

RCN Wales Board

Minutes of the open meeting held on 16 September 2022
commencing at 09.30

The meeting was held via Microsoft Teams

Present	Position
Richard Jones, MBE	Chair, RCN Wales Board / Council member for Wales
Nicola Milligan	Vice Chair, RCN Wales Board
Catherine Jones	Board member
Dr Carolyn Middleton, MBE	Welsh member on Professional Nursing Committee
Euan Hails	Board member
Gaynor Jones	Board member
Jackie Davies*	Welsh member on Trade Union Committee
June Clark*, DBE, FRCN	Board member
Susan Williams	Board member
Steve Watson	Board member
Apologies	
Alison Magor	Board member
Donna Mead, OBE, CSt.J, FRCN	Board member
Tristan Griffin	Board member
Ann Taylor Griffiths	Board member
In attendance:	
Helen Whyley	Director, RCN Wales
Nicky Hughes	Associate Director of Nursing (Employment Relations)
Nicola Davis-Job	Acute Care and Leadership Advisor
Helen Carlyon	Finance & Business Continuity Manager
Lisa Turnbull	Policy, Parliamentary & Public Affairs Manager
Katie Branch	Complaints, Quality & Administration Services Manager
Jayne Taylor*	Executive Assistant to the Director, RCN Wales
Luci Pollard*	Executive Assistant
Lee Anderson*	Secretarial 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 Tristan Griffin, Alison Magor, Ann Taylor Griffiths, and Euan Hails and the Associate Director of Nursing (Professional Practice). The Director had given her apologies as she would be representing RCN Wales at a service of prayer and reflection for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

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 18 May 2022 had been circulated and were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

Page 15 – amendment: Steve Mason should read ‘Steve Watson’

2.2 Review of Action Sheet

All actions were either noted as completed or updated on the action sheet.

2.3 Matters Arising

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.

The Board Chair thanked Board members for all their hard work on behalf of the Board during a very busy period of activity.

The Chair asked the Board to note that he would be speaking to any Board members who had a number of absences from Board meetings.

3.2 Director, RCN Wales Report

A report had been received and was noted.

The Associate Director (Employment Relations) took the Board through the report and also asked the Board to note that the Director had met with

Jason Roberts recently appointed to the role of Executive Director of Nursing, Cardiff & Vale University Health Board.

3.3 Correspondence

A report had been received and was noted.

The Associate Director (Employment Relations) gave further information on the following:

- It was noted that the Director has regular meetings with Lisa Llewellyn, HEIW, there had been an issue with the email address.
- The Director is pursuing a meeting with Lynne Neagle, Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing.

A Board member noted disappointment in the Deputy Minister being apparently unwilling to meet with the Director.

The Associate Director informed that the Director has written to the Minister regarding the ballot and subsequently the delay of the ballot.

Should Board members wish to see correspondence they are asked to contact the Director's office.

3.4 COVID-19 Update Report

A report had been circulated and was noted.

The Associate Director (Employment Relations) took the Board through the paper and highlighted the following:

- Serious covid infections are reducing and therefore activity around this is also reducing. Should there be an increase in infections then the meetings that have been stood down will recommence.
- Vaccination programme for the over 50s and the vulnerable is progressing.

It was noted that the test and trace was continuing.

3.5 Long Covid

The Acute Care and Leadership Advisor spoke to this item. A report had been circulated and was noted.

It was noted that from 1 July sickness absence transition returns to managers discretion. It was suggested that guidance should be developed to ensure better equity. There were also concerns regarding those working within the independent sector who generally have fewer protections and support than those employed by the NHS.

It was noted that Long Covid has not been classed as an industrial injury. The Board were reminded that there is a hardship fund for members who are on long term sick leave and are in financial difficulties. Representatives can support members and one option is to seek a temporary injury licence.

Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board – it was noted that currently occupational health colleagues do not sit on the panels which consider additional support for members.

3.6 Policy, Parliamentary & Public Affairs Impact Report

A report had been received and was noted.

The Policy, Parliamentary & Public Affairs Manager highlighted the following:

- The annex contains extracts from the proceedings from the Senedd.
- Some activities have been paused due to the pay activity.
- Work is being done with colleagues in the TUC to influence Westminster as there is pressure to reduce the influence of the unions by repealing the Trade Union (Wales) Act 2017.
- Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Bill is being considered and it is expected to be passed by the end of the year.
- Board Subcommittee on Campaigns - The Board were asked if they wished the next scheduled meeting in October to go ahead. It was agreed that as there is scrutiny of the pay activity through the Pay Scrutiny Group the Subcommittee on Campaigns could continue to be paused.

3.7 RCN Congress 2022/23

The Associate Director (Employment Relations) spoke to this item. A report had been received and was noted.

