

RCN Wales Board

Minutes of the open meeting held on 14 May 2020, The meeting was held via Skype

Present:

Denise Llewellyn, MBE, FRCN	RCN Wales Board Chair / Member of the RCN Professional Nursing Committee
Billy Nichols	Board member – <i>joined at 10:45 and – left at 12:45</i>
Gareth Howells	Board member – <i>joined at 10:15</i>
Jackie Davies	Member of the Trade Union Committee
Prof Dame June Clark, DBE, FRCN	Board member
Moiria Davies	Board member
Neil Evans	Board member
Nicola Milligan	Board member – <i>left at 12:45</i>
Tristan Griffin	Board member

In attendance:

Helen Whyley	Director, RCN Wales – <i>joined at 10:40</i>
Nicky Hughes	Associate Director of Nursing (Employment Relations) – <i>joined at 10:15</i>
Diane Powles	Associate Director of Nursing, Policy & Practice
Helen Carlyon	Finance & Business Continuity Manager
Katie Branch	Complaints, Quality and Administration Services Manager
Lisa Turnbull	Policy and Public Affairs Adviser
Jayne Taylor	EA to Director, RCN Wales

Apologies:

Alison Magor	Board member
Ann Taylor Griffiths	Board member
Prof Donna Mead, OBE, CSt.J, FRCN	Board member
Kate Parry	Board member
Richard Jones, MBE	Council member for Wales / Vice Chair of both RCN Wales Board and RCN Council
Sandra Robinson-Clark	Board member

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Board Chair welcomed everyone to the Open session and thanked Board members for their perseverance in joining the meeting via Skype. The Board Chair gave special thanks to Lee Anderson for his IT support for Board members.

The Board was informed that apologies had been received from Board members Richard Jones, Alison Magor, Ann Taylor Griffiths Donna Mead, Kate Parry and Sandra Robinson-Clark.

The Board was informed that Board members Alison Magor and Kate Parry had suffered a family bereavement and that letters of condolence had been sent to them. The Board was also informed that flowers had been sent to Alison Magor and Tristan Griffin during their recent ill health.

The Board Chair offered congratulations to Board member Donna Mead on her recent appointment as a Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales.

The Board welcomed Helen Carlyon, Finance and Business Continuity Manager back from a period of sickness absence.

The Board welcomed Diane Powles to her first Board meeting in her new role as Associate Director of Nursing, Policy and Practice.

2. RCN Wales Board Declaration of Interests

The Board Chair asked Board members to declare any possible interests with any items on the agenda. The Board was reminded that the following amendments had been noted in the Closed session:

- Donna Mead has been appointed as a Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales.
- Donna Mead declared an interest that may be relevant during the COVID-19 report as she signs off procurement of PPE on an all Wales basis.
- Board member, Neil Evans had submitted his 2020 return but the update was received too late to be included in the report.
- The duplicate bullets points in the record for Richard Jones to be removed.

No further declarations were made in the Open session.

2.1 Minutes and actions from the previous meeting

Minutes of the Board meeting held on 7 February 2020 had been circulated and were approved as accurate record of the meeting.

2.2 Review of Action Sheet

All actions were either noted as completed or an update provided on the action sheet.

2.3 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3. OPERATIONAL UPDATES

3.1 RCN Wales Board Chair's Report

A report had been received and was noted.

The Board was informed of an addition to the report in that Board member, Donna Mead had joined the following meetings via Skype:

- Succession Planning Committee on 5 May 2020
- Education Policy Roundtable event on 23 April 2020

3.2 Director, RCN Wales Report

A report had been received and was noted.

The Director gave a verbal update as follows:

- The Director had given oral evidence to the Welsh Government Committee on Health and Social Care on 14 May 2020.
- The Board was reminded that at the meeting with Welsh Government officials on 29 January 2020, work was progressing on the Social Partnership legislative framework within very tight timelines to ensure the Bill reached stages 3 and 4 in July 2020. However, the Board noted that the pandemic has had significant impact on the timeline for extending the Nursing Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016.

