



**Local Partnership Forum**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 13.00 hrs  
Via Skype**

**Present**

Ms Jan Tomlinson (JT)	UNISON and Trade Union Partners (Chair)
Mr Peter Bohan (PB)	BCUHB – Associate Director of Health, Safety & Equality
Ms Sharon Cawdell (SC)	UNISON
Ms Kate Clark (KC)	Secondary Care Medical Director
Ms Lesley Hall (LH)	Associate Director for Workforce & Organisational Development
Ms Susan Doyle (SD)	RCN
Ms Kay Hannigan (KH)	BCUHB – Head of Human Resources
Mrs Sue Hill (SH)	BCUHB – Executive Director of Finance
Ms Jackie Hughes (JH)	SoR and (Trade Union) Independent Member
Mr Adrian Jones (AJ)	BCUHB – Asst. Dir. Of Nursing, Mental Health & Learning Disabilities
Ms Catherine Jones (CJ)	Royal College of Nursing
Mr James May (JM)	UNISON
Ms Vivienne Nelson (VN)	UNISON / A4c Staff-side Lead
Mr Richard Oldfield (RO)	UNISON
Ms Alison Pawley (AP)	Unite
Mrs Georgina Roberts (GR)	BCUHB - Senior Head Of HR (West) And Women's, Workforce & Organisational Development
Mr Nick Such (NS)	BCUHB - Equality and Inclusion Manager – Workforce Projects
Ms Nia Thomas (NT)	BCUHB - Head Of Organisational & Employee Development, Workforce & Organisational Development
Mr Stuart Whittaker (SW)	Unite
Mr Mark Wilkinson (MW)	BCUHB – Executive Director for Planning & Performance
Ms Susan Williams (SWi)	Royal College of Nursing
Ms Sarah Wynne-Jones (SW-J)	BCUHB - Head Of Occupational Health & Wellbeing
Ms Pat Youds	Professional lead and head of service for Radiology

