



Our ref: MA/EM/0945/23

Professor Medwin Hughes  
Chair of the Board of Llais

30 March 2023

Dear Medwin,

### **Citizen Voice Body (Llais) term of Government remit letter 2023-2026**

I am grateful to all those involved in establishing the Citizen Voice Body for Health and Social Care, Wales, (herein after referred to by your operating name, Llais) for all their hard work since the Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act (The Act) became law in June 2020. As a result, you will become a fully operational independent body that will play a vital part in shaping health and social care services at a time when they are facing their toughest challenges in decades.

These are unprecedented times for us all, and especially for our health and social care system and those that work within it. There has been a relentless demand on our health and care services and the current environment means service providers will face difficult decisions and, in some cases, may have to make systemic changes to adapt. Llais will play a pivotal role in continuing conversations about the potential changes, sharing the people's voices in these decisions and ensuring decision makers meaningfully consider these views.

In addition to your core work (as set out in the Act and your framework agreement) this letter sets out my strategic expectations of Llais and highlights national priorities where I believe Llais can actively contribute and which I hope will help inform your medium-term planning and create a shared sense of purpose.

I would expect Llais' forthcoming annual business plan, and longer-term strategic plan, to reflect the following strategic objectives, including how each will be achieved and the outcomes and impact they will have:

- 1. Establishment and development of Llais as a well-known, trusted and valued partner, employer and people-centred organisation.**

I recognise that establishing a new organisation is challenging and complex and it will take time to review, develop, engage, implement and embed all the requirements to be an effective and impactful organisation. I also recognise that as the organisation is still

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
0300 0604400

[Gohebiaeth.Eluned.Morgan@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Eluned.Morgan@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Eluned.Morgan@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Eluned.Morgan@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

developing, 2023/24 will continue to be a transitional period. With this in mind it is prudent to remain flexible to revisit your remit in future years.

On the issue of flexibility, as we approach the start of Llais' first full financial year as a fully operational body, it is important to consider how you will be structured to deliver your: obligations under the Act, your strategic aims, and when and how this will be reviewed for effectiveness. In addition, you will need to give careful consideration on how to facilitate and deliver locally, regionally and nationally.

To underpin your obligations in respect of the Act, it is essential for Llais to continue developing high trust relationships with partner organisations and the public. I look forward to learning how Llais maximises its engagement and partnership working within the health and social care landscape.

It will be necessary for Llais to develop memoranda of understanding and co-operation arrangements to underpin these relationships. These arrangements must include and take account of the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations with regard to the sharing of personal data and information.

It will also be important to consider how you develop as an organisation in order to have the most impact. I look forward to seeing how you plan and deliver your organisational development plan which would cover areas such as:

- integrating several Community Health Council cultures into one organisational culture,
- the development of national skill and capability frameworks,
- developing your ways of working,
- performance assessment and
- the evolution of the values and behaviours that are the foundations for the way you work.

I would also expect, especially given the economic context, Llais to operate effectively and to a high standard of governance, accountability and probity, meeting the requirements set out in Managing Welsh Public Money and working with the partnership team, Principal Accounting Officer or Additional Accounting Officer in an open, honest and constructive way ensuring all the necessary publication schedules are followed to ensure transparency.

## **2. Connecting with the public through accessibility and inclusion.**

It is important to me that the people of Wales feel connected to Llais. That the organisation works for them, in their best interests and is trusted to deliver the people's priorities to decision makers in the NHS, Local Authorities and national policy makers across Wales.

That is why it is essential that Llais is accessible to all citizens and ensures it goes the extra mile to include all community groups across Wales when seeking views.

The pandemic has shown us that we cannot assume services will/should stay the same and they should in fact continue to develop with a people-centred focus. Bringing new voices to the discussions on health and care is critical to ensuring those services reflect the changing needs of the people.

The pandemic has also shone a light on how digital technology and innovation must continue to underpin the health and care system, and how face to face engagement has moved on, using modern ways of communication and engagement. I would hope to see Llais building upon this movement and working in innovative ways that best suit the public. I would hope to see Llais reflecting the approaches in the Digital Strategy for Wales and the

Digital Service Standards for Wales to ensure users experience modern and efficient engagement with Llais.

Llais' organisational strategies and policies on engagement, communication, equality and digital should reflect an innovative people-centred, accessible, inclusive and equitable approach.

### **3. Listening and representing views - A Healthier Wales**

It is important that health and social care organisations continue to work towards delivering the objectives set out in a Healthier Wales. The joint work between health and social care must continue so that people using the services don't notice when they are provided by different organisations, that local services learn from each other, and best practice is scaled up to the whole of Wales. In addition, shifting services out of hospital and closer to people's homes and stopping people getting ill by prevention and earlier detection is vitally important.

Llais will be in a unique position to support a Healthier Wales by reaching out, listening, analysing and tactically sharing the issues most important to the public, to allow Llais to represent the interests of the public in respect of health and social care. I look forward to hearing what they have to say in a way that is founded in evidence and is actionable for service designers.

### **4. Giving equal consideration to health and social care services**

The Community Health Councils have been working with the NHS in Wales for nearly 50 years and whilst the relationship between Llais and health organisations will evolve into something different, the foundations of institutional understanding and trusted relationships will already be in place. This is not the case for Local Authorities and social care service providers.

Llais must give equal consideration to how it will most effectively work with the public and partner organisations on both health and social care service issues. This may initially mean committing more resource to building up the organisational knowledge, fostering relationships in social care and engaging with the people of Wales to hear what matters most to them in relation to social services.

