



Minutes of Pembrokeshire Public Services Board

Monday 27th April 2020 at 11.00am (Skype meeting)

Present:

Tegryn Jones	Chief Executive, PCNPA (Chair)
Sue Leonard	Chief Officer, PAVS (Vice-Chair)
Ian Westley	Chief Executive, Pembrokeshire County Council
Jonathan Feild	Employer and Partnership Manager, DWP
Andrea Winterton	SW Operations Manager Pembrokeshire, Marine and Monitoring, Natural Resources Wales
Sarah Jennings (SJ)	Director of Partnerships & Corporate Services, Hywel Dda UHB
Anna Bird	Head of Strategic Partnership Development, Hywel Dda UHB
Dr Steven Jones (SPJ)	Director of Community Services, PCC
Iwan Thomas	Chief Executive Officer, PLANED
Dr Barry Walters	Principal, Pembrokeshire College
Elwyn Williams	Vice-Chair MAWW Fire Authority
Maria Battle	Chair, Hywel Dda UHB
Cris Tomos	Cabinet Member for Environment and Welsh Language
Kevin Jones	Assistant Chief Fire Officer, M&WW Fire & Rescue Service
Alison Perry	Director of Commissioning, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
Martyn Palfreman	
Anna Malloy	Port of Milford Haven

Support/Secretariat

Nick Evans	Corporate Policy and Partnerships Manager, PCC
Lynne Richards	Corporate Partnerships Officer, PCC

Apologies

Ros Jervis	Director of Public Health, HDUHB
Supt. Ross Evans	Dyfed Powys Police

The meeting commenced at 11.00am.

1. Welcome and Apologies

Introductions were made and apologies received from those listed above.

2. Updates from partner agencies

Each partner agency was invited to provide an update on their current position and response to the pandemic;

Hywel Dda UHB

SJ noted that the Health Board had been prepared for what had been planned regarding the number of Covid-19 cases and that the lockdown had made a difference to the number of cases being seen. There had been fewer cases and deaths to date than previously expected, although this would have to be closely monitored once lockdown was lifted/eased. The Health Board were able to manage the current level of cases and were interested in how PSB partners could work together to support each other, together with the 3rd Sector, charities etc., during the recovery phase. SJ also noted the success of team working with PCC on the construction of the field hospital at Bluestone.

Pembrokeshire County Council

IW reiterated SJ's comments regarding lessons learnt around team working following the construction of the field hospital at Bluestone and that the current situation had highlighted opportunities to work differently together in the future. He noted that the Leader had been impressed with the speed of development at Bluestone and this had led him to consider how we might be able to bypass bureaucracy and unnecessary 'red tape' in working together in the future.

IW noted that a recent study published by Kings College, London had looked at categorising individuals as either accepting, sufferers or resisters to the current lockdown situation with results suggesting that 48% were accepting, 44% sufferers and 8% resisters. There were some indications in certain areas of the County that this 'resister' figure was above the figure published in the study.

Looking forward to recovery, PCC had started to look at a recovery plan incorporating four strands; Internal (PCC) recovery; Community; Young People and Education; and Business and Economic. He suggested that the PSB would have a significant part to play in the recovery period.

SPJ noted that a programme delivery plan was also being developed and an abridged version of this would be provided to partners once available. He asked NE to provide a brief update on the role of the Independent Advisory Group.

SPJ

NE explained that the group consisted of representatives from various networks and communities and that their role was to feed in their views on planning and managing the current situation and shaping the response. Some examples of the groups involved were an older persons group, children and young people's representatives, mental health charities, armed forces, PAVS etc.

MAWW Fire and Rescue Service

KJ provided a brief update from a Fire Service perspective;

- Home fire safety checks were continuing with staff utilising PPE to safeguard themselves and customers. A package had been produced which would be made available on Hwb around fire safety in the home, due to the large number of children currently at home rather than in a school setting

- There has been an increase in grass fires, mostly in the NPT, Swansea, Powys and Ceredigion Local Authority areas, with some farmers burning outside the 31st March deadline. Local Authorities were being asked to remind farmers of this deadline in any dealings with them
- There had been an increase in the number of calls around domestic waste fires due to either waste not being collected or civic amenity site closures

SPJ noted that PCC had received 26 complaints during the month regarding domestic waste fires, up from approximately 4 in 2019. Access to Civic Amenity Sites was currently under review.