**In attendance**

Mrs F Lewis (FL)	For minute taking
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Agenda Item	Action By
<p>The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and wished to record her thanks for the way everyone was dealing so positively with the exceptionally challenging circumstances caused by the pandemic.</p>	
<p><b>L20/21 Apologies for Absence</b>  <b>L20/21.1</b> Apologies were received from Gill Harris, Sue Green, Teresa Owen, Adrian Thomas, Chris Stockport, Ffion Johnstone, Alex Tapley, David Barber, Debra Hickman, Richard Tanswell and Mike Openshaw.</p>	
<p><b>L20/22 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7/7/20 and Summary Action Plan</b>  <b>L20/22.1</b> The draft minutes were approved as an accurate record and updates were provided to the summary action log.</p>	
<p><b>L20/23 Verbal update on Special Measures</b>  <b>L20/23.1</b> Sue Hill, Executive Director of Finance, provided an update. She confirmed that there had been a recent, constructive meeting with Welsh Government where BCUHB explained its responses to the current pandemic and how it had proved to both Welsh Government and local partners that the actions taken had demonstrated an improved organisational alignment and capability. Welsh Government agreed that there had been substantial progress in leadership and governance, Maternity and Out of Hours. Areas that are currently being looked at for future improvement are strategy, performance, leadership and finance. To this end, a three year plan is being created. Mrs Hill confirmed that positive conversations are ongoing with Welsh Government regarding a support package for the transformation of the Health Board.  <b>L20/23.2</b> Mrs Hill confirmed that the senior management team is looking forward to the new Chief Executive starting in January and look forward to how the organisation is to progress and the work needed to get out of Special Measures, is generally acknowledged.  <b>L20/23.3</b> The Chair expressed disappointment that although the announcement on Welsh news had recognised how well the organisation had met the challenges presented to it during the pandemic, BCUHB still remains in Special Measures.  <b>L20/23.4</b> Cath Jones asked if the 40,000 referrals for treatment that are beyond the 36 weeks period are likely to have a detrimental effect on the wish to get out of Special Measures. Mrs Hill did not believe so, and added that this situation is being felt across the whole of Wales and not just in North Wales and that concern has to be to focus on the outcome for the patients before being concerned about how to get out of Special Measures.</p>	
<p><b>L20/24 Finance Update – Month 5</b>  <b>L20/24.1</b> Mrs Hill presented The Finance Report, which was noted, and highlighted certain parts of the report –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Financial Implications Summary on pg. 2, which shows a severely adverse £27.7m year to date variance, was based on the assumption that the extra spend was to be covered by Welsh Government however at the time this report was written, this had not been confirmed. It has since been confirmed that the spend will be covered by Welsh Government.</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There was a technical adjustment as to how figures were reported.</li><li>• Once the Q3/Q4 guidance was received from Welsh Government, it was confirmed that BCUHB would receive £83.1m (the Health Board's share of the £800m Welsh Government sustainability money put aside for COVID-19). This effectively covers the £88.2m adverse figure which will make Month 6 will look far more positive.</li></ul> <p><b>L20/24.2</b> Appendices 2 &amp; 3 highlighted the additional COVID-19 expenditure on field hospitals, Test Trace &amp; Protect and the flu and COVID vaccination programmes.</p> <p><b>L20/24.3</b> Jacqueline Hughes asked where costs of volunteering expenses were attributed. Sue Hill confirmed that costs would go under whichever department was concerned.</p> <p><b>It was resolved that SH would find out if it is possible to identify volunteering expenses by department.</b></p> <p><b>L20/24.4</b> Stuart Whittaker, Unite, asked if there was any extra funding available for IT equipment for people working from home as he is aware that there is concern that some people working remotely since the end of March were still unable to access a laptop? Sue Hill confirmed that the demand for IT equipment was unprecedented. Figures from the end of September showed 2,200 laptops were expected to be in stock – 1,350 of those were to be purchased using additional Welsh Government COVID-19 funding. Of the 2,200 laptops projected to be in stock, 1,500 were ring-fenced for specific projects and the remaining were to go towards the 800 requests in the system. Mrs Hill had already asked IT to look into prioritising people who need a laptop as opposed to people who could possibly take their desktop home instead.</p> <p><b>It was resolved that a member of IT management will attend the next meeting to explain the criteria for prioritising who receives laptops.</b></p>	<p>SH</p> <p>SH</p>
<p><b>L20/25 Corporate Planning Update</b></p> <p><b>L20/25.1</b> Mark Wilkinson, Executive Director for Planning &amp; Performance, presented his paper, which was noted. Mr Wilkinson highlighted the fact that that we are in the middle of unprecedented times with a huge amount of uncertainty. He spoke about the significant challenges brought about by COVID-19 upon every person in North Wales; he noted however that there were also many positives that it had brought, which must be built upon and described the core priorities currently being planned towards.</p> <p><b>L20/25.2</b> Susan Williams, wishing to ensure that all divisions were being represented at the Forum, asked if anyone from Mental Health was attending the meeting. Adrian Jones confirmed that he was there to represent Mental Health and that he would report back to both Ian Wilkie and Mike Smith.</p> <p><b>L20/25.3</b> Cath Jones enquired as to whether the Health Board, should it need to increase capacity due to COVID, had considered the use of various 'ghost' wards? The wards Mrs Jones referred to are such that have been empty of patients for years but remain ready to be used at very short notice. Mr Wilkinson confirmed that they had and responded by describing the intended sequencing, should the need to increase capacity arise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Firstly, the Health Board will seek to see as many patients as possible in the three main sites</li><li>• Secondly, the Health Board's intention will be to place patients in the Community hospitals,</li></ul>	

- Thirdly, and only after the first two options had been exhausted, the Health Board would seek to open temporary hospitals. Mr Wilkinson stressed that only once the capacity within existing hospitals is exhausted, will temporary hospitals be considered.

