

## RCN Wales Board

Minutes of the open meeting held on 4 June 2021  
commencing at 09:00

The meeting was held via Microsoft Teams

Present via Teams	Position
Richard Jones, MBE	Chair, RCN Wales Board and Council member for Wales
Nicola Milligan	Vice Chair, RCN Wales Board
Alison Magor	Board member
Carolyn Middleton, MBE	Board member
Catherine Jones	Board member
Ceri Dolan	Board member
Denise Llewellyn, MBE, FRCN	Welsh member on Professional Nursing Committee
Jackie Davies	Welsh member on Trade Union Committee
June Clark, DBE, FRCN	Board member
Steve Watson	Board member – <i>left at 14:00</i>
Susan Williams	Board member
Apologies:	
Ann Taylor Griffiths	Board member
Donna Mead, OBE, CSt.J, FRCN	Board member
Rhys Vanstone	Board member
Tristan Griffin	Board member
Presenters:	
Nichola Ashby	Head of Professional Learning & Development
Rhian Wright	Cardiff & the Vale Branch Secretary
In attendance:	
Helen Whyley	Director, RCN Wales
Nicky Hughes	Associate Director of Nursing (Employment Relations) – <i>left at 1pm</i>
Diane Powles	Associate Director of Nursing, Policy & Professional Practice
Helen Carlyon	Associate Director of Nursing, Policy & Professional Practice

Lisa Turnbull	Policy, Parliamentary & Public Affairs Manager – <i>left between 13:00 and 13:30</i>
Katie Branch	Complaints, Quality & Admin Services Manager
Jayne Taylor	Executive Assistant to the Director, RCN Wales
Lee Anderson	Secretarial Administrator
Observers:	
Michelle Moseley	Education & Lifelong Learning Adviser
Rhona Workman	PA to Associate Director of Nursing, Policy and Professional Development/ Study Centre Administrator

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Open session.

Apologies had been received from Board members Ann Griffiths, Donna Mead, Rhys Vanstone and Tristan Griffin.

The Board welcomed the following two observers:

- Michelle Moseley, Education & Lifelong Learning Adviser.
- Rhona Workman, PA to Associate Director of Nursing, Policy and Professional Development/ Study Centre Administrator.

The Board agreed to record the meeting and for the recording to be used in a future development session.

### **1.2. Declaration of Interests**

The Board Chair asked Board members to declare any possible interests with any items on the agenda, but no further declarations were made.

## **2. MINUTES AND ACTIONS**

### **2.1 Minutes from the previous meeting**

Minutes of the Board meeting held on 19 February 2021 had been circulated and were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

### **2.2 Review of Action Sheet**

All actions were either noted as completed or delayed due to COVID-19.

### **2.3 Matters Arising**

The Board was informed that Lisa Llewellyn had been appointed as the Director of Nurse and Health Professional Education at Health Education and Improvement Wales and that the Board Chair and the Director have a meeting arranged with her on 10 June 2021.

There were no further matters arising.

### **3. OPERATIONAL UPDATES**

#### **3.1 RCN Wales Board Chair's Report**

A report had been received and was noted including the remaining Wales Board 2021 meeting schedule.

The Board Chair expressed his gratitude to all Board members for the hard work they have undertaken on behalf of the Board.

#### **3.2 Director, RCN Wales Report**

A report had been received and was noted.

The Director gave further information on the following:

One to One Meetings have continued through the pandemic with the Directors of Nursing. The Directors of Nursing Peer Group meetings resumed on 28 May 2021 which the Associate Director of Nursing, Policy & Professional Practice attended.

Meeting with Sue Evans, Chief Executive and David Pritchard, Director of Regulation, Social Care Wales on 7 April 2021. The Director was asked if the issue of dual regulation by Social Care Wales and the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) for registered managers who are nurses was discussed.

The Director outlined that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the RCN's response to the Rebalancing Social Care White Paper and concerns over the NHS Executive. The Board was reminded that the issue of dual registration had been raised as part of the response to the White Paper.

The Board was also informed that Social Care Wales intended to expand their register to 3 additional areas. The was informed that David Pritchard would be invited to meet with the Employment Relations Team to discuss concerns around fitness to practice for HCSW members.

The Parliamentary Cross Party Group on Nursing & Midwifery was held on 24 March 2021 on the subject of mental health and learning disability nursing. The Board was informed that this event was very well attended by a number of very experienced members and Senedd members and the feedback has been very positive.

It was agreed following that meeting to work on increasing the number of nurse consultant practitioners across Wales and the Board will be updated on that.

