

Dear

ATISN 17216 – Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB)

Thank you for your requests to the Welsh Government for information, which were received on 28 February 2023 and are being dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) (FOIA), and in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

You have requested the following:

1. *Names of all new Interim Board Members including Chair, Vice Chair or any other official and their designated Board role;*
2. *Details of the selection process - how were they selected - to include who put forward the names of each person to the Minister, how many people in total had been approached to take on each role;*
3. *Who was involved with any interviews of the selected group;*
4. *When did the recruitment first commence for these interim appointments;*
5. *Have any of the people selected previously applied to go on the BCUHB Board or any other Public Appointment in Wales but have been unsuccessful;*
6. *A copy of their full terms and conditions of engagement - to include financial information, role, time allocation etc.*
7. *The date on which the appointments were made;*
8. *Details of any meetings that have taken place between the new Interim Chair, Interim Independent Members and /or with either the Minister for Health or any Welsh Government Officials. The information requested is dates and meeting agenda;*
9. *How many more interim Board appointments will be made in the next 12 months;*
10. *A copy of the report produced on behalf of the Welsh Government by Geraint Evans into the various Disclosures that have been submitted to Welsh Government Ministers, Officials and Government Departments (these to include HIW and Audit Wales);*
11. *As well as the actual report I am requesting a full list of anyone who is listed above that has been on the circulation list;*
12. *A full list and copies of all reports both formal and informal that the Health Minister has used to make her decision to remove the Independent Members of BCUHB;*
13. *A list of the dates when each report was presented to the Minister together with copies of any briefing documents accompanying the reports;*
14. *A list of all advisors either as authors of reports or in discussions of the said reports identified in point 12 and 13.*

Our Response

Question 1

Names of all new Interim Board Members including Chair, Vice Chair or any other official and their designated Board role;

Dyfed Edwards – Interim Chair

Rhian Watcyn Jones – Interim Independent Board Member

Gareth Williams – Interim Independent Board Member

Karen Balmer – Interim Independent Board Member

Questions 2 & 3

2. Details of the selection process - how were they selected - to include who put forward the names of each person to the Minister, how many people in total had been approached to take on each role;

3. Who was involved with any interviews of the selected group;

The Governance Code on Public Appointments, 'section 3 The Role of Ministers' allows that in exceptional cases, Ministers may decide to appoint a candidate without a competition. Some individuals were already engaged in the Public Appointments process and therefore known to officials.

In line with the Governance Code on Public Appointments, 'section 3 The Role of Ministers', officials contacted Ministers and other stakeholders for names of individuals who should be approached.

Before the health board were escalated to Special Measures, Welsh Government officials approached 10 individuals regarding a direct, interim appointment to the Board.

Question 4

4. When did the recruitment first commence for these interim appointments;

Week commencing 6 February.

Question 5

5. Have any of the people selected previously applied to go on the BCUHB Board or any other Public Appointment in Wales but have been unsuccessful;

Yes.

Question 6

6. A copy of their full terms and conditions of engagement - to include financial information, role, time allocation etc.

These are attached at Annex 1.

Question 7

7. The date on which the appointments were made;

27 February 2023.

Question 8

8. Details of any meetings that have taken place between the new Interim Chair, Interim Independent Members and /or with either the Minister for Health or any Welsh Government Officials. The information requested is dates and meeting agenda;

No meetings had taken place at the time of your request.

Question 9

9. How many more interim Board appointments will be made in the next 12 months;

Welsh Government does not hold that information as at the time of your request, but further direct appointments will follow.

Questions 10&11

- 10. A copy of the report produced on behalf of the Welsh Government by Geraint Evans into the various Disclosures that have been submitted to Welsh Government Ministers, Officials and Government Departments (these to include HIW and Audit Wales);*
- 11. As well as the actual report I am requesting a full list of anyone who is listed above that has been on the circulation list;*

The Welsh Government has not yet reached a decision on the balance of the public interest. Due to the need to consider, in all the circumstances of the case, where the balance of the public interest lies in relation to the information that you have requested, the Welsh Government will not be able to respond to your request for this information at this time.

I hope to let you have a response before the end of April.

Questions 12 & 13

- 12. A full list and copies of all reports both formal and informal that the Health Minister has used to make her decision to remove the Independent Members of BCUHB;*
- 13. A list of the dates when each report was presented to the Minister together with copies of any briefing documents accompanying the reports;*

The Minister did not remove the independent members of the board of BCUHB. They resigned. We have provided, at Annexes 2(i) and 2(ii), a list and copies of all reports that were made available to the Minister before she invited the independent members of the board of BCUHB to consider their position.

Question14

14. A list of all advisors either as authors of reports or in discussions of the said reports identified in point 12 and 13.

- Special Adviser to Minister for Health and Social Services
- Deputy Director – Escalation and Intervention, Health and Social Services Group, Welsh Government.
- Deputy Director, Corporate Services and Government Business, Health and Social Services Group, Welsh Government.
- Chief Nursing Officer, Welsh Government.
- Director, Workforce & Corporate Business, Health and Social Services Group, Welsh Government.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ
or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely