

ASSURANCE REPORT

NHS WALES SHARED SERVICES PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Reporting Committee	Shared Service Partnership Committee
Chaired by	Mrs Margaret Foster, Chair
Lead Executive	Mr Neil Frow, Managing Director, NWSSP
Author and contact details.	Peter Stephenson, Head of Finance and Business Development
Date of meeting	21 January 2021
Summary of key matters including achievements and progress considered by the Committee and any related decisions made.	
<p>1. Health Courier Services – The Head of HCS updated the Committee on the significant challenges faced since March 2020. The service’s response to the Pandemic has been exceptional, and the team adapted to the new ways of working and continued to supply, collect and distribute a significant amount of medical and non-medical supply/stock to NHS sites across Wales, whilst ensuring that the appropriate governance arrangements, and social distancing controls were in place. In an average year, approximately 60m items would be transported by HCS for NHS organisations. In 2020, that figure is more than 630m items, with 580m being PPE. The additional demand on the service has resulted in an increase of its workforce by 50%. At first, staff were sourced through external agencies, but were swiftly relocated to the NWSSP bank to reduce the costs. A major concern is fatigue and staff overall welfare, which needs to be managed carefully. The current vaccine rollout has brought many new challenges in terms of distribution and storage requirements. Security arrangements have been enhanced, whilst ensuring that the vaccine is kept in accordance with regulated storage requirements. HCS staff are included in the early vaccination programme roll-out. The Committee were united in their appreciation of the significant achievements of the HCS team</p> <p>2. Planning Update – The Director of Planning, Performance & Informatics presented NWSSP’s strategic plan to the Committee. In line with the current requirements from Welsh Government, this is a one-year plan, but one that blends the current operational focus with the longer-term objectives of NWSSP. The Ministerial priorities remain unchanged, but it reflects the current four harms - Harm from Covid itself, Harm from an overwhelmed NHS and Social Care system, Harm from reduced non-Covid activity, and finally harm from wider societal actions/lockdown. The Committee discussed and reviewed the outline plan. The Director will meet individual Committee members over the next few months to ensure that local strategic requirements are considered in developing the full plan. The final version of the plan will be reviewed and signed off at the March Committee meeting prior to submission to Welsh Government.</p>	

3. **Managing Director's Report** – the main issues noted were:

- **IP5** - The facility has continued to provide NHS Wales a number of strategic benefits over the past 12 months. It has proved to be invaluable during the first and second waves of the COVID pandemic together with adding important resilience during the BREXIT preparations. The Minister has recently endorsed NWSSP proposals within the overall IP5 Programme Business Case and has also agreed to cover the additional recurring running costs. Work on the PHW laboratory is almost complete and final checks are being worked through. The SLA for the support to the UK Lighthouse Laboratory has been agreed and ownership will transfer to NHS Wales in approximately 18 – 24 months.
- **Transforming Access to Medicine** - The TRAMS Programme Business Case (PBC) has been endorsed by the Chief Pharmacists Group and subsequently approved at the November 2020 Committee for submission to Welsh Government, who subsequently had some queries which have now been addressed. In particular some changes had been made to the accounting treatment of project implementation and transition costs which had been discussed with Audit Wales. In addition even though the project would generate cumulative revenue savings, proposals have been developed to close the temporary non-recurring revenue funding gap in year 3 and 4. The PBC will now be presented to the Welsh Government Infrastructure Investment Board at the end of January 2021 for formal scrutiny as part of the government approval process.
- **Temporary Medicines Unit** - The TMU, established with Welsh Government funding in response to COVID-19, has now produced its first batches of product. This follows months of hard work by staff from across NHS Wales, including input from the NHS Wales national quality assurance lead, in supporting the creation of the Unit and in particular in the development of the operating model and quality management processes. This recently culminated in a rigorous inspection from the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency, resulting in the granting of a wholesale distribution license as well as a production license at IP5. We continue to work with our host, Velindre Trust, in developing the Quality and Safety Committee arrangements which the Committee signed off in September 2020.

The service will initially supply key medicines needed for Health Board critical care units in ready-to-use syringes. Capacity is for 2,600 syringes a week to be supplied, ensuring continuity of supply, and saving significant hours of nurse time to be redirected towards patient care, across all of Wales. The unit has also been involved in supporting the additional distribution of COVID vaccines and related consumable supplies, as part of the national contingency response. Welsh Government have also confirmed funding for the Unit for the next two years.

Items Requiring SSPC Approval

4. **Digital Workforce Systems Scheduling** – The Committee received a proposal relating to the adoption of a Once for Wales e-scheduling system

contract for District Nursing. This work is being taken forward at the request of Welsh Government and follows on from several successful pilots in Health Boards. The chosen e-scheduling system enables District Nursing teams to work more safely and efficiently, reducing non-clinical contact time and duplicate visits; and gave the opportunity to interface mileage usage to the Expense system, supporting more accurate payment of expenses with reduced administration. Funding has been made available by Welsh Government to support the national roll-out of the e-scheduling system, and the Committee were asked to support a single tender action to take this matter forward. It was proposed that NWSSP enter into a short-term contract, which will enable NHS Wales to explore the market further and to enter into a competitive procurement exercise, exploring additional efficiencies/service improvements through the development of a technical specification, and opportunities for further cost savings via economies of scale. The Committee **ENDORSED** this approach.

5. **Scan for Safety** – The Committee received a paper requesting approval of the full Business Case to be submitted to Welsh Government as at the end of January. Following some delays caused by COVID and a required change in the technical specification, the timescales for approving this project have been squeezed. The project will deliver improvements to patient safety through tracking of medical devices to ensure the right product is provided to the right patient and that products can, where required, be swiftly identified and recalled in the event of product safety alerts. Nine suppliers were approached to submit tenders for this service, and five have submitted formal bids, all of which are significantly less expensive than forecast. Following review, the Committee **APPROVED** the submission of the business case to Welsh Government.
6. **Once for Wales Concerns Management Database** – the Committee received and **APPROVED** the updated Terms of Reference for the Programme Board for this initiative which is being led by NWSSP on behalf of NHS Wales.
7. **Updated Standing Orders** – the Committee **APPROVED** the proposed changes to the NWSSP Standing Orders and Schedule of Delegation.

Finance, Workforce and Governance Updates

8. **Project Management Office Update** – The Committee reviewed and noted the programme and projects monthly summary report, which highlighted the team’s current progress and position on the 30 different schemes being managed.
9. **Finance and Workforce Report** - As at Month 8, NWSSP are reporting a break-even position, with an underlying underspend position of £1.8m. Review of the forecast position has resulted in a declaration of a further distribution of £1.25m to NHS Wales. The Welsh Risk Pool forecast outturn remains at £121m, with the continued expectation that £13.8m will be funded under the risk sharing agreement with contributions from health organisations. Staff sickness levels remain at a historically low level and most key performance indicators are on track.
10. **Corporate Risk Register** – there are three red risks on the register, all of which should either come off shortly or reduce in score. These relate to the

replacement of two separate payments systems in Primary Care Services and working through the implications of the UK Government's deal with the European Unit at the end of December.

11. **Gifts & Hospitality Report** – the Committee noted the annual report for 2019/20.

12. **Finance Monitoring Reports** – the Committee were provided with the monitoring returns for Months 7 and 8 for information.

Matters requiring Board/Committee level consideration and/or approval

- The Board is asked to **NOTE** the work of the SSPC and ensure where appropriate that Officers support the related work streams.

Matters referred to other Committees

N/A

Date of next meeting

18 March 2021