



Local Partnership Forum Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

1.1 The Local Partnership Forum (LPF) for Public Health Wales NHS Trust (PHW) is the formal mechanism where the Trust management and recognised trade unions work together to improve the health and well-being of the people of Wales. It is the forum where key stakeholders can discuss and consider the organisation's strategic direction, priorities and plans, and how these will affect the workforce, as well as engage with each other to inform, debate and seek to agree local priorities on workforce related issues facing the Trust.

1.2 The purpose of the LPF is twofold:

It is where key stakeholders can engage with each other to prioritize, inform, debate, and seek agreement on strategic workforce and public health services issues enabling high-level, strategic discussions to take place in relation to the Trust's future direction.

It will also provide the formal mechanism for consultation, negotiation and communication between the Trade Unions and management on specific workforce related matters that arise out of the Trust's priorities and plans.

1.3 Operational, day to day matters will be discussed and resolved at Directorate, departmental or divisional level.

1.4 In embracing the ethos of partnership working, the Public Health Wales Board will engage with recognised trade unions in the key discussions affecting the organisation and its staff at the PHW Board and its Committees, LPF and, where appropriate, at Local Directorate, departmental or divisional level.

The LPF will provide the formal mechanism for consultation, negotiation and communication between the trade unions and management.

- 1.5** Members of LPF and POD (Operational Group) will work to resolve operational issues outside of this forum. Depending on the nature of the work being undertaken, there may be a requirement to report back to LPF or for LPF to refer work to the operational group.
- 1.6** The Trust's approach to partnership working as laid out in the Partnership Working Charter is further reinforced in these Terms of Reference for the LPF and can be accessed here. [Partnership Working Charter.docx](#)

2. Principles

As laid out in the Partnership Working Charter, Public Health Wales promotes partnership working, in realisation that it supports both the workforce and management to work through challenges and to grow and strengthen their respective organisations. Such relationships are built on trust and confidence and demonstrate a real commitment to working together.

- 2.1** The TUC six principles of partnership will underpin the relationships and work of the LPF:
- a shared commitment to the success of the organisation
 - a focus on the quality of working life for our staff
 - recognition of the legitimate roles of the employer and the trade union
 - a commitment by the employer to employment security
 - openness on both sides and a willingness by the employer to share information and discuss the future plans for the organisation
 - adding value – a shared understanding that the partnership is delivering measurable improvements for the employer, the union and employees

In addition to the above, PHW management and trade unions abide by the following general principles which are based on the etiquette adopted by Board Members of Public Health Wales, as set out in the following link:

<https://phw.nhs.wales/about-us/board-and-executive-team/board-etiquette1/>

- 2.2** Aspects which are particularly pertinent to LPF Members and attendees are set out below:
- Embody Public Health Wales values
 - Adhere to the Nolan Principles of Public Life, and relevant Codes of Conduct
 - Declare any potential conflicts of interest at the beginning of a meeting (or when these arise if it becomes evident part way through)
 - Be respectful of, and courteous to others, recognising that all contributions have value
 - Listen actively and challenge constructively

- Manage conflict objectively, explore differences fully and look for resolutions. Respect any ultimate divergence of view
- Show support and loyalty to other members of the LPF
- Commit and demonstrate throughout to openness, transparency and candour
- Turn mobile phones to silent, focus on the agenda and discussions in hand, and refrain from undertaking other work
- Avoid repeating points made by others LPF Members
- Adopt a solution-focussed approach to decision making
- Be alert throughout to the issues of diversity and inclusion
- Flag up in advance with the Chair if you will need to leave the Board meeting at any point

3. Purpose

3.1 The purpose of the LPF is to establish Bi-monthly meetings between PHW senior management and the recognised trade unions on matters relating to the key strategic issues and future direction of the Trust. Such discussions will be confined to strategic, high-level organisational plans and priorities enabling the LPF to be the formal mechanism for consultation, negotiation and communication between the recognised trade unions and management on specific workforce related matters that arise out of the Trust's strategic priorities and plans. This will include and enable:

- regular and formal dialogue between PHW and the trade unions on matters relating to strategic workforce and workforce related Trust issues
- the employer and trade unions to put forward issues affecting the workforce
- opportunities for trade unions and managers to input into PHW service development plans at an early stage
- consideration of the implications for staff of service reviews and identify and seek to agree new ways of working
- consideration of the implications for staff of NHS reorganisation at a national or local level and to work in partnership to achieve a mutually successful implementation
- appraisal and discussion in partnership of the financial performance of the organisation on a regular basis
- appraisal and discussion in partnership of PHW service activity and performance and its implications
- opportunities to identify, discuss and seek agreement on quality issues, including clinical governance, particularly where such issues have implications for staff
- communication to the LPF of key decisions taken by the Trust and senior management
- consideration of national developments in the NHS Wales Workforce Strategy and the implications for Public Health Wales including matters of service re-profiling
- negotiation on matters subject to local determination
- development in partnership of appropriate facilities arrangements using Agenda for Change Facilities Agreement as a minimum standard

- trade union representatives being afforded reasonable paid time off to undertake trade union duties

N.B. In addition to the above, Public Health Wales will establish local forums at Directorate, divisional and departmental level as required, to establish ongoing dialogue, communication and consultation on service and operational management issues specific to each area.

4. Delegated Powers and Authority

- 4.1 The LPF may establish sub committees or task and finish groups to carry out, on its behalf, specific aspects of the work of the LPF.
- 4.2 Policy Development workshops take place regularly to review and develop HR policies, procedures, guidelines, protocols, and schemes. This forum is a mechanism by which management and trade union representatives, facilitated by People and OD, meet to jointly review and develop policies for recommendation to LPF, Executive Team/ Leadership Team and, where appropriate, final ratification by People and OD Committee. The LPF should review and comment on all people related policies, this may be managed either at LPF meetings or electronically between meetings if required. Other policies may be appropriate for the LPF review and this should be jointly agreed.
- 4.3 Minutes of the meetings of the LPF will be forwarded to People and OD Committee for information.
- 4.4 Where matters cannot be resolved they will be referred to an appropriate governance forum.

5. Local Partnership Forum Meetings

- 5.1 There will be Bi Monthly meetings of the LPF which will consider any key strategic issues and the strategic direction of PHW as it relates to the workforce. Key items for consideration will be included in an annual work plan in order to support efficiency in agenda management and to ensure relevant people are in attendance.
- 5.2 These meetings will be chaired alternately by the Assistant Director of People Strategy, Insights and Service and the Chair /Vice Chair of Staff Side, who are joint Chairs of the LPF.
- 5.3 A pre-agenda meeting will take place for all Bi Monthly meetings, between the Joint Chairs of the LPF in order to discuss and agree the agenda.
- 5.4 For all Bi- Monthly meetings of the LPF there should be 2 management representatives (one of which must be a senior member of the People and OD Directorate and 2 Staff Side representatives, each from separate recognised from separate Trade Unions (one of which must be the Chair, Vice Chair or Secretary of Staff Side) for the meeting to be quorate.

- 5.5** If a meeting is not quorate no decisions can be made but information may be exchanged, and recommendations can be endorsed at the next meeting (when quorate).
- 5.6** The cycle of meetings will be determined and agreed at the start of each year but will generally follow the schedule below:

April
June
August
October
December
February

- 5.7** Joint Chairs can, by agreement, schedule extraordinary meetings with 7 calendar days' notice.
- 5.8** The Bi Monthly meetings shall be restricted to matters pertaining to PHW strategic issues and discussion/updates in relation to major change programmes and major corporate initiatives. Local operational issues should be raised at local Directorate level and will not be considered unless it is agreed that such issues have Trust wide implications.
- 5.9** The agenda and papers shall be sent out no later than 7 days in advance of the LPF meeting.