**ACTION 8:** To update the Board on the work to increase the number of nurse consultant practitioners across Wales.

### 3.3 COVID-19 Update Report

A report had been circulated and was noted.

The Director took the Board through the paper and highlighted the following:

- Appendix 1 provides the notes of the Board COVID-19 briefings since the last Board.
- FAQs have been updated regarding NHS staff taking holidays abroad during the pandemic. Although the Welsh Government is advising people not to undertake non-essential travel, NHS staff will be supported on an individual basis should they need to quarantine.
- UK Sage Group has given an update on use of FFP3 masks. The RCN is clear that FFP3 masks should be used in a more precautionary manner and RCN Wales continues to raise this issue at the Nosocomial group and with Welsh Government.
- The Director commended the work of the nursing staff who have led and delivered the Wales wide vaccination and testing programme across Wales.
- RCN Wales Employment Relations team is working to fill the vacant paid representative hours in Swansea Bay University Health Board and is working with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to regain the hours lost.
- RCN Wales offices are still closed to members and waiting for final Welsh Government guidance as to when the offices can reopen to members. The Board was assured that services to members have been maintained during the pandemic and the library continues to offer services virtually.

The Board raised concern that in April 2021 substantive staff were recalled to their posts and withdrawn from the vaccination programme. The Board sought reassurance with regards to the sustainability of the vaccination programme going forward into the winter months.

The Director asked both Associate Directors to raise this with the Vaccination Group and NHS Wales Partnership Forum and take any necessary action and report back to the September Board.

**ACTION 9:** The Associate Directors to raise the Board's concerns with sustainability of the vaccination programme going forward into the winter

months with the Vaccination Group and NHS Wales Partnership Forum and take any necessary action and report back to the September Board.

The Board sought reassurance around the future of workforce plans and HEIW's workforce strategy in light of the post covid recovery of the NHS and the issues around long COVID. The Board suggested gathering this evidence ahead of the appointment of the new Chair of the Welsh Government Health Committee.

The Director reminded the Board that the RCN continues to lobby around commissioning numbers and had raised concerns with the deliverability of Welsh Government's workforce plans.

The Director agreed to discuss what actions to take with the Associate Directors and report back to the September Board.

The Board noted that in preparation of the new parliamentary term, RCN Wales will send all new Senedd Members an introductory letter with a briefing highlighting both the RCN's position on NHS pay and COVID-19.

**ACTION 10:** The Director to discuss what actions to take with the Associate Directors on the future of workforce planning and HEIW's workforce strategy in light of the post covid recovery of the NHS and the issues around long COVID and report back to the September Board.

#### 3.4 Policy, Parliamentary & Public Affairs Impact Report

A report had been received and was noted.

The Policy, Parliamentary & Public Affairs Manager gave a verbal update as follows:

- Board members were thanked for their contributions to the policy papers detailed in the report especially around the workforce requirements for specialist mental health services and learning disabilities. The Board noted that one objective for these papers is to demonstrate the diversity and specialist nature of nursing roles.
- The Board noted that social care is a very important issue and is a top priority for the incoming Welsh Government. The Labour Party in their manifesto committed to the establishment of a new role of Chief Social Care Officer for Wales and the Director would discuss this further with key stakeholders.
- The Board is grateful to Board member, Steve Watson, for agreeing to chair the two member discussions on social care policy and the dates for these will be circulated to Board.
- The information around the developments on the Levelling Up Fund and its implications for public funding was noted.

The Board discussed how best to educate and inform people around the complexities of nursing. It was agreed for the Director and Board Chair to discuss this offline and to report back to the Board.

**ACTION 11:** The Board Chair and Director to discuss how best to educate and inform people around the complexities of nursing.

The Board discussed the possibility of mapping the nursing consequences of the potential reduction in funding for health and social care in Wales and recognised that this issue needed to be seen within the wider political context around devolution and the possibility of Scottish independence.

The Director assured the Board that the Executive Team is aware of the potential implications for the RCN from Scottish independence and was undertaking preparatory work around the implications of a future Scottish referendum on the RCN.

### 3.5 2021 RCN Wales Nurse of the Year and Alumni Network Update

A report had been received and was noted.

The Board noted that the 2021 awards ceremony would be held on 10 November 2021 and the Wales Nurse of the Year Project Planning Group was planning for a virtual and a hybrid ceremony.

The Board was delighted to see the return of the Care of the Older Person Award. The Board noted that all Board members would be invited to sit on the awards interview panels.

Board members were urged to encourage members to submit nominations by the closing date of 30 June 2021.

