

Present			Apologies
<p>Welsh Government</p> <p>Annie Jones Chantelle Jenkins Martin Mansfield Rhiannon Jones Emma Coles</p>	<p>NHS Wales Employers</p> <p>Andrew Davies Andrea Thomas Sue Green Kirsty White Sarah Simmonds (Chair) Gareth Hardacre</p>	<p>Trade Unions</p> <p>Tanya Bull Peter Hewin Nathan Holman (NHo) (via Teams) Nicky Hughes (NHu) Caroline Hurley Chris Musgrave Paul Seppman Vicky Richards</p>	<p>Employers</p> <p>Hywel Daniel Helen Watkins Rachel Gidman Samantha Morgan Tina Ricketts (TRi) Lisa Gostling</p> <p>Welsh Government Amy Andrews Helen Arthur Sara Whittam</p> <p>Trade Unions Christopher Saunders Erica Stamp</p>
			<p>Secretariat</p> <p>Tabitha Rodway (TRo)</p>

1.	Welcome/Introductions	Actions
	<p>SS welcomed attendees and noted apologies.</p> <p>NHu noted lack of attendance of Workforce & OD Directors at today's meeting; SG advised that representation moving forwards was discussed at the meeting of W&OD Peer Group at their meeting on Friday 20 February.</p>	
2.	Agree the notes of the meeting held 29 April 2025 and review progress of the actions on the action log	Actions
	<p>The notes and action log were agreed as a correct record.</p>	

3.	Matters Arising	Actions
	There were no matters arising.	
4.	WPF Social Partnership Workshop agenda (18 March 2026)	Actions
	<p>AD advised that the WPF Co-ordinating Group had circulated the proposed questions for discussion at the forthcoming Social Partnership Workshop, due to take place on the afternoon of 18 March following conclusion of the business of the Welsh Partnership Forum.</p> <p>The outline as it currently stands was circulated; RJ suggested that a more positive framing of the questions for discussion would be welcomed. AD agreed to take this into consideration and discuss with the working group, adding that any further comments on proposed content would be welcomed. AD suggested that comments from Employers should be directed to him, from Welsh Government to MM, and from Trade Unions to NHu. It was confirmed that supporting papers for the workshop will be circulated in advance.</p> <p>NHu raised attendance at the workshop and extended any assistance Trade Unions can offer to encourage attendance. NHu also raised the need for tangible actions to arise from the meeting. AD advised that the current plan is for the groups to be self-facilitated, but agreed this could be reviewed. Further thought will be given to this in partnership as the outline for the afternoon develops.</p>	<p>Comments on the draft outline for the WPF social partnership workshop are welcomed and should be directed to AD from Employers to MM from Welsh Government colleagues, and to NHu from Trade Union colleagues.</p>
5.	Flex Campaign discussion	Actions
	<p>NHu advised that the Flex Campaign is a piece of work being taken forward by the Trade Unions on the NHS Staff Council, and has resulted in a campaign around flexible working called 'Get Ahead on Flex' which has been in train since 2024. NHu indicated that the campaign details have been circulated to Trade Unions; it was established that they have not yet been conveyed to Employers. NHu undertook to share the email issued to Trade Unions with Business Committee members.</p> <p>NHu confirmed that webinars are taking place to advise staff of the details of the campaign, including how people can get involved. Referencing the Flexible Working Policy, NHu reiterated that the intent is that a default response to a flexible working request should be that it is agreed where possible. As part of the campaign, Employers will be invited to sign a 'Flex Pledge', demonstrating their commitment to making flexible working as widely available as possible within organisational constraints.</p> <p>NHu highlighted that the campaign aims to allow Trade Union representatives to aid organisations in being proactive about flexible working, to encourage them to take ownership and set targets, and publish data on a regular basis. It was hoped that this data could be published as part of a Welsh Health Circular, but there is difficulty acquiring accurate and reliable data as many requests are either agreed or denied via informal conversations, and not documented on ESR.</p>	<p>NHu will share the email regarding the 'Get Ahead on Flex' campaign with Business Committee members, which was previously issued to TU colleagues.</p> <p>PS to share examples of organisations breaching the legislative 2-month outcome timeframe with NHSWE.</p>