**L20/25.4** Mrs Williams asked how the Health Board intends to staff these extra wards, should they be required. Mr Wilkinson discussed the three options currently available to the Health Board –

- Redeployment
- Temporarily ceasing some planned care work
- The last resort would be relaxing some of the staffing ratios. It was noted that should this option be chosen, patient and staff safety must be of paramount importance.

**L20/25.5** Lesley Hall, Associate Director for Workforce & Organisational Development, noted that the pandemic is one of the biggest challenges the Health Board has ever faced and that the Bank Team is currently advertising to recruit both registered and support staff. Work was also being undertaken to seek to fill vacancies in both vaccination and TTP teams. Miss Hall also wished it to be noted that the Health Board had, during the pandemic, received a very good response from recently retired staff, wishing to come back into both nursing and medicine to help.

**L20/25.6** Kate Clark, Secondary Care Medical Director, told members that her staff were looking at models produced by various professional bodies, to ascertain what reasonable staffing levels would be.

There were no further questions and The Chair thanked Mr Wilkinson for his presentation and for attending.

*[14.00 hrs. MW left the meeting]*

#### **L20/26 Verbal Update – COVID-19 Pandemic and Outbreak Management.**

**L20/26.1** In Sue Green's absence, Miss Hall provided an update and told the members that the FAQ section on the intranet had proved a great success and that this way of communicating with staff will be used in the future.

**L20/26.2** The fortnightly, touch-base meeting with key trade union partners were, due to the increased pressures emerging in the system, returning to weekly meetings and were very helpful in ensuring TU partners were kept up to date.

**L20/26.3** A great deal of work is currently being undertaken around workforce planning for the vaccination programme, TTP and the temporary hospitals. W&OD is not only looking at recruiting staff but also at how best to utilise existing staff, whose personal situations stop them from being able to carry out their normal, front line jobs

**L20/26.4** Peter Bohan, Associate Director of Health, Safety & Equality, delivered an overview of the work that is currently taking place regarding COVID-19, highlighting

- Infection control – the speedy response required when outbreaks occur
- TTP – quick and appropriate tracking of people
- Social distancing reviews – staff-to-staff infections are still common due to lack of social distancing and masks and how, with the help of the trade unions, W&OD are supporting this.
- Increased use of epidemiology techniques.

- Ensuring Datix reports are being implemented immediately and a 72 hour review is undertaken of those COVID incidents
- Security review
- Newly establish BaME network group – meeting for the first time later this month
- Risk assessments
- All Wales Risk Assessment – PB, JH and the ESR team are currently doing a piece of work to get as many staff members as possible to complete it to identify where the risks lie and to report back to Welsh Government in March 2021.

**L20/26.5** Georgina Roberts, Senior Head Of HR (West) And Women's, Workforce & Organisational Development, delivered an update on safe and agile working for staff and how she and Sue Morgan, Head of Health & Safety, are in the process of putting together all the relevant guidance and documents around remote working into one guide. Mrs Roberts described the plans for remote working hubs being created for people who are not able to work from home but are still able to go to a Health Board building to work instead. The Chair praised the initiative which brings staff, who might be unable to work in their substantive areas or their homes, back into a safe working environment.

**L20/26.6.** Cath Jones, RCN, asked if it was known how many staff are currently 'shielding'? Kay Hannigan, Head of Human Resources, advised the members that originally there had been around 500 people, however this figure had now greatly reduced to fewer than 50. It was also noted that a significant number of staff are working from home.

### **L20/27 Verbal Update – Vaccinations – Flu and COVID-19**

**L20/27.1** Sarah Wynne-Jones, Head Of Occupational Health & Wellbeing, delivered her update. It was noted that the Flu Vaccination Campaign which had started on 28.9.20, had by 21.10.20 delivered 10,926 vaccinations – the most they have ever given in such a short period of time – a figure that represents 56.49% of the total Health Board staff but in order to get to the 75% uptake (a figure that the Chief Medical Officer has requested), 3,373 more staff must be vaccinated. In addition, 1,945 immunisations have also been given to people not necessarily classed as core BCU staff – of this number, 688 immunisation had been given to bank staff, and the remaining to doctors, GP trainees, FY1s, Public Health microbiology students, hospice staff, etc.

