

# **Pre-appointment hearing: Chair of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board**

## Pre-appointment questionnaire

February 2026

### **Background**

You are being asked to complete this questionnaire because you are the Welsh Government's preferred candidate for the post of Chair of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

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. It may be necessary to redact certain personal information, such as contact information, before publication. We would also request that you refrain from disclosing third-party personal data unless necessary. Your response to each question should be around 250 words (with the exception of question 1, where you may provide a longer response).

## 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. Please provide a brief summary of your employment history. You may wish to do this via a separate CV. Please be aware that anything you provide will be published.

### Local Authority apprentice – Cynon Valley Borough Council 1992 – 1995

Gaining qualifications under a trade, both on site work and at college. The trade element at that time was focused on local authority housing estates - both in terms of repairs within the property boundary and wider estate improvements.

### Housing DLO operative – Cynon Valley Borough Council 1995 -1997

As above, working as part of a small maintenance team within the Housing division, focusing on repairs within property boundaries and on wider estate management.

### Building Direct DLO operative – RCT County Council 1997 – 2000

Following local government re-organisation, I worked as a charge-hand, working on wider public estates - covering works to public schools, housing estates and wider public spaces.

### **Building Direct DLO Supervisor – RCT County Council 2000 – 2002**

As a supervisor in the then Building Direct arm of the Local Authority, I was in charge of a small workforce team covering a dedicated part of the county. Managing and prioritising workloads, working with service managers to direct resources and oversight of approximately £800k annual spend in addition to staff costs. As part of this role, I managed the day to running, and also oversaw record keeping and covering personal development plans and sickness return to works that were reported to management and HR.

### **Maintenance inspector / Litigation – RCT County Council 2002 – 2004**

I was asked to join a small team of litigation inspectors for the Council to assess any outstanding repairs and defects and to put forward a mitigation plan, while at the same time gathering evidence to understand the potential legal risks and, occasionally attending court to provide supporting written and photographic evidence in litigation claims.

### **Elected County Councillor 2004 to present**

Representing the community of Mountain Ash, an area of approximately 4500 properties and 6000 residents.

### **Board Member of RCT Homes 2005 – 2008**

RCT Homes was the housing body set up to take over the transfer of housing stock for the local authority. The Board of 15 members was the management board set up to oversee and run the new housing service. I was appointed to the board and subsequent sub-committees for repairs and staffing to use my knowledge and experience in assisting with capital maintenance planning and the delivery structures.

### **Chair of Appointments committee and Audit member 2006 – 2008**

Being the Chair of the Appointment Committee, I was responsible (along with a small panel) for assessing and interviewing for the most senior posts within the Council and working with external advisors on performance assessment centres. In this role, I have interviewed and appointed senior directors to the level of the CEO.

### **Appointed Cabinet Member in 2008 – 2014**

Responsibility for areas such as highway maintenance, emergency planning, structures and traffic services. Agreeing and setting the capital programme for the service areas and working with officers on delivery plans to be agreed annually. At this time, I also attended the Leadership Academy programme which was run on a U.K.-wide basis.

### **Elected Leader of the Council 2014 – to present**

My role as Council Leader has been diverse, working with senior officers across the Council while still having my distinct portfolio responsibility for the same areas as my previous Cabinet portfolio from 2008 – 2014. The role of Leader has meant I have responsibility for having oversight of the Council's budget and the capital programme. I have also developed external relations with other public bodies and both the U.K. and Welsh Government.

### **Co-Chair Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Board 2017 – 2021**

Co-chair of the Strategy Board which had oversight for a dedicated small team within the Welsh Government and a dedicated annual budget to focus investment and interventions across the Heads of the Valleys region, in line with the plan agreed by Welsh Ministers and key stakeholders.

### **Chaired the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal 2016 -2019**

Forming and working on the Shadow City Deal from late 2014 / early 2015, this role involved the bringing together of the 10 South East Wales Local Authorities with the Welsh Government, U.K. Government and business leaders to agree a £1.2Bn City Deal for the region, which was the first in Wales. As part of the negotiations, along with a small team of colleagues, I met with senior U.K. Government Ministers in London to negotiate the deal prior to sign-off with the U.K. Government's Business Minister. In chairing the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, we carried out extensive consultations with business and the wider public to seek their views and priorities. The role then required a strategy to be put in place to deliver the agreed outcome targets for the region.