## 4. **STRATEGIC UPDATES**

### 4.1 RCN Wales NHS Pay Campaign

A report had been received and was noted.

The Associate Director of Nursing (Employment Relations) gave a verbal update as follows:

- There has been a lot of campaign activity and political influencing. Member engagement has intensified via social media over last 6 weeks and the RCN has held a number of successful online events and member meetings.
- The Pay Review Body (PRB) is likely to report its recommendations to the UK Governments in June or July.
- RCN members in Scotland rejected, with a clear majority, the 4% pay award made by the Scotland Government.

- The RCN UK Pay Programme Government structure has been reviewed with a newly formed UK Pay Programme Board in place to support countries and regions in the work going forward.
- RCN Wales structures have been adapted in line with these new governance structures. The RCN Wales Board Pay Scrutiny and Decision-Making Sub Group, chaired by the Board Chair, will oversee the delivery of the pay campaign work in Wales.
- Monthly all Wales Officer meetings and campaign meetings with representatives continue and one will be held in Prince Charles and Royal Glamorgan hospitals over next couple of weeks.
- The Board was grateful to Denise Kelly, Vice Chair of TUC for giving a presentation on “*The Power of the Nursing Voice - Lessons learnt from the strike in Northern Ireland*” on 12 May 2021.
- Board members were urged to encourage members to update their membership records in preparations for any consultations or ballots.

#### 4.2 NHS Wales Partnership Forum Update

A report had been received and was noted.

The Associate Director of Nursing (Employment Relations) gave a verbal update as follows:

- The NHS Wales Partnership Forum (NHSWPF) met on 17 March 2021 and the agenda is enclosed in the appendix.
- NHSWPF Business Committee meetings and the Vaccination and Workforce cell meetings now take place fortnightly on alternate weeks.
- The NHSWPF Trade Unions will meet shortly with new Minister for Health and Social Services and hopefully monthly meetings with the Minister will recommence.
- The consultation on the Race Equality Action plan for Wales closes on 17 June 2021 and it is hoped that following a recommendation that an inclusion network for Wales will be established.
- The NHS All Wales Respect and Resolution policy will be launched shortly.
- The recent NHS staff survey had a new approach which saw a 20% response rate which is a slight improvement on previous surveys. However, this remains quite low but as the survey was undertaken during covid pandemic, a lower response was to be expected.

- The NHSWPF Trade Unions continue to collectively call for a significant pay rise for the 2021/22 pay round and for this to be backdated to December 2020.
- There is now reciprocal arrangement across NHS Wales re redeployment however discussions regarding the application of this within the Organisational Change process continue.
- The Data Monitoring Group reviews the implementation of the Managing Attendance at Work policy, however, the review has been deferred due to COVID-19.

The Board expressed concern that new policies such as the Managing Attendance at Work policy are implemented without sufficient training for staff to implement them.

The Board noted that this concern had been raised within the NHSWPF but NHS Employers had decided training was not necessary for this policy and so the NHSWPF stressed the need to monitor its implementation.

The Board expressed concern that feedback from NHS Wales staff surveys is not being fed back to staff and sought reassurance that the comments from staff are acted upon.

The Board noted that RCN Officer, Vikki Rees would take the Board's concern back to the NHS Staff Survey working group and the Board will be updated at the September Board.

**ACTION 12:** The Board's concern that feedback from NHS Wales staff surveys is not being fed back to staff to be taken to the NHS Staff Survey Working Group.

The Board noted that 6 engagement events were held to look at the Staff Governance Framework and that the NHSWPF would receive further detail on this work in due course that will be shared with Board.

The Board was reminded that there is a work stream within the Pay Working Group looking at pay and terms and conditions within the independent sector. The Board noted that some independent sector providers are offering a pay award and that RCN UK is putting together groups to discuss these on an individual organisation basis.

#### 4.3 Political Influencing Campaign Report

A report had been received and was noted.

The Policy, Parliamentary & Public Affairs Manager gave a verbal update as follows:

The evaluation of the election campaign will be prepared by the end of June 2021.



A large scale public facing campaign and political campaign will be launched in September 2021. Board members were asked to volunteer to join the Campaign Steering Group.

Decision: The Board approved the establishing of a Campaign Steering Group and was grateful to the following Board Members for volunteering to sit on the Campaign Steering Group:

- The Board Chair
- The Welsh member on PNC
- The Welsh member on TUC
- Board member, Steve Watson
- Board member, June Clark

**ACTION 13:** The dates for the Campaign Steering Group to be circulated to the Board members who agreed to join the group.