- There were a lot of meetings in March and April around the availability and quality of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and the difficulties faced by members during the crisis.
- The Director wrote to all Health Board Chief Executives in Wales on 1 April 2020 expressing members' serious concerns regarding the lack of suitable and sufficient PPE and has since spoken to several of them to seek reassurance about the situation in their Health Boards and care homes in their areas.
- Following sustained pressure from RCN Wales through the Welsh Partnership Forum, the Welsh Government now publishes technical details of PPE stock levels in Wales. The Director stressed the need to do everything possible to ensure staff welfare during this distressing time.
- Shavanah Taj has become acting General Secretary of the Wales Trades Union Congress (TUC), taking over from Martin Mansfield, who is on secondment to Welsh Government to work on the Social Partnership legislation.
- Due to the lockdown, several planned conferences and events have been postponed but RCN Wales is working hard to maintain political influencing.

It was reported that partnership working is working well in some health boards that have set up command and control hubs to manage the crisis but that in some health boards there are difficulties in maintaining partnership working.

The Board was advised that some PPE that is out of date is being re-dated and is shown as fit to use. The Director informed the Board that if PPE is out of date, it has to be retested to ensure it meets health and safety requirements before it can be re-dated as safe to use.

The Director assured the Board that the Associate Director of Nursing (Employment Relations) will raise this at the next technical briefing meeting.
(ACTION)

BN – this is impacting on confidence of staff in the equipment.

3.3 Policy & Public Affairs Impact Report

A report had been received and was noted.

The Policy & Public Affairs Adviser gave an update as follows:

- Significant victory in terms of Health and Social Care Quality and Engagement (Wales) Bill as the Welsh Government conceded they would consult with the RCN on this.
- WG facilitated joint statement with lots of stakeholders with the need of industry with new immigration legislation that the UK is putting forward.
- Rescheduling work on prison
- The Director, Board Chair and the Policy and Public Affairs Adviser had attended a very successful Welsh Conservative Party conference on 7 March 2020 in Llangollen. RCN Wales political influencing was particularly evident around education, extending the nursing apprenticeship role, the importance of degree and widening access.
- Unfortunately, both Plaid Cymru and Welsh Labour Party conferences have been rescheduled until later in the year.
- The Board's attention was drawn to the Assembly Impact Report attached in appendix A. This shows the tremendous amount of work done regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Political Leadership Programme will be held in November and all Board members who had previously requested a place will be accommodated.

Date for the next Political Leadership Programme to be confirmed (ACTION)

Following a number of robust conversations, the RCN was invited to attend a briefing of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges. The meeting was chaired by the Medical Royal Colleges and the Chief Nursing Officer had attended their meeting. Following the RCN's attendance at that meeting, questions were raised in the Welsh Parliament about their engagement with the RCN and they said they are invited to these weekly meetings. It became CMO meeting and last week we were told we would no longer be invited as we are not a royal college. We wrote back to say if this is official means of communications re c19 we need to be included but have not yet had a response. This will be pursued.

HW said Dir General made reference to our being included on that group and to then tell us we can't come was strange. **This will be picked up with DG in meeting shortly. (ACTION)**

DL commended HW and team on her efforts to make sure RCN Wales is at the right meetings.

DL – conservative conf – she spoke to secretary of state of xx funds. Will you bring back to Sept Board strategy for political influencing?

HW – we will make sure business as usual and looking at legislative timetable and work around consultations and lobbying and MSs across the piste. Looking at the new normal and what that may look like. Some of that is set out in SSEC campaign.

3.4 RCN Wales Board Elections 2020

A late paper has been received.

HW took the Board through the paper:

Election timetable was noted as follows:

Nominations open	10 July 2020
Nominations close	4 September 2020
Candidates' details published	8 October 2020
Candidates notified if uncontested	By 12 October 2020
Voting opens	29 October 2020
Voting closes	26 November 2020
Candidates notified and results published	By 30 November 2020

Current Board Chairs term of office runs until 31 Dec 2020 and detail of Board chair election will come to September Board.