### **Elected leader of WLGA 2019 to present**

In the role of WLGA Leader I have gained extensive media experience, notably through the COVID-19 pandemic and major storm events. The role has involved regular interview appearances, and I am able to speak with confidence to

broadcast outlets, with extensive knowledge on a breadth of issues from briefings and from over a decade of experience of making key decisions within local services.

### **Appointed member of the Welsh/U.K. Government Tips Taskforce**

In my role on the Coal Tip Safety Taskforce, I provided real-world insight into the concerns of communities in RCT, which had experienced the largest coal spoil landslip since Aberfan. Working closely with engineers, I was able to relay their professional concerns, recommendations and the practical barriers to wider coal tip intervention. I briefed UK and Welsh Government Ministers on behalf of local authorities and built strong working relationships with officials to help shape the draft Coal Tip Safety Bill. I also gave evidence, alongside one of my senior tip engineers, to the Senedd Committee throughout the Bill's stages, including on the impact of climate change and the need for improved drainage infrastructure.

### **Appointed Board Observer to Transport for Wales - 2023 to present**

Observer (ex-officio) position to provide comment and to ensure that actions agreed by the Board of the Officer Sub-Groups tie in with other areas of delivery within the public sector, focusing mainly (but not exclusively) on local authorities.

### **Chair of Regional Transport & Infrastructure Sub-Committee**

As the Chair of the Regional Transport Sub-Committee, I have worked with officers in taking a hands-on role to working through the proposals for the Regional Transport Plan and the Regional Delivery Plan, looking at the £250m budget over the 5-year period and reviewing the spend profile against the key projects. This work is ongoing but recently had Ministerial sign-off for next year.

## 2. What motivated you to apply to be the Chair of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board?

I have spent my whole working life in public service, starting as an apprentice at Cynon Valley Borough Council before progressing into management at Rhondda Cynon Taf Council. I then became an elected Member in 2004 and a Member of the Executive in 2008. I have led the Council since 2014.

As a Council Leader and as Leader of the WLGA, I have worked closely with health boards, Regional Partnership Boards and national bodies to strengthen integration between health, social care, local government and the third sector. This experience has given me a detailed understanding of the pressures facing the NHS and the importance of long-term planning and prevention. I am motivated by the opportunity to bring that experience to a leadership role where I can work collectively with others to achieve the right outcomes.

I have always fostered a team approach, recognising the strengths of others and providing leadership or support as needed to secure the best results.

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board serves a large and diverse population, including communities with significant health inequalities and socioeconomic challenges. I strongly believe there is a real opportunity for the Health Board and wider public services to make a long-term step change, particularly by strengthening primary care and focusing on preventative interventions.

## 3. Why do you think you are well suited to the role?

I believe my experience and leadership style align closely with what is required to chair a health board. As Leader of Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and through my role with the WLGA, I have led large organisations, set strategic direction, and ensured strong governance and accountability. I have a keen eye for detail and I am able to support and challenge constructively, remain objective, and keep a clear focus on outcomes for the public.

In my current role, I have worked across the political landscape over a number of years, engaging with MS's, MP's and Council Leaders; and I regularly attend high-level meetings with U.K. and Welsh Senedd Ministers and this has

strengthened my ability to navigate complex issues and maintain productive relationships.

In my current role as a Council Leader, I work with and support the executive team in the local authority in a similar way to how the Chair of a health board would work with executive directors, providing support, guidance, constructive challenge and scrutiny. A key aspect of leading a local authority is the consultation process and, through my time as a Council Leader, I have gained significant experience in reviewing and scrutinising consultation outcomes to help shape policy and strengthen decision making.

I have also had experience of working on a number of other strategic boards and these roles have involved policy setting, reviewing governance structures, challenging and monitoring performance, and managing risks.

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

Broadly, the three main outcomes that I would seek to deliver would centre around:

- Ensuring that services are sustainable with clear plans to drive measurable and improved outcomes, especially in areas that are receiving escalated monitoring.
- Improving access to good quality care, ensuring that the Health Board delivers on the targets set by the Cabinet Secretary and the Welsh Government. In addition, as part of this, I would seek strategic collaboration with other health boards to maximise the outcomes from investment in the health service and achieve the greatest outcome for residents.
- Improving and developing relationships both with internal stakeholders and external partners (including the wider public sector and the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector), which are crucial to some areas of service delivery and prevention. At the same time, to work closely with the Chief Executive to ensure that the culture and relationships within the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board are appropriate for the voices of staff to be heard and feel valued.

