

**Unconfirmed Minutes of the Board Meeting**

**held on 28 May 2020,**

 **(held electronically via skype / telephone)**

|  |
| --- |
| **Present:** |
| Jan Williams | (JW) | Chair |
| Tracey Cooper | (TC) | Chief Executive  |
| Jyoti Atri | (JA) | Interim Executive Director of Health and Wellbeing  |
| Rhiannon Beaumont-Wood | (RB-W) | Executive Director of Quality, Nursing and Allied Health Professionals |
| Kate Eden  | (KE) | Non-Executive Director, Vice Chair and Chair of Quality, Safety and Improvement Committee |
| Dyfed Edwards | (DE) | Non-Executive Director and Chair of Audit and Corporate Governance Committee *(left between 11:00 and 12:00)* |
| Huw George | (HG) | Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Finance and Operations |
| Judi Rhys | (JR) | Non-Executive Director (Third Sector) and Chair of the People and Organisational Development Committee |
| Quentin Sandifer | (QS) | Executive Director of Public Health Services/Medical Director |
| Stephen Palmer | (SP) | Non-Executive Director |
| **In Attendance:** |
| Sally Attwood | (SA) | Deputy Director – Strategy and Planning *(left at 11:25)* |
| Mark Bellis  | (MB) | Director of Policy and International Health, WHO Collaborating Centre on Investment for Health & Well-being (WHO CC) |
| Sian Bolton | (SB) | Interim Transition Director, Knowledge Directorate,  |
| John Boulton | (JB) | Director of NHS Quality Improvement and Patient Safety/Director Improvement Cymru  |
| Phil Bushby | (PB) | Director of People and Organisational Development |
| Helen Bushell | (HB) | Board Secretary and Head of Board Business Unit, via teleconference |
| Robin Howe | (RH) | Professional Lead Consultant, Microbiology  |
| Peter Jones | (PJ) | Welsh Government  |
| Andrew Jones | (AJ) | Deputy Director of Public Health Services *(left at 12:00)* |
| Reanne Reffell | (RR) | Corporate Governance Officer (Secretariat) |
| Verity Winn | (VW) | Audit Wales |
| Stephanie Wilkins | (SW) | Representative of Staff Partnership Forum *(left at 12:30)* |
| **Apologies:** |
| Alison Ward  | (AW) | Non-Executive Director (Local Authority)  |

*The meeting commenced at 10:00*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PHW84/2020** | **Welcome** |
| JW welcomed everyone to the meeting, reflecting on the continuing loss of life resulting from the global spread of COVID-19; the Board observed a minute silence in memory of all those who had died.JW extended a particular welcome to those observing the meeting, Verity Winn from Audit Wales and Peter Jones from Welsh Government; she summarised the role of the Board and the Board Etiquette that underpinned the conduct of Board business.JW then restated the rationale behind the restricted agenda and the mechanisms through which the Board and its committees maintained good governance during the pandemic. She signalled the intention to resume live-streaming of Board meetings from June 2020 onwards. |
| **PHW85/2020** | **Apologies** |
| The Board **noted** the apologies for absence. |
| **PHW86/2020** | **Declarations of Interest** |
| Board members made no additional declarations of interest in addition to those already on the declarations of interest register.  |
| **PHW87/ 2020 Minutes, Action Log from the Board Meeting on 4 May 2020 and matters arising** |
| The minutes of the meeting held on 4 May 2020 were **approved** as a true and accurate record. (Ref 3.1.1.280520).The Board **considered** the Action Log (Ref 3.1.2.280520). The Board **approved** the closure of the action marked as complete.  |
| **PHW88/2020 Chief Executive’s Report** |
| The Board **received** the Chief Executive’s Report (Ref 4.1.280520).In introducing her report, TC reminded the Board of Public Health Wales’ early mobilisation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; the organisation had, therefore, been working at an enhanced level response for three months. TC expressed her thanks and gratitude to staff for their ready adaptation to the unparalleled operating environment in which they found themselves.She went on to reference the BBC Wales feature on ‘Coronavirus Testing: Behind the Scenes’; this provided an insight into how staff across Public Health Wales had worked together to scale up Wales’ testing capacity. Doing so had involved many long hours, personal sacrifices and constant agility in responding to new challenges. The feature paid tribute to microbiology, screening division and Improvement Cymru teams, all of whom, with assistance from other staff, had been instrumental in preparing the ground in support of the Welsh Government *Test, Trace and Protect* Strategy.TC then drew attention to the number of national-level weekly meetings in which she and others were engaged; the work required  in managing the resulting communications and actions was significant and  fell outside the ‘daily battle rhythm’ of COVID-19 incident management and all that involved.TC concluded by noting the publication of the Public Health Protection Response Plan (the Response Plan); as the Board was aware, this had informed *Test Trace and Protect* and TC thanked all contributors.In discussions, Board members expressed their appreciation of the hard work, determination and commitment of all staff during this unprecedented time; the Board also recorded its thanks to TC and the executive for their organisational leadership. Finally the Board asked QS to share the Response Plan with IANPHI partners, in support of international learning. **Action : QS**The Board **resolved** to receive the information contained within the report.  |