**L20/27.2** Area teams in the East and West, along with their respective hospitals, lead the way in uptake. Of the approximately 500 vaccinators available, 291 are currently delivering and active.

**L20/27.3** Around 1,500 immunisations have been delivered by the two additional sites set up in Deeside and Llandudno. These locations were primarily created to provide COVID-secure environments to support people who were working from home or shielding.

**L20/27.4** Managers currently receive reports twice a week, showing their teams' vaccination uptakes in all the service areas.

**L20/27.5** It was noted that careful management of stocks of vaccine is in place as vaccine supplies are becoming limited nationally. The Government has some stockpiles to support any surge there might be in public demand and these might become accessible in the future, should the public demand not be there. Therefore it is critical to manage the remaining doses carefully.

<p><b>L20/27.6</b> The Chair wished to thank Ms Wynne-Jones for her update on Flu vaccination programme and was very pleased to hear that staff at so many of the critical areas were managing to get their flu vaccinations due, in no small part, to her team's care and diligence.</p> <p><b>L20/27.7</b> Ms Wynne-Jones also reported to the meeting about current planning to roll out the COVID Vaccination Programme, which it is hoped might happen in early 2021. There are several work streams, including logistics, pharmacy and IT. Delivery of vaccinations will primarily be targeted at clinical workers in the first instance, using existing vaccinators alongside recruiting some new ones.</p> <p><b>L20/27.8</b> Sue Williams, RCN, asked Ms Wynne-Jones if there is evidence to prove that any new COVID vaccine will be safe? Ms Wynne-Jones explained that the Joint Committee on Immunisations &amp; Vaccinations reviews all evidence from trials and research carried out to date; they then assess this information, which various agencies and research institutes are currently looking at, surrounding each vaccine's efficacy data. Assurances have been received that this research has been conducted from an early stage.</p> <p><b>L20/27.9</b> Current understanding is that even if someone has previously had COVID, there is no solid evidence as to how long antibodies might remain in their bodies and therefore it will be recommended that all front line, clinical workers are vaccinated.</p> <p><b>L20/27.10.</b> The Chair wished it to be noted that the trade union partners wished to thank Ms Wynne-Jones and her team for all the hard work that they are doing to ensure the safety of all staff.</p>	
<p><b>L20/28 Raising Concerns / Safehaven Review</b></p> <p><b>L20/28.1</b> Miss Hall presented her paper. The findings in the paper showed that although there are currently two main routes for people to raise concerns – the All Wales Procedure for Raising Concerns and Safehaven, it was apparent that some people were still reluctant to raise concerns and therefore there is a review taking place to find out how to improve the situation. The paper showed that Safehaven was not being used to its full potential as it appeared to have some limitations surrounding the quality of information it allowed to be noted.</p> <p><b>L20/28.2</b> A system similar to England's 'Freedom to Speak Up' is currently being reviewed, along with another option which uses a portal system, developed to allow better co-ordination of concerns that come in.</p> <p><b>L20/28.3</b> The review looked through the options available and the best way forward; hoping for input from not only the trade union partners but also from people that have raised concerns in the past. The Chair welcomed this approach.</p>	
<p><b>L20/29 The BCUnity BAME Staff Network</b></p> <p><b>L20/29.1</b> Nick Such, Equality and Inclusion Manager – Workforce Projects, presented his paper. Initially there will be five monthly meetings – the first on 30.10.20. After the first five meetings, they will become either bi-monthly or quarterly – depending on what seems appropriate. The name and specifics of the group will be determined by itself and Mr Such hopes to receive trade union support.</p>	
<p><b>L20/30 Workforce Engagement Update</b></p> <p><b>L20/30.1</b> Nia Thomas, Head Of Organisational &amp; Employee Development, presented her paper and referred back to the Staff Engagement Strategy approved</p>	