**5. How will you work with NHS bodies, Welsh Government, local authorities and social care partners?**

I will build on my years of experience of working with and liaising between health boards, Welsh Government and local authorities.

I will strive to maintain open and honest relationships with these stakeholders whilst working with - and being accountable to - the Welsh Government's Cabinet Secretary.

Building on my experience of working with local authority and social care partners, developing and enhancing strong links with these stakeholders will be crucial in addressing the need for an integrated health and social care system while, at the same time, looking at the long-term health inequalities that exist between different communities.

I will play a supportive role within the health board in working with regional partners, such as through the Regional Partnership Board and Public Service Boards but also building strong collaborative links individually to ensure that health and social care services are aligned and work seamlessly together. My focus will be on fostering trust, improving joint planning and ensuring that collective decisions lead to better outcomes for residents.

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

Effective engagement with communities and partners is essential to delivering sustainable, high-quality health services. My approach is to provide clear leadership while actively listening to those who use and deliver services. I believe strongly in creating opportunities for residents, patients, staff and community organisations to shape and inform local priorities and decisions.

To develop long-term, sustainable health plans, we must not only understand the needs of our population today but also anticipate future demand. This requires meaningful dialogue with communities and clear communication about what is achievable. I will champion an approach that embeds engagement into the Board's culture, ensuring that feedback is meaningful and used as a mechanism for continuous improvement.

Strong relationships with stakeholders are essential. I have extensive experience working with Welsh Government, local authorities, unions and community partners, and I understand the value each of those brings. The third sector in particular plays a crucial role in prevention, early intervention and supporting vulnerable groups – and, on some occasions, community organisations may be better placed than statutory services to deliver support and reach communities.

As Chair of the Health Board, I will foster a collaborative environment where stakeholders are respected, informed and able to contribute meaningfully, while recognising the priorities and direction set by the Cabinet Secretary.

## **7. How will you work with Senedd Members and Senedd committees?**

I feel that it is important to build good relationships with all political representatives within the health board area, having regular engagement and briefing sessions with MS's, MP's and Council Leaders. I feel this will be essential with an increased Senedd and more local representatives being elected for the first time.

In my current role as a Council Leader in Rhondda Cynon Taf, this is an approach that I feel has worked well in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB area - with the Health Board Chief Executive and Chair holding regular calendared meetings to discuss local issues, emerging priorities and have meaningful engagement with elected representatives. This will very much be an approach that I'd like to adopt, in recognition of the important role they play in representing local residents in raising specific concerns or complaints. In addition to this, I would ensure that the Health Board has a culture of responding in a timely and meaningful way with elected representatives.

In my current role as the WLGA Leader, I am used to appearing before Senedd Committees, giving oral or written evidence and answering questions in an open and transparent manner. I fully recognise the role that Senedd committees play in both providing scrutiny and in developing changes to the legislative frameworks. Scrutiny plays a critical role in leading to positive outcomes and can deliver meaningful change, and its role is crucial in a functioning democracy.

8. Do you currently hold any other appointments that could give rise to any potential conflicts of interest or perceived conflicts of interest? If so, how do you propose to manage those conflicts or perceptions?

**Leader of RCT Council**

While the role does not conflict with the appointment to Aneurin Bevan Health Board as it is outside of the Health Board's footprint area, I have announced that I will be stepping down from this position in April.

**Leader of the Welsh Local Government Association**

I have already given notice that I intend to stand down as the Leader of the WLGA, however I have been asked to continue in the role until after the Senedd elections in May to ensure a smooth transition.

Whilst holding the role of Leader, the Association has dedicated Spokespersons for Health and Social Care, so I would not have direct oversight of such matters. Should a situation arise where an agenda item does involve such matters then I will recuse myself from any discussion where a conflict or a perceived conflict of interest may arise and ensure that I declare an interest to avoid the perception of a conflict of interest.

**Councillor (Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council)**

Again, while I foresee no conflicts or perceived conflicts with any role I play within RCTCBC as the County Borough sits outside of the Aneurin Bevan Health Board area. I have announced that I will be stepping down in May 2027 and, during the interim period, I will ensure that I recuse myself from any discussion and declare an interest as appropriate, should a direct or perceived conflict arise at any time. I do not, however, envisage this to be likely.