

Covid-19 Pandemic Welsh Interim Operational Review

C19 National Foresight Group

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NR

July 2020

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It is highly commendable that LRFs, Partners and Government Departments have engaged with such a duty of candour directly with this independent review and forthcoming reviews. We would not wish for any breach to restrain the unique opportunity to share learning mid crisis.

C19 National Foresight Group Title: Covid-19 Pandemic Welsh Interim Operational Review Report

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I write this foreword at a very poignant time; Public Health Wales reporting no new deaths in Wales for the first time since lockdown.

Foreword

Accepting the weekend reporting lag, this news nonetheless reflects the formidable contribution and public service of each Local Resilience Forum, partner, volunteer and government department. The most enduring emergency response in modern times continues and every daily update on those taken from our communities by Covid-19 is as heart breaking as that previous.

As a former Chairman of a Local Resilience Forum, I recognise the value learning can add to any emergency, especially to one with such a long tail. Typically, in the form of a debrief after response, learning is carried forward into the next emergency. The opportunity to reflect and afford learning during an emergency is rare.

I commissioned this interim operational review, with your kind sponsorship, across Wales at every level of response for that very reason, to save lives, relieve suffering and support communities during this crisis. Across all Local Resilience Forums, partners and government, over 150 participants have contributed to share compelling personal experiences, intended to shape and inform the ongoing response and beyond.

The review has been delivered by a collaboration between [NR] [NR] Director of the Hydra Foundation, and [NR] [NR] and her dedicated team from Nottingham Trent University. As a previous participant of Hydra sessions with [NR] and a Nottingham Trent University alumnus, I have confidence in this combination of resource and expertise, notwithstanding the scale, complexity and speed of the challenge. Supported by Deputy Chief Fire Officer [NR] who kindly contributed practical expertise of civil contingencies, I am very grateful to this review team for their professionalism, dedication and uncompromising resolve. We were privileged to be joined by [NR] [NR] who brought his own insight, professional network of support and helped us better understand the Welsh civil contingencies landscape and context.

This report presents analysis and details recommendations; priority recommendations which may be enacted now to inform this ongoing response and beyond. Other recommendations are more long term in nature and, whilst they should be considered now, may be of such scale, complexity and depth that they may not be realised as quickly. Their value is significant and should not lack traction.

My personal commitment is to share this learning with you and I am assured that you have bespoke arrangements and governance in place to maximise the benefit and value shared by participants.

I commend this interim operational review to you and thank you for the opportunity.

Personal Data

NR

Chairperson, C19 National Foresight Group

Note from **F** **NR** **M.B.E**

I was asked by **NR** Coordinator of the Joint Emergency Services Group, to run an event specifically for Wales, I took this request to **NR** Chairperson of the C19 National Foresight Group, as it was a perfect fit with previous reviews he had commissioned. We have now delivered six remote 10kv reviews during the Covid-19 crisis within the UK. This required the modification of the 10kv software to operate on smartphone technologies, and a new design for facilitation, achieved through live streaming video appearing on all devices. I have named the new approach *10kv-Cloud*. All six events including this one have been delivered by the Hydra Foundation free of charge.

Traditionally 10,000 volts (10kv) debriefing required the participants to be in a large room, seated at tables and given access to one iPad per participant. These events are facilitated and managed by a facilitator in the room, managing the flow and focus of the debrief. Over the last 25 years I have carried out over 400 operational debriefing and review of events from Child Protection to Counter Terrorism, with participants attending from all the relevant agencies and organisations. The technology, methodology and report analysis approaches have evolved over time.

The Covid-19 crisis presented two debriefing challenges, one, social distancing and two, the need to engage with expert practitioners and their partners over a large geographical area. Consequently, this new approach enables the events to take place without travel and several new design developments have been incorporated into the *10kv-Cloud* over the current crisis.

Debriefing is only one part of the process; the data needs to be analysed and recommendations and learning extrapolated from the data. The work of **NR** **NR** who leads a team of talented academics at Nottingham Trent University is the intellectual engine of this report. **Name Redacted** and her team's commitment and skill has been incredible.

The following report provides an unassailable evidence-led analysis of the voice of the practitioners and those who are dedicated to supporting communities and saving lives. We salute them and thank them for all their efforts.

Personal Data

NR

Sc.(Hons) Ph.D (Salford) Sc.D (South
Wales)
Director, Hydra Foundation

The Academic Team from Nottingham Trent University

The NTU team acted as an intelligence cell during the 10kv session and also analysed the data and co-authored the report.

NR (Intelligence cell only)

Contributed to the Intelligence cell, analysed the data and contributed to the authorship of the report, with authors listed on the front cover being involved in the development of the recommendations.

NR

This research team at NTU are psychologists and staff from Social Sciences. As a group they have worked and researched within the context of emergency management as part of a wider research focus on safety and security. The group have researched communication within Strategic Coordination Groups, psychology associated with emergency responders, and they are actively involved in a series of ongoing research programs focusing on disaster management. NTU have sponsored this team's time in order to support the national response to Covid-19. As part of this, Dr Name Redacted, is seconded full time to the C19 National Foresight Group as the only embedded scientist. Prior to this secondment she worked almost exclusively in research and policy with emergency responders and emergency management.

The Subject Matter Experts

NR former Head of Resilience, Welsh Government

Deputy Chief Fire Officer A NR, Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service; Vice Chair, Bedfordshire Local Resilience Forum

NR The Resilience Group

*Denotes authorship of the final written report

**Denotes corresponding lead author for any enquiries or questions

Executive Summary

This review took place on Wednesday 3 June 2020. At this point 1,371 people had lost their lives to Covid-19 in Wales. Public Health Wales confirmed on that day that 81,424 people had been tested for Covid-19 of which 67,221 tested negative.

The debate whether to open schools or not was very active in the public narrative and the opening of drive-throughs had led to long queues of traffic. These headlines were prominent during the time of the review and are presented here to capture the feeling and status of the pandemic within Wales at that point in time. The first peak of Covid-19 had passed in Wales and the community spread of the virus was by comparison, reducing. The focus of public narrative had started to consider restarting services and public debate was exploring the approaching ease of lockdown measures.

Consequently, this review was completed just at the point where recovery and response were running in tandem. The relaxing of lockdown measures was not only presenting additional aspects to manage, but variations in the four nations approaches had become increasingly distinct since the introduction of the lockdown measures at the end of March 2020. The review therefore took place when the participating delegates were managing the full range of diverse activity (response, recovery, restart and planning for future outbreaks). These activities were running in parallel, at different paces, mostly managed by the same group of organisations and partnerships.

The review captured the past, present and future reflections of those people managing Covid-19 in Wales. Their rich experiences and insights are presented in a themed and sharable format within this report following analysis of the data. The key findings and associated recommendations are grouped for transparency purposes and are explored in turn. There are seven main findings, seventeen recommendations, thirteen of which are rapid recommendations for immediate action and the other four are for implementation in slower time.

Finding One details delegate's views of how the four nations approach to policies and guidance within the pandemic should be communicated to the public more clearly to prevent public confusion which could have a negative impact on the confidence in the management of the pandemic. Finding Two focusses on communities within Wales and details considerations focussed on both the public and the emergency management teams. Finding Three considers the ways in which the emergency management teams are working together, mostly in multiagency teams, and the challenges and organisational relationship management this brings. Finding Four focusses on strategy and decision making, specifically the coordination and timing of decision making. Finding Five details the challenges of planning and the benefit of

increasing transparency both in decision making and the communication of those decisions in a timely and transparent manner, particularly regarding changes in policy or guidance by the Welsh or UK government. Finding Six focusses on the ways in which learning, sharing and planning is currently being undertaken in real time through the elongated nature of the incident. Finding Seven looks ahead and considers what is necessary to enable future needs to be met and the resources, systems, changes to policy and ways of working that are needed to enable this.

The 'body' of this report unpacks these findings and the supporting evidence in full, and considers their associated recommendations developed with Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). Our SMEs have a wealth of civil contingency knowledge and include an individual with additional knowledge of the Welsh emergency management context. These recommendations are designed to capture learning and address the challenges reflected in the analysis.

Summary of Priority Recommendations for Immediate Action

Four Nations Approach: Finding One

Rapid Recommendations

RAPID Recommendation 1.1: A more collaborative and coordinated approach to the development of guidance is advocated. This approach should articulate clearly where a common four nations approach is adopted, and where there are policy differences. This will support the effective coordination and duality of response and recovery across the UK in the next phase of the enduring management of Covid-19. This should also be considered ahead of time for EU transition and other types of systemic UK wide national emergencies.

RAPID Recommendation 1.2: Recognising that devolution may lead to a different approach within Wales, the Welsh and UK Governments should agree a joint strategy on public communications to ensure greater clarity of guidance and regulations and how they apply in each nation in the event of national emergencies.

Community and Place: Finding Two

Rapid Recommendations

RAPID Recommendation 2.1: LRFs should undertake a rapid review of the impacts of the pandemic on local communities to identify and reduce risks to the most vulnerable, assess the effectiveness of community engagement and provide partners with a clear plan to strengthen community resilience for the enduring nature of Covid-19 and other types of major incident. The Welsh Government and LRFs should agree a common methodology for doing this to promote consistency in approach and enable sharing of learning.

RAPID Recommendation 2.2: Response and recovery organisations should urgently consider the merits of establishing a duty of care framework and encouraging mutual aid between organisations more experienced in supporting the health and wellbeing of first responders.

RAPID Recommendation 2.3: A review of response and recovery organisations arrangements to manage prolonged and concurrent emergencies should be undertaken immediately with a particular focus on assessing the psychosocial impacts on the wellbeing of staff involved in major incident response and recovery both during and after an emergency.

Working Together: Multi-Agency Working: Finding Three

Rapid Recommendations

RAPID Recommendation 3.1: The Welsh Government, NHS Wales and the LRFs must urgently review the alignment and awareness amongst partners of key roles and responsibilities of the multi-agency and NHS response structures to ensure the maximum integration of these to increase the coordinated enduring management of Covid-19 and other types of future major incidents.

RAPID Recommendation 3.2: All responder agencies should ensure a sufficient trained and accredited cadre of staff are used to continue to support an effective and sustained response and recovery.

RAPID Recommendation 3.3: Building on the good practice of a single Public Health Strategic Co-ordinating Support Group which provides advice to all levels, the Welsh Government and LRFs should consider where other national level groups of this kind could provide a more

effective option than separate LRF groups for Covid-19 and other national emergencies.

Strategy and Decision Making: Finding Four

Rapid Recommendations

RAPID Recommendation 4.1: The Welsh Government working with key partners should clearly agree a Covid-19 strategy for Wales. This should be published and reviewed regularly, with and by, response and recovery partners to support and promote a coordinated approach across Wales.

