

Item: 5

Title: Chief Executive's report

Introduction

This report sets out some of the activities of the Chief Executive since the last full public Board meeting on 24 July 2024. More detailed information about our key activities and developments since the last board meeting is included in other Board papers.

Developing relationships and working with partners

I have met with lots of key partners to talk about our role, developing our plans and delivering our activities, our ways of working, key issues in health and social care and how we can work together to strengthen the voice of people in health and social care services. This included:

- Meetings with the Llais partnership team to talk about Llais's activities and performance, development activities, budget allocation for 2024-2025 and budget planning arrangements for 2025-2026. This included providing detailed information about the potential impact of the current financial challenges on the development and delivery of our services.
- Regular planning or information sharing meetings with health and social care representative or regulatory bodies. This included:
 - the Royal College of Midwives, to talk about arrangements for regular information sharing and opportunities to work together on areas of common interest, including challenges affecting maternity services such as the capacity challenges affecting home-birthing arrangements in some parts of Wales
 - the Association of Directors of Social Services, to talk about the development of our relationships with local authorities, what we are hearing about social care services and working together to expand our activities in the sector
 - the British Medical Association, to discuss concerns about the introduction of Physician Associates in Wales
 - the NHS Confederation, to talk about the challenges facing health and social care services in the run up to winter, including the importance of focusing on unmet need in social care
 - an introductory meeting with the new Chief Executive of Social Care Wales, and a further joint meeting with the Chair and Chief Executive.

We talked about a range of matters including arrangements in Social Care Wales for citizen engagement and involvement, working together with Digital Health and Care Wales to develop digital arrangements across health and social care, including data collection, and engaging with people on a review of the [Code of Professional Practice for Social Care](#)

- Community Pharmacy Wales, to talk about developments and challenges in community pharmacy. This included the impact of a challenging financial climate on staffing capacity, dealing with medicine shortages, the balance between consulting and dispensing activity, the roll out of e-prescribing arrangements and making sure people know how it works, the development of the NHS app and distance selling pharmacy arrangements.
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission, to talk about progress in delivering the recommendations from its inquiry report on [‘Challenging decisions in adult social care in England and Wales’](#).

We also focused on a range of other matters including the opportunities and risks for inclusion relating to digital developments, the use and sharing of personal data and consulting on the Commission’s next strategic plan.

- The Welsh Local Government Association, to talk about our co-operation arrangements, including information sharing.
- Our regular meeting with the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, to review our joint working arrangements, share information about our respective activities and talk about our plans for a complaints summit.
- Further discussions with the Bevan Commission around our joint work programme and activities. We agreed on a range of matters including:
 - our involvement in a ‘Health on the High Street’ round table discussion in October 2024
 - timings and engagement on our joint work on ‘Silly Rules’
 - the approach to our project ‘Walking in your Shoes’ and
 - developing our ‘In Conversation with’ series.
- Further discussions with the Future Generations Commissioner to agree on key areas of joint interest and opportunities to do things together in the year ahead.
- Discussions with a range of third sector and other bodies to share information and identify opportunities to work together:

- Swansea University, to talk about the perspectives of the Welsh public in different fields of healthcare, including accessing services through the Welsh language
 - All Wales People First and Learning Disability Wales, to talk about the work we have been doing together locally to focus on the experience of people with learning disabilities accessing health and social care services, and to look at opportunities to work together nationally.
 - National Youth Advocacy Service, to talk about the development of our complaint's advocacy service, the experiences of children and young people and the [Health and Social Care \(Wales\) Bill](#).
- Introductory meetings with the new Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care and his team, the interim Deputy Chief Medical Officer for Wales, and the Public Health Wales Executive Team.

Beyond Wales, I held a regular catch up meeting with the Chief Executive of Healthwatch England. We shared information about a range of matters including the regulation of social care workers and GP access requirements in Wales, and the approaches taken in Wales and England for the development and use of physician associates, and the challenges people face getting to see a dentist.

Health and social care service developments and delivery

I have met with a range of health and social care policy makers, development bodies and groups to share what we are hearing about people's experiences of health and care services, and to influence what needs to happen to make things better.