<p>in 2016 and all the staff engagement activities that had taken place linked to this strategy. This strategy has now been incorporated into the Workforce and Organisational Development Strategy 2019/2022.</p> <p><b>L20/30.2</b> Ms Thomas wished to highlight both the findings of the NHS Wales Staff Survey 2018 along with the fact that the next NHS Staff Survey is due to be launched w/c 2.11.20. This will be a significantly shorter survey than those historically, with approximately 20 questions - down from 80 in the previous survey - and will be a very teams-based approach.</p> <p><b>L20/30.3</b> Ms Thomas also wished to highlight the Health Board's own quarterly survey – Be Proud – which has just closed and wished it to be noted that this did not receive as much response as hoped for – only 12% - which she put down to 'COVID-fatigue'.</p>	
<p><b>L20/31 Job Evaluation Programme Report</b></p> <p><b>L20/31.1</b> In the absence of Alex Tapley, Miss Hall presented the report, which was self-explanatory, however she wished to note the fact that due to the pandemic, the normal KPIs around job evaluation requests are not being reached with the necessity to prioritise COVID-related jobs, such as TTP and antigen roles. However, as was evidenced, the backlog created by the pandemic has been greatly reduced over the last three months and that they hope to be back on track very soon.</p> <p><b>L20/31.2</b> Mrs Williams wished it to be noted that she sat on a 'virtual' panel recently and found it worked very well.</p>	
<p><b>L20/32 Health &amp; Wellbeing Report</b></p> <p><b>L20/32.1</b> Sarah Wynne-Jones presented her very detailed report.</p> <p><b>L20/32.2</b> Due to information received regarding sickness absence, Ms Wynne-Jones' team decided to visit staff with musculo-skeletal and stress and anxiety problems with a view to providing bespoke risk assessments. The H&amp;W team, Workforce and partners provided training in the new Attendance Management Policy to 76% of managers and Ms Wynne-Jones described a number of Health and Well-being workshops that have taken place across the Health Board.</p> <p><b>L20/32.3</b> Ms Wynne-Jones reported that there has been an review of Occupational Health Provision at All Wales level and that there are early discussions around which models will be going forward.</p> <p><b>L20/32.4</b> During COVID, Occupational Health has been giving out general advice around fitness for work, shielding and other health-related questions. It had also reacted quickly to provide fast-track pre-employments, consultations by phone and ensuring that they provided COVID-secure environments for appointments, providing a risk-based approach to what they could and could not do.</p> <p><b>L20/32.5</b> Ms Wynne-Jones wished her thanks be noted not only to all the retired Occupational Health employees who had returned to work during the pandemic, but also to the redeployed staff.</p> <p><b>L20/32.6</b> Ms Wynne-Jones described the resources that have been secured:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Dr Marcus Wong – a full-time occupation health physician, who started with the Health Board in May.</li><li>– A temporary Deputy COVID project lead</li><li>– During w/c 26/10/20 interviews are due to commence for a Deputy Head of Occupational Health and Wellbeing. The successful candidate will support succession planning for the service long term.</li></ul>	

