

**ALL WALES AUDIT COMMITTEE CHAIRS (AWACC) MEETING
NOTES FROM THE MEETING HELD REMOTELY VIA
MICROSOFT TEAMS ON 17 JULY 2026 AT 11AM**

Please note, this is not intended to serve as a formal minute of the meeting. It is a Copilot-generated summary designed to support those who were unable to attend and to inform the actions and decisions log.

It was agreed at the meeting held on 30 September that formal minutes would not be taken or presented in a public format. This decision reflects the nature of the All Wales Audit Chairs Committee, which is not a decision-making forum but rather a valuable peer support group.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Peter Curran	Chair, Welsh Ambulance Services NHS University Trust
Anne Beegan	Audit Wales (<i>Part 1 only</i>)
Simon Cookson	NWSSP Internal Audit (<i>Part 1 only</i>)
Stephen Elliot	Powys Teaching Health Board, Independent Member
Cheryl Hill	Counter Fraud Services (Wales)
Marian Jones	Digital Health Care Wales, Independent Member
Paul Lambert	Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board Independent Member
Alun Lloyd	Health Education and Improvement Wales
Trish Mills	Director of Corporate Governance/Board Secretary, Welsh Ambulance Services NHS University Trust
Ben Rees	Head of Local Counter Fraud Services Hywell Dda UHB
Dafydd Vaughan	Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (<i>Attending in the absence of Iwan Jones</i>)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Sarah Harland	Secretariat, Welsh Ambulance Services NHS University Trust Welsh Ambulance Services NHS University Trust
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APOLOGIES RECEIVED:

Rhodri Evans	Hywel Dda University Health Board, Independent Member
Gareth Jones	Velindre NHS Trust, Independent Member
Iwan Jones	Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Independent Member
Danielle Timmins	Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

PART A - EXTERNAL BRIEFINGS

Agenda Item 2 Action Log

There are currently no open actions.

Agenda Item 3 Audit Wales Update

Members received an update from Anne Beegan on recent and forthcoming work undertaken by Audit Wales. Key updates included the publication of national insight reports on planned care, urgent and emergency care, and NHS finances, together with ongoing work to broaden participation in the National Fraud Initiative. An update was also provided on lessons learned from the NHS accounts process and the progression of Audit Wales' digital transformation work.

In discussion, members received clarification on the increasing levels of limited assurance findings in workforce and financial governance, opportunities to identify common themes arising from audit work, benchmarking arrangements, and the proposed Internal Audit review of organisational grip and control arrangements. Anne confirmed that Audit Wales had adapted its Structured Assessment approach to reflect related assurance activity already taking place across NHS Wales, with a greater focus on delivery, planning and financial sustainability.

Agenda Item 4 Update from Internal Audit

Members received an update from Simon Cookson on Internal Audit activity and performance during 2025/26. The update highlighted that the majority of audit opinions remained reasonable, although workforce and financial governance continued to present the highest levels of limited assurance.

Members discussed emerging themes from audit findings, benchmarking arrangements, and the proposed approach to reviewing organisational grip and control arrangements.

The group also noted ongoing work to improve audit efficiency, the priorities within the 2026/27 audit programme, and planned national reviews relating to speaking up safely and organisational assurance.

Agenda Item 5 Counter Fraud

Members received an update from Cheryl Hill on Counter Fraud activity during Quarter 4 and across 2025/26, noting continued progress in fraud prevention, investigation and recovery, an increase in fraud referrals, and the publication of the refreshed Fraud Strategy.

Discussion focused on the benefits of fraud awareness training, the importance of strengthening preventative activity in light of new legislative requirements, and the need to improve resilience within local counter fraud services.

Members also noted developments in professional accreditation and a significant operational success involving the recovery of funds linked to a payment diversion fraud.

Agenda Item 6 Update from the Director of Corporate Governance

Members received an update from Trish Mills on matters arising from the Directors of Corporate Governance network, including developments relating to the NHS Wales Operating and Accountability Framework, the appointment of a new Welsh Government Executive Lead for Corporate Governance, and the circulation of provisional Public Accountability Meeting (PAM) dates for 2026/27.

Members discussed the forthcoming PAM process and the importance of aligning evidence requirements with existing end of year reporting arrangements to minimise duplication and maximise efficiency.

PART B - ALL WALES AUDIT COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Agenda Item 7 AWACC Chair from September 2026 – Expressions of Interest Outcome

The Chair noted that, as this was his final meeting as Chair, no expressions of interest had yet been received for the role. The Chair encouraged members to consider the opportunity, emphasising the importance of securing a successor to ensure the continuation of the Group. The Chair advised that there remained time before the next meeting in the autumn and invited members to put themselves forward over the coming weeks.

The Chair also acknowledged the significant contribution made by WAST in supporting the Group and expressed his appreciation to Trish Mills and Sarah Harland for their ongoing support in coordinating and preparing for meetings.

Agenda Item 8.1 Deep Dive – The broader role of Audit Committees in providing holistic assurance from ‘floor to board’

Members explored the wider role of Audit Committees in providing holistic assurance from “floor to board”, highlighting the importance of triangulating evidence from multiple sources to strengthen oversight, support organisational learning, and provide comprehensive assurance on governance, performance and culture across NHS Wales.

Agenda Item 8.2 Deep Dive - planning for next session (Board Assurance Framework, Counter Fraud issues, Audit Committee role in partnership working, Clinical Audits, Financial sustainability/Digital, Assurance from NWSSP Audit Committee to other Audit Committees, Digital Transformation)

Members agreed that a future deep dive on digital transformation should be deferred pending publication of the forthcoming Audit Wales report and retained as a placeholder item for the next meeting. Dafydd Vaughan suggested establishing links with the Digital Independent Member Peer Group, noting that there was likely to be overlap in themes and that closer collaboration could support shared learning and assurance.

Agenda Item 12 Any Other Business

None declared.