| **PHW89/2020**  | **Implementation Plan (The Plan)** |
| The Board **received** the Implementation Plan (Ref 4.2.280520).TC advised that the Plan before the Board represented a three-week Stage 1 Plan that followed on directly from the Response Plan. This, the Stage 2 Plan and any subsequent stages would reflect Public Health Wales’ role in, and contribution to, delivering *Test, Trace and Protect*.QS introduced the Plan, indicating that the COVID-19 Case Finding and Contact Tracing Operating Framework, set out at Appendix B, formed a companion document. Work on the Plan had begun immediately following completion of the Response Plan; Stage 1 covered the period up until 8 June 2020 and included the activities, products and risks for each of the work streams. He proposed to comment by exception, bringing in other colleagues as appropriate and inviting questions as he went along. **Contact Tracing**QS noted the roles of Public Health Wales, NWIS, Health Boards and Local Authorities; the Welsh Government-led Test Trace Protect Strategic Oversight Group had also established a contact tracing workstream. Public Health Wales, NWIS and Welsh Government had now issued an ‘Operational Note’ for *Test, Trace, Protect.* This described phases 0‑2; Phase 1 would begin on 1 June, assimilating the learning from the 4 pilots underway in phase 0. Phase 2, from 8 June onwards would see the switch to the all-Wales digital platform, with incoming data feeds direct to the Microsoft Dynamics CRM system.KE asked about the compatibility during Phase 1 of the nationally-supplied excel spreadsheet and any local systems in use. QS confirmed that all parts of Wales would collect data against a specified minimum data set.StP welcomed the production of all Wales standards and comprehensive guidance on the operation of contact tracing; QS mentioned an imminent ‘walk through’ of the guidance, involving all partners, to ensure clarity on expectations.JW asked about on going messaging around basic hand hygiene and social distancing; HG outlined the campaign work underway or planned.**Sampling and Testing**QS outlined Public Health Wales’ role in this; he drew the Board’s attention to public access to on-line booking slots from 29 May and the significance of the approval of the business case for the new laboratory at Imperial Park (IP5) DE raised the question of turnaround times for test results; QS contextualised his answer, noting Public Health Wales’ responsibility began once swabs reached the laboratories. The Welsh Government led Test Trace Protect Strategic Oversight Group sampling and testing work stream was developing ‘end-to-end’ performance measures. TC indicated the ways in which additional laboratory capacity across Wales would assist turnaround times; HG added detail in respect of capacity in the Rhyl and Singleton laboratories, with additional orders still in the system.The Board also noted the position on antibody testing; this reflected the information provided in the weekly SitReps.**Surveillance**QS outlined the focus of the Public Health Wales’ surveillance workstream and the internal recruitment of an additional 9 analysts to support the work . He singled out current work supporting 250 Welsh residents’ participation in the Oxford vaccine trial; whilst not part of the original plan, this was an important addition.QS noted the close working with Welsh Government Technical Advisory Cell (TAC); StP welcomed the focus on the suite of indicators proposed for the COVID surveillance system and looked forward to further updates on this.**Communications and Engagement**HG summarised the key role that Public Health Wales had to play in public messaging and in providing support to Welsh Government. He outlined the focus of the work over the next 6 weeks and TC added detail on the involvement of the behaviour change team.JW welcomed the prominence given to this workstream, complimenting the team on the ‘How are you doing?’ campaign and the breadth of both internal and external engagement.**Our People**RB-W commented on the state of preparedness for the Plan and the balancing of that requirement with the need to support the Organisational Recovery Programme.The health, well-being and safety of staff were paramount and RB-W noted that initial feedback from the staff survey was positive. She also mentioned the launch of the risk assessment tool for staff from a BAME background; this also had wider application and would be introduced accordingly. JR welcomed this, underlining its importance.JW thanked RB-W for the update, noting that the Board would have another opportunity to ask about workforce matters in the following agenda item.