turned to "red". The inability of the Programme Management Board to take decisions, as it had been inquorate on a number of occasions, was cited as one reason. In addition, a number of key staff had left the Trust in recent months which had added to an imbalance between resources and the demand to progress projects. The Board considered information about individual projects as listed in the report.

The Board noted the issues in relation to the ability of the Department to progress projects, particularly the need to ensure that the vehicle replacement project followed project management principles which, in turn, would reduce the associated risks.

Members also asked when it would be possible for the Cleric system to supply meaningful management data as this would give key information when comparing with systems operating within the pilot arrangements in three areas in
Wales. It was confirmed that the Deputy Chief Executive was currently
discussing these issues and would be able to report back to future meetings of
the Board.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be noted;

(2) the Executive Team consider appointing a Project Manager to the
Vehicle Replacement Project; and

(3) PCS and the availability of quality management information from the
Cleric system be a Standing item of business on future Board agenda.

09/10 WAST ACTION PLAN ON THE HEALTH INSPECTORATE WALES (HIW)
REVIEW OF AMBULANCE RESPONSE FOLLOWING THE HOMICIDE OF
FATHER PAUL BENNETT

The Clinical Director presented an action plan that had been prepared following
the review by Health Inspectorate Wales of the homicide of Father Paul Bennett.
The Review commented on the ambulance response and care provided to Father
Paul and included a wide range of issues surrounding mental health care and the
subsequent care provided to the family of Father Paul and the community. Eight
recommendations were made by the Review relating to the ambulance response.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the updated WAST Action Plan be noted;

(2) the updated Action Plan be placed on the HIW website; and

(3) the Clinical Governance Committee be requested to monitor and ensure
completion of any outstanding actions.

10/10 OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE: NOVEMBER 2009

The Interim Director of Ambulance Services introduced a report which confirmed
that the Trust had achieved a response performance standard of 65.8% within 8
minutes for Category A (immediately life threatening) incidents in November
2009, against the All Wales 65% target set out in the Trust’s Annual Operating
Framework.

The three Regions had exceeded the 60% Category A eight minute response
performance standard for the month and this standard was also achieved within
18 of the Local Health Board areas.
The report provided detailed information on the standards for the month, a comparison in demand between November this year against last year’s and emphasised the key challenge of working with hospitals to improve handover and turnaround times. The report also commented on the sickness absence rates from which members noted that the rate was much lower in the North Region than in the other two Regions; further information was requested to explain this difference.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the content of the report be noted; and

(2) further information be presented to the Board on the overall sickness absence rate, broken analysed by Region.

11/10 APPROVAL OF TRUST POLICIES/ANNUAL REPORTS

RESOLVED:

That the following policies and the Annual Report of the Welsh Language Scheme, be approved:

(a) ICT Mobile Telephone Policy;
(b) Community First Responder Policy;
(c) Freedom of Information Policy; and
(d) Sickness Absence Policy.

12/10 COMPLAINTS AND CLAIMS UPDATE

The Corporate Secretary introduced a report to reflect the current position in response to the Board’s discussion at its previous meeting about the length of time investigations were taking to complete and for the Trust to respond to complainants. The information provided in the report indicated that the number of outstanding cases within each age range in terms of a response had reduced and that these reductions had occurred around the 121-140 day range. In addition, Senior Managers were having regular meetings to review outstanding cases and it was reported that a large number of cases were shortly to be signed-off by the Chief Executive.

The report also briefed the Board on progress with the arrangements to meet the requirements of the Welsh Assembly Government’s (WAG) proposal to introduce a new process for handling adverse incidents, complaints and claims. A consultation paper had been published by WAG, a response to which would be co-ordinated by the Corporate Secretary and agreed with the Chairman and Chief Executive. Arrangements to meet these requirements had already begun
Appendix 1

within the Trust and the results of a risk assessment undertaken by the Trust had identified the following key themes:

(a) Too many Investigating Officers resulting in lack of numbers for each Investigating Officer and therefore the standard of investigations varied in quality as a result of major differences in the experience of Investigating Officers;
(b) Need to establish stronger partners in healthcare team links to ensure feedback into service improvement;
(c) Standardise process and forms for Adverse Incidents and complaints; and
(d) Need for consistent Clinical Leadership.

The Chairman welcomed the improvement in the profile of outstanding complaints and agreed with other members that the improvement needed to be maintained and not decline as a result of the transfer of the arrangements within the Trust.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the report be noted; and

(2) the Chairman and Chief Executive be authorised, on behalf of the Board, to sign-off the Trust’s response to the consultation document entitled “Putting Things Right” to meet the deadline of 2 April 2010.

13/10 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN ANNUAL REPORT 2008/09

The Board considered the Safeguarding Children Annual Report for the period ending 30 June 09. The Report updated the Board on the Safeguarding Children requirements for the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST) which had been highlighted by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) in recent months. This was following the review of safeguarding arrangements in Wales undertaken by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) and Healthcare in Wales (HIW), together with other key strategies being delivered which had an impact on children.

The Named Professional for Safeguarding Children explained to the Board that an action plan had been prepared in relation to a Serious Case Review involving a child in the Swansea area. The Plan was to be monitored by the Safeguarding Children Strategic Forum and the Clinical Governance Committee.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the Safeguarding Children Annual Report: (Period Ending June 09) and the update report be noted; and
(2) mandatory training re safeguarding for all staff, in particular front line Emergency Medical Services (EMS), PCS and control staff continue to be supported.

14/10 DEBTORS ARBITRATION

RESOLVED: That

(1) the latest position on NHS Wales Debtors arbitration be noted; and

(2) the commencement of formal arbitration procedures in respect of the debtors identified in the report, should payment not be forthcoming, be approved.

15/10 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the following meetings be received:

(1) Clinical Governance Committee held on 10 December 2009;

(2) Programme Management Board held on 11 December 2009;

(3) Risk Management and Modernisation Committee held on 15 December 2009; and

(4) Audit Committee held on 29 January 2010.

16/10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was reported that the next meeting of the Trust Board would be held on Wednesday 28 April 2010 at Vantage Point House.

17/10 CLOSED SESSION OF THE TRUST BOARD MEETING

RESOLVED:

That representatives of the press and members of the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting having regard to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted in accordance with the requirements of Section 2(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.