RAPID Recommendation 4.2: The Welsh Government should rapidly review the existing decision making structures and (non -formal/alternative) networks to ensure an agile and collaborative approach to decision making facilitates effective decision making and information sharing across Wales and at all levels. This should include an assurance regime to effectively test and embed any new and untested recovery and response structures.

Planning Enabled Through Transparency:

Finding Five

Rapid Recommendations

RAPID Recommendation 5.1: To ensure an effective response and recovery the Welsh and UK Government should adopt a transparent approach to data and decision making at all levels and ensure that, where appropriate, this is underpinned by a transparent ethical framework.

RAPID Recommendation 5.2: Communication between LRFs, Welsh Government and Public Health Wales needs to be immediately enhanced to deliver effective, timely and bidirectional information sharing in an ongoing public health emergency.

Learning, Sharing and Planning : Finding Six

Rapid Recommendations

RAPID Recommendation 6.1: The Wales Learning and Development Group should rapidly develop a common debrief methodology and shared learning mechanism to ensure learning and good practice is captured, shared and acted upon in real time, to both mitigate harm now, and influence the future response, to Covid-19.

Scope and Approach

Delegates from across Wales were afforded the time and space, during the ongoing Covid-19 national emergency, to offer their reflections of that ongoing national emergency. They considered the capacity, capability and sustainability throughout an enduring response and reflected upon the unique nature of the Covid-19 response. They offered individual and collective reflections on practice, which informs the current and future management of Covid-19 and other emergencies. They also reflected on identifying lessons and how they can be taken from response into recovery.

This interim operational review was supported using an online model of the 10kv review called 10kv-Cloud. This system developed by the Hydra Foundation, has been used in over 400 debrief and review sessions and whilst the original approach allowed participants to attend a single location, this new method enabled participants to engage without travelling. 10kvCloud operates on smartphones and tablets and uses a video stream as a format to instruct delegates on the nature and approach of the review and to provide facilitated direction during the session. This was the third time 10kv-Cloud was run. During the live session, there was a short 5 minute delay to part of the video streaming. However, this was swiftly corrected and the Hydra and NTU team-initiated engagement with the process in the interim through other means. On reflection, this does not appear to have altered or affected the nature or quality of the data at all. Delegates reported the experience of taking part in the review as positive, they described participating in the review as reassuring, helpful and a place to share experiences they would not normally share in other spaces.

10kv creates space for participants to post anonymous comment on questions posed to them. It also encourages reflection and comment on peer thoughts during the review. The contents of the 10kv are analysed, themed and shared as a detailed report to the sponsor and participants. A rapid review of the material was undertaken, and emerging findings and preliminary recommendations have been shared previously to the Joint Emergency Services Group (JESG). The session parameters, invitees and strategic aims are set out below and were driven by the C19 National Foresight Group and Welsh Government.

For those readers who are unfamiliar with, and would like more information about, the Civil Contingencies and emergency management structures within Wales, there is an additional supplement in the technical appendices, titled 'Essential Context of the Civil Contingency and Emergency Management Structures within Wales'. This gives a brief overview and landscape of the structures and constitutional position and is intended as a reference for some of the structural terminology referred to in the report. This is a bespoke two-page overview created specifically for this report by our SME group, in liaison with appropriate contacts in the Welsh Government and other appropriate organisations.

Delegate Representation

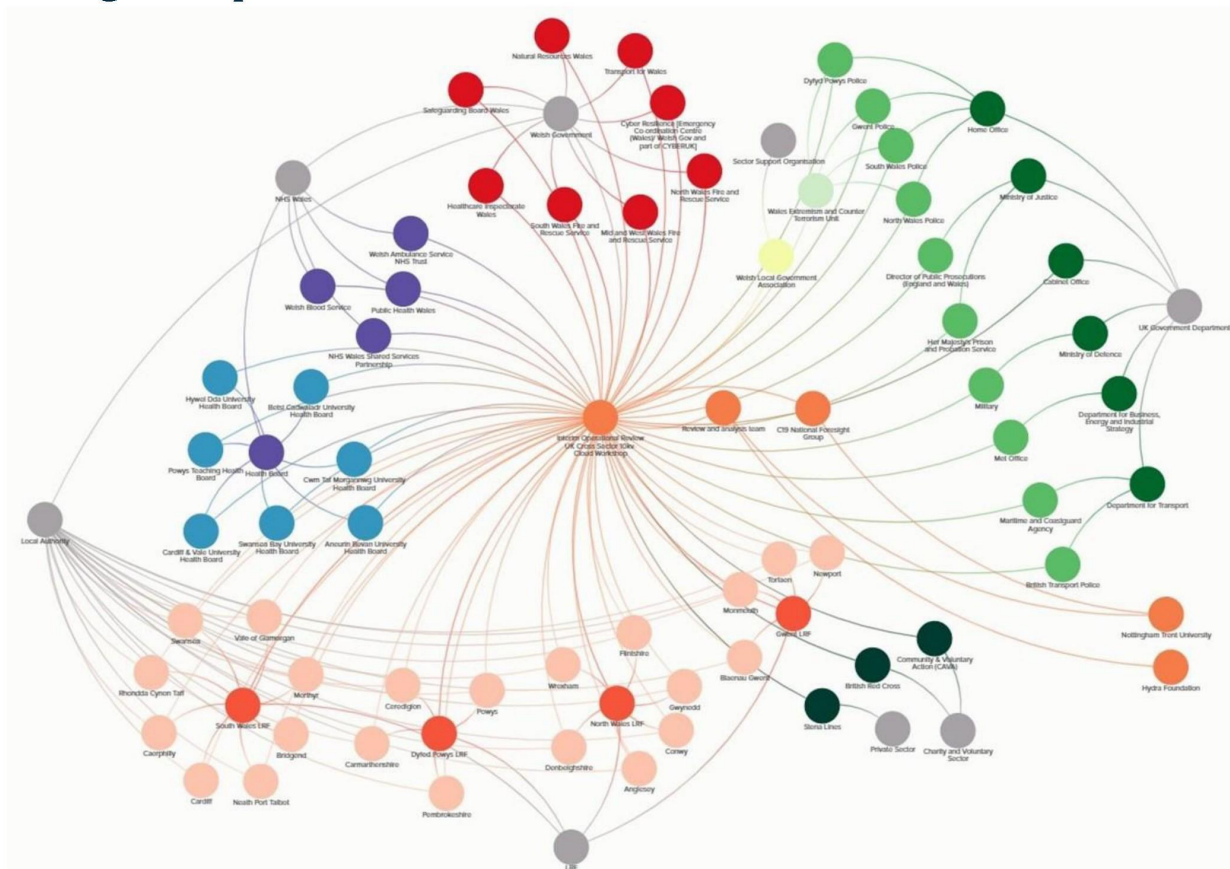


Figure 1. A graphical representation of the delegates and their affiliations.



Method

The review took place on Wednesday 3 June 2020 between 15:05 and 16:30. During the review, over 150 delegates logged on via smartphones or laptops. Using the Hydra 10kv process, delegates responded (via written text) to the following questions (below). Delegates were anonymous and where this report uses data to illustrate and evidence the analysis, any identifying places, names or references have been removed to retain this anonymity. The questions were chosen to align the National Interim Operational Review hosted on Wednesday 22 April 2020 as those questions led to significant valuable insight and enables an opportunity to align the outcomes of the two reviews. The framing of the questions was

nuanced to the devolved context. Question two focused on the support from the Welsh Government and question three focused on the UK National Support. Through this report, the term 'UK-wide' denotes comments, findings, themes and recommendations that reach across the four devolved nations of the UK. The term 'national' delineates issues specific to Wales as a devolved nation.

Question set used in the review

Section 1. Activity within your Local Resilience Forum

What achievements are you most proud of?

What didn't go so well?

What would you change and do differently moving forward?

Section 2. Welsh Government Regional Support

What achievements are you most proud of?

What are the key challenges in your region?

What would you change and do differently moving forward?

Section 3. UK National Support

What achievements are you most proud of?

What support might you require?

What isn't going so well?

Section 4. Concurrent Emergency

What's your preparedness for a concurrent emergency?

What are the pressure points?

What support might you require?

Section 5. Forward Look

How much space and time are you affording to foresee consequences of

C-19 and identify legacy issues?

How well geared are your C3 arrangements to contribute to this?

What foreseeable mid to long term consequences might you anticipate as we move from response into recovery?

Section 6. Personal Reflections & Insights

Over 42,000 words and 1,400 comments were generated over the six sections. The raw data was rapidly analysed by academics from Nottingham Trent University and the Hydra Foundation to create emerging findings and preliminary recommendations for a preliminary presentation 'Interim Operational Review Welsh Cross Sector 10kvCloud Workshop: Rapid thematic analysis to inform ongoing Response and new Recovery'. This was presented to and accepted by the JESG coordinator on the Thursday 18 June. JESG then

shared the rapid analysis with colleagues and relevant partners. Following the presentation, the team produced a detailed consideration of the analysis, which is contained within this report.

Differences between the Rapid Review and the Report

Title of presentation document mapped to: *'Interim Operational Review Welsh Cross Sector 10kv-Cloud Workshop: Rapid thematic analysis to inform ongoing Response and new Recovery'*.

The above presentation contains the initial findings of this report. As the analysis informed the development of this full report, some opportunities were taken to synthesise or improve the presentation of the analysis. None of the main findings or their structure has changed between the reports. The only aspects to have developed are the recommendations, where they have become more nuanced, specific and detailed.

Analytic Approach

The thematic analysis followed the steps outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). As timely analysis of the data was required in order that findings could feed into the ongoing response and recovery of Covid-19, the full data set was split up, with a member of the analysis team analysing data from each section. The analytic process started with familiarisation where initial understanding of the data set was established by reading the responses to questions in each section. Initial codes were then generated through the coding of every statement. Codes were collected into similar thematic groups. Some codes were then merged into sub-themes and some codes (with little commonality to cluster with) were discarded. This process enabled the creation of a theme and sub-theme structure for each section, which was reviewed several times in the process of collapsing and merging themes or separating out sub-themes. The final sets of themes for each section are shown in the Technical Appendices.

Subsequently the steps of clustering, nesting and theme mapping were undertaken across the full dataset to develop an overall theme and subtheme structure for the full dataset. These themes were named according to their cluster to provide better representation of the underlying subthemes and coding. The mapping of the themes generated in each section to these overall themes is shown in Table 1 in the Technical Appendices. In the main report, the focus is on the overall themes and sub-themes, which for ease of interpretation are referred to as themes and sub-themes going forward.

It is important to note that the analysis team was the same as that of the National Interim Operational Review hosted on the 22nd of April 2020. The team discussed potential bias in terms of letting the coding generated in that debrief influence the current process. This 'bracketing' out of positions, views and data is checked through the analytical checking that is done by others in the team and is a well-recognised technique to safeguard against bias whilst maintaining subjectivity of interpretation of the data.

