



**ASSURANCE REPORT
NHS WALES SHARED SERVICES PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE**

Reporting Committee	Shared Services Partnership Committee
Chaired by	Tracy Myhill, NWSSP Chair
Lead Executive	Neil Frow, Managing Director, NWSSP
Author and contact details	James Quance, Assistant Director of Corporate Services
Date of meeting	21 November 2024

Summary of key matters including achievements and progress considered by the Committee and any related decisions made

Chair’s Report

The Chair updated the Committee on activities since the last meeting and forthcoming events. This included:

- The most recent Welsh Risk Pool Committee meeting which took place on 24 September 2024, with the next meeting taking place on 26 November 2024.
- The Autumn Development Day hosted on 11 October 2024 was positive and provided valuable feedback and insights as regards Committee management, including the induction process for members and highlighting the importance of ensuring Executives are representing organisations to ensure quoracy for meetings. Presentations included Risk Appetite, Transforming Access to Medicines and the refresh of the Customer Charter. Welsh Risk Pool delivered a session covering the life cycle of a claim, opportunities to minimise the length of claims and exploring the impact on people in processes, sharing examples of learning programmes, such as PROMPT. Going forward, the Welsh Risk Pool Team would ensure, where possible, that the useful data collated was made available to NHS Wales to inform organisational planning and decision-making.
- Discussions were held at the Chair’s Peer Group on 29 September 2024, regarding Clinical Associates in Applied Psychology, the Aspiring Board Member Programme run by the Public Bodies Unit to increase diversity in Board membership across Wales, the Care Action Committee and productivity and performance. Further, the Group received an update from Paul Mears from the Chief Executives. The Llais Strategic Plan and the disciplinary processes for Chairs and Independent Members were also discussed. There was also an update from the Welsh Confederation and Welsh Confederation Conference on 6 November 2024.
- NWSSP would be hosting an All-Wales Planning Programme for Learning Autumn Event on 22 November 2024.

The Committee **NOTED** the Chair’s Report.

Managing Director Update

The Managing Director presented his report, which included the following updates:

- The Welsh Risk Pool Committee recently highlighted slight delays in terms of deferred cases, potentially due to additional pressures in Health Board Claims

Teams, but was positive in terms of 209 cases reviewed with £15 million of reimbursements.

- In terms of finance, NWSSP put forward 22 schemes for capital funding and are working through the approvals.
- Positive progress has been made on the South East RadioPharmacy project and subject to Welsh Government (WG) approval and planning permission, works would be looking to commence in January 2025. Notwithstanding there was a current issue regarding the stack diffusion assessment and HEPA filters, which would be discussed with Natural Resources Wales. The Newport Council planners have requested a formal Section 106 Agreement together with a small contribution to the adjoining roadway scheme as part of the planning approval process.
- There was great work being undertaken around lessons learned and organisational learning being taken forward as part of the Welsh Risk Pool programme.
- NWSSP have confirmed the proposed £2 million declaration for distribution to NHS and WG.
- The internal process for the Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMTP) is on-track and we would bring a further update of the plan to the January Committee meeting, for approval.
- The Medical Examiner Service became statutory in September 2024 and we have been working through delays experienced regarding records being returned to us. As such, there had been some press interest in North Wales and we have been working with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) around this.
- As regards accommodation, the Companies House and HQ accommodation position had changed with negotiations ending for the NG2 site which we understand has now been sold. Therefore we are looking to extend our lease of the current HQ site and to downsize Companies House to a smaller footprint.
- In terms of international recruitment, there had been a positive recent visit to Kerala and the Medical Director reported a significant number of doctors and nurses were appointable to positions. In terms of going forward for future visits, it would be helpful for Health Boards to be clear on their available vacancies.
- Laundry Services' achieved the BS14065 accreditation for decontamination of linen at their North Wales and Swansea sites and are progressing on other sites. As expected, there had been a number of challenges in terms, operationally, due to the ageing estate and laundry equipment, which has been as a direct result of the lack of investment in previous years.

The Committee **NOTED** the Managing Director's Report.

Deep Dive

Single Lead Employer Model

A comprehensive deep dive into the Single Lead Employer (SLE) Model was presented to the Committee by the Deputy Director of People and Organisational Development, Sarah Evans.

The SLE model is now fully embedded as part of NWSSP's organisational set up with a Tripartite Agreement in place for NWSSP to work in partnership with Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) and any host organisations. This complex model of working is further underpinned by an Employment Management Agreement. In terms of scope, SLE covers all Medical, Dental and Pharmacy trainees across Wales; the current headcount exceeds 3,700 trainees. The initial implementation began with GP trainees in 2015 and expanded to include Foundation Doctors during the pandemic. The remaining trainees were then transferred between 2020-2022.