- The number of RTCs due to speeding had increased
- A number of firefighters had volunteered to drive ambulances and were receiving training
- Business fire safety advice was being provided and the Fire Service was working closely with the field hospitals set up across the MAWW region

KJ agreed with IW's view that there was an opportunity to do away with excess bureaucracy and 'red tape' in the future and that there were also opportunities to think about introducing more remote working practices going forward. He also noted that there had been an increase in FOI requests and would be interested to know whether other partners had experienced this.

Natural Resources Wales

AW said that the majority of NRW staff were currently working from home, however, forestry staff were working to ensure timber supply was ongoing and work was also ongoing to ensure that permits and licenses were being issued. NRW laboratory services had been closed due to social distancing issues therefore monitoring and analytical services had been considerably reduced. FOIs were being dealt with as usual with no significant increase in requests, however, enquirers were being asked to be patient with responses as some files were not available to those working from home.

PAVS

SL said that PAVS staff were also working from home and that this was proving to be effective overall. PAVS were working closely with PCC on the Community Hub and the Community Connectors were dealing with referrals.

There had been overwhelming support from communities and within days of the lockdown being announced 77 citizen led self-organising groups had sprung up around the County to help with tasks such as shopping, dog walking and collection of prescriptions. Sixty of these were now registered with the Pembrokeshire led Community Support Network and had received some training and support.

To date more offers of help had been received than had been needed and PAVS were struggling to place volunteers. SJ mentioned that this had also been the case with Hywel

Dda with regard to donations and offers of help and she would discuss this with SL outside the meeting. SL said she agreed with earlier comments about how the situation could provide an opportunity for the PSB to work together on recovery and in building community resilience.

DWP

JF noted that as of 16th April 1.5m Universal Credit claims had been received by DWP and that 10,000 staff had been redeployed to meet this demand. A wellbeing hub and Communications Strategy for staff had been developed. 93% of claims had so far been paid in full and on time. Of the 1.5m claims, 360k have applied for advances. Work was ongoing to provide LAs with meaningful management information on the number of UC claimants within each County. Job Centres were technically closed but were available for vulnerable customers.

As previously noted by other partners, a large amount of bureaucracy had been stripped out of the UC claim process in order to get claims up and running quickly. DWP had made resources available to help customers and employers and partners were asked to share these with their networks as appropriate. Links would be circulated following the meeting. Looking towards recovery, indications were that the labour market were looking to promote key worker vacancies.

LR

Pembrokeshire College

BW said that the college had closed on 23rd March but had now partially re-opened to accommodate NHS volunteer inductions and training. Some pre-planned building work was also taking place. Pastoral care was being provided in the form of 1:1 virtual contact with vulnerable students and 451 contacts had been made to date. WG had been very supportive of the FE sector with regard to funding, but cuts to work based learning going forward were anticipated. Further information had also been made available regarding how some qualifications would be graded.

Port of Milford Haven

AM said that the majority of staff were working from home but the Port was working normally with some changes to shifts to accommodate social distancing requirements. A number of projects had been delayed e.g. the Milford Waterfront Project.

PLANED

IT noted that PLANED had been contributing to the Independent Advisory Group discussions and that they were working with communities in different ways to progress work that was already in place before the lockdown. There were some concerns in communities about what would happen post-lockdown, especially in regard to the 'strength' of Pembrokeshire being a risk and around the fear that there would be an influx of visitors introducing Covid-19 cases.

Conversations had taken place with some of those in the agricultural network in terms of supply chains and ensuring sufficient workers for food harvesting. There would also be a need to look at the future use of community buildings and how they would operate. IT said that PLANED continued to provide signposting and support to those who needed it.

OPCC

AP said that victim services were running as usual but virtually rather than face to face. Criminal justice meetings were also taking place virtually. There were a number of risks and issues around early prisoner release and court suspensions but these were currently being managed. Going forward an increased need for bereavement and mental health support was anticipated.