Report Structure

The report is broken down into several sections. The first reviews seven main themes derived from the analysis and explores the sub-themes underneath. The themes and sub-themes are described and evidenced with direct quotes from the data, and numerical information is provided to indicate the frequency with which each sub-theme was represented in the data. As well as frequency, the analysis focusses on the consideration of resonance of the theme in the data. In other words, how important the theme or sub-theme is to people in the data. Some themes might have a lot of contributing codes, which would increase their frequency, but it might consist of descriptive data. Another theme could have a comparatively fewer number of codes but be more important to the delegates and their experience. The analysis took account of these differing challenges in the data.

Glossary of terms used throughout the report

It is important to be clear throughout the structures and geographical footprint that is meant when using certain terms. The terms used throughout are detailed below:

'Local' denotes Local Authority footprint or community level

'Regional' denotes Local Resilience Forum footprint

'Wales' denotes Wales

'UK' denotes UK

Findings

The number of responses per section of the report is shown in Figure 2. The largest two sections were those focusing on activity in the LRF and Welsh Government activity. In part, these being the first two sections delegates responded to (although they could choose to respond in any order) may have driven this. That the focus was much more on Welsh Government Activity in comparison to UK National Support however reflects the devolved nature of the emergency and disaster management structures in Wales.

The frequencies of codes for the themes and sub-themes generated is shown graphically in Figure 3, with the initial layer of nodes representing the themes and the secondary layer the sub-themes, and the size of circle representing the frequency of codes relating to that sub-theme/theme. Analysis of the data generated seven main themes: 1 Four Nations Approach, 2 Community and Place, 3 Working Together: Multi-Agency Working, 4 Strategy and Decision Making, 5 Planning Enabled through Transparency, 6 Learning, Sharing and Planning, 7 Enabling Forward Direction & Resources. These were further underpinned by seventeen associated sub-themes. These themes represented issues that spanned the full dataset. The largest theme by far was Strategy and Decision Making, and within this, the sub-theme Coordinated Approach to Decision Making was extensive. This indicates the importance attributed to these issues by the delegates. Although there was variation in terms of the frequency of codes that aligned to the theme, each theme represented a distinct and important of voices in the data.

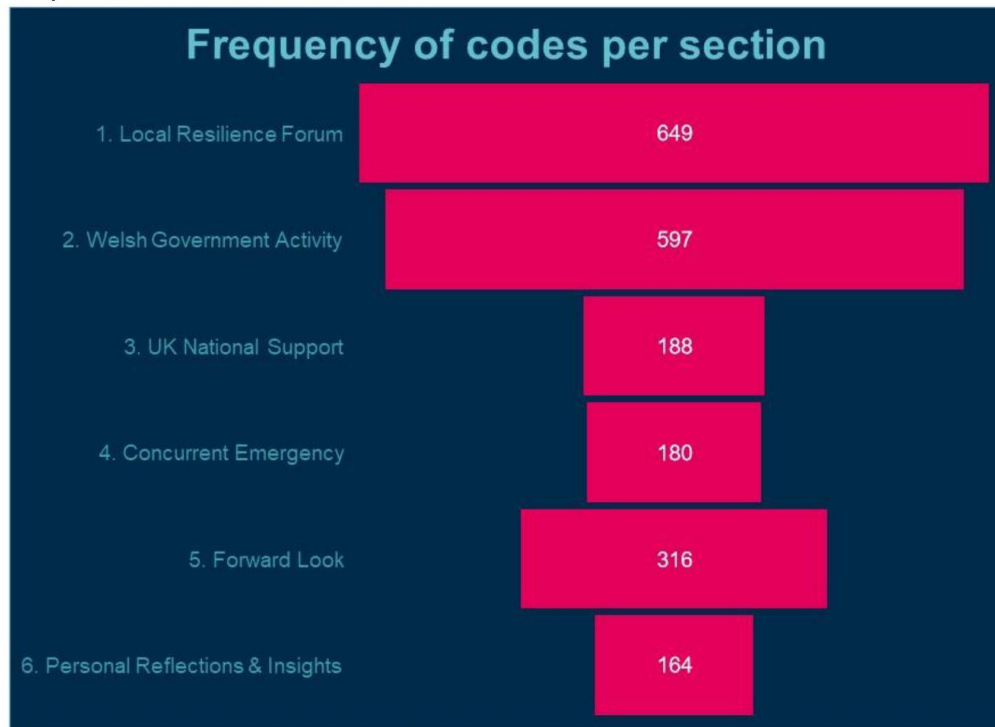


Figure 2. Frequency of codes per section of the review

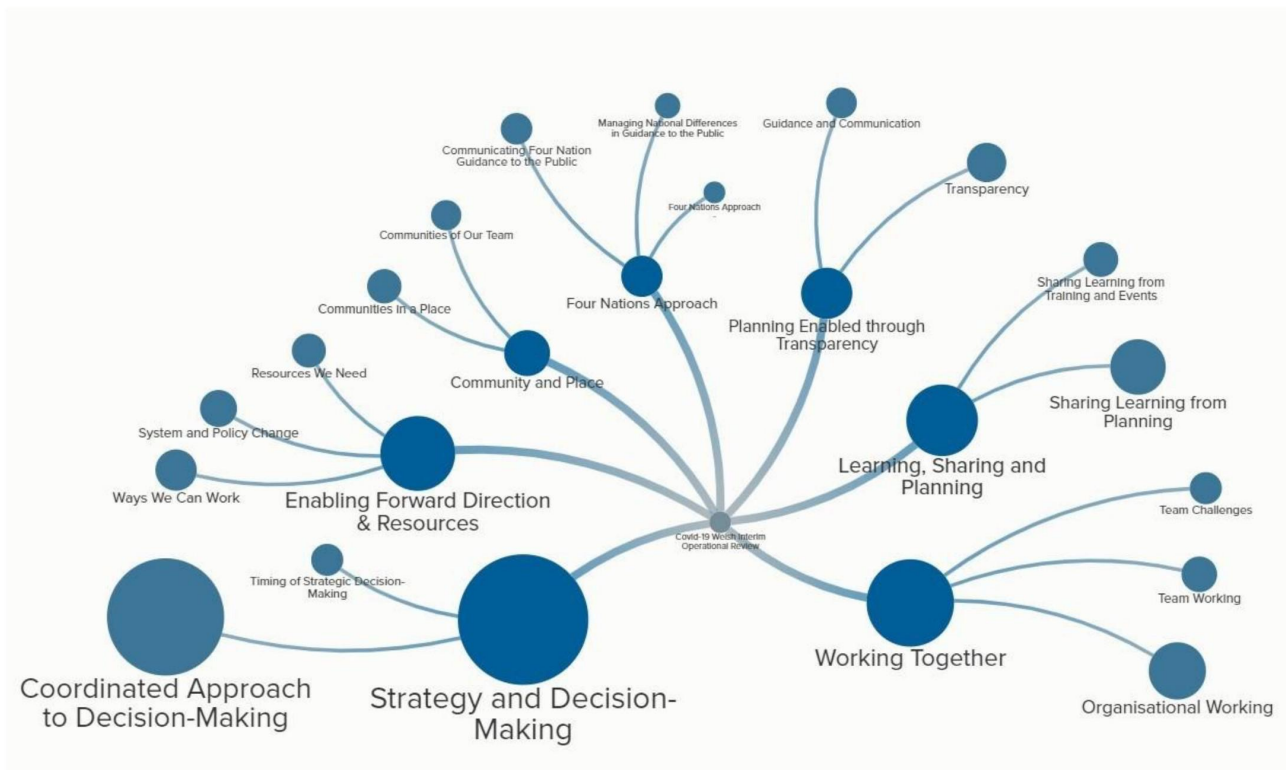


Figure 3. Graphical representation of findings from the analysis. The size of the circle relates to the frequency of issues that arose that pertained to these themes. The seven main themes are shown in the first layer of nodes, with sub-themes the second layer of nodes.

Four Nations Approach: Finding One

Delegates were very clear that being a devolved nation had impacted on their management of Covid-19. This brought benefits as well as challenges. This theme has three sub-themes that detail the practical and tactical implications of the differences in approach and how the public were able to react to this difference in approach. The extent to which delegates generated the issues pertaining to these sub-themes is shown in Figure 4. The sub-themes within finding one. As can be seen the major issue delegates identified was in the communication of a four nation guidance to the public.

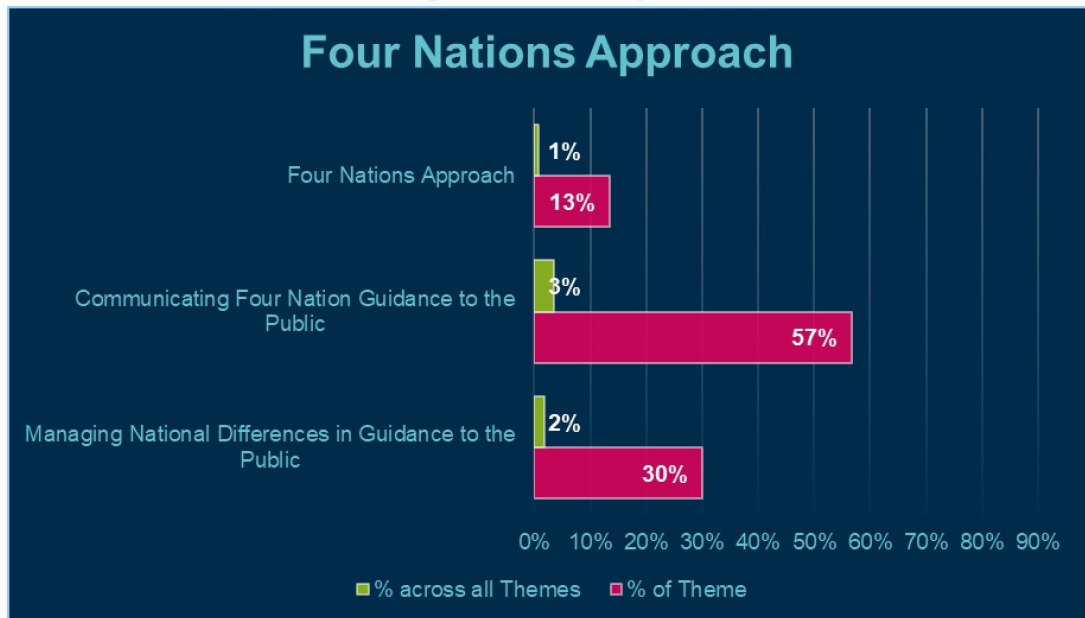


Figure 4. The percentage of the codes generated for each of the sub-themes in the overall theme of four nations Approach (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes).