The recommended constraints put forward by the Succession Planning Committee were set out in Appendix B and were discussed.

At least **one** member to be elected from the Cwm Taf Morgannwg branch

At least **two** members to be elected from the independent sector, one of whom works in the social care sector and one who works wider independent sector.

If no-one stands from Cwm Taf Morgannwg branch and the independent sector the candidate(s) with the next highest number of votes will be elected in turn.

For the purposes of this election, the definition of independent sector member is any member who does not work for an NHS employer.

For the purposes of this election, the definition of social care is – **this will need to be defined** – Reconvene Succession Planning Group to define this. (ACTION)

Vote unanimous.

GH – Will gov review have any implications? DL said we have not had the report from the review and should be out this week.

HW – council have seen the report and have not sent out a direction to Boards to look at the timeline.

JC – lack of proper definition of independent sector. Need a new category of membership. This covers a third of our membership. This has been defined in legislation. DL said this will be look at within the task group looking at the independent sector.

JC – would like 2 members from ind sector one of whom is from care home.

Tristan – need balance on the Board and would support JC in that there should be two. “who do not work for the NHS”

JD – agrees with Tristan

MD – need to encourage people to stand from ind sector.

Vote to election to increase it to two people from ind sector:

Richard's update

RCN Elections 2020

Council after much consideration and deliberation on all the issues agreed it was important for the elections to take place in 2020 and agreed a revised timeline with nominations opening on a phased basis throughout the summer. Nominations for the vacant Yorkshire and the Humber seat on Council has now opened. The key elections this year will be for President, Deputy President, Student Member of Council, Country and Regional Board members, UK Representative committees, Student Committee and Nursing Support Workers Committee.

In light of Congress not going ahead in 2020 Council also decided to defer the elections of the Chair and Vice Chair of Congress until 2021.

Council agreed to continue to defend a complaint made by a member to the Trade Union Certification Officer about the procedures for the 2019 Election to Council.

3.5 Scholarship Funds Fundraising Task & Finish Group

The Board Chair requested volunteers to sit on the group and led it
DL – declared an interest in RCN Foundation as a Trustee.

Owain Jones let the group previously and did good job raising money for the funds. The Board was grateful to Tristan Griffin to agreeing to consider joining the group and looking at fundraising initiatives.

HC to give TG/MD a brief on the working of the group. (ACTION)

4. STRATEGIC UPDATES

4.1 Annex C of NHS in Wales 3-Year Pay Deal – Unsocial hours' and other regularly paid enhancement payments in occupational sick pay

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

4.2 RCN Wales Nursing Education Policy Position Paper

A draft report had been circulated and was noted.

The Director reminded the Board that a number of roundtable discussions had been held in order to formulate the draft RCN Wales Nursing Education Policy Position.

The Board expressed its gratitude to those Board members who assisted in this work.

The Board noted that the position had built on the priorities identified at the February Board meeting but the final report would need to address the implications of COVID-19 and the potential for universities to move to distance learning and the sustainability of nursing as a profession.

Decision: The Board agreed the direction of work as outlined in the draft Education Policy Position Statement and the inclusion of the following areas of educational policy:

- Student experience, support and outcomes during Covid-19
- Distance learning
- Prince of Wales cadet scheme
- Nursing Education as a profession

Decision: The Board approved for a further roundtable discussion to be held in July 2020 to develop the content required to finalise the Statement.

4.3 NHS Wales Partnership Forum Sub Group on Health and Wellbeing of NHS Staff

A report had been received and was noted.

HW – recent announcement of health for health professions access to 4 counselling has been extended to other prof staff (previously only for doctors)

Confidential update on annex C yesterday.

4.4 RCN UK Pay Update

No paper

HW work on c19 t & cs NH leading as Vice Chair of Bus Committee looking at overtime payments and sick pay paid when staff self isolating and not penalised in sick records etc.

Paper will come to Sept Board.