It was noted that this year only 26 voting members attended Congress although there were 31 places available. Work will be undertaken with the branches to ensure improved attendance next year.

RCN Wales had two resolutions accepted by the Congress Agenda Committee, including one on Assisted Dying.

A Board member updated the Board on the Congress leadership resolution: work is being undertaken to agree progress and the Board will receive a report in due course regarding this.

It was felt that the allowance for members was inadequate and the food available poor. It was noted that other members across the UK had also made similar observations.

A Board member noted that the geography of Glasgow was a challenge for some due to the distances between venues.

It was felt that the hybrid model was a positive change allowing members the opportunity to join remotely.

It was noted that some of the comments made by speakers did not relate to the debates and it was agreed that members should be encouraged to read the guidance available to members regarding speaking at Congress.

The Board were pleased to note that in 2024 Congress will be held in the ICC in Newport in Wales.

ACTION 36: The Associate Director of Nursing (Professional Practice) to feed back to the Board member regarding the Assisted Dying work.

3.8 RCN Wales Board meeting dates for 2023.

The Board agreed the dates as set out at 2.2.

3.9 Update Report on the RCN Representative Pathway

The Associate Director (Employment Relations) spoke to this item. Curriculum review has been undertaken. Online training for representatives is taking place during the Autumn. The Curriculum will change in January 2023. It was noted that support for those with dyslexia has been developed.

3.10 RCN Wales Carbon Group – Proposals to Tackle Climate Change & Sustainability

The Associate Director (Employment Relations) spoke to this item. The Board were reminded that in February 2022 it requested that a Carbon Group be convened.

The Board noted the items at 2.1 that were being actioned. The Board were asked to consider items set out at 2.2.

2.2.1 – electric charger point at Ty Maeth

The Board agreed to the options being explored.

2.2.2 – Landlord to be approached regarding electric charger point for Plas Eirias Business Centre car park.

The Board agreed that the landlord should be approached.

2.2.3 – Bike Share scheme

The Board agreed to explore this with HR.

2.2.4 – carbon offsetting

The Board agreed to explore this.

2.2.5 – purchase of recyclable/reusable marketing items

The Board agreed this.

2.2.6 – reduction of use of ‘standby’ mode

The Board agreed the action.

2.2.7 – travelling to events

The Board agreed the action.

It was noted that a prepayment system will be required for electric charger. It was noted that the installation cost and maintenance would be significant. Currently there are few electric car owners, but this will increase over time.

A Board member had said that they preferred face to face meetings. It was highlighted that the RCN had a policy of face-to-face first, but individual considerations will be made for each meeting.

It was suggested that a charitable donation could be made instead of purchasing Christmas cards.

It was noted that there had been difficulties with booking a hotel room for a Board member for this meeting, this was due to trying to book accommodation at short notice when several large events were being held in Cardiff, including the King Charles III visit.

3.11 RCN Workforce Standards

The Acute and Leadership Advisor spoke to this item. A report had been received and was noted.

The Standards were published in June 2021. Further Wales implementation plan is underway. The Standards document was circulated to the Board.

This work is also being undertaken by the Professional Nursing Committee. A series of statements were going to be developed regarding the minimum standards required to help support members raise their concerns. It was noted that a Tipping Point Tool is being developed to support members in identifying when staffing levels drop to an unacceptable level.

The Board were asked to highlight to relevant members there will be a Health Care Support Worker conference on 23 November 2022.

ACTION 37: Acute Care and Leadership Advisor to send a link to the Standards and the most recent PowerPoint presentation to those members who joined the meeting virtually.

3.12 RCN Wales Elections Update

The Associate Director (Employment Relations) spoke to this item. A report had been received and was noted. The Board agreed the election constraints in May, and they were subsequently updated in agreement with the Board.

Six members have been nominated for the 7 vacancies. The verification process has not yet been completed. A second round of elections will take place later this year with the election for the Board Chair will take place early in December.

Board member, June Clark stated that she would not stand again for the next election due to ill health. She thanked the Board for their support and wished the Board well. The Chair thanked her for her contribution to the work of the RCN and for centring nursing staff and patients at the heart of her work.

4. **STRATEGIC UPDATES**

4.1 Update from Glamorgan Branch

Martin Lloyd, Branch Secretary, gave a presentation to the Board.

The Board noted that one of the Branch's objectives this year had been to improve the branch attendance. There has been an increase in attendance and debate at the branch. ThruText and social media have been used successfully to raise the profile of the branch.

AGM is planned for 5 October 2022 which will be a hybrid meeting.

Membership has increased and there was lots of engagement regarding advice relating to Covid-19.

The branch links effectively with the Officer and Senior Officer.

Once the outcome of the ballot is known and Council's response to the outcome the branch will meet to discuss.

Learning and development opportunities have not progressed due to the pandemic.