Four Nations Approach

This sub-theme reflects how nations have taken different approaches to public guidance and lockdown measures, creating additional layers of guidance (in public facing information) and policy (in organisational policy). Delegates felt that the public have been confused by the lack of clarity in differences between public guidance. A four nations approach to develop a communications strategy with the public was called for by delegates, who acknowledged that whilst the approaches should be different when they need to be to reflect the individual nations, the differences should be clearly communicated through the adoption of a UK approach.

“It did not join up the Nations at times when it needed to be.”

“All 4 governments will be in for criticism post the pandemic (regardless of what they do) and they are stronger as a 4 than as separate entities.”

“There was little recognition of devolved status and how at times for nondevolved bodies operating in that world it could be difficult.”

Opinion was divided on the exact four nations approach to the pandemic. It was suggested by some delegates that a UK wide policy might have been preferable to the four nations response, which has created some operational difficulties and 'a lack of direction and clarity'. However, this was not universal and on balance, delegates recognised the need for diversity of approach between the four nations, but more cognisance and communication of the differences in legislation as this has caused confusion, frustration and tension. Delegates expressed their view that because the UK Government and media was focused towards England, there have been difficulties in ensuring that members of the public in both Wales and England had clarity of information that was relevant to them.

"I feel that having the four nations giving out different public updates/statements have added confusion to the general public throughout the UK."

There were calls for greater collaboration between the four nations as lockdown eases to complement the approaches. Some delegates felt that Wales has been too focused on following England's lead which resulted in them being reactive. In contrast, other delegates felt that having a different approach reflected their needs as a devolved nation.

"The Welsh Government delivered the right message for Wales".

It was not just the impact on the public that underpinned this theme, but a wider view on national relationships. Delegates had pride in the clarity of the Welsh voice, citing coordinated communications structures that aligned their messaging, reporting and communicating with the UK Government through the official Welsh mechanisms. Delegates perceived that this increased effectiveness by presenting one unified clear voice from the Welsh nation.

The communication with delegates from the UK Government appeared good initially, at the start of the response. Most delegates reported that the UK Government became less visible and contact reduced over time. Some delegates reported not having any contact from the UK Government at all to date.

"More collaborative working between governments in the UK so we can provide a full response, even if it is localised this gives us full transparency to discuss and engage where needed."

Communicating Four Nations Guidance to the Public

There were issues around communication from UK Government, communications from organisations and narratives from the media. Delegates felt these did not give sufficient clarity about differences in position or approach across four nations and tended to be English centric. This created significant issues in relation to the clarity of guidance for members of the public. In this way, delegates felt that devolution was not acknowledged and this caused further confusion for the UK public and frustration for devolved nations.

"'UK' Announcements and guidance should be made explicitly clear that they pertain to England only. This has been very confusing for some of the public."

"I think the messaging from UK government has been confusing for devolved nations....the PM has said he is talking to us as the UK prime minister when announcing changes to lock down but they are only in effect in England."

Delegates felt there was a lack of direction and clarity resulting from the response, as there was confusion over different approaches and guidance in England and Wales. There was a perception of a lack of stakeholder understanding of the differences between UK and Wales. Specifically, the differences in legislation caused frustration and tension, and some delegates noted that Covid-19 had presented a significant challenge to the devolved administration because of the difficulty in creating a united approach.

Lack of acknowledgement of devolution was also challenging for some delegates who questioned whether a Welsh perspective was often considered. This was reflected in communications that were not shared in time to enable a strategic coordinated communications strategy or to collaborate on the development of the policy itself. This lack of coordination and involvement in the development and release of communications and associated policies could be resolved through the coordination of higher media lines. This would ensure the articulation of different nations having different approaches, specifically about changes at borders.

Delegates suggested that UK announcements should make clear that they only apply to England so that the public confusion between English, Welsh and UK announcements is reduced. Specifically, communications from the UK Government should deliver messages with regard for the differing positions in devolved nations, highlighting differences in legislation. This is because at the time of the review, managing the border was particularly challenging as members of the public were trying to access Wales when restrictions were in place meaning they could not enter Wales and be under the same guidance as was operating in England. Delegates suggested that the Governments should 'work harder on working together', for all leaders to collaborate to enable transparency of discussion and engagement.

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Managing National Differences in Guidance to the Public

Managing the impact of different public guidance from nations was a particular challenge at border areas, where communications did not make clear what behaviour change was needed between Wales and England. This also refers to public awareness and compliance to differences when passing each way at the border.

The different approach of England and Wales in some guidance has led to community confusion, resulting in tensions at the border and increasing community frustration and demand for services such as policing and health in these geographical areas. Delegates called for a collaborated higher media line to articulate different approaches between the nations and implications for the borders. There was a clear need identified by delegates to keep pace with this guidance and cascade changes to policy guidance. This would reduce the complexities of cross border differences in policy and increase understanding of the public and personnel when it comes to differences in sector guidance between Wales and England. This was seen as particularly challenging for those organisations or public services operating across devolved borders. The public confusion of lockdown rules led to increased cross boarder activity which increased pressure on services, particularly policing. This additional demand was viewed as having been created by this differing policy, although some delegates reported that their services continue to work well across the border.

“Differing approach between nations caused difficulties and community tensions at borders and in some areas. Required higher media lines to share the message that Wales differs to England.”

“Complexities of responding to the cross-border differences in messages.”

“Practice had to be amended, revised or, in many cases, discounted. This led to additional demand being faced by Welsh policing.”

A considerable number of delegates clearly felt that diversification of policy across the four nations caused difficulty. This was through the interpretation between UK and Wales and the confusion led to an increase in non-compliance to national guidance. Not delineating differences has resulted in extra work and pressure for Welsh partners and organisations through an increase in enquiries for clarification and difficulties in the consistent delivery of services at the border through enforcement activity (such as advising the public) and diversifying resources (such as moving resources and people round to enforce the

differences at the border). This was particularly challenging for non-devolved bodies working across the nations.

"A better approach to messaging across the four administrations would be very helpful in reducing confusion and non-compliance. Lack of clarity at daily No10 briefings as to the lockdown rules in England only applying to England. This confusion added to the number of people from outside the area coming in thus potentially spreading covid19 and also causing additional problems for the police."

"Differences in English and Welsh guidance and legislation just created another problem to manage."

A pervasive issue appeared to be the lack of accommodation of the differences of devolution in both policy and communication. The differences in legislation between devolved nations has meant that some sectors and organisations have advocated English centric guidance which does not account for the devolved context, this was mostly category one responders, in particular national bodies for policing and fire. Delegates suggested that policies and doctrines should be amended or revised for the devolved context or discounted if the policy is not sympathetic to the devolved context.

"Lack of clarity in UK Government announcements/briefings for the differing approaches across the 4 nations. This continues and is causing significant issues. All national media outlets should ensure that clarity is provided on what measures and restrictions are pertinent to each nation."

"I think the messaging from UK government has been confusing for devolved nations....the PM has said he is talking to us as the UK prime minister when announcing changes to PM has said he is talking to us as the UK prime minister when announcing changes to lock down but they are only in effect in England!"

"National media focus on the England position."

Some delegates suggested that both Governments should work harder putting political differences aside and collaborating to a greater extent to provide a more joined up approach to improve public understanding. This would mean collaborative decisions being taken by all four leaders, working across the UK to enable transparency, discussion and engagement. Delegates suggest that the daily briefings had become unhelpful.

"It is just a shame that we couldn't put politics aside for longer. It would have resulted in a more joined up approach and a better public understanding of and response to the government messaging. There has definitely been an element of wanting to do different things just to be different from a rival governing party. Governments must work harder on this."

Recommendations for Four Nations Approach

RAPID Recommendation 1.1: A more collaborative and coordinated, approach to the development of guidance is advocated. This approach should articulate clearly where a common four nations approach is adopted, and where there are policy differences. This will support the effective coordination and duality of response and recovery across the UK in the next phase of the enduring management of Covid-19. This should also be considered ahead of time for EU transition and other types of systemic UK wide national emergencies.

RAPID Recommendation 1.2: Recognising that devolution may lead to a different approach within Wales, the Welsh and UK Governments should agree a joint strategy on public communications to ensure greater clarity of guidance and regulations and how they apply in each nation in the event of national emergencies.

Community and Place: Finding Two

This theme focusses on the human aspects of the Covid-19 pandemics. This theme has two sub-themes, the first focusses on the public and the second focusses on those managing the response and recovery. The extent to which delegates generated the issues pertaining to these subthemes is shown in Figure 5. Delegates discussed the public and the ongoing resilience of the teams managing the Covid-19 response and recovery, these held great resonance with the delegates.

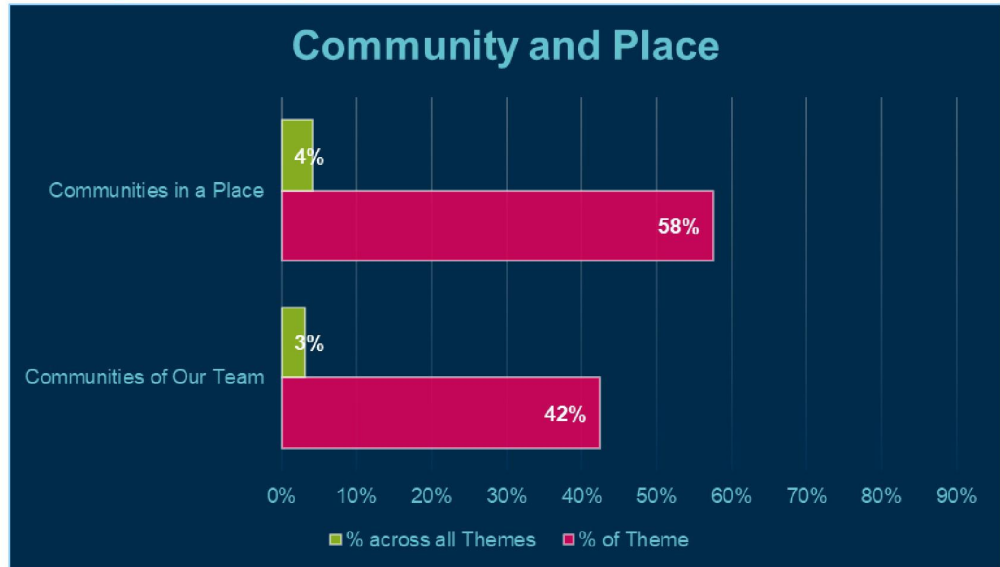


Figure 5. The percentage of the codes generated for each of the sub-themes in the overall theme of Community and Place (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes).