	<p>As part of the key asks of the campaign, Trade Unions would like to see an action plan for progress, and that flexible working is part of the agenda of a normal board meeting; NHu emphasised that training and education packages are available to support the change of culture that may be required.</p> <p>In terms of the phases of the project, NHu advised that there will be a soft launch of the campaign on March 6, Employee Appreciation Day, and suggested that Employers use this event to activate the pledge and encourage momentum around flexible working, in addition to using Local Partnership Forums to drive forward; the campaign website is comprehensive, including letters to download from Trade Unions to CEOs to support and progress the agenda in partnership. NHu suggested that she reference the campaign as part of the Staff Council verbal update at WPF to bring it to life, if this would be helpful.</p> <p>PS advised that it is being widely reported by members that they are submitting flexible working applications, but there are cases where employers are failing to comply with the 2-month statutory timeframe to provide an outcome. PS made a plea for all NHS organisations to follow the policy, and further advised that legal advice taken has indicated that claims for compensation can be raised if the 2-month legislative timeframe is breached, so union representatives are advising staff to start ACAS proceedings if they find themselves in this position. SG requested that PS share examples of breaches with NHS Wales Employers, which he agreed to do.</p> <p>CH noted an anomaly in the Flexible Working Policy regarding the number of days allowed to appeal, and that it appears correctly as 7 days in the body of the policy but as 14 days in the appendix, and requested that this be amended. AD agreed that this would be corrected, and the policy recirculated to ensure all are working from the correct document. SS advised that local arrangements for ABUHB are to store the policy on the organisation's SharePoint, and discourage staff from keeping their own copies. SS reflected on the work that will need to be done to support the flexible working campaign; GH noted that flexible working is one of the questions in the staff survey, which could be helpful in terms of gathering data.</p> <p>SG agreed that when the amended Flexible Working Policy is cascaded, the need to comply will be reinforced.</p>	<p>TRo to correct the inconsistency in the Flexible Working Policy regarding number of days allowed to appeal a flexible working decision. AD to recirculate the amended policy, reiterating the need to comply.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Welsh Government Estates update on RAAC and asbestos</p>	<p>Actions</p>
	<p>EC gave an update from the Welsh Government Estates Department on the current status of RAAC and asbestos across the NHS Wales estate. EC confirmed that she had spoken with Ian Gunney, Deputy Head of NHS Capital, Estates & Facilities to clarify governance and escalation, advising that these issues fall under the governance of each organisation's own Health & Safety groups and committees; there is a mechanism of escalation for such committees to the All-Wales Estates Group. Each NHS organisation has their own advanced asbestos management plans, which are managed extremely carefully in line with Health & Safety Executive expectations. EC advised that extensive survey work has been undertaken across the NHS Wales estate, identifying four sites with known areas of risk, and confirmed that significant Welsh Government funds have been invested in addressing those issues.</p>	<p>TU colleagues to identify where TU representatives are not attending organisational Health and Safety meetings.</p>

