

Pre-appointment hearing: Chair of Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Pre-appointment questionnaire

June 2022

BACKGROUND

You are being asked to complete this questionnaire because you are the Welsh Government's preferred candidate for the post of Chair of the Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

Your answers to this questionnaire will be published with the meeting papers for the pre-appointment hearing, and will be used to inform Members' preparation for the hearing. Your response to each question should be no more than around X words.

PROVIDING WRITTEN EVIDENCE

The Senedd has two official languages, Welsh and English.

In line with the [Senedd's Official Languages Scheme](#) the Committee requests that documents or written responses to consultations intended for publication or use in Senedd proceedings are submitted bilingually. When documents or written responses are not submitted bilingually, we will publish in the language submitted, stating that it has been received in that language only.

Please see [guidance for those providing evidence for committees](#).

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

Please ensure that you have considered the Senedd's [policy on disclosure of information](#) before submitting information to the Committee.



1. What motivated you to apply to be the Chair of the Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust?

Having previously served as a non-executive director of an NHS acute hospital trust, being brought up as a child in an "NHS family", having been the recipient of excellent NHS care personally on a number of occasions and having spent 7 years as chair of a Local Authority Social Care provider – I have a deep interest and respect for the NHS and I continue to want to be involved in the service, believing I have something to contribute in a non-executive/Chair capacity.

Having just stepped down at the end of my term from the Chair of the Local Authority owned Social Care provider, I have time to devote to another significant role in the wider NHS and this opportunity has arisen at a most opportune time.

My executive and non-executive career has been heavily focused on regulated sectors with delivering performance improvements alongside culture change as the dominant features and I hope that experience can be of use in this non-executive Chair role particularly when considering my understanding of the special issues facing all ambulance services and their unique position and inter-dependencies within the wider NHS system.

Also, much of my non-executive experience in previous Chair roles has been managing complex stakeholder relationships in politically sensitive environments and working with partners, which I believe is an essential part of this important role – particularly as performance of the ambulance service is so intrinsically linked to the performance of all other components of the wider NHS system.

2. Why do you think you are well-suited for the role?

Over that last 30 years I have built up relevant experience in both executive, non-executive and Chair roles in related and highly regulated sectors, which I believe will be helpful in this appointment.

I have strong governance experience, helped greatly by the training and experience provided by the NHS in my first non-executive role on an acute hospital board and further significant Chair experience of leading boards in large scale, complex, social purpose settings.

As identified in the section above, I have significant regulated executive experience over 3 decades in different sectors which I believe is helpful to assisting boards and executive teams to navigate the challenges of regulated environments.

I have over 20 years practical senior executive experience including CEO roles which I believe can be helpful as a non-executive Chair, in guiding and advising the CEO and executive team in delivering their objectives. This is particularly the case in relation to finance, HR, performance management, IT, regulation, governance and stakeholder management. While the non-executive team are not involved in day-to-day operations, their experience and learning can be a useful aid to the executive team.

Having served as non-executive independent Chair of a complex social care provider and on an NHS board I have a good understanding of the complex inter-dependencies within the wider NHS system and understand the importance of collaborative working, supporting the wider system and working to better integrate care providers.

While issues concerning the working relationships within the wider political setting are addressed in questions below, in relation to this question – I do have significant experience of working with Council elected members and officers in several different settings and while that is at English Local Authority level, I believe it is good experience to prepare me for this larger role working with Senedd members.

3. What are the three main outcomes that you want to achieve during your tenure?

1. Strong well respected effective and efficient governance processes
2. Strong purposeful presence within the wider NHS system
3. Demonstrable improvements in service levels

4. How will you work with health boards, NHS trusts, special health authorities, Welsh Government, local authorities and social care partners?

The first step is to understand the local dynamics, build personal relationships and to understand the pressure and tensions within the system.

Regular attendance at appropriate committees, meetings and events to ensure the ambulance service issues are well reported and understood across the system.

Working to build a relationship based on trust, openness and integrity while not avoiding the difficult issues and recognising the cross dependencies.

5. How will you work with community groups, patients, the third sector and other stakeholders?

Good governance demands an open and honest approach which includes a significant focus on patient voice and on service quality measures.

I would work to ensure the Board continue to hear the patient and other partner voices through formal board agenda items, open meetings, involvement across the NHS system and informal contact.

As Chair I would encourage Board members (executive and non-executive) to face issues openly and encourage non-executive members to take opportunities to meet regularly with colleagues, patients and stakeholders to better understand the issues and complexities they face.

Personally, I would invest time to establish the wide relationships necessary to maintain strong communications between all parties and to reinforce mutual respect, understanding and co-operation.

6. How will you work with Senedd Members and Senedd committees?

As above, I would invest time to build relationships of mutual trust and respect with members and committees ensuring an open and honest approach, working to deliver high quality governance oversight and representing the Ambulance service wherever necessary.

As Chair I recognise the privileged position of trust that is given by both Board members and Senedd members in the role and would work to always fairly and openly address issues with all parties and to maintain appropriate communications and feed-back.

I have considerable experience of working with elected members in a variety of local authority settings in England which I hope will serve me well in working with the more significant devolved government in Wales.