Several branch members attended Congress this year and participated in the debates. It is hoped that next year the branch will be able to submit a resolution.

The Chair thanked Martin Lloyd for his presentation and the information shared with the Board.

4.2 Update on NHS Wales Pay campaign

The Associate Director (Employment Relations) spoke to this item. A report had been received and was noted.

In addition, it was noted that Ty Maeth will be illuminated as part of the pay campaign. Consideration is being given to holding rallies. The Board was asked for its view on holding or participating in a rally. There was concern that a rally may not reflect the feelings of members and a low turnout will not be supportive of the campaign. It was suggested that the RCN could join other unions, but other unions are having similar issues and concerns as the RCN. A walk was suggested to raise the profile of the pay campaign. It was suggested that the public could be asked to support an RCN rally. It was also suggested that a rally could be held with other unions.

It was suggested that the RCN might wish to review its lack of affiliation with the Trade Union Congress.

A concern was raised regarding the bollard covers which might cover the whole bollard and may create a hazard.

It was noted that there was funding for 500 meal deals from Tesco. Branch funding or central funding can be used for purchasing additional items that could go in the sandwich bags.

A Board member noted the lack of clarity regarding what the 'ask' is regarding pay because of the fluctuation in the retail price index.

A Board member commented that a number of nursing staff are opting out of pension schemes due to financial pressures. It was suggested that Lighthouse could speak to members about their pensions. It was noted that the RCN Wales Nurse of the Year Awards brought Mental Health and Learning Disabilities together. The necessity of getting appropriate sponsorship for the awards was noted.

A Board member noted that the webinars are well attended, and clips from those events are helpful in promoting the issues through social media.

ACTION 38: HEIW to be asked what action they are taking to improve the take up to Learning Disability Nursing training.

ACTION 39: It was agreed that there should be consideration of the categories of the RCN Wales Nurse of the Year awards for Mental Health and Learning Disabilities.

4.3 RCN Wales Partnership Forum Update

The Associate Director (Employment Relations) spoke to this item. A report had been received and was noted.

Despite the increase in registration there is not an increase in the numbers of Learning Disability Nurses. It was noted that work is being undertaken on how this issue can be addressed. The Board agreed on the importance of this issue as it impacted patients who access every part of the health system.

4.4 Developments in Primary Care

The Acute and Leadership Advisor spoke to this item. A report had been received and was noted. It was noted that the Community Nursing Specification is being reviewed and RCN Wales has responded to the consultation.

4.5 Update on Cardiff and the Vale Branch Plan

A report had been received and was noted from Philip Caffery, Branch Chair.

4.6 RCN Foundation Wales Committee Update

A report had been received and was noted.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS TO NOTE

5.1 Report from RCN Council meetings held on 27 May and 24 June 2022

The reports had been received and was noted.

5.2 Report from the Professional Nursing Committee (PNC) meetings held on 28 April and 28 June 2022

Carolyn Middleton, Welsh member on the PNC, gave an update.

Podcasts are currently weekly and have covered a wide variety of topics. The Committee work programme has been agreed to include the RCN Professional Framework; Staffing for Safe and Effective Care; Forums and Networks – there are a number of recommendations from the Review which are being worked through; Education and Learning Development Strategy – the first phase is currently being tested. Further information will be available in due course. RCN Research Strategy – a new strategy is being developed. International and National Policy Influencing – there will be regular monthly meetings, each meeting will focus on a topic. The sessions have also been used to examine NMC consultations.

Clinical Imagery and Nursing Associates – it has been agreed that the RCN position is that Nursing Associates should not order any imagery.

It was noted that there was a lack of links between the PNC and the Networks.

5.3 Reports from the Nursing Support Workers Committee meetings held on 5 May and 19 July 2022

A report had been received and was noted.

5.4 Report from the Students Committee meetings held on 19 July 2022

A report had been received and was noted. It was further noted that Carlie Andrews has been elected to the Committee.

5.5 Reports of the Trade Union Committee (TUC) – July 2022

Jackie Davies, Welsh member on the TUC spoke to this item. A report had been received and was noted.

The TUC had received a summary report on pay within the Independent Health and Social Care (IHSC) sector including the employers Four Seasons, Huntercombe, Caretech, Marie Curie and Sue Ryder.

The terms of reference for the Committee have been reviewed and agreed. It was noted that Council had delegated the work of reviewing the recommendations relating to the strike fund to the TUC. Members will be able to access the fund if they take one day's action rather than 2 days as previously agreed.

ACTION 40: A copy of the summary report of health and social care pay to be shared with Steve Watson, Board member.

5.6 Report of the UK Representatives Committees – July 2022

A report had been received and was noted.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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

He gave the Board's thanks to those Board members standing down.

Date of next Board Open session: 17 February 2023

ET: Helen Whyley, Director, RCN Wales

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