	NHu raised concerns that there are not always Trade Union representatives at Health & Safety meetings; SG advised that there should always be Trade Union representation, and welcomed any examples of where this is not being adhered to. GH advised of support provided via NWSSP Specialist Estate Services, and SS advised that in ABUHB, regular updates are provided to Local Partnership Forums regarding estates matters, particularly RAAC issues.	
7.	Band 2/3 update	Actions
	<p>SG gave an update on current progress against implementation for relevant organisations as part of the Framework Agreement, which is being overseen by Business Committee. The progress report circulated to members includes Management leads and Trade Union leads for each organisation, implementation plans, and the anticipated pay dates for implementation. SG noted that feedback on the layout of the report would be welcomed, to ensure the next progress report is presented to Business Committee in a cohesive manner.</p> <p>SG advised that the Oversight Group has been developing the FAQs, and that a first draft of the All-Wales version has now been circulated. Once all comments have been received, the group will discuss any required amendments before issuing a joint set of All-Wales FAQs in the coming weeks.</p> <p>TB shared that within the reporting mechanism, it was helpful to see implementation laid out on a month-by-month basis, to allow a view of which organisations are progressing at different points. TB also indicated that ABUHB's report, which flagged as amber and identified key risks was helpful, and that this would be welcomed in the same format from other organisations who flagged progress as amber but without explanation of the key risks. TB advised that there are some small comments regarding the FAQs from Trade Unions, which she will forward to SG for consideration by the Oversight Group.</p>	<p>TB to forward comments on the draft Band 2/3 FAQs to NHSWE for consideration by the Oversight Group.</p> <p>NHSWE to request that all organisations include key risks against RAG status in the next submission of their implementation progress reports.</p>
8.	Agenda for Change Pay Structure Reform	Actions
	<p>SG gave an update on pay structure reform, and advised that Wales is now properly involved from both an Employers and Trade Union perspective. It is hoped that a mandate will soon be received, at which point it will be shared with Employers and Trade Unions to be discussed within respective governance structures. Future steps will be to share any comments with EC and Welsh Government, whereby a Memorandum of Understanding will be developed; it is hoped that this would be developed in partnership.</p> <p>EC noted that Welsh Government are continuing to work on finalising the definitive version of the joint mandate, emphasising that the content remains confidential at this stage. EC shared that it is hoped that a formal mandate will be issued by all three governments on a joint letter within the next few weeks, and that Welsh Government is working to take every opportunity to reinforce the tri-nation approach. EC recognised that Employers and Trade Unions are awaiting information on the salary compression of Bands 2 and 3, and suggested that as the pay structure reform mandate is imminent, the</p>	<p>TRO to ensure that AfC Pay Reform Structure remains as a standing agenda item at the June 2026 Business Committee, and potentially October 2026 depending on negotiations and timescales of the mandate.</p>

	<p>intention will be to work through delivery of the mandate and have a separate single issue negotiation about the compression issue.</p> <p>TB noted that the Real Living Wage uplift and the pay scale compression that it creates is a significant issue for affected colleagues, and needs to be recognised in the context of the Band 2/3 Framework which has recently been agreed. TB also raised the importance of open dialogue as morale is being affected due to this compression.,</p> <p>EC advised that England and Northern Ireland are in a different position as they are not currently Real Living Wage employers. It is positive that Wales recognises the Real Living Wage, but equally it is understood that there is uncertainty around the potential new government in May 2026 and the implications that this may have for those organisations who have Real Living Wales accreditation if the funding commitment changes. NHu requested commitment to collectively resolving the structural reform discussions and negotiations in a timely manner..</p>	
9.	Purchase of Annual Leave – timescale/window for purchase	Actions
	<p>GH gave an update on the timescales for the purchase of annual leave, with the deadline of 10 March 2026 set for NHS Organisations to make their submissions. This date has been set to ensure that the previous 12 months' worth of payslips can be drawn down to ensure there is no detriment or breach of the National Minimum Wage. Regarding the concern raised around tight timescales for submission, GH advised that the first payroll of the new financial year will be on 3 April 2026, which accounts for the driver of the window between 10 March and 3 April. GH shared that in the last financial year there were 4,500 applications for the purchase of annual leave, so processing these does take time.</p> <p>GH advised that individual organisations have been provided with a calculator to enable colleagues to check that a purchase request will not lead to a breach before they are given local approval, in advance of payroll calculations. This tool can also be used during the leave year, should an employee need to request an emergency purchase of annual leave, to enable local approval to be sought if the calculation shows there to be no breach before the request reaches payroll. GH added that some salary sacrifice schemes are run outside of NWSSP, and calculators are available to colleagues to ensure there is no breach of National Minimum Wage when colleagues take out e.g. gym memberships, purchase white goods etc.</p> <p>GH agreed to provide a one-liner on the window for annual leave purchase for Trade Unions to be able to share with their members. It was also agreed that further discussion of the Working Time Directive percentage payments would take place at the meeting of the T&C Business Committee in March 2026.</p>	<p>GH to produce a simple message explaining the reasons for the timescales for purchase of annual leave which can be shared with colleagues.</p>
10.	NHS Wales Job Descriptions for approval	
	<p>AT enquired if members were content to approve the following NHS Wales Job Descriptions, confirming that they have been developed in partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diagnostic Radiographer (Band 5) 	