Communities in a Place

Delegates reported the many ways in which the impacts from, and management of, Covid-19 continue to have significant consequences for their communities. Discussion also considered the challenge of balancing the many activities on behalf of their communities. Managing response, managing the societal impacts, and working with community partners on recovery whilst trying to reduce the risk to those in the community who are most vulnerable was seen as a challenge to balance. Consequently, a number of comments referred to the community or voluntary role and it was recognised that volunteers enabled a significant community response with a focus on the vulnerable. Delegates acknowledged that going forward, engaging these volunteers in the longer term and linking them with established aspects of the voluntary sector would be increasingly important to provide support to the communities.

Emergency planning exercises have included Community Resilience Groups, which has not always happened previously, this reflects the nature of how the ongoing management of Covid-19 continues to act as a catalyst to develop relationships. Delegates consistently reported strong working partnerships with communities, with relationships and structures with the

Voluntary Community Sector strengthening over the course of Covid-19.

There was a clear appetite from delegates to plan, train and work together to enhance future resilience. The Covid-19 response has acted as an intense training course for many and in the future, this will increase capability and capacity of the Voluntary Community Sector. Relationships at the Community level (e.g., from Voluntary Community Sector colleagues) were recognised as very important, as connecting with individual members of the community who were physically distancing or shielding is difficult, especially when wearing PPE. This physical barrier of not seeing someone's full face and lack of physical touch should be recognised as a challenge to initiate and maintain community relationships.

"The inability to interact directly with some of the community due to concerns of staff and vulnerable."

There was recognition from delegates that communities have given a lot to the management of Covid-19 and will have significantly reduced capacity to give again. Delegates reported that in their view, the public were instrumental in the response to the pandemic, but they had concerns over local outbreaks and a potential second wave after restrictions are lifted. They felt that having been through the first wave, the public needed a restorative period. This is important as delegates recognised the public reactions and behaviour as imperative to the ongoing management of the virus.

"Complacency with view that we are in recovery and...concerned that we will be caught out by a second wave at end of June which is looking increasingly likely with public abandonment of lock down and R number hovering around about 1."

Delegates recognised the many ways that Covid-19 will impact on their communities in the short, medium and long term. It was recognised that as lockdown measures ease, public feeling that things are returning to pre - Covid-19 might increase, despite the UK still being in pandemic response. This was forecasted to increase demand for services as latent demand from the pause in services are continuing to require support; the delay might cause further consequential impacts of Covid-19, which would then increase demand on services and organisations. Mental health was raised by delegates as a particular concern for all age groups as a result of the measures put in place to manage the virus (such as isolation through lockdown) as well as the longer-term consequences of the societal wide and community changes that are likely to happen as a result of the secondary impacts of Covid-19. These impacts include the changes to service delivery during the lockdown measures, as well as emergent need due to increases in mental health provision. Delegates recognised the opportunity, which Covid-19 has brought, to make changes to service delivery models and ways of working for health and social care. Delegates were also cognisant of the potential impacts of the short, medium and long

-term economic consequences of the measures taken to control Covid-19. *“The health, social and economic inequalities have been thrown into stark contrast at this time. They have probably increased. This is a difficult legacy to deal with and try to redress increased inequality and disadvantage.”*

Delegates largely reported that recovery planning is currently at the stage of scoping the impacts on communities. A potential point of tension was noted between the needs of the community and the reliance of the Welsh economy on tourism.

“Impacts on the local community will be deep and long, there is fear of a worse recession and a back to austerity financial position.”

“Major concerns about long term economic impact of the pandemic on employment (100 % increase in u/e in one month so far), businesses (including high street) and council finances. On the latter, major concerns also about public finance outlook particularly after decade of austerity.”

“Tension between tourism (I am based in a County where tourism is critical) versus the concerns of locals.”

Alongside these societal considerations, delegates also highlighted the mental health of individuals of all ages as a particular concern. These were attributed both to the measures put in place to manage the virus (such as isolation through lockdown) as well as the longer-term consequences of the societal and social changes that are likely to happen as a result of the secondary impacts of Covid-19.

“Foreseeable mid to long term consequences...mental health impact on both children and adults with increased suicide rates.”

These secondary impacts were defined as the consequences of changes to service delivery during the lockdown measures, as well as emergent need due to increases in mental health provision. Delegates recognised the opportunity to make changes to service delivery models and ways of working, particularly in health and social care.

“This is an opportunity to move from traditional forms of social care to new models but the transition whilst still having Covid out there will be particularly challenging for health and local authority social care commissioners.”

Delegates reported that in their view, the public were instrumental in the response to the pandemic, but they had concerns over local outbreaks and a second wave following the intent to lift restrictions. The public reactions and behaviour were recognised as imperative to the ongoing management of the virus.

Delegates are concerned that without clear communication, the trust of the public is being eroded and a second wave might see different adherence levels to restrictions. Delegates concluded that it will be challenging to

retain levels of trust as the management of the pandemic enters new and different phases.

“Moving to recovery in order to manage getting to a new norm could be perceived by the public as ‘everything is ok’. Already we are seeing issues of ignoring the regulations either purposely or through a lack of knowledge. If moving to recovery isn’t communicated clearly the possibility of complete move away from the required measures will see a rapid increase in infection rates and therefore a required response which we cannot manage.”

The community was not the only group of people delegates had concerns for; they also spoke about their colleagues. The next sub-theme explores their concerns for their colleagues in more depth.

Communities of Our Team

Having identified the impacts on the community in terms of the wider public, this sub-theme acknowledges that the community also includes those who are managing the response and recovery. Delegates recognised a number of personal considerations (aside from those raised in association with working in new ways) for those managing Covid-19. Namely, that they have been engaged and stood up for over three months and the impact on their physical, psychological and social health is beginning to show, as well as evidence of task fatigue (continually being focused on Covid-19 and unable to find space away at home, work or in wider society as it is omnipresent throughout society).

“I am personally shattered having had to manage this crisis both professionally and in my personal life at the same time.”

“Balancing working from home, with shielding, childcare etc, has been a real challenge for many of our staff. I’m not sure how we will cope if this incident carries on.”

The length of time this crisis has lasted is far beyond any other event in the experience of those involved. Delegates described that colleagues had been working at a fast pace, on extensive shifts and not seeing family for lengthy periods. This was widely accepted as not being sustainable any further. In addition to the risk of burn out for significant numbers of staff, there are also long periods of leave remaining that need to be taken to afford those needing a break to have one. With the potential impact of these two factors on the wider workforce, some planning needs to take place to manage the shortfall of staff in the near future. There also needs to be some consideration of the nature of these impacts on the individuals and the duty of care to them. In addition to the impact on workforce, this theme also highlights the shortfall in the required financial and wider resources to ensure this could be addressed, including easing some of the

potential future funding forecasts and what that means in real terms in the context of wider social economic scenarios.

Delegates described task fatigue of dealing with and thinking about Covid19 at work, and then thinking about Covid-19 in their personal lives. This has led to fatigue of those working within the emergency response mechanisms. Delegates did suggest inclusion of rotas to ensure staff

resilience, as public health depends on a functioning Public Protection Service. Delegates felt this was currently threatened due to the significant challenges of staffing all the roles in the response and for concurrent events. Additionally, staff are only temporarily in Covid-19 management roles, these are not their substantive posts. This may mean that these staff may not be available in future responses to Covid-19, which may impact effective future response. Compounding this, other operational staff in partner organisations have been redeployed within the organisation for Covid-19 so are not readily available to relieve any pressure points, which may come from managing a concurrent event. Single agency planning teams are small, so managing any potential concurrent events brings additional pressure. More broadly, within Local Resilience Forums, Local Authorities, and partner organisations, there are individuals with high levels of knowledge and expertise, but this is a limited pool who are also fatigued from flooding, EU Transition and Covid-19. With these individuals already deployed, there is limited additional expertise available to support if another health protection response was necessary.

“We call upon the same pool of staff to respond to emergencies and having just dealt with serious flooding in October and February, our staff are tired – both physically and mentally - this continues to be a protracted response. In addition to this is the limited pool of expertise in emergencies who are human and will come fatigued and are difficult to replace due to knowledge management.”

“Rotas in place to manage staff and ensure resilience.”

“Lack of suitable trained strategic commanders in Health.”

“If another health protection incident was to happen at this time, concerns that there would not be enough additional expertise available to support another health protection response.”

“No new capacity existing stretch to support Brexit preparedness with those staff already diverted from Brexit to Covid . next Covid phase and winter pressures planning as well as sector stability means a concurrent emergency would be a significant challenge - Risk of staff exhaustion reduced quality having not quite emerged from the flooding emergencies before going head long into this I would say we are stretched too thin and if we had another disaster to deal with we would be up against it. We are still in this and will be for some time to come. Pressure points would be enough warm bodies to spread around another disaster. What would help from a Health and Social care perspective would be Heath being more pragmatic and less risk averse and sharing the resources of staff across a region to support jointly instead of passing the 'hot potato.’”

Delegates also noted the wider context within which the Local Resilience Forums were operating in when Covid-19 came to the UK. Many LRFs started the Covid-19 response stretched as they were coming from EU Transition, and for some, they were coming out of flooding response and recovery. On top of this general fatigue, the exhaustion from Covid-19 to date has caused significant challenges for these individuals. Additionally, those organisations pivotal in response and recovery are now required to

plan for future resurgences of Covid-19 and winter pressures, creating staff capacity challenges. Delegates had high confidence in their preparedness for managing a concurrent event, and high confidence in the systems and structures, but staff capacity, exhaustion and the ongoing resource drain of Covid-19 is a significant risk to be able to execute those plans. Delegates suggested that the Welsh Government revise staffing levels back to pre-austerity levels.

Recommendations for Community and Place

RAPID Recommendation 2.1: LRFs should undertake a rapid review of the impacts of the pandemic on local communities to identify and reduce risks to the most vulnerable, assess the effectiveness of community engagement and provide partners with a clear plan to strengthen community resilience for the enduring nature of Covid-19 and other types of major incident. The Welsh Government and LRFs should agree a common methodology for doing this to promote consistency in approach and enable sharing of learning.

RAPID Recommendation 2.2: Response and recovery organisations should urgently consider the merits of establishing a duty of care framework and encouraging mutual aid between organisations more experienced in supporting the health and wellbeing of first responders.

RAPID Recommendation 2.3: A review of response and recovery organisations arrangements to manage prolonged and concurrent emergencies should be undertaken immediately with a particular focus on assessing the psychosocial impacts on the wellbeing of staff involved in major incident response and recovery both during and after an emergency.

Working Together: Multi-Agency Working: Finding Three

This finding focused on aspects of working with others within teams and had three sub-themes. These explored the challenges of working together, where teams had worked well together, and their experiences of working between organisations. The extent to which these sub-themes were generated by delegates is shown in Figure 6. Overall, this theme accounted for around 19% of the total codes generated, and so it was a substantive focus of delegates, and was primarily focused on working across organisations.

