

Pre-appointment hearing questionnaire

Following questions sent from the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee.

February 2020, in preparation for session on 12th March 2020.

Emma Woollett, Interim Chair, Swansea Bay University Health Board

Personal Background

1. Do you have any business or financial connections, or other commitments, which might give rise to a conflict of interest in carrying out your duties, or impact on the time you are able to commit to the role?

Conflicts of Interest

I have no business or financial connections that could give rise to a conflict of interest.

Commitments

I have other current commitments, for example lay member on the audit committee of Bristol Zoo, but my experience since my appointment as Interim Chair confirms that I have more than sufficient time to commit to the role.

2. Have you ever held any post or undertaken any activity that might cast doubt on your political impartiality?

No.

3. How were you recruited: were you encouraged to apply, and if so, by whom?

I was recruited by open competition and a full public appointments process.

I was encouraged to apply by colleagues at Swansea Bay University Health Board (SBUHB).

4. Please explain how your experience to date has equipped you to fulfil your new responsibilities.

Experienced Vice Chair of 2 large NHS organisations (including SBUHB) and Interim Chair for SBUHB since July 2019. This has given me a strong understanding of governance, significant experience of working with partners across a health system and experience of building an effective unitary board. The past 2 ½ years as Vice Chair and then Interim Chair at SBUHB has enabled me to understand the NHS in Wales at a national as well as a local level and to appreciate the opportunities we have for a more integrated and devolved health system.

Prior to becoming a non-executive, I had a successful executive career spanning a wide range of sectors including utilities and retail. This gave me experience in developing (and delivering) strategy, achieving turnaround in performance and building effective teams to deliver change.

Over the past 15 years, I have also undertaken a number of consultancy roles across the NHS in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, often supporting troubled organisations as they worked to improve governance, quality of care, operational performance and do so whilst making best use of financial resources. This has given me useful insights into how NHS organisations turn themselves around and some of the difficulties in doing so.

Performance of the role

5. What will be your key priorities in your new role?

- To continue to develop an effective unitary board
- To continue to tighten governance and ward to board oversight of quality and performance
- To encourage the continued development of an open culture and the further embedding of our values throughout the organisation
- To focus board and organisation on delivering our strategy and de-escalation from Targeted Intervention
- To deepen local partnership relationships for the benefit of our population
- To play my part in a collaborative health system across Wales

6. What criteria should be used to judge your performance over your term of office?

Overall, the main criteria should be the effective and efficient delivery of SBUHB's strategic plans and operational performance (in particular de-escalation from Targeted Intervention), which is the responsibility of the whole board, including the Chief Executive and the executive team.

However, I lead the board and should be held accountable for:

- Providing visible, open and strategic leadership
- Building a stable, effective, visible board
- Ensuring appropriate governance arrangements
- Ensuring the organisation has the confidence of Welsh Government and the Welsh Assembly
- Developing relationships of trust with local partners and stakeholders

The organisation

7. What criteria should be used to judge the performance of Swansea Bay University Health Board as a whole?

- De-escalation from Targeted Intervention
- Progress against delivery of our strategic ambitions
- To deliver both of these, we need motivated, supported, well trained staff

8. What do you see as the key risks to delivering Swansea Bay University Health Board's objectives?

In brief:

- Pandemics
- Cultural inertia
- Shortages in key staff groups
- Managing EU withdrawal

9. What do you consider to have been the main successes and failures of Swansea Bay University Health Board? What lessons can be learned from the failures?

Successes

- SBUHB delivers effective and safe care to hundreds of thousands of people every year
- Making good progress on developing and embedding our values (Caring for Each Other, Always Improving and Working Together). I firmly believe that having a strong, clear set of values that believe in is a critical success factor for any organisation
- The quality and innovation within so many of our clinical services – both specialist services provided at our hospitals and services developed within our community teams. This energy and innovation within our clinical teams is another critical factor for successfully delivering leading edge, high quality care.

Failures

- Our Targeted Intervention status, which is driven by inadequate delivery in some core areas of performance, including:
 - Unscheduled care
 - Planned care
 - Financial deficit

Learning

- The importance of a positive, open organisational culture that encourages two way feedback and communication
- The importance of good governance, including effective Independent Member scrutiny and challenge
- That focusing our efforts on providing high quality services will deliver sustainable operational and financial performance
- The value of partnership work to deliver better, more effective care, as evidenced by our Hospital 2 Home work through the Regional Partnership Board for example
- The importance of communicating with public and stakeholders in a timely way to maintain confidence and build awareness of issues we are facing and decisions we need to take

10. What is your assessment of the public profile and reputation of the organisation?

Given the integrated nature of the NHS in Wales and the proximity between local issues and national debate and coverage, it is likely that SBUHB's public profile and reputation is heavily influenced by perceptions of NHS Wales more broadly – that is, as a cherished institution, but one that is facing significant challenges to meet rising demand.

I am conscious that the Andrews *Trusted to Care* report is also likely to continue to feature strongly in perceptions of the organisation. The legacy of the report and the actions that came from it have been crucial for the organisation, and are, I believe, bearing fruit.

Perceptions are, of course, strongly formed by personal experience, whether directly or indirectly via the care provided to loved ones. The Health Board's Friends and Family test show that the vast majority of people experiencing care would be happy to recommend to others.

The overall public perception is of an organisation that has been challenged, but also one that has stabilised and is now on an upward trajectory.