#### 4.4 RCN Wales Engagement with the Independent and Social Care Sector Steering Group

A report had been received and the work plan was noted.

The Associate Director of Nursing, Policy and Professional Practice gave a verbal update as follows:

- Board members were thanked for their work on the Independent and Social Care Sector Steering Group.
- The Board's attention was drawn to the independent sector listening events to be held on 24 June and 9 and 23 July 2021.
- The Board noted that the Associate Director of Nursing, Policy and Professional Practice has a seat on the UK Independent Group, which is chaired by Council member, Jeremy Benton. The Board noted that the group oversees the implementation of the independent sector strategy. The Group has the following key work themes:
  - To develop an acuity tool a dependency tool for care homes.
  - To develop some generic job descriptions and evaluate these against Agenda for Change.
  - To develop an accreditation system for care homes.

#### 4.5 RCN Wales Succession Planning Committee Update

The Board Chair gave a verbal update as follows:

- The Succession Planning Committee met on 21 May and discussed the suggestions made at the February Board to increase member

engagement with the Wales Board elections and agreed to undertake a scoping exercise to provide data on the uptake of emails, access of members to electronic voting and voting patterns and breakdown by branch.

- The Committee considered providing broadband for RCN members but thought that the cost would be prohibitive and that it would not be viable for the RCN to offer this financial incentive.
- The Committee discussed the pros and cons of recording or live streaming and live tweeting from Board meetings. It was agreed that Board members would not be encouraged to ‘live’ tweet from Board meetings but that a few pre-approved tweets would be sent out by the Comms team during the meetings which Board members would be encouraged to re-tweet following the meeting.
- The Committee cautioned that Board members would require training prior to any live streaming. It was suggested that training be included in the Board induction sessions, prior to the Board members taking up their seats. The Board has already agreed for the Open session of the June Board to be recorded and used as part of a future Board development day.
- However, the ability of the Board to live stream sometime in the future would depend on Ty Maeth being installed with the appropriate IT equipment.
- The Board had expressed disappointment that the turnout for the last Board elections was lower than expected. The Committee would like the Board to consider what target should be set for the 2022 elections.
- As part of the succession planning work, the Committee is working on developing a buddying/mentor system for new Board members.

**ACTION 14:** The programme for future Board development sessions has been agreed and will be circulated shortly.

The Director agreed to try and provide the Board with data on the profile of members who engaged in the RCN Wales elections process.

The Board suggested that shadowing and buddying for new Board members should be made available to members who are thinking of standing to become a Board member.

The Board recognised the time and commitment the role of a Board member involves and the need to have a broad range of Board members from different backgrounds and experience and the need to support members who wish to stand for the role.

The Board was unable to reach a decision on setting targets for future Board elections without having received a further analysis of existing voting data.

The Director cautioned that the Board would not be setting a target until September and would have six months to implement and reach targets.

**ACTION 15:** To try and provide the Board with data on the profile of members who engaged in the RCN Wales elections process in Closed session to assist in setting targets for the 2022 Board elections.

#### 4.6 Communications Strategy to Increase Member Engagement with 2022 RCN Wales Board Elections

A report had been circulated and was noted.

The Board Chair took the Board through the strategy and in the discussion that followed, the following suggestions were noted:

- To consider developing a list of RCN social media groups that are available for members to join and to consider how best to provide virtual IT support, possibly via the library.
- To consider writing a guide for people who want to join the Board, branches or forums to encourage members to become more active in the RCN.
- To re-issue the RCN's social media use guidance (June 2020).
- To identify the key influencers in nursing in Wales and use them to get messages out.

The Board commented that the paper set out a communications work plan and agreed not to call it a strategy. The Board stated that the Succession Planning Committee should monitor the implementation of the work plan leading up to the 2022 elections.

**Decision:** The Board approved the member engagement communication workplan.

**ACTION 16:** Succession Planning Committee to monitor the implementation of the communications work plan to increase member engagement with 2022 RCN Wales Board Elections and consider the Board's comments.

#### 4.7 RCN Group ELD Strategy

The Head of Professional Learning & Development attended for this item to give a presentation on the RCN/RCNi Education, Learning and Development Strategy.

The Board queried if student placements are manageable and creditable within NMC requirements of fitness to practice and noted that student placements would be mapped across to local universities and audited to ensure competences have been achieved.

The Board sought assurance that Council had agreed the funding to deliver this strategy and noted that Council has representation on the Partnership Board which will need to show that it has achieved key markers to maintain funding.