NH – WG went into command and control way of working in the beginning of the crisis but this has moved on in a positive way. Some areas where not consulted risk assessment for BAME group but discussions in Bus Comm can work it through. We can't have P working we would normally have due to timescales but as we go back into normal, how do we go back to bus as usual and handle it in the next phase.

DL – BAME feeling victimised. NH – said WG expert panel getting evidence around that and RCN is rep by Wendy Irwin all unions represented. This should produce risk assessment for all vulnerable groups in including BAME. Staff are scared and scared to escalate issues. NH stressed that risk assessment is not enough need guidance for managers as to how it is applied and being more flexible about working areas .

NM – lack of p working. Within CTM not best p working whilst acknowledging c19. GJ on call with CEO with unison and unite in attempt to address this.

BN – 2 issues, 1) BAME group running looking at these staff and how they are being identified and treated and risk assessments are used. 2) p

working well at higher levels, management are trying to sneak in changes without consultation under the guise of c19.

JD – Positive experience with p in Swansea Bay – weekly p meetings attended by CE and members of Exec Team. BAME issues has taken of in last 10 days – BAME network has stepped up leaving to attend meeting with CE to look at this issue and other staff issues.

Need to add this issue to c19 briefing meetings and Board to keep watching brief (ACTION).

5. ITEMS TO NOTE

5.1 RCN Foundation Wales Committee Update

DL gave verbal update as follows:

Work of the F on hold due to c19 and discussing work

C19 support fund for any nurse to apply to Foundation if there are welfare issues during COVID-19 – this is on website and urge bms to encourage nurses to apply.

F has received a donation from Tik Tok of £5 million and set up subsidiary group for any worker to apply for monies.

5.2 Report from RCN Council meetings/briefings held on 17 and 24 January and 3 February 2020 and 2, 16 and 21 April

A report had been received and was noted.

The Vice Chair had provided a written update that was read out at the Board as follows:

RCN Awards

Council agreed the recommendations of the Awards Committee for the 2020 Fellowships, Awards of Merit and the Representatives of the Year Awards, but given the current situation and that 2020 RCN Congress was not going ahead plans to celebrate the awards will NOT be confirmed by Council until later in the year. The Welsh Board will be given an update as soon as a decision has been made.

RCN AGM

Council agreed to adjourn the 2020 AGM as it was now not possible to proceed with the original date in June in Liverpool. Council agreed that the date of the AGM for this year would be confirmed later in the year, once there is more certainty about how long the current restrictions on gatherings will last. Council's preference is to hold a meeting rather than an on-line AGM, but this will be subject to Health & Safety considerations and any restrictions imposed by government.

Council also discussed the feedback from the consultation on the timing of future AGM's. The majority of responses including that of the Welsh Board had supported keeping the AGM in the same week as congress and consequently Council agreed that from 2021 onwards, the AGM would continue to be held during Congress Week.

RCN Foundation Update

Chair of RCN Foundation briefed Council on setting up a new Covid-19 Healthcare Support Fund with a significant donation of £5million from the social media company Til Tok and others and the fund will be used to provide financial and health & wellbeing support for healthcare workers adversely affected by Covid-19. more information is on the Foundation website.

JC – Please make sure that the list of elections for the NPC representatives are not mixed up with other elections. – **This to be passed to RJ so he can raise it at Council. (ACTION)**

5.3 Report from Trade Union Committee meetings

A report had been received and was noted.

JD – pensions where gov stated its intention to publish the white paper.

Northern Ireland and Guernsey disputes on hold and into c19.

5.4 Report from the Professional Nursing Committee held on 17 March 2020 A

A report had been received and was noted. A late paper had also been received providing report from the Professional Nursing Committee held on 5 May 2020, which was noted.

DI – Students around their work on aspirant nurse and that title will no longer be used.

HW – Has spoken with CNO re Temp register and we explore and share positions. Some frustration in student space in original joint statements we need ed to work in partnership and most recent development by NMC 10 days ago to say they are not intending to open temp reg to third year students with less than 6 months to go. Decision taken at hast to allow for the expansion of the workforce an some will say it was good not to open the register but some wanted the advancement of band 5 nurses. We have seen letter from goodall and CNO setting the confusion for students. We were not asked to hlpe with the content and were not happy that it was only shared with us after. We stressed we need to work together as number of students who are out on placements and how long contracts were and what grades etc. In a better place now with more engagement with Nursing Officer in contact with DP and business committee. Board will need to be aware there was no need for extra workforce – good for people – but need to be prepared for second wave and returning people to their supernumerary status for students to complete their education.

NE – Band 5s – after c19 opportunity to have discussion about broadening roles.

5.5 Report from the Students Committee held on 12 February 2020

A report had been received and was noted.

FAQs for students RCN has produced and DP engaged with RCN UK and HEIW.

5.6 Report from the Nursing Support Workers Committee held on 6 February 2020

A report had been received and was noted.

5.7 Report from RCN UK Reps Committees

A late paper had been received providing a report from the RCN UK Reps Committees held in February 2020, which was noted.

5.8 Correspondence

A report had been received and was noted.

The Director highlighted the following in the report:

Correspondence file is not available virtually if BMs wish to see any items we need to **check with Idris as to how we do this virtually. (ACTION)**

DL – its important that Board has access to this in their governance role.

5.9 Existing guidance for RCN Committees and Country/Regional Boards on decision-making when it is not possible to hold a quorate meeting

A report had been received and was noted.

HW – This is going to all Boards as under bus continuity we had to plan during the current crisis to look at this existing guidance. If the Board is not quorate, the paper sets out how to proceed.

It is recommended that country/regional Boards and Committees should discuss the different options at their May meetings; agree how they would prefer to operate during the current pandemic and authorise their Chair or Vice Chair to convene an ad hoc committee to make a decision if it is not possible to convene a quorate meeting or arrange for a written resolution to be signed.

This would mean if a decision is required to be made in these uncertain times it can be taken swiftly and effectively with the authority of the Board.

DL – said we had identified this and agreed during a Board briefings that the Chair and the Director may have to make decisions out of the normal processes.

Board is not quorate at this point.

DL assured the Board we are following this guidance and those present were content.

5.10 Updated RCN Wales Meeting Schedule

A report had been received and was noted.

Branch dev day scheduled for 10/11 Dec with Board.

Development sessions for Board are on hold.

Need 2-3 weekly meetings about c19. (ACTION)

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

DL thanked HW and staff for everything they are doing.

JC – **Platforms** – HW said we will continue to explore. Lee to explore costs of call and provide information on how not to be charged. (ACTION) – don't use pdfs – and not one long document from same person with same heading.

HW - We will work with individual board members on this. We are moving to the ModGov system.

Thank you to Lee for support.

JD – **Social Media** – use of and people going outside of policy. This will be added to RCN Website FAQs.

JD – **RCN F** going to give £250 payment to all nurses in England. Is that true – **DL to follow up (ACTION)**

Death in Services Benefits

If you work in NHS and member of pension scheme entitled to DIS. We have lobbied to extend this to members and their families who have returned to practice. WG said there is DIS benefit and working through legal aspects – gives family £60,000 in addition to any other benefit/ pension and in any service setting. It does not have a survivor pension.

RCN Wales has written to the family and sign posting them to the Foundation fund and Lamplight and member support services.

DL – add this to the agenda for 1 June meeting re NOTY (ACTION)

BN - Opening of RCN Wales Offices - 3 more weeks or lockdown from WG – we are working on bus continuity plans. Exec Team are working on this on a UK basis.

Face to face with members, we need to find a new normal and will explore that with staff.

There were no further items of business and the Chair closed the meeting at 13:36.

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

Board Closed Session 10 September 2020 13:30 – 17:00

Board Development Session 10 September 2020 17:30 – 19:00
Venue: RCN Wales headquarters, Ty Maeth, Cardiff

Board Open Session: 11 September 2020 09:00 – 12:30
Venue: RCN Wales headquarters, Ty Maeth, Cardiff

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