I have:

- Worked with colleagues from the National Office for Care and Support¹ and others to follow up on the Strategic Advisory Group's agreement to focus on arrangements for citizen engagement with the National Office.
- Met with the Chief Social Care Officer for Wales to talk about what we are hearing about social care services in Wales. We talked about a range of matters including the identification and support for carers, long waits for assessments, interface between health and social care, accessing respite support, continuity of domiciliary care and delays in taking forward stage 2 complaints because of a lack of independent investigators.
- Met with the NHS Executive to talk about the arrangements for getting urgent mental health support from [NHS 111 Wales 'Press 2'](#) service, a review of our Llais safeguarding policy and procedure and raising awareness and understanding of the service.

¹ [National Office for Care and Support | GOV.WALES](#)

- Visited the Welsh Air Ambulance Charity's base in Dafen. We talked about Llais' role, remit and activities and heard directly from front line staff about the work they do.
- Met with people affected by poor maternity care provided by Swansea Bay University Health Board to hear more about the impact on their lives and what they want from an independent review.
- Met with Powys Teaching Health Board to talk about its arrangements for engaging with people and communities about proposals to [make temporary changes to Minor Injury Units in Brecon and Llandrindod Wells and community hospital inpatient services across Powys](#) and its significant financial challenges.
- Participated in the assessment of the applications received for the [Bevan Commission's Exemplar programme](#) cohort 8. This programme challenges applicants to develop "prudent and innovative solutions to overcome issues facing the sustainable delivery of health and care services in Wales".

Successful projects are supported by a 12 month programme of training and mentorship to transform health and care services from within, to have a positive impact on care, lived experiences, health outcomes and service efficiency.

- Visited [Solva Care](#), to hear from its co-ordinator and trustee about its work. Solva Care is a local charity. It provides a valued support system for people living in the parish of Solva. Its volunteers offer help to those who need it in lots of different ways. This includes pop in visits, trips out, walks, minor repairs and maintenance, dog walking, shopping, and picking up prescriptions, etc.

The visit provided a great opportunity to hear about the things that helped make it work in the local community, and the key things other communities may need to think about if introducing similar arrangements. We agreed regular contact and communication arrangements between Solva Care and Llais West Wales region.

- Participated in a Stakeholder Panel to inform the appointment of a new Director of Commissioning for Specialised Services in Wales as part of the new Joint Commissioning Committee.

I also received further information as an interested party about the Judicial Review proceedings aimed at challenging the decision of the NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee to approval recommendations for relocation of Emergency Medical Retrieval and Transfer Services.

Developing ourselves to deliver

I have spent lots of time working with our organisation's leaders and staff to continue to build our capacity, capability, and ways of working. This included:

- Supporting the introduction of our new Strategic Director of Operations and Corporate Services into our organisation, and meeting with new joiners to our organisation to hear more about them, the reasons they joined Llais and what we can do to support them in their work.
- Commissioning our leadership team ‘Tîm Arwain’ to talk about, decide on, make proposals, and oversee progress around the things we do and how we do them. This has focused on a range of areas, including:
 - The continued development of our governance and assurance framework and arrangements
 - Developing our plans and priorities in a challenging financial environment
 - Making representations effectively
 - Sharing what works across our regions
 - understanding the factors affecting attendance at work
 - identifying, prioritising, and delivering our learning and development programme
 - options to provide a salary sacrifice car lease scheme
 - potential office moves
 - our research activity
 - developing a protocol for our involvement in service change proposals
 - developing our complaints advocacy service and our approach to working with children and young people
 - our approach to national events
 - reviewing our safeguarding policy and procedures
 - developing our business continuity arrangements
 - handling data and information, including dealing with information requests.
- Reviewing progress on developing our key third party supplier arrangements, including back office functions like workforce and finance.

Planning and reporting arrangements

We submitted our draft Annual Report and Accounts for 2023/2024 to the Welsh Government and Audit Wales on 31 August 2024, in line with our legislative requirements.

Work continues developing new dashboard style reporting to help us review progress against our Annual Plan, as well as reporting on how we are doing in some key areas like our workforce and financial performance.

Upcoming events and activity

Some of the upcoming activities and events I will be involved in during the coming weeks include:

- National Office for Care and Support Strategic Advisory Group
- General Medical Council UK Advisory Forum
- Care Inspectorate Wales
- “Witness to harm, holding to account” research conference

- Health Education and Improvement Wales stakeholder reference group