

Board Paper to note



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Minutes of the Board Meeting, 17 May 2019

Present:

Shan Morgan
Ellen Donovan
Ann Keane
Jeff Farrar
Gareth Lynn
Tracey Burke
Des Clifford
Andrew Slade
Natalie Pearson
Gawain Evans
David Richards
Peter Kennedy
Jeff Godfrey
Gillian Baranski
Charlotte Cosserat
Simon Dean
Helena Bird

In attendance:

Aled Roberts – Welsh Language Commissioner
Dylan Hughes
Bethan Griffiths

Secretariat:
Charmain Watts

Apologies:

Andrew Goodall

1. Welcome

1.1 The Permanent Secretary welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the shadow board member, Charlotte Cosserat and Robin Bradfield, Chair of TUS.

2. Update on Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Maternity services at Cwm Taf Health Board

2.1 Simon Dean, Deputy Chief Executive NHS Wales provided an update on the issues that have recently arisen with the Maternity services at Cwm Taf Health Board and Betsi Cadwaladr being in special measures for 4 years.

Special Measures - Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB)

2.2 Simon Dean advised that in 2015, BCUHB was placed in special measures due to failings in service delivery, organisational effectiveness, and the quality and safety of care including the provision of mental health services, maternity services and primary care including out-of-hours services. In January 2016, the special measures improvement framework was published setting out the milestones for BCU to achieve by May 2016, November 2016 and November 2017 to be considered for de-escalation.

2.3 The second special measures improvement framework was published in May for the period May 2018 – September 2019 and included key milestones under the headings leadership & governance, strategic and services planning, mental health and primary care including out-of-hours services. The Minister will be making a statement in early June on progress and publishing a revised framework that will prioritise the milestones for the next 12 months to deliver the sustained improvement to be considered for de-escalation.

Maternity services at Cwm Taf Health Board

2.4 Simon Dean advised that in summer 2018, the maternity service at Cwm Taf University Health Board identified a number of serious incidents. The Minister for Health and Social Services commissioned the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and Royal College of Midwives to undertake an independent review in October 2018. An extraordinary tripartite meeting between WG, HIW and WAO agreed the escalation status should increase from routine arrangements to enhanced monitoring. A Written Statement confirming the escalation level issued in January 2019

2.5 Following the Maternity Review report in April an extraordinary tripartite meeting and the Minister agreed that the escalation level be increased to Special Measures, whilst the level for the organisation overall was increased to targeted intervention. A Written Statement confirming the escalation level to special measures issued in April 2019. Target Intervention/Special Measures meetings are being set up at executive level with the health board. The first is planned for the beginning of June. This will be informed by the feedback for the Oversight Panel and wider interventions. The Panel will also be providing monthly update reports to officials and producing comprehensive quarterly reports to the Minister which will be published.

3.1 Des Clifford advised that the exit date had been extended to 31 October, he explained that there were three possible options in going forward:

1. Leave with a 'No Deal' on 31 October
2. Stay longer in the EU before leaving
3. The UK remain in the EU permanently

3.2 The Board noted that all three options will have associated issues and Des Clifford highlighted that remaining longer before leaving the EU would have an impact on the common agricultural policy. Welsh Government would have to triple run work to ensure it continued to implement the current EU system, prepare for a new Welsh Government system and prepare for the next financial round of the EU system.

3.3 Des Clifford further explained that the extension had given us an opportunity to reflect on the work that had been done to date and to take forward a lessons learnt exercise. He also advised that this gave us some time to re-calibrate and allow progress of decelerated work due to Brexit to ensure we deliver on the First Minister's priorities.

3.4 The Board noted the risk of a No Deal was still a possibility and Welsh Government had to remain prepared.

4. Finance Report

4.1 Gawain Evans presented a Finance Report which focused on the initial assessment of the 2019-20 annual financial position. He advised that in advance of the regular monthly financial management process, Welsh Government Heads of Finance are asked to provide an initial view of their financial position and highlight potential budgetary pressures and/or underspends. This enables us to enter into early discussions with the Minister for Finance & Trefnydd on the possible use of our reserves and inform bi-lateral discussions held.