**Digital Requirements**QS drew the Board’s attention to the digital risks identified, emphasising the critical importance of both the Case and Contract Management System and IP5 business case approval. He also underlined the importance of effective information governance across the system.**International Learning and Intelligence**QS reminded the Board of the active role Public Health Wales played  in IANPHI and the benefits of international engagement through webinars and other mechanisms.MB emphasised the importance of evidence-informed decision-making in mitigating against the negative consequences of COVID-19 and in optimising benefits. He noted the ways in which Public Health Wales was applying its WHO Collaborating  Centre status: through the National Public Engagement Survey, International Horizon  Scanning and the development of COVID-19 Health Impact Assessments. A Dashboard of broader health trends would complete the suite of systemic intelligence-based products to inform policy and decision-making.SP reflected on how this work formed such an important part of `Public Health Wales’ role; KE echoed that point, referencing specifically the value-added contribution of the forthcoming dashboard.**Research and Evaluation**QS summarised the ways in which existing research and evaluation activities aligned to the Plan workstreams, as did the ongoing evaluation plans. SB confirmed that she would forward the evaluation of the original contact tracing function. **ACTION: SB****Quality, Safety, Information Governance and  Risk**RB-W outlined the ways in which this workstream would support the 4 public health response workstreams and provide approaches and products to assure Gold, Quality, Safety and Improvement Committee (QSIC) and the Board. Board members noted the schedule of products, the risks and issues highlighted and the oversight arrangements.**Finance and Supply Chain**HG drew the Board’s attention to the financial costs associated with testing; he had drawn these to the attention of Welsh Government, but the total quantum of funding to address COVID-19 costs across Wales remained fluid and uncertain.He also commented on the further cost analysis under way in 56 of the 70 Stage 1 deliverables.**Relationships**HG outlined the work planned against this workstream, noting the connection with communications and engagement.QS concluded by noting that the Operational Framework, set out in Appendix B, had been prepared prior to *Test, Trace and Protect* and was presented for information.He placed on record his thanks to Sally Atwood and Nathan Jones for their invaluable assistance in compiling the Plan; QS also thanked all colleagues for their inputs and commended the Plan to the Board.On behalf of the Board, JW thanked all those involved in producing the Plan; it set out clearly Public Health Wales’ role and responsibilities, itemised the activities, products and risks associated with each workstream and provided a firm foundation for the Stage 2 Plan. JW confirmed that the whole Board would have the opportunity to discuss that in the following week.The Board **resolved** to approve the Implementation Plan and noted the progress, including the production of the COVID-19 Case Finding and Contact Tracing Operating Framework. |
| **PHW90/2020 COVID-19** |
| The Board **received** the COVID-19 Update (Ref 4.3.1.280520)Given that the detailed discussion on the Plan had covered much of the material set out in this report, JW proposed to focus on Appendix 5 - the Public Health Wales workforce. Board members supported this proposition and JW invited RB-W to provide an update.RB-W drew attention to the workforce mobilisation system and the number of interactive dashboards; she provided an overview of workforce availability, noting that 1,562 staff members were either deployed as part of the COVID-19 response or were delivering a critical non-COVID service. 332 were available for internal deployment or for mutual aid to the wider NHS.RB-W went on to comment on the number of mutual aid requests and the pressures  associated with staffing the National Contact Centre, COVID and other business critical functions She acknowledged the genuine anxiety a number of staff were experiencing around returning to the workplace.KE sought clarity on the numbers of staff available for deployment, asking whether the 322 number resulted from the further analysis of the 500-550 estimate presented at the last Board meeting. RB-W set out the work still underway to populate the digital workforce model and agreed to provide added detail outside the meeting. **ACTION: RB-W**JW then invited PB to comment on the work underway in respect of My Contribution, following the limited assurance audit report