

Chief Executives' Teleconference – 20/03/20

Blaenau Gwent – Michelle Morris Bridgend – Mark Shephard Caerphilly – Christina Harrhy Cardiff – Paul Orders Carmarthenshire – Wendy Walters Ceredigion – Sue Conwy – Iwan Davies Denbighshire – Judith Greenhalgh Flintshire – Colin Everett Gwynedd – Dilwyn Williams Isle of Anglesey – Annwen Morgan Merthyr Tydfil – Ellis Cooper Monmouthshire – Paul Matthews	Neath Port Talbot – Steven Phillips Powys – Caroline Turner Pembrokeshire – Ian Westley Rhondda Cynon Taf – Chris Bradshaw Swansea – Phil Roberts Torfaen – Alison Ward Vale of Glamorgan – Rob Thomas WLGA – Chris Llewelyn WLGA – Tim Peppin WLGA – Jon Rae WLGA – Naomi Alleyne WLGA – Daniel Hurford
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- Chaired by Chris Llewelyn

Update on Issues

Education (Chris)

- Minister issued statement on expectations next week
- WG definition of key workers published this afternoon – no discussion with WLGA beforehand. WLGA been advising LAs to follow UK Govt guidance initially, as this is what the public will expect
- WLGA messages to WG has been to allow LAs to implement whatever plans can be put in place for next week for FSM, children of key workers, vulnerable children important – best placed

Transport (Tim)

- School transport – Confederation of Transport in discussions with WLGA
- Concern amongst transport providers loss of income particularly tour income.
- LAs still providing transport for key worker children. Leaders wanted social care covered too.
- Letter being drafted by Cllr Andrew Morgan and Ken Skates (*now circulated*) re. 75% payment

Finance (Jon)

- WLGA written to WG following Leaders meeting re. social care pressures and council tax
- Council tax holiday/relief – in discussion with Treasurers
 - income problem around business rates

- Looking to reprofile RSG payments – more payment upfront rather than uniform monthly throughout the year
- Fiscal stimulus package – agreed as LG to administer £850m
- Discussions with WG to fund a large-scale capital funding scheme
- Treasurers coming together this afternoon

Social Services (Naomi)

- Access and availability of PPE – guidance from WG on how to use PPE/where PPE can be accessed
- Testing of social care staff – issue as people are self-isolating and not working
 - NHS staff – not mentioning social care staff – WLGA pursuing
- 70/100k vulnerable individuals – ‘shielding scheme’ letters
 - Will include UPRN number compatible with LAs database
 - Wording around seeking support from councils – will strongly suggest people use their existing support mechanisms – councils should not be first point of contact
 - CVCs are ready to help councils

Other matters raised by Chief Executives:

- PPE – Urgent need in all LAs, particularly needed for social care workers, hostel staff and staff working with the homeless. Some supplies (e.g Carms) coming through.
- Concerns about the ‘shielding scheme’ – potentially huge numbers locally
 - LAs have not seen/had input in the letter
 - Concerns around number of residents who will require support from the council – noted that Cllr Morgan will see letter by the end of Friday
 - Concerns around ‘shielding scheme’ letters being sent to primary homes
 - WLGA assured that councils will be noted as ‘last resort’ in letter, family, friends, neighbours first port of call.
- Rural authorities are seeing an influx of second homeowners – LAs not sure of who is where. Massive impact particularly around waste and potential social care (as well as potential on health service).
- Several LAs taking a phased approach regarding schools next week - in some LAs all schools be open Monday to Wednesday – demand in terms of provision detailed approach by end of week, and scaling back depending on demand. Others adopting hub model
- Concern around arm’s length commercial entity – leisure/bus companies
- Concerns regarding refuse, LAs currently have minimum staffing levels – indicating childcare impact next week
- Noted that LAs are looking at redeployment/retraining staff as of Monday – huge response from staff volunteering to move from core roles to support emergency effort.

- Business support – financial hardship – how the business community can work with LA
- LAs moving to 7-day operation – switchboard operated on weekends
- Issue around sustainability of domiciliary care/care homes – appearing to not take people in
- apacity for education provision – 20% of learners are from families of key workers is UK expectation – figure likely to be higher in Wales – some schools will see majority of pupils in attendance (60% in Conwy and 80% in NPT)
- Flintshire – £3m fund from reserves to cover leisure, AGMs, theatre, Community Asset Transfers, 1 month rent relief on commercial properties (representations in due course to recover from WG)
- What discussion is there about year end capital expenditure grants to be carried forwards?
 - WLGA has had discussions with Treasury, who have not been flexible, WG want to help)
- Proposal that councils could re-programme council tax payments if RSG is reprofiled and paid upfront, it's a cash flow issue – e.g. residents may not have to pay council tax until September if RSG comes in now.
- Concerns around council tax relief/small business grant scheme – expectation that it's wanted on Monday – no guidance. Also, many people in Wales public sector, so will be paid, any council tax relief scheme needs careful consideration.
- Need Concerns for rural authorities and the difficulties with rural schools – FSM secondary school children may be able to access their FSM in local primary school
 - Concerns around FSM vouchers proposed by WG – may not be providing a healthy meal
- Cross border issues across Wales – NPT willing to offer care provider support to Powys
- Concerns from LAs food banks – availability of food major issues
- Torfaen – mobile testing sites 1 on Monday and 2 Wednesday for public – social care staff priority
- Concerns around information coming out around rate of peak
 - Forward planning around mass deaths and burials
- Councils leading the response – e.g. in Pembrokeshire Hywel Dda urgently requested 1,000 extra beds – the council supplied 1,700
- Concerns about WG's emergency planning approach and coordination – lack of engagement with LAs, poor communication, delay in approaches following UK Government announcements 'WG 48hrs behind the curve', WG Key Workers list came out 12 hours after UK Government on afternoon of last day of school. LAs best placed to respond locally and via LRFs. LAs not waiting for WG guidance or direction, planning and implementing already.
 - WLGA already raising concerns with DGs following leaders' meeting