	<p>- Senior Diagnostic Radiographer (Band 6)</p> <p>All present were in agreement that the job descriptions could be taken forward for consideration at Welsh Partnership Forum on 18 March 2026.</p>	
11.	Job Evaluation Process Audit update	
	<p>AT advised that as part of the Job Evaluation delivery work in England, a RAG-rated checklist consisting of 22 questions will be issued, known as an assessment of job evaluation audit. In England completion will be mandated; AT shared that it would be helpful for Wales to also collect this information with questions such as 'do you have a staff side lead, do you have an employer lead, are you working in partnership'. AT requested approval for the audit to be circulated stating completion is required, to be able to collect the information to inform future development. SG suggested incorporating the work as part of the WPF Coordinating Group, to agree timelines and escalation routes. AT confirmed all the questions are relevant for Wales, and agreed to share the audit questions with Business Committee members.</p> <p>NHu raised concerns regarding some fundamental issues with job evaluation such as organisations not adhering to policies, and difficulties such as the re-evaluation of pay bands being halted within organisations where it is unclear where the blockers in the process are arising. AT advised that tangible examples of any such issues would be welcomed; NHu agreed to share with AT to enable discussion and a wider conversation with the WODD Peer Group.</p> <p>PS raised the regular review of job descriptions and queried whether questions relating to this would form part of the audit. SG advised that whilst the annual review of job descriptions through the PADR process is unlikely to be included, the three-year review within the policy will likely be captured. AT agreed to check the Enabling Agreement, which will become Annex 31 of the NHS TCS handbook, to confirm the three-year review. SG suggested that output from a wider conversation with the WODD Peer Group can be socialised within organisations, and correct usage of the policy reinforced by NHSWE.</p>	<p>AT to share Assessment of Job Evaluation Audit questions with Business Committee members.</p> <p>NHu to share examples of breakdown of job evaluation processes within organisations with AT.</p>
12.	WPF Agenda – 18m March 2026	
	<p>Members of the Business Committee agreed the draft Welsh Partnership Forum agenda for 18 March 2026.</p>	
13.	Any Other Business	
	<p>AD advised that the Planned Additional Activity Rate will cease on 31 March 2026. AD will issue a reminder to organisations that the current advisory notice is shortly to expire.</p> <p>CH raised Bank Terms of Engagement (ToE), stating that in her experience, no bank workers have received a copy of the ToE, and there is uncertainty whether new bank workers are receiving a copy on commencement. AD affirmed that he has</p>	<p>AD to issue a reminder to organisations that the current PAAR advisory notice will expire on 31 March 2026.</p>

	<p>approached all organisations to reinforce that they must issue the ToE to existing and joining bank workers; the majority have confirmed that they have implemented, with the remainder either in the process of doing so or committed to doing so.</p> <p>CM raised the Adverse Weather Policy and requested confirmation that it is on the agenda for the March T&C Business Committee. AD advised that it is on the forward agenda for that meeting.; AD further confirmed that he and MM have contacted NHS P&I colleagues responsible for emergency planning to feed into that discussion.</p>	<p>AD to go back out to organisations and reinforce clarity on how to issue the Bank Terms of Engagement to staff.</p>
Dates of 2026 meetings		
	<p>Full Business Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 24 February 2026 • Wednesday 3 June 2026 • Tuesday 13 October 2026 <p>Full Welsh Partnership Forum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 18 March 2026 • Tuesday 7 July 2026 • Wednesday 18 November 2026 	

