

Regional Board Open Minutes

Royal College of Nursing South-West Regional Board

Minutes of Meeting held on

Thursday 21st September 2023

Open Minutes

In Attendance

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| VB - Vicky Brotherton | Board Chair & Plymouth Member |
| JJ - Jeanette Jones | Council Member & Greater Bristol Branch |
| EH - Emma Hallam | Trade Union Committee |
| MS - Matthew Stewart | Gloucestershire Branch |
| AT - Ashleigh Taylor | Greater Bristol Branch |
| CB - Colin Baker | Professional Nurse Committee |

Staff in Attendance

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| Lucy Muchina (LM) | RCN, Regional Director |
| Tony Aspinall (TA) | RCN, Regional Service Manager & Board Administrator |
| Steven Robertson (SR) | RCN, Admin Support & Board Minute Taker (cover) |
| Tracey Roberts (TR) | RCN, Communications Manager |

Guests/other members

Emmanuel Asimah (EA)
Geoffrey Walker (GW)
BJ Waltho (BW)
Jacob Knowles (JK)
Jane Matthews (JM)
Dawn Francis (DF)

Apologies

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| Leonore Newson (LN) | Natasha Goswell (NG) |
| Jason Duckworth (JD) | Kirsten Bland (KB) |
| Jade Hunt (JH) | Netty Snelling (NS) |

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| <p>Item 1. 1:05pm</p> | <p>Welcome & apologies for absence <i>Vicky Brotherton, Board Chair – South West Region</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VB welcomed everyone to this open session. VB asked all present to introduce themselves. • Apologies: Leonore Newson, Jason Duckworth, Jade Hunt, NG, KB, NS |
| <p>Item 2.</p> | <p>Minutes and actions from the previous meeting <i>Vicky Brotherton, Board Chair – South West Region</i></p> <p>2.1 To agree accuracy of the minutes – all agreed that an accurate record.</p> <p>2.2 To review the actions from the last meeting – n/a</p> <p>2.3 Matters arising not covered by the agenda – none.</p> |
| <p>Item 3.</p> | <p>Key messages from closed session of the board meeting <i>Vicky Brotherton, Board Chair – South West Region</i></p> <p>VB informed all that meeting (closed session) was not quorate however no decisions were taken.</p> <p>Key messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - thank stewards for continued work/support - thanks to regional staff for additional hours and work - update on Job Evaluation - RCN SW staffing levels to improve - continued increase in SW membership - change to booking forms for AGMs (have full capacity/attendance when offering CPD events) - reminder of upcoming Board elections - notice of Board & Branch development day in January 2024 |
| <p>Item 4.</p> | <p>Items to declare under Any Other Business <i>Vicky Brotherton, Board Chair – South West Region</i></p> <p>No items.</p> |
| <p>Item 5.</p> | <p>Decision and Discussion Items</p> <p><u>5.1 Job Evaluation (Lucy Muchina)</u> LM gave an update on situation regards Band 2/3s. RCN plan to train and support (resources) staff, rep's and members to become job</p> |

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| | <p>evaluators. Build on work done in Plymouth and Bristol Branches and to look at situation with Band 5/6s.</p> <p>VB asked if any questions? None.</p> <p><u>5.2 Safe Staffing update (Natasha Goswell)</u> NG not able to attend so no report. LM gave brief update on Nursing Workforce Standards (NWS) work and progress. Asked all to encourage members to sign up as NWS champions.</p> |
| <p>Item 6.</p> | <p>Consultation Items</p> <p>None.</p> |
| <p>Item 7.</p> | <p>Communications <i>Tracey Roberts, RCN South West Communications Manager</i></p> <p><u>7.1 Communications Report</u> TR gave a summary update. Thrutext - effective communication tool and cost-effective. £0.003p a text, £7.00 bill for a Wiltshire Health & Care (WHC) event recently. Bulk email - similar to above. Now have very good reporting and statistical analysis tools. Has helped resolved some issues with confirmation of sending, bounce-back emails etc.</p> <p>Had 5 blogs posted in last 3 months i.e.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sarah Winfield-Davies - independent sector - Emma Hallam - Band 2/3 work - Vicky Brotherton - journey as an active rep with RCN TR asked for any others, all welcome. Can even just be bullet-points and TR can edit into a blog.</p> <p>TR reminded all that help available with branch events. Please contact or let Vita Fitzsimons (VF - RCN Communications Officer) know.</p> <p>Political engagement - to pick up again after Pay Campaign and Strike Action. Looking towards to the General Election in 2025. RCN yet to decide if to register as a lobbying organisation. Paper has gone to RCN ET to consider and decide.</p> <p>BW asked if the RCN should be targeting 'swing seats' and candidates likely to support nursing? GW stated that the RCN should have an apolitical stance - to support nursing workforce. TR agreed but pointed out it's important to challenge all parties (regardless of colour) about support for nursing. BW asked if issues/concerns could be picked up/reported back to RCN Council? GW agreed, for Council to listen to membership.</p> |

