

Message

From: Chris Llewelyn [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=1DA2A216127C4059B8D079F4113A1004-CHRIS LLEWE]
Sent: 26/03/2020 23:44:19
To: 'Tracey.Burke@gov.wales' [Tracey.Burke@gov.wales]; 'PS.PermanentSecretary@gov.wales' [PS.PermanentSecretary@gov.wales]; 'Andrew.Goodall@Gov.Wales' [Andrew.Goodall@Gov.Wales]; 'Andrew.Slade@gov.wales' [Andrew.Slade@gov.wales]; 'Desmond.Clifford@gov.wales' [Desmond.Clifford@gov.wales]
CC: 'Shan.Morgan@gov.wales' [Shan.Morgan@gov.wales]; 'Paul.Griffiths003@gov.wales' [Paul.Griffiths003@gov.wales]; 'Morgan, Andrew (Councillor)' [Andrew.Morgan2@rctcbc.gov.uk]
Subject: RE: Communications and Engagement with Local Authorities

Tracey,

Many thanks for your reply and I'm sorry that it has taken me so long to acknowledge your response. It's been a busy week for all of us. The engagement between your colleagues, and Steve and Reg in particular, has increased significantly over the last week and I am grateful to all of you for responding so positively. As you rightly state, it is an unprecedented national crisis and we must all do our bet to protect the people of Wales.

I mentioned in my earlier email that we are currently holding daily briefing sessions with the 22 council leaders and that I would share concerns raised at those meetings with you and your colleagues. Below is a short summary of the issues raised at today's meeting. Please feel free to share with your colleagues as you deem appropriate. Frank Atherton has agreed to participate in tomorrow's meeting and I will provide you with a further briefing following tomorrow's meeting.

I hope this approach is helpful and I am more than happy to discuss any of the issues raised with you or any of your colleagues.

Best wishes,

Chris.

Actions/Issues Raised at Local Government Leaders' Teleconference 26th March

- PPE – clarity around procurement. Mixed messaging from WG (ranging from LAs not to procure separately but if you have, WG will underwrite it and share supply with WG). LAs also able to procure hand-sanitizer directly. Also, if LAs are able to source supplies, why can't WG?
- Testing – confusion about messaging. Some LAs have been told social care not included even though Minister confirmed this on Monday.
- Finance
 - urgent clarification of date of RSG payments. This was covered in Ministerial meeting and subsequent letter to Minister yesterday, but was raised again as a major concern.
 - flood grant deadline of 31st March needs to be extended. Causing undue anxiety and pressure.
 - Urgent clarification of timing of payments LAs of small business grant funding and guidance
- Shielding Scheme for vulnerable people – ensure communications about the operation of the scheme are timely and clear
- WG Comms and Coordination
 - Continual frustration, growing in certain areas. Term 'Gridlock' being used
 - Concern about announcements being made with limited guidance/information provided beforehand/at same time to LG

- Concerns about chain of command – WG not responding or very slowly to urgent requests for information/guidance. Continued and strong message from chief executives and leaders - view in Gwent that LRF communications/coordination is good, but links into WG are not and too many delays.
- Not clear why Wales Resilience Forum hasn't been set up to meet to coordinate and receive updates from regions.
- Emergency legislation - Lack of clarity and advice in relation to Wales and England regulations has caused significant email traffic to manage
- Prisoner Release – significant concern that prisoners not being risk assessed before early release. This needs to be addressed. WLGA is also raising with Probation Service
- Emergency Bed provision – Several LAs already working proactively with LHBs. LAs receptive and responsive but need more WG/LHB coordination and resource, advance warning and sharing of specifications and guidance.
- Flexibility of teachers/teaching unions about weekend and Easter holiday support – reassurance and shared understanding with unions and WG is needed. WLGA CE will discuss with teacher unions in meeting tomorrow.
- Volunteering Scheme – catching up after Minister's statement, needed better planning and coordination before announcements. WLGA discussing with WCVA today and trying to coordinate with LAs and put in place all-Wales communications/web facilities.

From: Tracey.Burke@gov.wales <Tracey.Burke@gov.wales>

Sent: 22 March 2020 22:09

To: Chris Llewelyn <chris.llewelyn@WLGA.GOV.UK>; PS.PermanentSecretary@gov.wales; Andrew.Goodall@Gov.Wales; Andrew.Slade@gov.wales; Desmond.Clifford@gov.wales

Cc: Shan.Morgan@gov.wales

Subject: RE: Communications and Engagement with Local Authorities

Chris re-sending as Andrew Goodall and Andrew Slade's email addresses were incorrect.

Kind regards

Tracey

From: Burke, Tracey (EPS - Director General)

Sent: 22 March 2020 22:05

To: Chris Llewelyn <chris.llewelyn@WLGA.GOV.UK>; PS Permanent Secretary <PS.PermanentSecretary@gov.wales>; Andrew.goodall@wales.nhs.uk; Andrew.Slade@wales.gsi.gov.uk; Clifford, Desmond (OFM - Director General) <Desmond.Clifford@gov.wales>

Cc: Morgan, Shan (PSG - Permanent Secretary's Office) <Shan.Morgan@gov.wales>

Subject: RE: Communications and Engagement with Local Authorities

Chris, apologies I meant to reply to you before now but things have been so busy all weekend.

I think I can speak on behalf of all those copied in to say we would certainly take your comments in the spirit in which they are intended. It's a national crisis and we do all have to work together to protect the people of Wales and that is our wish. Your points are well made and I understand the concerns and will discuss them internally in the next couple of days.

It's a sad fact that the speed and severity of developments and therefore the urgency of decision making have been unprecedented in the last 10 days. We will certainly review how we can have earlier engagement going forward.