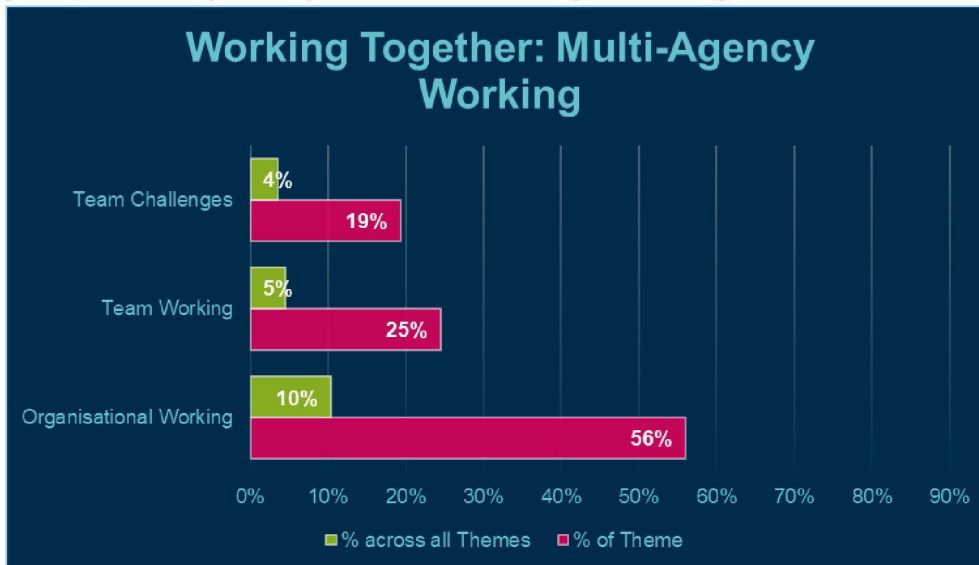


Figure 6. The percentage of the codes generated for each of the sub-themes in the overall theme of Working Together: Multi-Agency Working (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes).

Team Challenges

Being able to populate the different layers of emergency response structures and creating suitable sub-structures was reported by delegates as challenging. Delegates were quite positive that on balance, role allocation was effective. However, they highlighted issues around the need for better role clarity and often the partner responsibilities within these structures were unclear. Delegates described challenges between teams when they populated the different structural layers, including communication, clear responsibility of activity and aspects of role allocation.

Delegates tended to focus on these different aspects of role allocation, including role clarity, the nature of the roles allocated and regional/national alignment. Most of the discussion considered overall effectiveness of role allocation and focused on the Strategic Coordinating Group or the Tactical Coordinating Group or related subgroups and cells. The vast majority of these discussions were very positive about the working of, and performance of, these different groups.

“Excellent team work using the established structures and being able to adapt the supporting structures to fit the response requirements.”

“Overall feeling is that the structures worked well and have now become embedded within organisations so this will enhance any response going forward; Tighter governance could be considered in terms of record keeping / terms of reference for the various groups etc.”

“Tactical cells particularly excess deaths/volunteers and latterly contact tracing have worked exceptional well if difficult circumstance where data was absent and the situation was evolving rapidly with little lead in time to allow a planned response.”

In terms of role clarity, it was apparent that sometimes partner responsibilities were unclear, either in the SCG, or in local and regional partnership structures such as the LRF and SCG, Local Authorities or Health Board, and at national level, this included the Welsh Government. Looking forward, there was a clear request for better clarity of command and control structures and of roles. There was also some evidence that sometimes the right roles had not been allocated, that SCGs had set up structures that duplicated efforts elsewhere (e.g., health), or that sometimes they were not that effective.

“Expectation on some agencies to take on non statutory duties with capacity still with in the statutory holders.”

“Sometimes there was a lack of clarity as to what partnership was doing what. There was reference to LRF/SCG but also to other LA/HB partnerships (LSBs) leading response.”

“Initial resistance to the establishment of operational sub-groups under TCG when existing arrangements had already commenced within health board areas. The aim of which was to establish consistency across health boards across the LRF, however health boards were keen to progress with their own defined arrangements.”

Delegates felt there were some positives from working across regional and national structures despite the challenges of aligning those structures. These positive views included the support from some partners and the new structures that were put in place (e.g., the Public Health Strategic Coordinating Support Group). However, going forward there were requests to strengthen this further through more cross-Wales working, improving the interface with regional and local levels. In the wider context of role clarity, respondents noted a confusing picture in relation to testing with a focus on set up and issues relating to who had responsibility for testing. This was raised as one aspect that could possibly be resolved through the alignment of these new structures.

“Public Health Wales in discussion with the 4 LRF chairs agreed to put in place a Public Health Strategic Co-ordinating Oversight Group - which met weekly. This enabled specialist PH advice to be communicated consistently to all 4 SCGs across Wales.”

"Some sub groups in LRF's need to change; there should be more pan Wales working."

"WG/PHW have made assumptions on the LRF that the LRF couldn't

develop on, this has led to some duplication of effort on certain programmes of work that the health board's have been required to take forward i.e. key worker testing cell etc."

Team Working

Delegates were very positive about the teamwork evident in the range of activities, and the cross partnership working undertaken across all structures established to manage Covid-19. There was a strong feeling that there had been very effective teamwork between colleagues and partners, with supportive working, shared responsibility and a sense of working to common goals. New partnerships and collaborations have been established during the pandemic and the ability to deliver what has been required had only been made possible by establishing new relationships with individuals within other organisations and trusting those new partnerships. Delegates were clear that these new partnerships and collaborations should continue after the current crisis is over to strengthen resilience in emergency planning. Conversely, where there was a lack of awareness of the roles and abilities of other organisations, delegates highlighted poorer outcomes. Many of the positive discussions referred to the pride respondents felt in terms of teams stepping up, adopting a 'cando' attitude and showing flexibility whilst working in difficult environments and work streams. It was clear that respondents felt pride in their teams and colleagues.

"ANONYMOUS area - great teamwork, strong leadership, mutual support and collective goal-setting. Pulled off things that might have seemed impossible - rainbow hospitals etc. Says so much about the quality of the region and its senior public sector professionals."

"The pace at which arrangements were stepped up and the willingness to work together."

"Ability of partners (SCG and TCG) to adapt the response to changing modelling; priorities; guidance and information."

"Team ethos amongst SCG members in [ANONYMOUS AREA]. Incredible level of commitment to a common purpose and a willingness for people to lead important and complex and challenging pieces of work. Adapted to virtual meetings quickly."

"I am incredibly proud of the way in which partners stepped forward in a time of real uncertainty, worked together and got things done with the minimum of fuss and bureaucracy."

"I'm so proud of being part of ANONYMOUS LRF, the can do, will do, done it attitude has been a testament to all who have contributed. The support and co-ordination provided by the LRF Partnership Team, most of the time working remotely, has been excellent."

"I'm so proud of being part of ANONYMOUS LRF, the can do, will do, done it attitude has been a testament to all who have contributed. The support and co-ordination provided by the LRF Partnership Team, most of the time working remotely, has been excellent."

Another area of discussion was the issue of working in teams across other partner organisations. Delegates spoke extensively of effective multiagency team working. This related to all levels, for example at SCG, TCG and sub-groups, often referring to particular tasks or representation from specific partners (for example LAs and Health) as well as wider issues around communication between team members from different partner organisations and the LRF approach. Far fewer comments referred to ineffective partnership working and where they did, they focused on issues arising from structural alignment, confusion about response from certain areas, and duplication of work.

"Good level of multi-agency co-operation at all levels - within the TCG, SCG and operationally."

"Partnership working and the establishment of an SCG so quickly. Strong leadership and partnership working from the outset."

"The effective partnership working on areas such as excess deaths, enforcement and logistics."

"The development of a consistent view from the partner agencies in response to the emergency. Difficult decisions needed making across sectors which at sometimes were at odds with my own organisational needs."

Organisational Working

Although there were positive aspects of team working and collaboration, there were clear issues relating to the integration between partner organisational working, particularly the LRF not aligning with health structures and the representation of health bodies at SCGs, both of which led to lack of clarity about the ongoing situation.

In terms of representation of organisations within teams, broadly this was seen as positive, with many comments specifically noting good representation of LAs at multiple levels, although this was not universal. Several comments referred to the inconsistency of Government Liaison Officers.

“Local Authorities have taken a substantial lead in a number of aspects of the response, including chairing most of the tactical groups established. All partners have contributed equally and appropriately.”

“Lack of engagement from LAs. Most of the LRF presence was from blue lights only predominantly

-Not the case in ANONYMOUS AREA where the [Number] Local

Authorities were well represented at SCG - at the appropriate level - and also have had a strong presence and contribution to the tactical level activities

-Certainly not the case with ANONYMOUS AREA

-I disagree Health Boards have been present at the LRF from the outset

-Disagree totally for ANONYMOUS AREA

-Definitely not the case within ANONYMOUS AREA.”

“Delay in ECCW standing up. Also, inconsistency of WGLO during the early critical phases

-Agree - no idea why sending higher grade but inexperienced civil servants to SCGs was deemed to be appropriate.”

In terms of relationships, it was recognised by delegates that the close working during the Covid-19 response has the potential benefit of building stronger relationships to aid emergency planning in the future, but also particularly during recovery from Covid-19. Delegates noted the importance of pre-existing relationships where trust and familiarity are already present. It was clear that effective cross partnership working was significantly enhanced and facilitated where there were strong pre-existing relationships and hindered when these were not there.

“Close working relationship between all agencies within the LRF built up over many years helped towards ensuring a good response to the covid19 crisis.”

“Through responding to this challenge together we have built a stronger strategic relationship at the LRF.”

One of the ways in which effective and collaborative organisational working was exemplified was through key achievements, such as the building of new temporary hospitals, managing the excess death process (e.g., setting up temporary mortuaries), putting in place the shielding program and setting up testing and community hubs through schools. It was evident there was a lot of pride in the way partners came together to produce sizeable achievements in a short space of time.

“There had been good collaboration across the whole system.... With good cross-agency support and resource sharing.”

“Incredible level of collaboration and mutual support leading to rapidly developed solutions including a regional excess death facility.”

“Ensure effective representation from partners who are sighted on issues and able to add value.”

“All local Authorities came to an early agreement on mortuary provision and this was established (and needed) very quickly.”

However, there were also considerable issues identified with organisational working. Effective organisation requires the alignment of policies and guidance and it was felt that this was not always achieved between organisations and between England and Wales. There was not a view from delegates that guidance should be the same, but that when it was different, it should be delineated in the communications. For example, different policies between Public Health Wales and PHE in relation to staff testing had proved challenging due to differences in the English and Welsh testing availability and capacity. More coordination of messaging was required, and it was noted by delegates that it took several weeks to establish a cross-organisation communication strategy.

