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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board



Meeting Date	9th March 2023		Agenda Item	2.3
Report Title	Board Assurance Framework (BAF)			
Report Author	Len Cozens, Head of Compliance			
Report Sponsor	Hazel Lloyd, Acting Director of Corporate Governance			
Presented by	Len Cozens, Head of Compliance			
Freedom of Information	Open			
Purpose of the Report	The purpose of this report is to request that the Audit Committee review and discuss the Health Board's updated Board Assurance Framework (BAF) document.			
Key Issues	<p>The BAF was last presented to the Audit Committee in November 2022.</p> <p>Relevant extracts from the document were circulated to Executive Directors on 1st February 2023 for review and update. At the time of reporting, three responses remain outstanding. All responses received have been included in the updated document at Appendix A.</p> <p>Work is currently ongoing to further enhance the BAF following meetings with Audit Wales and NWSSP Audit & Assurance colleagues, and to ensure its alignment with the Health Board Strategic Objectives contained within the Recovery & Sustainability Plan (IMTP 23/26)</p>			
Specific Action Required <i>(please choose one only)</i>	Information	Discussion	Assurance	Approval
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recommendations	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOTE and DISCUSS the Board Assurance Framework (BAF), acknowledging that it is an iterative document which will be continually updated • AGREE any specific areas where further assurance is required, in order that these may be addressed with the relevant Lead Executive(s). 			

BOARD ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK (BAF)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request that the Audit Committee review and discuss the Health Board's updated Board Assurance Framework (BAF) document.

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 2.1 The process of gaining assurance is fundamentally about taking all of the relevant evidence together and arriving at informed conclusions. With this in mind, the BAF is intended to enable the Board to:
- Establish the key controls in place which contribute to the Health Board achieving its strategic objectives.
 - Identify sources of assurance regarding the adequacy, suitability, completeness and operation of those controls.
 - Receive assurance that, where gaps in control or assurance are identified or the need for improvement has been highlighted, appropriate action is being taken.
 - Provide an overall assessment of assurance regarding the adequacy and operation of controls in place.
- 2.2 In summary, the BAF provides a framework for identifying which of the Health Board's objectives are at risk because of inadequacies in controls or insufficient assurance about them. At the same time it provides structured assurance about gaps which are being managed effectively, and objectives that are being delivered.
- 2.3 The most objective assurance comes from independent external review sources. These are supplemented by internal sources such as clinical audit, internal management, performance management and self-assessment reports.

3. STATUS UPDATE

- 3.1 The Board Assurance Framework was last presented to the Audit Committee at its meeting on 17th November 2022.
- 3.2 Responsibility for populating the content of the BAF, including an assessment of trend/direction of travel and level of assurance, rests with each Executive Director and his/her team. As such, relevant extracts from the document were circulated to the Executive Directors and nominated leads on 1st February 2023 with a request that they be reviewed and updated. At the time of reporting, responses remain outstanding in respect of the following three areas:
- 3.2 Mental Health & Learning Disabilities
 - 3.3 Urgent & Emergency Care
 - 6 Finance

- 3.3 All updates received at the time of reporting have been included in the updated version of the BAF found at **Appendix 1**. All updates are highlighted in green text.
- 3.4 Actions marked as 'Complete' by the executive leads and their teams will remain in the Agreed Action column until the BAF is presented to the Board in March 2023. Following that meeting, they will be assessed for inclusion as either a key control or form of assurance.
- 3.5 The Director of Corporate Governance and Head of Compliance have met with representatives of Audit Wales and NWSSP Audit & Assurance in order to discuss the status of the BAF. Very positive feedback was received in respect of the progress which has been made in developing the BAF to date. Work is currently ongoing to further enhance the BAF following these meetings, and to ensure its alignment with the Health Board Strategic Objectives contained within the Recovery & Sustainability Plan (IMTP 23/26).
- 3.6 In order to further assist Executive Leads and their Teams, the Head of Compliance is working with the Head of Corporate Governance to develop mechanisms to update the 'Forms of Assurance' within the BAF (particularly at Levels 2 and 3) on their behalf.
- 3.7 It is intended that the BAF will be presented to the next meeting of the Board on 30th March 2023.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Members are asked to:
- **NOTE** and **DISCUSS** the Board Assurance Framework (BAF), acknowledging that it is an iterative document which will be continually updated
 - **AGREE** any specific areas where further assurance is required, in order that these may be addressed with the relevant Lead Executive(s).

Governance and Assurance		
Link to Enabling Objectives (please choose)	Supporting better health and wellbeing by actively promoting and empowering people to live well in resilient communities	
	Partnerships for Improving Health and Wellbeing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Co-Production and Health Literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Digitally Enabled Health and Wellbeing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Deliver better care through excellent health and care services achieving the outcomes that matter most to people	
	Best Value Outcomes and High Quality Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Partnerships for Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Excellent Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Digitally Enabled Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Outstanding Research, Innovation, Education and Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and Care Standards		
(please choose)	Staying Healthy	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Safe Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Effective Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Dignified Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Timely Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Individual Care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Staff and Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Quality, Safety and Patient Experience		
Ensuring that the Board and its Sub-Committees make fully informed decisions is dependent on the quality and accuracy of the information presented and considered by those making the decisions. Informed decisions are most likely to impact favourably on the quality, safety and experience of patients and staff.		
Financial Implications		
There are no direct financial implications arising from this paper		
Legal Implications (including equality and diversity assessment)		
Ensuring that the organisation has an effective and evolving Board Assurance Framework (BAF) that supports the Board in delivering its plans and achieving its objectives, is an essential component of the Health Board's governance arrangements going forward.		
Staffing Implications		
The further development and embedding of the BAF will require a significant amount of work on the part of Executive colleagues and their teams.		
Long Term Implications (including the impact of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015)		
The development of the BAF will assist the Board in assessing risk and gathering assurance across all corporate objectives, which span the five ways of working, and the wellbeing goals identified in the Act.		
Report History	Management Board – 1 st March 2023	
Appendices	Appendix 1 Board Assurance Framework (BAF)	