Benefits of the SLE model include a simplified employment process, encompassing one pre-employment check, one contract of employment and one payroll form. Further, it ensures easier access to salary sacrifice schemes, mortgages and more effective support for trainees with disabilities. A further benefit includes streamlined payments; for example, ad-hoc duties are paid via one SLE assignment.

The Committee **NOTED** the Deep Dive.

Items Requiring SSPC Approval/Endorsement

Price Increase – Alder House Lease

The report sought the Committee's endorsement for the annual increase of rent at Alder House, prior to obtaining approval of Velindre University NHS Trust Board.

The Committee resolved to **ENDORSE** the proposal.

Charnwood Court Lease Extension

The report sought the Committee's endorsement in order for the Velindre University NHS Trust Board to formally sign and seal the extension of the lease at NWSSP Headquarters at Units 4/5 Charnwood Court, Nantgarw, in accordance with the Standing Orders for the operation of the Committee.

The Committee resolved to **ENDORSE** the proposal.

Purchase to Pay (P2P) Governance Update

The All-Wales P2P Governance Group progress update sought the Committee's approval to cease the auto-release of invoices process from 1 January 2025. The Committee was informed of the progress made against the priorities which were identified in order to achieve the maximum impact and target the greatest improvements across the P2P process.

The Committee **APPROVED** the recommendation to cease the auto-release process from 1 January 2025 and **NOTED** the progress made by the Group.

Risk Appetite Statement

The Statement was brought to the Committee for approval and was last presented at the January 2023 meeting, following significant amendment. It is periodically reviewed by the Senior Leadership Group (SLG) and was discussed at the Autumn Development Day on 11 October 2024.

The Statement reflects guidance from the Good Governance Institute and a bolder approach to taking risk, which was reaffirmed at the Autumn Development Day when the application of the appetite levels for financial, regulatory, quality, reputational and people was discussed. In particular, the balance and interaction between value for money and quality generated a lot of discussion and was something that would need to continue to be monitored closely, and for the Committee to challenge itself as part of decision making and considerations in future.

The Committee **APPROVED** the Risk Appetite Statement.

Items for Noting

NWSSP Decarbonisation Update

SD presented an update on decarbonisation, following the commitment to provide a bi-annual update to the Committee.

The Decarbonisation Action Plan (2024-2026) had been reviewed by Welsh Government and was rated as amber assurance, with NWSSP having since addressed the areas identified regarding monitoring on a National level. All of the findings in the 2023-24 Internal Audit Report relating to staff training, operational impacts of risks and preparation of a fully costed implementation plan have been addressed.

The update provided assurance to the Committee of NWSSP's ongoing efforts and progress in reducing carbon emissions and promoting sustainability within NHS Wales and the Committee **NOTED** the Decarbonisation Update.

Duty of Quality Update

The report outlined steps made to ensure improving quality remains at the heart of the wide variety of services provided by NWSSP, on behalf of NHS Wales and sets out the positive actions taken to meet the Duty.

Progress included the establishment of a good practice network across all divisions, which focuses on sharing learning and quality improvement programmes and development of an All-Wales ESR e-learning module. Further, NWSSP's Business Quality Manager had delivered bespoke training sessions and was happy to engage with wider NHS Wales landscape as regards progressing the non-clinical side of quality. It was recognised that the National Group was unable to focus on the non-clinical measures due to clinical pressures, demands and the attendees being largely clinicians.

The Committee **NOTED** the Duty of Quality Update as provided by the NWSSP Medical Director.

Finance, Performance, People, Programme and Governance Updates

Finance - The financial position as at 31 October 2024 with a year-to-date surplus of £2.422m. This was reported as a surplus of £1.899m within our core operational budgets and £0.523m against the recurrent covid allocation. The £1.899m surplus against core budgets is primarily due to ongoing turnover and delays with targeted recruitment to vacancies. Therefore, NWSSP gave a provisional recommendation of a £2.000m distribution to partners, subject to pay award funding allocations.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) stock, which remains an area of uncertainty requiring WG direction, would be discussed at the meeting with WG on 29 November 2024. Budgets would also be explored as part of our IMTP process and we are identifying particular schemes that NWSSP will need to make investment into in the near future that will require NWSSP to generate internal resource savings or secure investment from WG or partners. In terms of capital schemes, we have submitted an ambitious list of potential capital schemes should additional funding become available and NWSSP is on-track with use of the allocation for the year.

The Welsh Risk Pool is forecasting £140m for the current year, which would require invoking of the risk sharing agreement with Welsh Government, confirming at the end of December the allocations from organisations and continue to manage the risk for the remainder of quarter four.

Audit Wales Management Letter 2023-24 - A very positive position was reported and no recommendations were raised. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services noted that she had met with Richard Harris, Engagement Lead for Audit Wales, to consider the year ahead in terms of the key risks being managed as an organisation and any improvements that can be made to working arrangements in the spirit of continuous improvement.

People & Organisational Development – Good progress had been made in relation to the majority of the statutory indicators, for which compliance had increased. The key messages detailed in the overarching report were:

- Sickness absence had increased by 0.3%, to 3.24%, compared to 2.90% for the same period last year (October 2023 to September 2024), but remained under the NHS target of 3.30%.
- PADR compliance remained above target, at 85.74%.
- Statutory and mandatory e-learning compliance remained very high at 93.16%, excluding the SLE Division.
- Turnover was reported at 22.11%, which had decreased by 1.61%, compared to the same period last year. When excluding the SLE Division, where a higher degree of turnover is inherent in the model, the turnover for NWSSP was at 10.15%.
- Agency spend increased to £18,188 in September 2024, from £12,247 in August 2024. However, we had received no new agency requests in October 2024, 3 staff were engaged via agency in September 2024 and the Resource Bank were recruiting for roles for Laundry, Clerical and Drivers.

Performance - Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) from June to September 2024 were reported and there were no significant areas of concern to be brought to the Committee's attention. The Report indicated a stable and positive position with 38 of 40 high-level indicators achieving target, which were explained in detail in the overarching report. Professional influence benefits generated by NWSSP amounted to £198m, as at the end of September 2024 and the Time to Hire target within Recruitment continued to be achieved over recent months.

Outcome Measures Performance Report – The report had been shared with the Senior Leadership Group for scrutiny, prior to being presented to the Committee and focussed on outcomes from the IMTP 2024-2027. Key messages included strong performance across divisions, especially customer satisfaction and employee well-being, noting that there was further progress to be made in demonstrating progress against our Decarbonisation Plan to Welsh Government. There are additional measures in development that will be reported, in addition to trend information as we progress through the year.

Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMTP) Update – The progress report for Quarter 2 of 2024/25 provided assurance that good progress had been made against the current objectives. Quarterly reviews with divisions had taken place to challenge the status of objectives and review any delays identified, which were detailed in the overarching Report. Going forward, the focus would be on targeted actions as we moved into Quarter 3. Additional scrutiny would be applied to objectives identified as off track or at risk. Updates regarding Decarbonisation, Foundational Economy and People & Organisational Development were provided. The Director of Planning, Performance and Informatics also updated the Committee that the 2025-28 IMTP development is well under way and confirmed that it would come to the next SSPC meeting, following further development

with the NWSSP SLG in order to ensure it is submitted to Welsh Government within the required timescales.

Project Management Office & Service Improvement Update Report – Current progress against projects was highlighted and confirmation received that controls were in place to ensure effective monitoring. The majority of the indicators are green, but the red and amber are consistent with the previous report. Updates regarding higher risk projects would continue to be reported, as a matter of course, to the Committee. It was noted that four projects had been closed since the last report: Medical Examiners; Procurement of Implementation of Wales Healthcare Student Hub; Wales General Ophthalmic Service – Primary Care Contract Return; and Charnwood and Companies House Accommodation.

Corporate Risk Update - There are 15 risks identified for action, of which there are six red risks and nine amber risks. The Committee's attention was drawn to the accommodation risk and the Primary Care Workforce Intelligence System risk, which was escalated by the SLG at its last meeting. It is expected that focus by the SLG and very recent management action will see these risks reduced in the next report. The remainder of the Corporate Risk Register position remained stable.

Papers for Information

The following items were provided for information only and the Committee **NOTED** the reports:

- Finance Monitoring Returns (Months 6 and 7 of 2024/25).
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Report.
- Shared Services Partnership Committee Forward Plan.
- NWSSP Audit Committee Assurance Report for October 2024.

Part B (Private Session)

Motion to exclude the public from the meeting in accordance with the provisions of section 1 (2) and (3) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960

NHS Wales Energy Source Decision November 2024

The Wales Energy Group's (WEG) proposal in respect of All Wales supply of electricity for the financial year 2025-26 was brought to the Committee's attention, for approval. Challenging discussions were had regarding the energy sourcing options available and a unanimous recommendation was made to stay with the current zero carbon for businesses option.

The Committee **APPROVED** the proposal to remain with the current energy provider, Zero Carbon for Business.

Any Other Business (AOB)

TM further thanked the Committee for their contributions and support during 2024.

Matters requiring Board/Committee level consideration and/or approval

The Board is asked to **NOTE** the work of the Shared Services Partnership Committee.

Matters referred to other Committees

No further matters were referred to other Committees.

Date of next meeting

Monday 3 February 2025 at 9.30am to 11.30am