The Board was informed that one of the workstreams looking at quality assurance had agreed to set up a depository of information and learning packages that would be made available across the UK.

The Board noted that the larger modules would remain at a commercial cost but that the smaller modules could be made available to members at a lower cost or free of charge.

The Board was reminded that the RCN's Royal Charter states that there should be an institute for nursing at the RCN and a query was raised as to whether the Charter needs to be amended or whether a structure is put in place around this strategy to meet the requirements of the Charter.

The Board was informed that the RCN Centre of Excellence would be a centre of education, learning and development and research and is a brand new offer that has been mapped across to the Charter. However, this is a valid point and will be reviewed by the RCN moving forward.

The Board Chair thanked the Head of Professional Learning & Development for taking the time to present this to the Board.

**ACTION 17:** The presentation on the RCN/RCNi Education, Learning and Development Strategy to be circulated to Board members.

#### 4.8 Update on Cardiff & the Vale Branch Plan

The Board received a presentation by Rhian Wright, Secretary, Cardiff & the Vale Branch on the branch plans for 2021.

The Director asked that the Associate Director of Nursing (Employment Relations) liaises with the Secretary of Cardiff & Vale Branch to pick up some of the issues highlighted in the presentation at the Branch Officials meeting.

The Board agreed to share a communications strategy with all the branches in Wales to assist with member engagement.

The Board Chair thanked the Secretary of Cardiff & Vale Branch for taking the time to present the branch's plans to the Board.

**ACTION 18:** The Associate Director of Nursing (Employment Relations) to liaise with the Secretary of Cardiff & Vale Branch to pick up some of the issues highlighted in the presentation for discussion at a Branch Officials meeting.

#### 4.9 Update on Gwent Branch Plan

The Board received a presentation by Board member Alison Magor, Chair, Gwent Branch on the branch plans for 2021.

The Board noted that the branch would like to expand the membership of the branch and was commended on its plans.

The Board Chair thanked the Chair of Gwent Branch for taking the time to present the branch's plans to the Board.

## 5. **ITEMS TO NOTE**

### 5.1 RCN Foundation Wales Committee Update

The Board was informed that the Director of the RCN Foundation has confirmed that the next meeting of the Wales Committee would take place in June 2021. The Board noted that the recruitment of Trustees would take place in July 2021 and the Board Chair would sit on the interview panel.

The Board will be updated at the September Board.

**ACTION 19:** The Board to receive an update on the RCN Foundation Wales Committee in September.

### 5.2 Report from RCN Council meetings held on 25 February, 22 March and 14 April 2021

A report had been received and was noted.

### 5.3 Report from Trade Union Committee (TUC) meetings

A tabled report had been circulated and was noted.

### 5.4 Report from the Professional Nursing Committee (PNC) held on 8 December and 9 February 2020 and 11 and 30 March 2021

A report had been received and was noted.

The Welsh representative on PNC gave a verbal update as follows:

- It was agreed at the AGM to bring forward the proposal for the RCN to re-join the International Council of Nurses.

- A number of sessions will be held on the RCN Nursing Workforce Standards.
- The PNC has place great importance on challenging the substitution of nursing posts with registrants from other professions being invited to apply for nursing roles.

5.5 Report from the Students Committee held on 11 February and 27 April 2021

A report had been received and was noted.

5.6 Report from the Nursing Support Workers Committee held on 4 February 2021

A report had been received and was noted.

5.7 Report from RCN UK Reps Committees

A report had been received and was noted.

5.8 Correspondence

A report had been received and was noted.

The Director reminded the Board that copies of the correspondence are available to view by contacting the Director's office.

The Board was informed that the Welsh Management Team reviews the correspondence log and also records and reviews the COVID-19 activity log monthly.

The Board noted the responses outstanding that were red flagged and agreed the following:

The Board Chair to chase a response from the Chair of Council as to whether the Board could have representation on Council if the Council member for Wales is on sick leave.

The response from Cardiff and the Vale University Health Board around the pausing of non-COVID activity would no longer been sought as this related to the second wave of COVID-19 and is now out of date.

5.9 Property Strategy Task Update

A report had been received and was noted.

**6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no further items of business.

The Board Chair thanked the staff for their support of the work of the Board.

The Board Chair thanked Board members for all their hard work and support and closed the meeting at 14:35.

The Board noted the dates for the next Board meeting as follows:

Board Open Session: 10 September 2021 09:00 – 14:30

ET: Helen Whyley, Director, RCN Wales

Email: [helen.whyley@rcn.org.uk](mailto:helen.whyley@rcn.org.uk)