6. Membership

- 6.1** All members of the LPF shall be full and equal members and share responsibility for the decisions of the LPF.
- 6.2** If a meeting has more representatives from either Trade Unions or from Management the voting rights of the meeting shall remain equal, suffice to say the focus of the LPF is effective engagement and discussion, and where required negotiation, this is not achieved through the number of attendees but a recognition the Trust and the Trade Unions are equal partners at the LPF.
- 6.3** Where matters cannot be resolved they will be referred to an appropriate governance forum.
- 6.4** Membership of Management at Bimonthly meetings will be determined by the specific agenda agreed for the meeting but will include:
- All members of the Business Executive Team

- Board Secretary and Head of Board Business Unit
- Assistant Director of People Strategy, Insights and Services
- Assistant Director of OD & Engagement
- Head of Communications
- Head of People and OD Partnering
- Head of People and OD Operations

N.B. Deputies should only attend in exceptional circumstances and by prior agreement with the joint Chairs.

Staff Representatives

- 6.5** Public Health Wales recognises those Trade Unions listed in Appendix 1 for the representation of members who are employed by the organisation.
- 6.6** It will be the prerogative of the staff representatives to decide on the formula to achieve the maximum number of representatives for each trade union. However, it is generally recognised that a maximum of between 6-10 representatives of both Management and Staff side will be present at each meeting.
- 6.7** The joint Chairs and Vice Chair will review and agree attendance prior to each LPF Meeting to ensure the meeting is appropriately represented and manageable
- 6.8** Staff representatives must be employed by PHW and accredited by their respective trade unions. If a representative ceases to be employed by PHW or ceases to be a member of a nominating trade union then they will automatically cease to be a member of the LPF. Full Time Officers of the trade unions may attend meetings subject to prior notification and agreement of the Joint Chairs.
- 6.9** Members of the LPF who are unable to attend a meeting may send a suitable deputy (in line with Section 6.6 above) who will be taken into consideration when determining whether the meeting is quorate.
- 6.10** Consistent attendance and commitment to participate in discussions is essential. Where a member of the LPF does not attend within a year (except for reasons of sickness, pre-planned annual leave, maternity leave, etc.), the Joint Chairs will write to the member and bring the response to the next meeting for further consideration and possible removal from the LPF.
- 6.11** The LPF Joint Chairs may also invite any others from within or outside the organisation to attend all or part of a meeting to assist it in its discussions on any particular matter.
- 6.12** The Assistant Director of People Strategy, Insights and Service and the Chair of Staff Side Committee will be Joint Chairs of the LPF and chair it on an alternate basis.

- 6.13** The Joint Chairs will be supported by the Head of People and OD Operations who shall ensure that key and appropriate issues are discussed by the LPF in a timely manner with all the necessary information and advice being made available to members to inform the debate and ultimate resolutions. The Head of People and OD Operations will be accountable for ensuring the meeting is quorate.
- 6.14** Administrative support, including the circulation of agenda, minutes and notification of meetings will be provided by a named member of the People and OD team.

7. Reporting and Assurance Arrangements

- 7.1** The LPF shall:
- Report each of its meetings formally to the People and OD Committee via submission of its minutes
 - Bring to People and OD Committee's attention any significant matter under consideration by the LPF through the standing agenda item at the people & OD Committee.
 - Provide an annual report to the Board in relation to the activities of the LPF.
 - The trade unions (LPF staff side) through their Staff side Committee mechanisms, will nominate the members of the LPF staff side to attend the Board and its committees, in accordance with agreed policies and arrangements.

8. Review

- 8.1** These terms of reference and operating arrangements shall be reviewed annually in line with the Standing Orders.

The Local Partnership Forum is comprised of the following recognised Trade Unions

- GMB
- MiP
- Royal College of Nursing
- Society of Radiographers
- Unison
- Unite

Endorsed - 24 November 2022