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| | <p>Upcoming events & work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - political party conferences soon and Autumn Statement later in year. Campaign to launch before Statement about the agency spend (employment) by the NHS. Continue work calling for better pay & conditions, and working environment for substantive staff. - update on on-going campaigns & work (Business as usual, BAU). Regional work: Safe Staffing, Pay, Independent Sector. National work: re-evaluation of Bands 2/3, job evaluating and uplifts for members through proper job evaluation. <p>TR reminded all of Communications support available to Branches. On-going work with WHC and Somerset (parking - RCN Organising team also involved). Can also help with Congress items - can't write them but can help with refining and editing.</p> <p>VB asked about item 6.8 in Communications report - suite of software. TR replied this is a suite of software used by the RCN Design Team at RCN HQ. The Regions have asked for a licence for each region (TR and VF for the South West) and appropriate training so regional Communications Team can use and reduce the reliance on the Design Team/HQ.</p> <p><u>7.2 Congress 2024 Agenda items</u></p> <p>BW gave a reminder of the help available from the Agenda Committee and RCN Libraries, and the regional office with preparing agenda items for Congress. Should start considering and writing them now.</p> <p>MS gave an example of a success story from Gloucestershire Branch. Branch submitted an item regards corridor care in hospitals. Was changed to a resolution whilst debated at Congress 2023 - RCN to lobby government to abolish corridor care. Congress passed resolution and is now with the working group to progress. MS happy to help other branches or discuss with them if needed.</p> <p>BW reminded all that doesn't have to be an agenda item, can also prepare things for the fringe events at Congress (i.e. Health & Well-being events).</p> <p><u>7.3 Regional Office move</u></p> <p>TA gave an update on situation regards end of lease for current office and potential move. VB asked if any questions? No questions.</p> |
| <p>Item 8.</p> | <p>Reporting Bodies <i>Task & Finish Groups</i></p> <p>No groups at present.</p> |

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| <p>Item 9.</p> | <p>Council Report <i>Jeanette Jones, Council Member South West Region</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs), now 5% of members need to vote in favour to trigger an EGM. - changes to term periods of Council members - about a third of work recommended from the Carr & KPMG reports has been completed. The rest is still on-going. Council have asked Pat Cullen to extend stay as CE&GS to support this. - Council to look at better recognition and collaboration of both sides of the College (Trade Union & Professional Nursing). - no increase to mileage expenses. Will stay at £0.45p per mile (in line with HMRC). - Council looking at membership fees. Not going to increase but could be more inventive i.e. reduced rates or a break (career break) <p>GW asked why Council extended stay of CE&GS? JJ explained that the decision was made before she took her seat on Council in April 2023, so not party to discussions. GW thanked JJ for response and asked for more frequent communications from the RCN SW Council member in general. BW said that the process for the next CE&GS should start earlier as a lengthy and involved process. BW also asked for better communications from Council, more visibility, and ease of access. VB asked JJ to take back concerns over the process for appointing CE&GS back to Council. JJ is at the Remuneration & Appointment Committee next week, so will take back and update the Board at the next meeting.</p> <p>JJ replied to GW & BW concerns and queries about JJs lack of visibility and communications since joining Council. JJ gave an explanation (fitness & health) and apologised if seemed unavailable or not her usual self. Hopefully this will improve in the future as her health improves, she remains committed to the role. GW said this was an example of why better communication was needed so there was more understanding. VB offered support to JJ as Board Chair, could stand in at Council meetings if needed (similar situation in another region). LM re-iterated that support is there if needed, please make use. BW repeated the above, get support and help. Re-emphasised need for better communications from Council generally.</p> <p>VB expressed concerns over tweets made by RCN President after the Lucy Letby trial. Language and tone used was not inclusive. Some members were blocked after raising concerns and making comments.</p> |