that the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee had considered.PB detailed the challenges associated with achieving the level of compliance required and the work in hand to develop an action plan.TC confirmed that the executive would take the opportunity of the Organisational Recovery Programme to redesign the process and to present this to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee. **ACTION: PB**PB then summarised the weekly meetings with Trades Union colleagues, under the auspices of the Local Partnership Forum; SW commented on the utility and value of these meetings.The Board **resolved** to consider and **note** the update provided in the report in respect of COVID-19. **Enclosed Cell Settings**The Board **received** the Enclosed Setting Cell paper (Ref 4.3.2.280520). TC reminded the Board that this had been set up as part of the acute response phase and that many staff involved in the Cell were new to this area of work. She thanked them all for their readiness to take on this new role and for providing support across a number of enclosed settings.QS outlined Public Health Wales’ role around infection prevention and control in these settings: receipt of notifications; public health protection advice; outbreak management and the provision of specialist health protection advice to support outbreaks and clusters; the provision of information, evidence and guidance as required.The report set out the breadth of the work that the Cell had  undertaken during the mitigation phase of the response; it also itemised evolving Welsh Government policy in relation to Care Homes .QS asked the Board to note the evaluation exercise underway and transitional  planning.SP welcomed the role of the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre in undertaking a number of studies into Care Home settings; this was important work. QS agreed to discuss these epidemiological studies further outside the meeting. **ACTION: QS/SP**In response to a query from JW, AJ provided further detail on the actions in hand to mitigate against the risks set out in section 3.6 of the report. He referenced the shared risk with health boards and advised that the findings from the evaluation would help inform mitigation.In view of Board members’ interest in the transitional arrangements, AJ agreed to produce a separate briefing paper. **ACTION: AJ**The Board **resolved** to: • Receive and **note** the update report in relation to the work of the Enclosed Setting Cell; and• Take **assurance** in relation to the ongoing review of the function of the Cell and the proposal for transition in the next phase of the Public Health Wales response. |
| **PHW91/2020 Strategic Risk Register** |
| The Board **received** the Strategic Risk Register (Ref 4.4.1.280520).JW advised that, as the Board had considered strategic risks 1-8 at its April 2020 meeting, and would do so again at its June meeting, this meeting would focus on the development of a specific strategic risk around COVID-19. TC introduced the report, indicating that the Gold group had considered the inclusion of a COVID-19 strategic risk; the current framing offered a basis for discussion around the exact nature of the risk, appropriate mitigating actions and sources of corresponding assurance. TC advised that, from her perspective, the key strategic risks centred on: clarity of roles and responsibilities across the system in the delivery of Test, Trace and Protect; the balance between ongoing covid-19 mobilisation and the resumption of non-COVID services; the health, well-being and safety of staff; the agility needed around surveillance studies to influence timely action; the approval of the IP5 business case.In discussions, Board members welcomed:  the inclusion of a specific COVID related strategic risk; the focus offered by the identification of the top five strategic risks; the opportunity the Organisational Recovery Programme presented to reset  both strategic and corporate risks.JW confirmed that, at one of the Board briefing sessions  in June, the Board would have the chance to look again at risk appetite and stratification, together with the framing of the COVID-related strategic riskThe Board resolved to **approve** in principle the inclusion of a COVID-related strategic risk in the register of such risks; to note the top five risks set out by the CEO and the importance of these for reframing the risk register to undertake further work on risk appetite and stratification.  |
| **PHW92/2020 Corporate Risk Register** |
| The Board **received** the Corporate Risk Resister (Ref 4.4.2.280520).TC made reference to the discussion under the previous agenda item, confirming the intention to review both sets of risks. This was timely, given that the Plan took Public Health Wales into a new phase and that work was accelerating on the Organisational Recovery Programme.The Board resolved to: * Take **assurance** on the management of the business as usual risks set out in the report.