4.2 Further discussions largely focused on:

- Revenue pressures
- Capital pressures
- Position of Current reserves
- Current DEL budget
- Unallocated DEL reserves

4.3 Gawain Evans advised that Minister for Finance and Trefnydd has written to Cabinet colleagues on the issue of identifying underspends earlier in the year to facilitate a discussion about priorities. She had also created a Policy Board

which will discuss key financial issues. The Board welcomed the establishment of the Policy Board.

4.4 Gawain Evans further explained that the Welsh Government is part of HM Treasury's cash management scheme. Each month Government departments and devolved administrations are ranked by how accurate their cash forecasts are against the actual outturn, Welsh Government had been ranked second. The Board were pleased with this outcome and congratulated the work of Gawain and his team.

5. Welsh Language Commissioner

5.1 The Permanent Secretary welcomed Aled Roberts, Welsh Language Commissioner to the meeting, Aled Roberts provided an overview of his functions which include:

- promoting the use of the Welsh language
- facilitating the use of the Welsh language
- working towards ensuring that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than the English language by imposing duties on some organisations to comply with standards relating to the Welsh language
- conducting inquiries into matters relating to the Commissioner's functions
- investigating interference with the individual's freedom to use the Welsh language

5.2 Aled Roberts presented a paper which focused on three key elements. The first, a general introduction to the work of the Commissioner; the second draws attention to some important issues to be agreed between the Welsh Government and the Commissioner during Aled Roberts' initial phase in his new role; and the third part of the paper addresses aspects of the implementation of standards in terms of service delivery, policy making standards, promotion standards and those relating to the use of Welsh as part of the internal administration of public organisations.

5.3 Aled Roberts highlighted the next steps for the Commissioner and the Welsh Government:

- To agree a stronger support framework alongside the Welsh Government which will help to meet the requirements of the Welsh Language Measure and the vision of the 2050 Strategy
- To maximize the use of scarce resources and avoid duplication

- To increase the use of Welsh by prioritising key areas and making effective use of the powers of the Measure to enable more opportunities to use the Welsh language

5.4 The Permanent Secretary thanked Aled Roberts and advised that the Welsh Government has a clear direction of travel from the First Minister and Ministers. The Welsh Government will set a clear ambition which will inform a policy over the longer term which will promote and facilitate use of the Welsh language internally.

6. Update: use of the Welsh Language in the Welsh Government

6.1 The Permanent Secretary advised that the previous agenda item by the Welsh Language Commissioner was a great introduction to this item, she also advised that she will have regular meetings with him.

6.2 Dylan Hughes and Bethan Griffiths attended to provide an update on the paper on the use of Welsh language within the Welsh Government. The Permanent Secretary asked the Board to note that this paper was a discussion paper and a further paper will return to a future Board which responds to the discussion at this meeting.

6.3 The paper focused on:

- Background.
- What is bilingualism?
- The Welsh language learning 'offer' to staff in the Welsh Government.
- Good practice in other organisations.
- The Welsh Government's overarching Welsh language policy.
- Reflections on the task and finish group's paper and conclusions.

6.4 Dylan Hughes explained that the Welsh Government is required to produce and publish a policy outlining how it will promote and facilitate use of the Welsh language internally. This policy needs to be agreed within a wider political context in which the Government has set a target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050. Developing a meaningful policy will mean a clear ambition will need to be agreed by the organisation.

6.5 The Board welcomed the aim of taking forward the future internal policy of the Welsh Government in relation to the use of Welsh and recognised the importance of this subject. The Board agreed that setting a vision for the future that is ambitious, meaningful and realistic will require careful handling in the context of the organisation. It would be important to ensure that all staff were engaged and that any approach should not act as a disincentive on potential new talent joining the organisation.

6.6 Dylan Hughes summarised the findings of the task and finish group which was established to consider the Welsh Government's internal use of the Welsh language and its vision for developing Welsh within the organisation.