A large proportion of comments relating to issues with organisational working related to the health sector. There were challenges with the health economy structure and its clarity in terms of how different structures interrelated, for example Public Health England, Public Health Wales and Welsh Health Boards. Better alignment between LRFs and Health Boards was noted as being a priority in the future. The representation of local health partnerships in the LRF was mixed, sometimes with good representation being observed, but other comments noting that health was working in parallel not in partnership or were slow to engage. Going forward it was requested that the expectations around Public Health Wales engagement at SCGs be clarified.

“No understanding of PH system - PHW role and regional PH role.”

“Confusion between PHW and HB colleagues who is responsible for what / hierarchy and bureaucratic structures created confusion and delays in enabling a proactive response.”

“This is a public health emergency but the NHS sometimes felt as though it was operating in parallel rather than partnership in terms of decisionmaking e.g. testing facilities and nightingale hospitals.”

In particular there was discussion about confidence in the support and leadership provided by Public Health Wales, their situational awareness and their understanding of regions. There was a request for Public Health Wales to be more pro-active and visible and, as stated previously, for expectations of their engagement at SCGs to be clarified. It was also noted by delegates that Public Health Wales communications with SCGs could have been improved and in turn, the messaging out to partners from the SCG was slow. One

positive associated with Public Health Wales was the establishment of the Public Health Strategic Co-ordinating Support Group, which provided specialist support to the four SCGs. This was seen as useful in providing guidance and had good representation. Some delegates noted that it would be useful to get feedback on this structure as it was relatively new and could be developed further if seen as useful. The alignment of guidance continues to be challenging, this links to issues already covered in the data challenges detailed in the transparency main theme below in main finding five.

“Communication between PHW and local SCG’s could be better.”

“PHW representative not attending SCG after the first week. This provided a gap in knowledge and sometimes caused a delay in getting answers for some questions which had a short response time frame.”

“PHW’s support for SCG. After the initial meetings direct PHW input into our SCG was non existent and this meant we got information second hand through the HB and were not able to challenge and understand policy direction. For me, it eroded confidence in the leadership behind the response to the emergency which is essential.”

“PHW SCG Support Group - This has been very useful group in terms providing updates to the SCGs and answering queries and addressing concerns raised by SCGs.”

In terms of information sharing, delegates reported a lack of collaboration and a lack of information sharing in some areas, for example, between resilience and health teams. Differences in organisational capacities was reported to have led to some difficulties between structures. Delegates also talked about elected structures (at all levels) requesting a lot from organisations and creating information overload. This was due to duplication of information requests via email and from multiple sources. Dealing with this reduced staff capacity and increased the potential of staff burn out, as well as creating the opportunity to miss important information. This was considered unhelpful in an emergency.

“Not sure if this was a specific Welsh Government issue – but there are too many requests for information from AM’s, MP’s, Councillors and elected officials, demanding information with short or no notice. Unrealistic expectations that staff are sitting waiting to answer such questions for information requests.”

The working between partner organisations and the military was widely reported as positive, with military engagement providing valuable logistics, support and advice. Where there were challenges, these related to the military being given several roles to perform that were costly or took too much time.

“I agree, the military have been excellent and the first RCG meeting I attended they reiterated locally their continued support which I cannot for a moment imagine came without national support.”

Another organisational partnership cluster the delegates discussed was the third sector, which was identified as important, and providing a unique infrastructure in Wales. They were widely reported as being able to organise very effectively at the local level and support informal community volunteers as well as formal volunteer routes. The financial impact of the crisis on the voluntary sector was recognised, but delegates were clear that going forward the sector would be key to resilience in communities.

“The sector might be voluntary, but it is not amateur.”

Moving from the third sector to organisational sectors, specific advice on procedures and planning was good, although these took some time to align with guidance from other sources or organisations, particularly around equipment or process. This was mentioned a few times specifically as a challenge for category one responders and is covered in more detail in the transparency of guidance in the main theme above.

Recommendations for Working Together: Multi-Agency Working

RAPID Recommendation 3.1: The Welsh Government, NHS Wales and the LRFs must urgently review the alignment and awareness amongst partners of key roles and responsibilities of the multi-agency and NHS response structures to ensure the maximum integration of these to increase the coordinated enduring management of Covid-19 and other types of future major incidents.

RAPID Recommendation 3.2: All responder agencies should ensure a sufficient trained and accredited cadre of staff are used to continue to support an effective and sustained response and recovery.

RAPID Recommendation 3.3: Building on the good practice of a single Public Health Strategic Co-ordinating Support Group which provides advice to all levels, the Welsh Government and LRFs should consider where other national level groups of this kind could provide a more effective option than separate LRF groups for Covid-19 and other national emergencies.

Strategy and Decision Making: Finding Four

This theme calls for the coordination and alignment of the structures and

flow between decision making bodies, this has two sub-themes. The extent to which the issues pertaining to these sub-themes were generated by delegates is shown in Figure 7, with far more focus on a coordinated approach to decision making. This theme was discussed more frequently by delegates than other themes, with 31% of the review data coded against this theme.

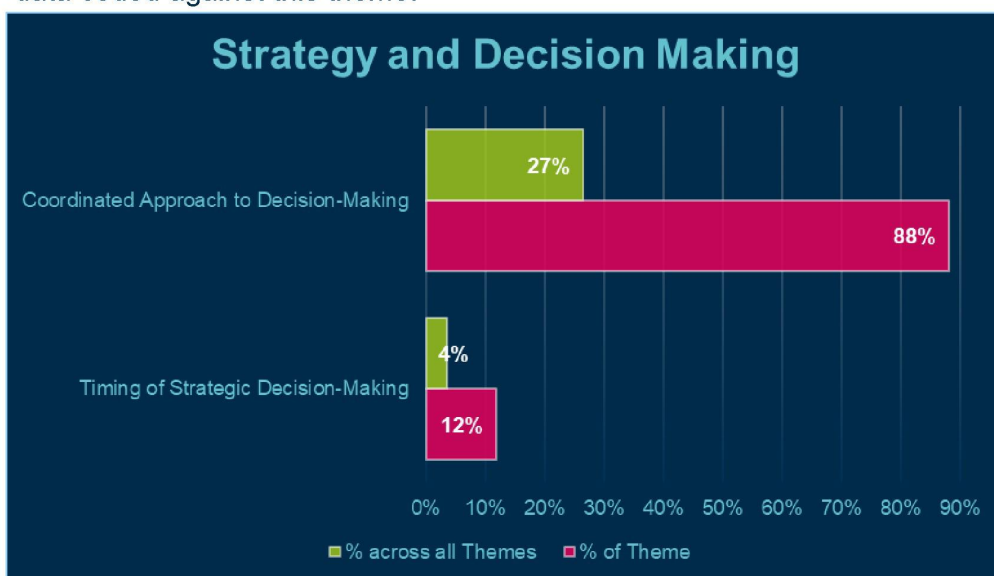


Figure 7. The percentage of the codes generated for each of the sub-themes in the overall theme of Strategy and Decision Making (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes).

Coordinated Approach to Decision Making

Looking to the continued management of the pandemic, delegates identified a clear need for all layers of the decision making structures to become more integrated, strategic, coordinated, and to have a multiagency approach as a default way of operating. This included all levels of structures, the local (communities and LAs), regional (LRFs), Wales and UK levels. The enhanced coordinated approach is in part needed to address the decision fracture points and perceived tension points in strategy that have already occurred during the pandemic (for examples see discussion of social care below). The quality and recording of decision making is paramount in all crises of this level.

“Even now I feel no one has overall control and coordination of the incident.”

A large proportion of comments that related to coordinated decision making referred to a lack of strategic direction, and this was mostly focused at the Welsh Government and Public Health Wales. Where respondents noted a presence of strategic thinking, this was at the regional/local level. The previous tensions of which will now be illustrated.

Delegates reported that testing had been an illustration of how decision making needs to be more integrated and coordinated. They felt that there and coherent testing strategy. There had been a lack of testing capacity throughout the crisis, including problems with testing key workers and problems with results not always being timely or accurate. The location of the testing centres had been problematic and in rural areas, they were not always within 30 minutes travelling stated in the guidance. The establishment of testing centres was not always known by all partners in advance of them arriving. Some strategies were critiqued as not being fully coordinated across the partnerships. For example, the test, trace and isolate system will potentially have a significant impact on organisational resilience and delegates felt that little consideration has been given to sector specific guidance for organisations. The decision to withdraw the track and trace system in the early days of the pandemic was also discussed by delegates. Although it was felt that there is now good communications between the relevant organisations involved in contact tracing, delegates did not feel that the issues identified with testing have been fully resolved.

“The testing approach was unclear for most of the time. The testing centre landed in the Cardiff city car park and no one knew it was coming. It was an ongoing saga. We never had enough capacity to do the testing.”

“End to end testing strategy and delays in getting results. Still not resolved.”

The rest of this sub-theme considers how the structures have aligned together and considers the strength of shared objectives between these different levels. In emergency response and recovery, it is essential that all levels of the structures have a shared strategy and pace and that the flow of decision making between those structures is supported, transparent and clear. The discussions in this sub-theme inform what made the overall coordination between these structures successful or what the tension points were. The different levels of structures are considered in turn.

Local Structures (LA and Communities)

Throughout the levels of structure, it was acknowledged that there was a lack of coordinated decision making around social care, and this impacted the local response. This aligned with the lack of focus on the social care sector, with some delegates feeling that this was because the focus was on the health sector. Some noted that the impact on social care has now led to it being seen as an equal to the health service. It is these points of tension in strategic decision making that the coordinated approach to decision making might support in the future, including in the continued management of the pandemic. The ongoing focus on the health aspects of the crisis was suggested to be limiting as Covid-19 is much more than a health pandemic. It impacts on all partner agencies.

It is still deemed to be a health emergency, which is ridiculous.”

“The fact that it was seen as a health Emergency was part of the problem the number of deaths in Social care is evidence that it was a wider public protection emergency.”

Delegates described coordinated decision making across multiple organisations and partnership relationships as a positive they would like to retain post Covid-19, to coordinate response to future and current demand.

“Councils facing unprecedented financial problems which will need to be supported by national governments to ensure crucial front line services can be sustained.”

“Demand will be significant going forward and will create challenges no doubt, but as long as we continue to strengthen our already strong relationships, we will prevail.”

Delegates felt that a contributing factor to a strategic, coordinated, multiagency approach to decision making at all levels was through multiagency training. In the context of post Covid-19, these coordinated and strategic multi-agency ways of working could provide innovative solutions to the projected increase in demand across all organisations and partners.

