



PFRB(18)07
Pandemic Flu Readiness Board (PFRB)

**Held in 10 Victoria Street
Wednesday 24 January 2017, 1100-1230**

Minutes

Departments present:

Joint Chairs

Katharine Hammond (CO) and Nick Adkin (DHSC)

CABINET OFFICE
CABINET OFFICE Comms
DCMS
DEFRA
DfE
DfT
DHSC
DHSC Comms
DWP

GO-SCIENCE
HMRC
HOME OFFICE
MHCLG
MoD
NHS ENGLAND
PHE
WELSH GOVERNMENT

Via phone

FCO
HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE
SCOTLAND OFFICE
SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT
NORTHERN IRELAND EXECUTIVE

Secretariat

Name Redacted (CO)



Item 1 – Welcome, Introduction and Review of Actions

1. KATHARINE HAMMOND (CO) opened the seventh meeting of the Pandemic Flu Readiness Board (PFRB) by welcoming all attendees. It was noted that there would be one more meeting of the PFRB ahead of the update going to NSC(THRC).
2. KATHARINE HAMMOND requested that HOME OFFICE identify a senior point person to represent their department on pandemic flu, a request arising from the letter written by NSA/DH Permanent Secretary dated 21 September that was sent to Permanent Secretaries across Whitehall.

- **Action:** HOME OFFICE to provide a senior point of contact on pandemic flu, as requested in the NSA/DH Permanent Secretary letter of 21 September by **Friday 9 February 2018**.

3. The Board's attention was drawn to paper 1, outlining actions which are still outstanding from previous Board meetings. It was also noted that the PFRB chairs have, since the last meeting, written to senior contacts in the Devolved Administrations and meetings are now being arranged.
4. KATHARINE HAMMOND turned to MINISTRY OF DEFENCE to update the Board on the progress made on for the approach to Military Aid to Civil Authorities (MACA) during a flu pandemic.
5. The MINISTRY OF DEFENCE informed the Board that discussions had been held following engagement with HM TREASURY, and that a cost recovery approach would be pursued with a MOU developed setting out approach. More detail to be worked up and shared in due course.
6. The MINISTRY of DEFENCE also updated on their sector resilience work and noted that more information was required from Other Government Departments on potential military demands during a pandemic.
7. NHS ENGLAND noted that the London District Regional Points of Command will be running a pandemic influenza Mission Rehearsal Exercise LONDON in late February, and highlighted that this would be an opportunity to test MACA thinking / arrangements.
8. SCOTLAND OFFICE requested that all parts of the UK should be considered when developing thinking on MACA.

Item 2 – Progress Update

9. NICK ADKIN invited the SROs for each workstream/strand to update the Board on progress made since the last PFRB.
10. Workstream 1 (CHLOE SELLWOOD): The paper on population triage has been delivered to the Chief Medical Officer (England). Feedback has also been received



from the Royal Colleges. Currently awaiting feedback from Devolved Administrations.

- **Action:** DEVOLVED ADMINISTRATIONS to provide feedback (or nil return) on population triage document to CHLOE SELLWOOD by **Friday 9 February 2018**.

11. Workstream 2 [Name Redacted] Paper on augmenting adult social care facilities has been delivered to the Chief Medical Officer (England) and PIPP Board. The next steps for this work stream are to continue working with ADASS on how to operationalise the guidance.
12. Workstream 3 [NR] Progress has been hampered in the past weeks by cross-Government response activities, and therefore, this work stream will be re-prioritised over the following weeks. The next steps are to host a workshop on excess deaths with local tier contingency planners so that their responses can form the basis of a guidance on augmenting capacity. *Post meeting note – the workshop is scheduled to take place on 21 February before the next PFRB meeting.*
13. Workstream 4 [Name Redacted]: Challenge panels on sector preparedness during a pandemic have been held for most Government departments, and panels with the remaining departments will take place in the next two weeks.

- **Action:** ALL DEPARTMENTS to provide SCS-cleared statements of preparedness to [Name Redacted] @cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk by Friday, 2 February 2018.

14. Workstrand 5 (communications): [NR] informed the Board that the four-nations comms strategy is being finalised (which will replace the 2012 comms strategy), and is currently awaiting feedback from the Devolved Administrations. It will then need to be cleared by the comms leads, the DAs and all the four CMOs before being approved.

- **Action:** DEVOLVED ADMINISTRATIONS to continue to liaise with DHSC Comms on the best approach to deliver the four-nations pandemic flu communications strategy, ahead of the PFRB anniversary.