6.7 The Board found the paper to be a very helpful aid to taking forward the agenda and expressed their gratitude to the team who had produced it. The Board discussed next steps and agreed the following:

- It is important to consult widely across the organisation as a policy is developed. Any policy change needs to be fully evaluated and challenged, and discussed with TUS.
- To explore the use of technology as a means of supporting bilingual working within the organisation
- To employ a behavioural change theory to encourage more use of Welsh in the workplace and ensure that strong and visible leadership is at the heart of developing the policy
- To consider a policy over the longer term, with gradual milestones in place which will allow for pause and reflect periods, to allow for evaluating interventions and agreeing objectives for the next period.
- To re-evaluate the Welsh training on offer to staff

Action 1: Establish a policy group and consult widely across the organisation as a policy is developed, so that any policy change is fully evaluated and challenged, and including the TUS in those discussions

Action 2: Exploring the use of technology as a means of supporting bilingual working within the organisation

Action 3: Employing behavioural change theory to encourage more use of Welsh in the workplace

Action 4: Ensure that strong and visible leadership is at the heart of developing the policy

Action 5: Consider a policy over the longer term, with gradual milestones in place which will allow for pause and reflect periods, to allow for evaluating interventions and agreeing objectives for the next period.

Action 6: Re-evaluate the Welsh language training on offer to staff.

Action 7: An update paper to be returned to a future Board which responds to the discussion at this meeting.

7. Perm Sec Items and Sub-committee items

7.1 The Permanent Secretary referred to the revised terms of reference, no further comments were received and the Board agreed to finalise them. She further reminded the Board to complete the self-assessment questionnaire which will form the annual Board review for 2018/19.

7.2 Jeff Farrar provided an update on the work around the Key Performance Indicators. The task and finish group had met a number of times to discuss what might be a suitable approach to preparing an enhanced and systematic set of Key Performance Indicators for the Welsh Government. He explained that he has drawn upon the existing material ensuring to capture all of the relevant material held across all Departments and a workshop will be held in June to test high level statements on what good looks like.

7.3 Jeff Farrar provided an overview on the Remuneration Committee – this included discussions around Director/Deputy Director posts and data on trend analysis.

7.4 Ann Keane provided feedback from the last ARaC meeting and advised that the committee had agreed a more systematic sharing of information. There were also reports on the progress being made on the annual report and accounts which will be presented at the next meeting. Ann further advised that arrangements were in place for the Welsh Government Non-Executive Directors to meet the Scottish Government Non-Executive Directors to share learning, discuss priorities and challenges and to compare Governance models.

7.5 David Richards provided an update on the Legislation Programme and summarised the RAG reports of Government Bills currently before the Assembly, Year 3 Confirmed Bills and the Year 4 Expected Bills. He further advised that Cabinet will consider Year 4 Bills next week.

7.6 The Board discussed the governance of the Legislative Programme Board, David Richards advised that any issues or key decisions will be escalated to the Executive Committee.

8. Health and Safety Leadership Training

8.1 Health and Safety Leadership training was provided which focused on key changes in ISO 45001 (the new international H&S Standard) that would impact on senior leaders and the organisation.

Actions arising at Board meeting

ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LATEST POSITION
Action 1: Establish a policy group and consult widely across the organisation as a policy is developed, so that any policy change is fully evaluated and challenged, and including the TUS in those discussions.	Dylan Hughes/ Bethan Griffiths	In progress – A challenge session will be held on 16 July on Welsh language internal policy.
Action 2: Exploring the use of technology as a means of supporting bilingual working within the organisation.	Dylan Hughes/ Bethan Griffiths	In progress
Action 3: Employing behavioural change theory to encourage more use of Welsh in the workplace	Dylan Hughes/ Bethan Griffiths	In progress
Action 4: Ensure that strong and visible leadership is at the heart of developing the policy	Dylan Hughes/ Bethan Griffiths	In progress
Action 5: Consider a policy over the longer term, with gradual milestones in place which will allow for pause and reflect periods, to allow for evaluating interventions and agreeing objectives for the next period.	Dylan Hughes/ Bethan Griffiths	In progress
Action 6: Re-evaluate the Welsh language training on offer to staff.	Dylan Hughes/ Bethan Griffiths	In progress
Action 7: An update paper to be returned to a future Board which responds to the discussion at this meeting.	Dylan Hughes/ Bethan Griffiths	In progress