Where complaints advocacy is concerned, I am particularly interested to see how Llais will promote this service and support the public when making complaints to their Local Authorities about social services and the positive effect this will have. Llais will also need to give consideration to how it works with statutory advocacy providers and the national standards and frameworks associated with advocacy in Wales.

### **5. Introduction of the Duty of Quality and Duty of Candour**

You will be more familiar than some that the Duty of Quality and Duty of Candour comes into effect in April 2023. The NHS has been preparing for this and as Health Boards, NHS Trusts and Special Health Authorities come to fully understand and implement the Duties in a meaningful way. I believe Llais will have a key role in translating back to the NHS what this change has meant for people accessing the services. This role is especially important to enable the NHS bodies to understand through this feedback any learning to improve the care and experience of those receiving health care.

Your complaints process and advocates will also have to be alive to these changes and what it means for them when they interact with the NHS body delivering the duty of candour to the public.

I appreciate this will be a big change and we must allow time for the Duties to be embedded so I will follow with this interest as it evolves.

## **6. Patient Safety**

I anticipate that you will become closely involved in the lived experiences of people and patients who suffer harm related to the services they receive. I expect Llais to place improving public and patient safety at the heart of its aims and actions and for you to make representations when you feel improvements can be made in the quality and safety of the health and social services provided.

You will be aware that a recommendation has been made that all countries should appoint a Patient Safety Commissioner. I have not agreed to this at present, as all the individual elements of the Quality and Engagement Act, including the establishment of Llais, will strengthen our processes around patient experience, quality and safety. I wish to give these mechanisms the opportunity to be as effective as possible.

To enable this, I do expect Llais to develop a focus on public, patient and service user safety within its operating policies and procedures.

## **7. Consideration of the wider strategic context**

Finally, Llais should be considering the array of relevant national strategies that should shape its work, and the work of other organisations, in its planning and delivery of its functions. Some strategies I have already referred to above but some others that Llais needs to consider are:

- The six priorities I have set for the health and care services in Wales, to help address immediate pressures and build sustainable services:

- A closer relationship between the NHS and local government to tackle delayed transfers of care, and an effort to move further and to deliver an integrated community care service.
- Improving access to general practice, dentistry, optometry and pharmacy.
- Urgent and emergency care must focus on the effective management of people with urgent care needs in the community 24/7 and help more people to safely access alternatives to hospital-based care.
- Prioritising planned care and recovery, moving services, workforce and funding from hospitals into the community.
- Cancer services must enact the quality statement on cancer and ensure there is a reduction in the backlog of patients.
- Improvements across mental health and child and adolescent mental health services and equity and parity between physical and mental health services.

- The approach to the foundational economy and how the NHS and care providers can respond to the cost-of-living crisis for both service users and staff.

- The Welsh Government requires all public bodies to act in accordance with the sustainable development principle (five ways of working) set out in the [Well-being of Future Generations Act \(Wales\) 2015](#). This recognises public bodies can provide an important contribution in achieving Wales long term well-being goals.

Llais will be required to provide evidence to its Partnership Team how it is applying the sustainable development principle in delivering the Strategic Objectives and are

encouraged to consider how Llais can maximise its contribution to the achievement of the seven well-being goals.

- The Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024, the Antiracist Wales Action Plan, the LGBTQ+ Action plan and the Disability Rights Taskforce are there to embed meaningful changes and values as part of Welsh life, Llais must continue to shape and provide assurance your strategies and plans reflect their requirements.

- *More than just words 2022-27* is the Welsh Government's strategic framework to strengthen Welsh language provision in health and social care and aims to support Welsh speakers to receive care in their first language, in addition *Cymraeg 2050* also sets out the ambition to have 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050.

You will be aware that Llais already has specific actions with some of these actions plans:

Anti-racist Wales Action Plan:

- establish relationships with ethnic minority-led organisations, local authorities, NHS bodies and those from ethnic minority backgrounds to ensure their views are heard and reflected.

More than just words:

- Help identify and develop research and data that will strengthen understanding and knowledge based on the experiences of Welsh language speakers accessing and receiving services.
- Provide insight and advice from the experience and views of patients and individuals on progress in actively delivering person centred care in Welsh.

As other national action plans are put in place Llais will be expected to engage and develop actions with their partnership team.

## **Funding**

The Chief Executive of Llais, as Accounting Officer, is responsible for the management of funding from the Welsh Government and the control of Llais budgets. The Chief Executive shall carry out these responsibilities in accordance with the Framework Document and Standing Financial Instructions.

The total Grant in Aid funding to Llais in 2023/24 to deliver their priorities as set out in the Act and per discussions and agreement between Welsh Government and Llais is a maximum of £6,754,000.

Confirmation of funding for the first year of activity is set out in the annual funding confirmation letter. An indication of funding for following years will also be provided where that is possible. Please note this indicative funding could decrease or increase according to several factors, including:

- a change in Government priorities or Ministerial portfolios;
- Budget fluctuations;
- Outcomes of Tailored Reviews

Funding levels are based on commitments set out in the Programme for Government. The Welsh Ministers reserve the right to review allocations and priorities, which will support the Government's strategic vision and agreed outcomes.

I am grateful for the ongoing positive partnership Llais has developed with Welsh Government officials in the Quality and Nursing Branch over the course of your establishment. I hope to see this partnership continuing to mature and a culture of support, trust and constructive challenge developing in the future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. E. Morgan'.

**Eluned Morgan AS/MS**

Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Health and Social Services