Item 3 – Overall Outputs

15. DHSC introduced Paper 3 on overall outputs, outlining the priorities for the final products of the Board and an indicative list of year 2 activities in priority order. It was noted that there will be resource commitments needed from a range of Departments beyond February 2018.
16. It was proposed that the 2011 UK Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Strategy would receive a light touch refresh.

- **Action:** DHSC [NR] and [Name Redacted] to ensure Annex A of Paper 3 tabled at this PFRB is updated to take into account all year 1 outputs.



17. Referring to paragraph 9 of Paper 3 outlining the Board's outputs for year 2, Welsh Government suggested that it would be a good opportunity to also renew the Cabinet Office document, Preparing for Pandemic Influenza: Guidance for Local Planners (2013).

- **Action:** MINISTRY OF HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT to gather feedback from local responders in the upcoming workshops on whether the Cabinet Office-issued guidance to LRFs, "Preparing for pandemic influenza: Guidance for Local Planners," is felt to be out of date.

18. STUART WAINWRIGHT (CCS) stated that priorities in year 2 will need to include further work on excess deaths. In addition, the need for socialisation and exercising is required in year 2 and beyond.

19. KATHARINE HAMMOND also noted that it is important to test the list on paragraph 9 of paper 3 with local responders attending the upcoming workshops, to determine whether they feel there is anything missing.

Item 4 – Local Tier Engagement

20. MHCLG introduced paper 4, outlining proposals for the upcoming PFRB workshops with the local tier. The attention of all departments was drawn to the detailed findings in Annex B which should be used to inform other workstreams.

21. The discussion turned to the Resilience Capability Survey (RCS) and the disparities between the local tiers on their pandemic preparedness plans.

- **Action:** MHCLG to review a sample of LRFs pandemic influenza plans to understand breadth and depth of issues considered.

22. NHS England noted the need to re-communicate key messages on PPE, antivirals and vaccines during a pandemic with LRFs.

- **Action:** NHS England, PHE, DHSC and MHCLG to agree the most appropriate approach to re-communicating key health messages with LRFs and action.

23. STUART WAINWRIGHT sought clarification on the likely membership and purpose of any pandemic flu working group and its role in relation to other existing groups / structures i.e. would it focus on PFRB outputs of being a longer term advisory group.

- **Action:** MHCLG to consider the establishment of a local-tier pandemic flu working group further in light of feedback from the forthcoming local-tier workshops. More detailed proposals to be tabled at the February PFRB.

24. The WELSH GOVERNMENT highlighted the Wales LRF guidance and the action list as an example of good practice.



25. KATHARINE HAMMOND noted that at the LRF chairs conference on 22 March her opening remarks would update on the work of the PFRB.

Item 5 – Draft Pan Flu Bill (Workstream 5)

26. DHSC presented Paper 5 on the progress of the pandemic influenza bill.

27. GREG MIDCALF (DfE) noted the thinking done by DfE in relation to school closures. This has yet to be tested with Ministers / Seniors but will be done urgently.

- **Action:** DfE to test with their Ministers the nature of existing powers in relation to school closures and update the draft Pandemic Flu Bill Team.

- **Action:** MHCLG to share feedback from the 1-1 LRF engagement with DfE.

28. There was a general discussion about project plans, deliverables and timescales including overall delivery across the four nations by summer 2018.

- **Action:** Devolved Administrations to work with the Bill Team on project plans for delivery by the end of July.

Item 6 – Moral and Ethical Considerations (Workstream 5)

29. **Name Redacted** (CO) presented Paper 6 on the progress of the moral and ethical workstream.

30. The MINISTRY OF DEFENCE has engaged faith networks in MoD who are keen to assist with this work.

31. CHLOE SELLWOOD (NHS England) noted the involvement of lay people on NHS groups / board .

- **Action:** MoD to put CO in touch with contacts in the faith network.

- **Action:** All Departments to consider indicative membership further and provide any specific suggestions to **Name Redacted** (CO)

Item 7 – AOB and Next Steps

32. KATHARINE HAMMOND outlined the expectations for the next PFRB meeting on 21 February.



- **Action:** SECRETARIAT to commission papers for the 21st February PFRB on:
 - a) the update to NSC (CO/DHSC);
 - b) the outcome of the local tier workshops and next steps including the working group (MHCLG);
 - c) approach to monitoring and alerting to a pandemic (DHSC). *Post meeting note- this may now take the form of a teach-in from DHSC modellers.*

33. The March meeting will be take place on Thursday 29th March.