

Appointment of Chair to NHS Board

Statement of suitability

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for the above role. I am delighted to submit this application and look forward to discussing my suitability further should I be successful at the next stage of the process. In the spirit of openness, my primary interest is the Hywel Dda Chair appointment. However, I appreciate this application is for the Swansea Bay University Health Board.

Before sharing the skills, and experience I can bring to the role, I would like to offer three reasons why I have decided to apply for this exciting opportunity. Firstly, I am profoundly passionate about people, community wellbeing and the important role played by the NHS as a critical provider of healthcare. Having worked within the service and engaged regularly with providers, I understand the scale of challenges facing Health Boards in Wales and very much want to play my part in finding a long-term sustainable solution. Secondly, I live in west Wales within the community served by the Health Boards and would hope to bring a local perspective and lived experience to the role. And finally, I have spent much of my career blending both paid and unpaid work to build a unique portfolio of experience which I am confident would enrich the work of the health board and hopefully strengthen its operation.

As the chair of the Wales Council for Voluntary Action, my key objective has been to build a shared vision, common purpose and a strategic road map across more than 8000 charities and 40,000 distinct voluntary organisations. As my CV demonstrates, this role is the culmination of many years working with people and communities in the health and social care sector, deepening my understanding and appreciation of what matters to people and how services can be designed and delivered to address needs.

For the past twenty five years, I have worked in a number of board-level leadership roles, in an executive and non-executive capacity across the statutory and third sectors. My role has often combined the provision of expert advice with a strategic focus on people and service delivery. This work often involved translating complex ideas and information into digestible formats that would engage those responsible for delivering the change to understand the process and the outcome.

More broadly, I think the role of the chair of a board, working group or committee is to make sense of the meaning of things for others. Having an acute sense of others, appreciating that different ways we understand things and the different cultural and intellectual reference points we use when we think and speak has helped me considerably to build a shared understanding and narrative that engages and inspired others.

To strengthen my ability to influence and thought lead others I have acquired expert skills in both facilitation and mediation. As a seasoned Senior Civil Servant, long-serving Non-Executive Director and HR leader, I have acquired the skill and emotional maturity to hold challenging and difficult conversations that can be uncomfortable but which in turn help to build trust and strengthen relationships. To aid my success I have developed a positive open-handed leadership style that blends confidence with humility. Working at a Ministerial level in a Whitehall, Welsh and Scottish government context has provided a rich seam of experience for influencing with evidence, data and well-prepared arguments.

As a past Equality and Human Rights Commissioner and a trustee many charities and foundations, acting as an ambassador and advocate for and on behalf of others has been an essential part of the role. The success of which has rested upon building trustful and credible relationships.

As someone who has collaborated extensively across public services to build shared interest and common cause, I would like to offer as an example, my role chairing '*Measuring the Mountain*', a community-based evaluation of the Social Service and Wellbeing (Wales) 2014. Formulated a citizen jury, this brought together third sector, statutory and community-based organisations to build a collaborative approach to evaluating the impact of the legislation using lived experience. I was asked to chair the enterprise having been requested to develop a strategic approach to the challenge of evaluating the legislation.

Working within organisations with very large expenditure profiles, at Board and Executive Committee level has equipped me with a detailed and extensive understanding of effective governance, in its design, purpose and operation.

As evidence of my experience of working within a controlled environment and within an assurance role, as a Scottish Government Non-Executive Director, I am share a responsibility for scrutinising/challenging Health and Social Care risk profiling and mitigation as part of my wider role on the SG Audit and Assurance Committee. Similarly, I chair the Remuneration Board for Scottish Government.

Thank you for taking the time to read this statement. I would be happy to elaborate on any of the information provided.