<p>– Six Band 5 registered nurses intended to work with the team for six months, to reduce the backlog</p>	
<p><b>L20/33 Issues for discussion raised by Trade Union Representatives</b>  <b>L20/33.1</b> Cath Jones raised a question concerning Brexit and asked if there was to be a communication strategy for staff on this? Miss Hall advised the members that pre-COVID there had been a Brexit group that met for this very purpose and that there were many plans in place, and it was noted that this group has recently re-convened, with Sally Baxter as lead. Mrs Hill advised the members that from a finance perspective, she had attended a meeting the previous week with Jonathan Irvine, Procurement Director for NWSSP, who had provided an update on the preparations for Brexit – confirming that planning is taking place.  <b>It was resolved that</b> a communication will be sent to all staff in the coming weeks to provide a Brexit update with regards to the Health Board.  <b>L20/33.2</b> Mrs Hughes wished to bring it to the attention of the members that she had sent an email to the HMTs concerning the lack of adequate staff changing facilities and was disappointed to report that she had not received a response to date. Mrs Hughes had been approached by many staff concerned about the inability to socially-distance whilst changing before and after shifts, and about the lack of any facilities to change in the workplace at a time when the Health Board is insisting that staff do so instead of travelling to and from work in their uniforms. Mrs Hughes asked to see what could be done in this regard to support staff. Sue Williams confirmed that in clinical areas there is a lack of changing facilities, lockers and showers and that staff are having to change in shared toilets – and that this was particularly problematic in the smaller hospitals. Stuart Whittaker wished to reiterate that there is a problem surrounding lack of space and facilities for staff to change. He was aware that in the Pharmacy department in Bangor, 100 female staff are expected to change in 5 ladies toilets and that these facilities are totally inadequate.  <b>It was resolved that</b> Mrs Hughes forward the email she sent to the HMTs, regarding the lack of staff changing facilities, to Miss Hall, who will ensure it is in turn forwarded to the Heads of HR to raise in the HMTs.</p>	<p><b>SB</b></p> <p><b>JH/LH</b></p>
<p><b>L20/34 Quality &amp; Performance Report</b>  <b>L20/34.1</b> The report was noted.</p>	
<p><b>L20/35 Welsh Partnership Forum Minutes.</b>  <b>L20/35.1</b> The minutes had not been provided.</p>	
<p><b>L20/36 Strategy Partnership &amp; Population Health Committee Minutes</b>  <b>L20/36.1</b> The minutes were noted.</p>	
<p><b>L20/37 Workforce Partnership Group</b>  <b>L20/37.1</b> Kay Hannigan, Head of Human Resources, wished to thank all the staff-side and trade union partners who had helped out during the pandemic – and acknowledged the difficulties felt by managers and staff across the Health Board. The input received from the trade unions was invaluable.  <b>L20/37.2</b> Mrs Hannigan acknowledged that the WPG had been stood down between February and August but that it is now back up and functioning again.</p>	



<p>Mrs Hannigan was concerned that she was receiving very little input from operational managers. Mrs Hannigan noted that a key project is the Healthier Working Relationships Policy, which will be approved later in the year.</p> <p><b>L20/37.3</b> The Chair thanked Mrs Hannigan for her kind words and wished it to be noted that the pandemic has underlined the excellent partnership working relationship that have been nurtured between the trade unions and the Health Board.</p> <p><b>L20/37.4</b> Alison Pawley, Unite, talked of her frustration at the process for getting mediation carried out but that she was really pleased to see that a working group is being set up to improve communication and to help foster healthier working relationships going forward.</p> <p><b>L20/37.5</b> When asked about current mediation training on offer, Mrs Hannigan pointed out that a substantial amount of mediation training has been given over the years and as this training was expensive therefore the Health Board's aim is to ensure that these people who have received training go on to use it rather than train more people, thus using scarce resources. Discussions are currently taking place with WULF (Welsh Union Learning Fund) about what sort of training is on offer – possibly less than a formal accreditation in mediation. Miss Hall advised the members that there may be some possibilities to come out of The all Wales Policy.</p>	
<p><b>L20/38 Workforce Report</b></p> <p><b>L20/38.1</b> In the absence of Sue Green, Lesley Hall presented the report, which was the most up to date report however, due to the pandemic, was from the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of last year.</p>	
<p><b>L20/39 Documents circulated via email to members between meetings.</b></p> <p><b>L20/39.1</b> The emails were all noted.</p>	
<p><b>L20/40 Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>L20/40</b> There was none.</p> <p><i>[The meeting closed at 15:00 hours]</i></p>	
<p><b>L20/9 Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Tuesday, 19/1/21, 1-4pm, Virtual via Teams</p>	