* **Note** the intention to review the corporate risks associated with COVID-19.
 |
| **PHW93/2020 Integrated Performance Report( IPR)** |
| The Board **received** the Integrated Performance Report (Ref 4.5.i.280520 and 4.5.ii.280520).HG introduced the IPR, itemising the four sections. He began with the COVID -19 dashboard, taking the opportunity to provide an update on the in-week daily testing capacity of 9,277. Work was also underway to secure additional capacity in the weeks ahead. QS drew attention to the daily number of new confirmed cases: 100-150 across Wales; this could increase on the lifting of restrictions.On Finance, HG reported that the year-end forecast still indicated that Public Health Wales would hit the three financial targets. A note of caution concerned the risks around COVID-19 expenditure, the Wales-wide funding of which was the subject of discussions with Welsh Government.The Board had discussed a number of workforce matters in earlier discussions; these had concerned COVID mobilisation; PB reported that general workforce indicators remained consistent.On business as usual indicators, QS referenced the 2.4% avoidable repeat rate achieved by the new-born blood spot programme; given the COVID compliant operating environment in which the screeners were now working, this was exceptional. The Board expressed its congratulations and thanks to all involved. RB-W highlighted the narrative in respect of incident management and the distinction between COVID-related and other incidents.The Board **resolved** to **note** the update.  |
| **PHW94/2020 Committees of the Board: Annual Reports 2019/20** |
| The Board **received** the Committee Annual Reports (Ref 4.6.1.280520, Ref 4.6.2.280520, Ref 4.6.3.280520 and Ref 4.6.4.280520).HB reminded the Board that the annual reports from the four committees brought together the business each had conducted and reported on in-year. They were presented for assurance purposes. The Board **resolved** to:* **Consider** the Annual Reports for 2019/20 for the four Committees summarising the key areas of business activity undertaken; and
* Take **assurance** that the Committees were fit for purpose.
 |
| **PHW95/2020 Committees of the Board: Reports from Committee Chairs** |
| The Board **received** the report from the Committee Chairs Ref 4.7.1.280520).**Audit and Corporate Governance Committee (ACGC)**DE reported on the key matters considered at the ACGC meeting on 18 May 2020. He complimented the team involved in compiling the annual counts; their exceptional accounts management throughout the year enabled the committee to cover a wide- ranging work programme. DE then turned to : the substantial rating against internal audit reports on ‘Core Financials` and `Board and Committee Governance’ ; the limited assurance rating against ‘Personal Development/ My Contribution’ , citing  the discussion earlier in the Board meeting; assurance against organisational management of risk.**Quality, Safety and Improvement Committee** KE provided a verbal update on the QSIC committee meeting on the 19 May 2002. She referenced the following: * Discussions around the resumption of those screening programmes suspended currently; immunisation programmes; standard operating procedures and Putting Things Right.

KE also noted the limited assurance rating following an internal audit report on the management of alerts. ACGC was aware of this and the actions being taken, most of which had been completed. KE also confirmed the Committee would be meeting 8-weekly for the foreseeable future. The Board **resolved** to consider and note the update from the Committee Chairs.  |
| **PHW96/2020 Board and Committee Work Plans 2020/21** |
| The Board **received** a verbal update on the Board and Committee Work Plans 2020/21.HB outlined that the work plan would project forwards to September 2020 and provide oversight of the main items being considered in each fora. The Plan would be circulated to the Board in the next week. **Action: HB**  |
| **PHW97/2020 Ratification of Chair’s Action and Affixing of the Common Seal** |
| The Board **received** the Ratification of Chair’s Action and Affixing of the Common Seal report Ref 4.9.280520).The Board **resolved** to: • **Note** the occasion where Chair’s Action was taken; • **Receive** assurance that the actions were taken in accordance with Section 2 of the Standing Orders; • **Ratify** the Chair’s Action as Chair of the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee to approve an application for VERS (Voluntary Early Release Scheme). This was being reported to Board for ratification, and will be reported to the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee at its next meeting. |
| **Date of Next Formal Meeting of the Board**  |
| The next meeting was scheduled for the 25 June 2020.  |
| JW brought the open session of the Board to an end, thanking everyone for their contributions.  |
| Meeting closed at 12:45 |