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| <b>DATE OF MEETING</b> | Wednesday 29 July 2026, 18:00 |
| <b>VENUE</b>           | Microsoft Teams               |

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| <b>ABUHB 2907/01</b> | <p><b>Welcome and Introduction</b><br/>Andrew Morgan, Chair</p> <p>The meeting commenced with a welcome from Andrew Morgan, Chair, who welcomed staff, stakeholders, community representatives and members of the public attending the meeting virtually. As this was his first Annual General Meeting since taking up the role of Chair in May 2026, Andrew acknowledged that much of the performance being reported related to a period under the leadership of former Chair, Ann Lloyd, and he recorded his thanks for her leadership and contribution to the Health Board.</p> <p>Andrew reflected on the commitment shown by staff and partners throughout another challenging year, recognising the significant pressures faced across healthcare services. He highlighted the strong foundations already in place across the organisation and noted the opportunities and challenges that lay ahead. Andrew advised that the meeting was being held in public, would be recorded and available to view on the Health Board's YouTube channel, and welcomed questions submitted both in advance and during the meeting.</p> |
| <b>ABUHB 2907/02</b> | <p><b>Overview of the Health Board's Performance in 2025/26</b><br/>Nicola Prygodzicz, Chief Executive</p> <p>Nicola Prygodzicz, Chief Executive, presented an overview of the Health Board's performance during 2025/26. She reaffirmed the organisation's mission to reduce health inequalities and improve population health, highlighting the publication of the new organisational strategy, Gwent 2035: Better Health, Better Care, Better Lives, and the</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |



associated People Plan. The strategy had been informed through extensive engagement with staff and local communities and marked a significant milestone for the organisation.

Nicola outlined progress made across the organisation's strategic programmes. Quality and safety remained central to the Health Board's work, with improvements reported across a number of quality indicators. Significant progress had been achieved in reducing waiting times, including a 92% reduction in patients waiting more than two years for treatment and a 91% reduction in outpatient waits exceeding 52 weeks. Diagnostic waiting times had also improved. Regional collaboration with neighbouring health boards had supported additional capacity, particularly within ophthalmology services.

The Chief Executive highlighted developments in prevention and population health, including the establishment of the Women's Health Hub at Nevill Hall Hospital, improvements in diabetes care, strong performance within the Healthy Child Wales programme and increased uptake of vaccinations. Progress had also been made in delivering care closer to home through expanded pharmacy services and community nursing provision.

Within urgent and emergency care, Nicola reported the successful opening of the expanded Emergency Department waiting area at The Grange University Hospital, additional consultant appointments and improvements in ambulance handover performance. Advances had also been made within planned care, including the opening of the satellite radiotherapy centre at Nevill Hall Hospital and improvements in theatre utilisation. Mental health services continued to perform strongly against Welsh Government targets, particularly in relation to assessment and treatment times.

Workforce developments were also highlighted, including improved participation in the NHS Staff Survey, increased staff engagement scores, the recruitment of more than 300 additional substantive clinical staff and a further reduction in agency expenditure. Financial challenges remained significant, although the Health Board had delivered savings exceeding £43 million during the year.



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|                      | <p>Despite these achievements, Nicola acknowledged ongoing challenges relating to workforce wellbeing, rising demand across services, ageing estate infrastructure, financial pressures, winter resilience and the need for continued investment in digital systems and infrastructure.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>ABUHB 2907/03</b> | <p><b>Presentation of the Financial Accounts 2025/26</b><br/>Robert Holcombe, Director of Finance and Procurement</p> <p>Robert Holcombe, Director of Finance and Procurement, presented the Health Board's Annual Accounts for 2025/26. He reported that the accounts had received a clear audit opinion confirming that they presented a true and fair view of the organisation's finances. However, the Health Board had again breached its resource limit, recording an in-year deficit of £18 million and a cumulative three-year deficit position.</p> <p>The Health Board spent £2.1 billion on health and wellbeing services during the year, reflecting increased investment across primary care, healthcare commissioned from other providers and hospital and community services. Workforce expenditure increased to £981 million, supporting the recruitment of more than 450 additional staff and helping reduce reliance on agency workers.</p> <p>Capital investment totalled £44 million and supported service expansion, digital developments, estate improvements, sustainability initiatives and new diagnostic equipment, including a second MRI scanner at The Grange University Hospital. Robert also outlined the scale of services delivered during the year, including over 700,000 outpatient appointments, more than 100,000 treatments and almost 190,000 urgent care attendances.</p> <p>An update was also provided on the Health Board's charitable funds. Increased income from donations and investment returns had enabled continued support for patient services, staff wellbeing initiatives, medical research, equipment purchases and student support schemes.</p> |
| <b>ABUHB 2907/04</b> | <p><b>An Overview of the challenges and priorities for the Health Board in 2026/27 and beyond</b><br/>Nicola Prygodzicz, Chief Executive</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |



Nicola Prygodzicz outlined the Health Board's priorities for 2026/27 within its Annual Plan and longer-term ambitions aligned to the *Gwent 2035* strategy. The plan balanced long-term transformation with immediate recovery priorities and focused on improving population health, reducing inequalities, strengthening community-based services and delivering sustainable healthcare services.

