

Chief Executive Board Report

28 July 2022

1 UK COVID-19 Public Inquiry

On the 28 June 2022, the Prime Minister signed and approved the final version of the Terms of Reference for the UK-wide Covid-19 Public Inquiry giving the green light to Baroness Heather Hallett, the Chair of the Public Inquiry, to begin gathering evidence and witness statements. Baroness Hallett later released a statement as follows, in which she set out her clear intent on how the Inquiry will be run by her and the Inquiry panel.

1. People who have suffered during the pandemic will be at the heart of the Inquiry's work. The Inquiry team is committed to listening to people's experiences.
2. The Inquiry will be firmly independent. Baroness Hallett will not tolerate any attempt to mislead the Inquiry, to undermine its integrity or its independence. If she encounters any such attempt, she will make her views known in a public hearing.
3. Baroness Hallett will do everything in her power to conduct a fair, balanced and thorough Inquiry.
4. Baroness Hallett will deliver any recommendations as soon as possible by producing interim reports. In that way, if they are adopted, she hopes to reduce or prevent the suffering and hardship in any future pandemic.
5. The Inquiry will not only be in London. The Inquiry team will travel around the UK to ensure we hear from as many people as possible. Baroness Hallett is acutely aware that experiences were different across the UK.
6. The Inquiry will be conducted openly. We will publish regular reports on our website so that everyone can know what progress we have made.
7. Finally, the Inquiry will be conducted efficiently and as speedily as we can manage.

The final terms of reference are attached as appendix A. We look forward to engaging with the Inquiry Panel and our internal preparations continue to ensure that we are ready to respond to and provide any information the Inquiry requests of Public Health Wales in an open and transparent manner.

2 End of Year Accountability Meeting with the Welsh Government

As part of the accountability arrangements between Public Health Wales and the Welsh Government (WG), we have a mid-year and end of year accountability meeting with the Executive Team of the Health and Social Services Group in the WG, where they assess the performance and delivery

of the organisation against the Operational Plan for the year, this is referred to as a Joint Executive Team (JET) meeting. The end of year JET meeting for 2021/2022 took place on the 1 July 2022.

The focus of the meeting was on performance and lessons learned in 2021/2022, Ministerial priorities and plans for 2022/2023. It was a very constructive meeting covering the significant breadth of the work of the organisation and attached in Appendix B is my cover letter and Appendix C is the JET Summary pack that we provided in advance of the meeting.

It was an opportunity for us to once again thank our exceptional staff across the organisation for their unrelenting professionalism and commitment in protecting and transforming the health of the population in Wales.

3 Meeting with the Minister for Education and Welsh Language

On the 8 June 2022, the Chairperson, Julie Bishop (Director Health Improvement) and I met with Jeremy Miles, Minister for Education and Welsh Language as part of our series of Ministerial engagement meetings.

This was a very constructive meeting and our discussions focused on providing an update on our strategic themes and organisational focus, our engagement with the education sector and the resilience, well-being of children and young people. We had a broad conversation on these areas and how we can best support the Minister given the breadth of activity that we are already involved in across his portfolio areas.

4 Screening Centre Opens in Mountain Ash

The Screening Division of Public Health Wales opened its doors to its first ever screening centre this month. It is the first screening centre of its kind on a high street in Wales where multiple screening programmes screen out of the same venue. Based in Mountain Ash, Rhondda Cynon Taf, it brings together services for three national programmes: diabetic eye, abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) and new born hearing screening. It has been designed with public accessibility and the health on the high street concept in mind making it easier for people to attend screening appointments and the opportunity to be more flexible with times and days of screening appointments. It is also hoped that the increased number of people coming to the high street for screening will have the added benefit of boosting local businesses. We hope this new model can be the blue print for the future of screening in Wales.

As with previous Public Health Wales developments, during the refurbishment of the building there was a focus on ensuring that it was environmentally, economically and socially sustainable. Examples of how this has been achieved include the re-use of carpet tiles and furniture from previous Public Health Wales offices, as well as the provision of additional

workspace, providing staff with the option to work more locally, rather than travel to offices further afield.

5 Response to the Health and Social Care Senedd Committee

Further to our attendance at the Health and Social Care Senedd on the 19 May, to give evidence on their Inquiry into Mental Health Inequalities the Committee requested further information in relation to resources for delivering prevention and early intervention in tackling mental health inequalities across all policies and public sector decision-making and also barriers to social prescribing. I have attached our response to these further questions as appendix D.

6 Welcoming Angela Jones as our Acting Director of Health and Well-being

I am delighted to say that Angela Jones, formerly Deputy Director of Public Health in Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTMUHB) and a member of our CTMUHB Public Health Team, became our new Acting Director of Health and Well-being on the 27 June 2022. Angela brings excellent experience across the breadth of public health and has already settled in quickly into her new role. Angela will be with us in the role to lead our Health and Well-being Directorate and to manage and support the combining of our Health and Well-being Directorate and our World Health Organization Collaborating Centre from April 2023.

7 Young Ambassadors Programme

The Public Health Wales Young Ambassadors got together at the end of May for their first residential in nearly three years. Around 35 Young Ambassadors, aged between 12-21 years old from across Wales, met and it was the first time many had attended a Public Health Wales residential event. The programme commenced with a discussion around what Public Health Wales is all about and what we do. This formed the backdrop for an interactive workshop on empowerment and influence to co-produce an approach to Board participation. This aims to equip and empower young people to influence Public Health Wales' decision-making. The group also covered new Agored accredited courses that we are co-developing with our Young Ambassadors to help them develop skills like leadership, communication and project delivery.

On day two, the group was joined by our Chair, Jan Williams, Rhiannon Beaumont-Wood, Executive Director of Quality Nursing and Allied Health Professionals, and Diane Crone, Non-Executive Director and our Board Champion for Children and Young People, as well as staff from across Public Health Wales. The group discussions focused on how Young Ambassadors can most effectively work with us on public health topics that they have

identified as priorities, such as mental health and well-being. Feedback from all the young people will be used to plan the next residential event and to develop a proposal for our Board participation approach in order to ensure that we learn from, and co create this with, our Young Ambassadors.

8 Kickstart Scheme in Public Health Wales

We welcomed six amazing 'kick-starters' in January 2022, they joined us for a six-month paid placement as part of the UK Government Kickstart scheme, the scheme aims to create opportunities for young people aged between 16-24 years.

Over the past six months our 'kick-starters' have worked in a range of teams across the organisation including CARIS, People and Organisational Development, Board Business Unit, Screening Engagement, Bowel Screening and the Wider Determinants of Health Unit. It has provided them with a great opportunity to work as part of a team, they have added a huge amount of value to our work whilst also developing their skills and enhancing their CVs. It has also been an opportunity for us to build their confidence to enable them to apply for roles at the end of their placements and one of the 'kick-starters' has been successful in gaining permanent employment with us and we are working with the others to explore opportunities as a result of their experience with us.

9 Meetings with Universities

Iain Bell, National Director of Public Health Data, Knowledge and Research, and I have been holding a series of meetings with Universities in Wales, and those additional universities that provide access to learning in Wales. These have been excellent meetings so far and have involved a broad range of academic partners representing different faculty departments in each university. We have explored our respective activities, priorities and opportunities for collaboration. To date, we have met with:

- ❖ Bangor University
- ❖ University of South Wales
- ❖ Cardiff Metropolitan University
- ❖ Cardiff University
- ❖ Open University
- ❖ Glyndwr University

Recommendation

The Board is asked to **receive** this information.

Tracey Cooper
CHIEF EXECUTIVE