I do hope though that you have found our engagement with the WLGA over the weekend addresses some of your concerns – I know Steve Davies has been engaging with you on a number of issues over the weekend and that WLGA have been actively engaged in the work on ‘shielded’ people where we have kept in close contact with WLGA in the development of the letter and guidance that accompanies it. I know how closely and at pace you have been working with WCVA too. I think Reg too has been in touch today on other urgent developments over the weekend.

Kind regards

Tracey

From: Chris Llewelyn <chris.llewelyn@WLGA.GOV.UK>

Sent: 21 March 2020 19:48

To: PS Permanent Secretary <PS.PermanentSecretary@gov.wales>; Andrew.goodall@wales.nhs.uk; Andrew.Slade@wales.gsi.gov.uk; Burke, Tracey (EPS - Director General) <Tracey.Burke@gov.wales>; Clifford, Desmond (OFM - Director General) <Desmond.Clifford@gov.wales>

Subject: Communications and Engagement with Local Authorities

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you're all well and bearing up at what I know is an immensely difficult time for you and everyone involved in public services.

I took part in a teleconference with the 22 council leaders this morning and spoke with all 22 chief executives yesterday afternoon. It is now part of our on-going routine of communication with authorities across Wales as a consequence of the Covid-19 crisis and my intention is to email you all as and when any concerns or issues arise from our teleconferences with leaders (daily) and chief executives.

- As the crisis escalates, leaders and chief executives are concerned that collectively we need to communicate more effectively, more efficiently and with greater precision.
- It is also felt that earlier engagement with Councils and greater trust between senior officials would speed up responses, lead to better delivery and potentially head-off some of the difficulty encountered in recent days.
- I believe that local government can provide many solutions going-forward but the engagement must take place as early as possible. I don't believe that that is happening at the moment.

I believe that the engagement at a political level, based on confidence and trust, is demonstrably strong and close. The joint press conference held at the start of the week by Local Government Minister, Julie James AM, and Councillor Andrew Morgan, Leader of the WLGA, and the dialogue that has taken place during the course of the week is evidence of that close working. Our respective communications teams are also working well together on sharing public messaging.

As officials we need to be doing more and working together more effectively. Local government can and must be trusted in advance of announcements such as those on the project to support the 100k vulnerable people, school closures, identifying vulnerable children etc. and can contribute constructively to all aspects of these arrangements not just the immediate delivery. With this in mind, I have established a small group of four local authority chief executives to act as advisers and

a sounding board to the WLGA on new initiatives and policies. They are happy to support the Welsh Government in any way they can. We already use the four Political Group Leaders for governance purposes, because things are moving so quickly, and they have been engaging with Ministers over the last week.

I appreciate the challenges and pressures faced by everyone and the efforts of Welsh Government colleagues, however, I feel that we can be more effective and improve our collective impact by being more joined up but we must have more trust and clarity.

Please accept these comments in the spirit in which they are intended and I am more than happy to discuss how we can address these concerns on the phone.

Best wishes

Chris

Dr Chris Llewelyn

Prif Weithredwr, Cymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru
Chief Executive, Welsh Local Government Association

Irrelevant & Sensitive

www.wlga.cymru - www.wlga.wales

@WelshLGA

***** Efallai bod gwybodaeth gyfrinachol yn y neges yma. Os nad ydych chi'n ymwneud â hi yn benodol - nac yn gyfrifol am ei rhoi i'r sawl sydd wedi'i enwi - chewch chi ddim copïo na throsglwyddo'r neges. Yn y cyfryw achos, dylech chi ddileu'r neges a rhoi gwybod i'r sawl a'i hanfonodd trwy ebost yn ddiymdroi. Rhowch wybod i'r anfonwr os nad ydych chi neu'ch cyflogwr yn gadael i neb anfon negeseuon o'r fath ar y we. Dyw Cymdeithas Llywodraeth Leol Cymru ddim yn hyrwyddo nac yn cymeradwyo unrhyw farn, casgliad na gwybodaeth nad yw'n berthnasol i'w gwaith swyddogol yn y neges yma. Sustem ebost WLGA fydd yn prosesu pob neges at y cyfeiriad yma neu oddi wrtho ac, o bosibl, bydd rhywun arall ar wahân i'r sawl sydd wedi'i enwi yn ei harchwilio.

***** Privileged/Confidential Information may be contained in this message. If you are not the addressee indicated in this message (or responsible for delivery of the message to such person), you may not copy or deliver this message to anyone. In such case, you should destroy this message and kindly notify the sender by reply email. Please advise immediately if you or your employer does not consent to Internet email for messages of this kind. Opinions, conclusions and other information in this message that do not relate to the official business of the Welsh Local Government Association shall be understood as neither given nor endorsed by it. All e-mail sent to or from this address will be processed by the Association E-mail system and may be subject to scrutiny by someone other than the addressee. *****

Sganiwyd y neges hon am bob feirws hysbys wrth iddi adael Llywodraeth Cymru. Mae Llywodraeth Cymru yn cymryd o ddifrif yr angen i ddiogelu eich data. Os cysylltwch â Llywodraeth Cymru, mae ein [hysbysiad preifatrwydd](#) yn esbonio sut rydym yn defnyddio eich gwybodaeth a sut rydym yn diogelu eich preifatrwydd. Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn anfon ateb yn Gymraeg i ohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi. On leaving the Welsh Government this email was scanned for all known viruses. The Welsh Government

takes the protection of your data seriously. If you contact the Welsh Government then our [Privacy Notice](#) explains how we use your information and the ways in which we protect your privacy. We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.