Key priorities included advancing place-based care models, developing a Clinical Services Plan, redesigning services for older people, improving urgent and emergency care performance, reducing waiting times, improving cancer performance and strengthening mental health provision. These priorities would be supported by enabling programmes relating to workforce, quality, value, digital transformation, capital investment and decarbonisation.

The Chief Executive acknowledged the significant challenges facing the organisation during the coming year, including continued demand growth, workforce wellbeing concerns, financial pressures, backlog maintenance issues within the estate and the need to modernise digital infrastructure.

**ABUHB 2907/05**

## **Public Questions and Answers**

The Q&A session followed the main presentations and provided an opportunity for members of the public and stakeholders to raise questions directly with the Board. Questions were submitted both in advance and during the meeting, and responses were provided by relevant Board members and Executives.

### **1. Reopening of Accident and Emergency Services at Nevill Hall Hospital**

*Answered by Nicola Prygodzicz, Chief Executive*

The first question, received prior to the meeting, 'is the ABUHB considering reopening the A & E department at Nevill Hall hospital to take the pressure off the Grange hospital and if so what is the timescale for this matter'.

Nicola Prygodzicz, Chief Executive, confirmed that there were no plans to reintroduce a full Accident and Emergency Department at Nevill Hall Hospital. She explained that emergency departments required a range of



supporting specialist services and workforce resource that were not feasible to replicate across multiple sites. Nicola highlighted the clinical benefits that had been achieved through the centralisation of acute services at The Grange University Hospital and noted the continued success of the Minor Injury Unit at Nevill Hall Hospital.

## **2. Infection Prevention and Control Measures**

*Answered by Jennifer Winslade, Director of Nursing*

The second question, received prior to the meeting, 'As the UK Covid Inquiry enters its final stages, we have heard that Covid-19 (and other viruses) is spread mainly via the airborne route. Existing IPC guidance covering all of UK healthcare is based on the false premise that Covid-19 is spread via droplets. As we head into another winter, will the Board enact an urgent review of Infection Prevention and Control measures within its healthcare settings?'

Jennifer Winslade, Director of Nursing, outlined forthcoming national changes to infection prevention and control guidance. She advised that updated guidance would come into effect from August 2026, including revised terminology relating to airborne transmission and new respiratory risk categories. The Health Board was updating its local guidance in line with the national changes.

## **3. Public Information on Pharmacy Services**

*Answered by Leanne Watkins, Chief Operating Officer*

The third question, received prior to the meeting, 'My question relates to the level of public information, which can be clearly understood so that members of the public understand their rights and responsibilities in respect to ensuring the consistent provision of pharmacy dispensing services upon which the public should be able to rely to always have their medicines dispensed'.

Leanne Watkins, Chief Operating Officer, described the information currently available to support public understanding of NHS pharmacy services and dispensing arrangements. She highlighted the Health Board's ongoing work with community pharmacy contractors and welcomed suggestions from the public on how information could be presented more clearly and consistently.



#### **4. Expenditure on Private Providers and Agency Costs**

*Answered by Robert Holcombe, Director of Finance and Procurement*

During the meeting, Councillor Desmond Hillman asked a question regarding expenditure on private providers and agency staffing costs.

Robert Holcombe explained that the increase in spending on private providers was largely associated with Welsh Government-funded initiatives to reduce waiting times and was separate from expenditure on agency staff. He noted that measures continued to be taken to reduce reliance on agency workers through substantive recruitment.

**ABUHB 2907/06**

#### **Closing Remarks**

Andrew Morgan, Chair

In closing, Andrew Morgan thanked everyone who had participated in and attended the Annual General Meeting. He emphasised the importance of public engagement, accountability and transparency, noting that opportunities for dialogue with communities remained central to the Health Board's approach. Andrew thanked colleagues for their contributions throughout the year and advised that meeting recordings and responses to questions would be made available following the meeting. He then formally closed the Annual General Meeting.