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| | <p>VB also asked about Council meetings as there are some happening where no minutes are being made available. Only seem to be minutes for those meetings on the calendar. JJ replied that has asked the same question along with other new members on Council. This has been discussed and hopefully going forward there will be messages and/or bullet points of items discussed in meetings between the ones scheduled on the calendar.</p> <p>MS asked about the rationale for Congress 2025 to return to Liverpool? JJ replied that this best meets the various RCN requirements. BW added that not just about the venue and its facilities and cost. Also need to consider 'outside' factors such as available accommodation in area, and surrounding facilities and resources. Liverpool (say compared to Bournemouth) is a good location when all these considered.</p> |
| <p>Item 10.</p> | <p>Reports from Governance Committees <i>Emma Hallam, TU Committee member.</i> <i>Colin Baker, PN Committee member</i></p> <p>To acknowledge the content of the minutes from the Governance Committees and to discuss any relevant issues raised.</p> <p>10.1 Trade Union Committee Take as read. Any queries please send to TA to forward to EH. VB reminded all that the SW seat is soon to be available. Please spread the word regards elections.</p> <p>10.2 Professional Nursing Committee CB ran through the report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recent engagement event with Daisy Cooper MP. - had some follow-up meetings regards Dementia & Older Person Care in CBs work role. This ties in with role on PNC. - summarised work being done by PNC: SSEC, discussions with NMC (Executive Director) regards Nursing Associates <p>VB asked if any questions? No questions.</p> <p>LM added that RCN is looking at recent nurse suicides and is having discussions with Directors of Nursing and nursing staff regards this issue.</p> <p>10.3 Nursing Support Workers Committee VB asked if any plans for HCSW campaign (Shine a Light)? Conference in London on the 23rd October. LM - have been considering. Happy to liaise with JK to organise something for South West region.</p> <p>10.4 Students Committee</p> |

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| | <p>Nothing discussed.</p> <p>10.5 Reps Committee VB pleased that Joint Reps (in October) was reinstated to the Reps Committee.</p> |
| Item 11. | <p>Items from Governance</p> <p>11.1 Regional Board Elections Open now, run until later this year. Terms to 31/12/2024, two positions to be elected. Elections to be staggered so half of the Board is elected every 2 years.</p> <p>11.2 Regional Board Dates 2024 Board/Branch Development Day planned for 11/01/2024 to take into account new Board members from 01/01/24. JJ asked if the Board meeting could be before the first Council meeting? TA replied that already considered. TA will add an item to the Board Agenda for next year - <i>Points for consideration to Council</i></p> <p>DF had a query over Branch AGM nominations, should the pre-nomination form be sent in before the AGM? TA replied not necessarily, 90% of Branch nominations are done at the AGM, no need for the pre-form.</p> |
| Item 12. | <p>Any Other Business <i>Vicky Brotherton, Board Chair – South West Region</i></p> <p>12.1 Regional Board meeting November 2023 (Teams) VB reminded all of online (Teams) Board meeting in November 2023. VB suggested considering funding for HCSW event?</p> <p>12.2 Black History Month update TA and LM gave an update on progress of upcoming events across the region. Events are to be aimed at all staff and to have an RCN presence and support across the whole region. Hope is they help to raise the profile/recognition of Black History and nurses, potential recruitment to the RCN, and to develop links - local and with EDI teams.</p> <p>12.3 Any other business LM asked all to remind reps of mandatory GDPR training. Emails have been sent to all reps asking them to complete the training. Should only take 15/20 minutes.</p> |
| | <p>Close of meeting</p> <p>VB thanked all for attending and the discussions, were informative and supportive.</p> <p>Meeting closed 15:10</p> |

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Date of next meeting: 2023

Membership: Colin Baker, Kirsten Bland, Vicky Brotherton (Chair), Nicholas Browning, Cathy Ellingford, Emma Hallam, Natasha Goswell (Vice-Chair), Jeanette Jones (Council Member - South West), Netty Snelling, Matthew Stewart, and Ashleigh Taylor