Action Log

Action	Responsibility	Status	Due Date	Comments
Full Business Committee 15 October 2025				
Managing Technology that Manages People: TB to share the link from TUC Cymru on research into AI and inequalities.	TB	Completed	24 February 2026	Circulated to members with February Business Committee papers.
Managing Technology that Manages People: EC to investigate the possibility of someone from the WG Digital Strategy team to present to a future Business Committee on the use of AI within NHS Wales.	EC	Completed	23 January 2026	Craig Barker from HEIW will attend February Full Business Committee to present to members.
Managing Technology that Manages People: TR to secure an NHS Wales Director of Digital to sit on WPF for 2026.	TR	In progress		A number of Digital Directors have been approached; continuing to request engagement.
Band 2/3 Workstream: AD to arrange a Tripartite Group meeting for w/c 20 October 2025.	AD	Completed	24 October 2025	Meeting took place on Thursday 23 October.
Pay / AfC Reform: TB to share bullet points re. 2025/26 pay award following the TU meeting with the Cabinet Secretary on 29 September 2025.	TB	Completed	29 October 2025	Information shared 20 October 2025.
Pay / AfC Reform:	SG/NHu	Completed	28 January 2026	Representatives of NHS Wales who sit on UK Staff Council

SG and NHu to follow up regarding timescales, and the status of Wales being represented at AfC Reform exploratory talks.				are now involved in discussions regarding the development of a draft mandate for structural reform.
Action	Responsibility	Status	Due Date	Comments
Full Business Committee 24 February 2026				
WPF Social Partnership Workshop agenda (18 March 2026): Comments on the draft outline for the WPF social partnership workshop are welcomed and should be directed to AD from Employers, to MM from Welsh Government colleagues, and to NHu from Trade Union colleagues.	All	Completed	16 March 2026	Meeting scheduled for 17 March to agree final agenda in partnership.
Flex Campaign: NHu will share the email regarding the 'Get Ahead on Flex' campaign with Business Committee members, which was previously issued to TU colleagues.	NHu			
Flex Campaign: PS to share examples of organisations breaching the legislative 2-month outcome timeframe with NHSWE.	PS			
Flex Campaign: TRo to correct the inconsistency in the Flexible Working Policy regarding number of days allowed to appeal a flexible working decision. AD to recirculate the amended policy, reiterating the need to comply.	TRo/AD	Completed	18 March 2026	Policy corrected and reissued in advance of WPF on 18 March 2026.

<p>Welsh Government Estates update on RAAC and asbestos:</p> <p>TU colleagues to identify where TU representatives are not attending organisational Health and Safety meetings.</p>	TU colleagues			
<p>Band 2/3:</p> <p>TB to forward comments on the draft Band 2/3 FAQs to NHSWE for consideration by the Oversight Group.</p>	TB	Completed	16 March 2026	Draft Band 2/3 All-Wales FAQs issued to organisations on 23 March 2026
<p>Band 2/3:</p> <p>NHSWE to request that all organisations include key risks against RAG status in the next submission of their implementation progress reports.</p>	SG			
<p>Agenda for Change Pay Structure Reform:</p> <p>TRo to ensure that AfC Pay Reform Structure remains as a standing agenda item at the June 2026 Business Committee, and potentially October 2026 depending on negotiations and timescales of the mandate.</p>	TRo	Completed	14 May 2026	Added to bring forward for Full Business Committee/Welsh Partnership Forum agenda planning meeting on 14 May.
<p>Purchase of Annual Leave – timescale/window for purchase:</p> <p>GH to produce a simple message explaining the reasons for the timescales for purchase of annual leave which can be shared with colleagues.</p>	GH			

<p>Job Evaluation Process Audit update:</p> <p>AT to share Assessment of Job Evaluation Audit questions with Business Committee members.</p>	AT			
<p>Job Evaluation Process Audit update:</p> <p>NHu to share examples of breakdown of job evaluation processes within organisations with AT.</p>	NHu			
<p>AOB – Planned Additional Activity Rates:</p> <p>AD to issue a reminder to organisations that the current PAAR advisory notice will expire on 31 March 2026.</p>	AD			
<p>AOB – Bank Terms of Engagement:</p> <p>AD to go back out to organisations and reinforce clarity on how to issue the Bank Terms of Engagement to staff.</p>	AD			
<p>AOB – Adverse Weather Policy:</p> <p>AD to share the organisational positions received with Business Committee members, to allow tracking of implementation against submitted positions.</p>	AD			