Dyfed Powys Police (provided via email)

- Police currently at state green overall with some functions at amber (with regard to resources available).
- 10% approx. of staff are currently home working for various reasons.
- Some court hearings are being heard remotely at the police station over Skype.
- Operation 'Dovecote' appears to be working – ensuring essential travel only (I am grateful for PCC support with this operation)
- Crime in the county is down approximately 25% - safe assumption to associate this with lack of night time economy and social distancing.
- The briefing provided at the last PSB regarding response rota is still valid – Milford & Tenby will return to dedicated 24 hour coverage from 28/06
- Mental Health and Domestic Abuse incidents are being closely monitored.
- Assaults upon staff are up but no other discernible crime trends at present

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

TJ said that all paths had been closed and approximately 50% of staff were working from home. Maintenance staff would shortly work as normal with social distancing measures in place as required.

West Wales Care Partnership

MP noted that the infrastructure of the partnership had enabled a quick health and social care response. WG had allowed a relaxation of the requirements on funding streams in order for funds to be redirected to support the response to tackling the virus. This had included support to build field hospitals and discussions with WG would take place in the future about how this funding could be recouped.

The Technology Enabled Care and Connecting Communities project streams had been able to provide tablets to those socially isolating and shielding and use of the digital platform to match people to volunteering roles had been accelerated.

TJ thanked partners for their updates and invited them to highlight anything that they thought the PSB could take forward in the short term. IW referred back to his earlier comments regarding bureaucracy and whether all processes currently in place would

need to be reintroduced post-Covid. It would be important to consider how much 'normal' bureaucracy could be removed, to save money and time and therefore provide a better service for customers.

3. Role of the PSB in recovery

TJ then invited partners to share their thoughts on the role the PSB should take during the recovery planning period.

IW noted that the plan he had mentioned earlier was in the early stages of development but would be shared with the PSB as soon as possible. He also noted the value in including input from those not within PSB partner organisations in this phase, such as from tourism and business leaders within the County.

MB said that a draft recovery plan had been agreed by Hywel Dda UHB Gold Command and would be presented to the next meeting of the Board. This could be shared with partners, however, it was a very high level document at the moment and would need to be built on.

SL noted that PAVS had previously planned for support to five local action hubs but at present there were 60 in place as she had mentioned earlier in the meeting. The challenge and opportunity would therefore be around keeping these groups interested and engaged in the 'new future' for Pembrokeshire. She also said that in the past focus had been placed on the skills and experience that older people could bring but that many over 70s and those shielding now had a heightened nervousness because they were being referred to as vulnerable. MB suggested that it would be important to innovatively support vulnerable people going forward as they may be isolated for a longer period than other parts of the population.

With regard to community groups, both CT and SL said that it would be important to encourage people in these groups to continue in their roles and expand them going forward into a more structured democratic role as community, town or even county councillors and to continue the active citizenship continuum.

AW asked whether the priorities in the Well-being Plan would be reviewed. NE replied that as previously noted the current situation provided an opportunity for the PSB to support the recovery of Pembrokeshire as this would be the most important challenge facing the County for the next couple of years. Larger organisations would be drafting their recovery plans over the next couple of months and it was agreed that the PSB would look to develop a combined response from these.

4. Letter from Welsh Government

TJ briefly mentioned the letter received from WG regarding the removal of regional funding for the coming year.

NE explained that the plan had been to utilise this funding to employ an individual for 12 months to work alongside the software developer on the regional digital project, however, this would not affect this workstream going forward.

IW noted that the removal of funding was a detrimental response considering the important role of PSBs in the recovery planning process and that a reply should be sent

to WG highlighting this. TJ agreed to contact the Chairs of the other PSBs in the region to take this forward.

TJ also noted that Natalie Pearson from the Welsh Government had stepped down from her role in supporting PSBs and that he was grateful for the support that she had provided and would contact her to pass on his thanks on behalf of the PSB. A new WG representative, Ann Owen, had been appointed.

TJ

Partners agreed that it had been useful for partners to share experiences and intelligence on how they had dealt with the planning phase, current issues and the future role of the PSB. As previously agreed, recovery plans should be shared when available when a further PSB discussion would be scheduled on the PSB's role in bringing these together.

NE/LR

The meeting ended at 12.20pm.