“I am forward looking to identify opportunities to improve how we do things in the post vivid space, including how we best support through joint training and exercising- the future will look different and we need to be fleet of foot and embrace opportunities.”

The Voluntary Community Sector was included in these multi-agency operations in both response and recovery as well as the management of the wider societal impacts. Delegates recognised that the capacity of volunteer sector might reduce once people were back at work after the easing of lockdown measures. Adequate resourcing of the voluntary response was noted as important in ensuring its sustainability.

“Need to work with voluntary sector in relation to this point (and most of Points in this whole exercise).”

“Third sector organisations provide services to carers and loved ones as well as the wider community and in order to continue to do so needs proper resourcing on a medium to long term basis.”

Regional (SCGs and LRFs)

At the regional level a number of delegates felt that the SCG had a good strategic focus and battle rhythm. Others felt that SCGs were sometimes too tactical and got lost on operational detail (although some felt this reflected the nature of the event) and that SCG battle rhythms differed and conflicted across LRFs. Although some delegates reported an initial delay in setting up the SCGs, it was generally recognised that SCGs are now working well.

“Highly strategic in ANONYMOUS AREA - good buy in particularly from Local Government raising many important issues which otherwise may have not been addressed.”

“Whilst there is a tendency for SCG members to dip in to tactical and operational matters, the ANONYMOUS AREA SCG has remained strategic in its oversight throughout.”

“The content of meetings has sometimes been too operational, more appropriate for a TCG meeting, and getting lost in the detail. Difficult to get this balance right all the time, but need to focus on the strategic role of an SCG and delegate actions appropriately to TCG.”

There are a number of positives highlighting the strengths already in existence in the regional co-ordination and decision making structures. SCGs were widely regarded as effective, having good structure and welldefined roles, having good timings and pace, and good management which enabled prioritisation. Delegates identified IT issues (due to dial in methods) or scheduling issues that impacted on joining (for example SCGs in different LRFs were sometimes scheduled at the same time). Overall, participation in the SCGs appeared to be a key strength, with full participation reported alongside good collaborative working and cohesion. The effectiveness of SCGs was in part due to the effectiveness of SCG Chairs, with a substantial number of positive comments relating to this, with only a small number of negative comments.

“Partnership working. The SCG structure developed well and quickly. I felt that we were as prepared as we could be in the time from the time we stood up for the worst projections.”

“Regular and consistent timings for meetings and availability of papers for both SCG and TCG.”

“The [PLACE] SCG enabled issues to be discussed, addressed and escalated to Welsh / UK Government where necessary – the group rose to the challenge and delivered (despite many set-backs / issues including technology, different organisational cultures and the extreme circumstances all organisations were operating under.”

“The skills of the chair have been excellent at keeping the group on task and aligned to strategic intentions from the outset - reviewed frequently and recovery considerations discussed early in the process.”

Alongside good chairing coordinated decision making was also reported as being achieved through leadership. Leadership was a common discussion, with all comments noting that this was a positive strength and was identified in the following contexts; leadership from the SCG; strength of leadership in the LRF; leadership in LAs and in other organisations. The learning from this leadership and how the leadership displayed at different levels of decision making inform the coordination and alignment of structures was widely

requested to be captured, shared and built in to learning and training opportunities.

One tool to facilitate decision making is the Joint Decision Model, which attracted comment, as did the training of key players in decision making. Although clear leadership was discussed as being displayed by SCG Chairs, other people at other levels also showed leadership as detailed in the paragraph above. The ability of people at all grades who stepped up to the challenge and performed roles and tasks that were far beyond their pay grade has drawn a lot of praise.

“Team ethos amongst SCG members in [PLACE]. Incredible level of commitment to a common purpose and a willingness for people to lead important and complex and challenging pieces of work. Adapted to virtual meetings quickly.”

“We have seen excellent leadership at SCG level, particularly from our Police Chair and Local Authority. Willing to take advice from the tactical level and specialist advisors, recognising the need to make decisions, and seeking clarity where information was unclear.”

In order for SCGs to be effective and operate strategically, delegates noted that it is crucial that the SCGs have the right people at them. Comments were balanced between those believing that the right people were consistently at the table in terms of level of seniority, experience and knowledge, and those who noted that membership was not comprised of people at the strategic level. Some partners were reported as being unsure of their role and where there was inadequate or inconsistent representation from some partners (particularly from Welsh Government and Public Health Wales).

“Inappropriate member representatives in some fora. For example, individuals attending SCG who had not completed a Wales Gold course or who were not operating at a strategic level within their respective agencies.”

“We have had difficulty with a lack of involvement from PHW in the SCGs. Decisions seem to be made by PHW in isolation, and then fed down rather than involving the partners.”

“Early representation at SCG of Welsh Government reps that could provide responses rather than going away to seek advice - this delayed strategic decision-making.”

“Having the correct level of representation at the SCG has been great and has allowed speedy decision-making.”

“People at Exec level around the table.”

Delegates also noted some issues around SCG size, with them being too big with too many partners. Consequently, the difficulties of resourcing all

SCGs was discussed, with some discussion of how to reduce the resource burden without losing value. Delegates suggested that there was a lack of initial consultations with LRFs and a lack of understanding of their role.

Wales (Welsh Government, Emergency Coordination Centre Wales and Public Health Wales)

Delegates had different opinions on the Welsh Government's handling of the crisis. Some delegates felt that the national planning was good and the Welsh Government were receptive and acted on concerns raised. Some delegates expressed a desire for additional strategic planning/considerations.

"The Welsh government listened through engagement with a number of forums... this engagement helped influence decisions and messaging from WG, which was helpful."

"No strategy from WG."

"I accept that whilst they are devolved- they might have been waiting for the central guidance in which to deliver in wales, but their ability to be contacted, response quickly with clear advice was poor."

"The flow of information through from the Government directly to SCGs has been poor."

Notable successes of the Welsh Government were the swiftness with which funding was secured for the LRFs, the food provision for the vulnerable and the financial support for key subjects such as temporary mortuaries. Delegates reported that the Welsh Government had a willingness to be open and they engaged well with Welsh citizens and rapidly established the BAME Advisory Group who produced a risk assessment tool for the social care sector. However, there were also those who felt the Welsh Government were slow to react, that there had been a lack of early engagement, that the national picture was not clearly presented, financial assistance was too slow, and that there had been a lack of leadership from the outset.

"A lack of co-ordination within the Welsh government The issue of who was doing what and too many WG fingers in the pie.... they provided interference rather than assistance."

There was a call from delegates for an urgent review of the Welsh Government internal co-ordination mechanisms and a call for Welsh Government officials to operate at speed and establish 24/7 working rather than shutting down at weekends.

Delegates reported that SCGs now have full engagement from the Welsh Government. Representation initially was good at SCGs, and assisted in providing clarity around some situations, however it was felt by delegates that it was not always the right people who attended the meetings.

“The WGLO’s are not deemed senior enough to attend SCG, although they are very knowledgeable they are not respected enough due to their grade.”

Delegates felt that the Welsh Government Liaison Officers had existing relationships and experience, but they were replaced with individuals who did not have the same level of relationship or experience. Some Welsh Government officials were unable to answer what some delegates considered ‘basic questions’ and where issues had to be taken away to seek clarification, this negatively impacted on activity.

Delegates mostly discussed the reported initial problems and delays with the supply of PPE, within the context of the Welsh Government, suggesting an under preparedness of stockpiling. These supply issues of PPE exacerbated the fears and anxieties of frontline workers due to their personal safety being threatened. However, it was reported that the difficulties experienced were not on the level that were seen in England.

“The supply of PPE was maintained despite the huge demand on the system, the army didn’t need to support Wales to the level that was required in England where the supply system collapsed.”

It was suggested by delegates that the messaging coming from the Welsh Government did not reflect the reality of the situation and the pace at which the PPE issues were resolved was critical to staff confidence. Delegates highlighted that whilst the explicit messages that staff safety was their number one priority, not being able to provide safe working may have given a different message. Delegates discussed how this could have a fundamental impact on the workforce moving forward, with some staff leaving the profession. Delegates demonstrated differing opinions on the current state of play about PPE. Although delegate opinion was clear that considerable improvements has been made, some reported they were still not confident of the supply, conversely, others suggested they trusted the issues were resolved.

“Is now excellent and very re-assuring, especially for all our social care providers.”

The subject of the Emergency Coordination Centre Wales evoked mixed responses amongst delegates. Some praised the centre and the helpfulness of their teams.

“ECCW stood up and operated in a seamless fashion”

However, there were also a similar number of negative comments. The delay in setting up Emergency Coordination Centre Wales (ECCW) (due to the categorising of Covid-19 as a health emergency) was mentioned as the reason that alternative groups used to set themselves up, which then stopped the centre having full situational awareness. This accompanied a general lack of awareness of the importance of the centre; there was a delay in the deployment of resources and a subsequent shortage of staff and staff with the

right specialisms. Delegates also commented that there was a lack of leadership in the centre. The information management system that was created to streamline information sharing was too 'complicated and long-winded'. It was thought that a better understanding of what the ECCW actually does would aid in effective functioning.

"Looked like all ECCW did was receive questions and send them to others to deal with and then the questions also arrived from other parts of the Welsh government... really don't know what ECCW were doing or did they?"

Structures within Public Health Wales were deemed critical to facilitate planning for the wider system, but also attracted some criticism regarding the challenges felt by other agencies trying to coordinate. This was reported as having an impact on the ability of other agencies to develop their strategic and tactical plans.

"Public Health Wales internal structures are very bureaucratic – often with no clear single point of contact which led to mixed messages, changes in direction and conflicting advice. This was particularly the case in setting up the testing protocols and resulted in changing parameters and abortive work for other organisations... lack of clear decision-making."

Delegates discussed how they felt that sometimes Public Health Wales were playing 'catch up' with Public Health England. Delegates wanted more engagement and coordination from Public Health Wales to the regional and local levels as well as more sharing and co-production from them.

UK Government

A small number of comments focused on the UK Government, with respondents noting that political announcements often hampered effective working and the political channels made responding more complex. Coordinating and sequencing this political input with the decision making structures was discussed.

"Dealing with the emergency through political channels made the process of dealing with the emergency a little more complex than it needed to be. Elected Local Government Leaders were on occasion being told more by the Welsh Government Ministers than LA Chief Executives which meant that participation at SCG was based on an incomplete picture (until they were told by their Leaders)."

This sub-theme has explored the considerations for each level of an integrated, strategic, coordinated decision making between the structures. Delegates were clear this needs to be resolved for the future management of the pandemic and future emergencies.

Issues relating to the coordination of decision making at the different structural layers were discussed in the sub-sections above. It was clear that in many instances, there had been a break down of this coordination across these

levels. The protracted nature of Covid-19 has highlighted issues with the connectivity and tension points across structures that may well not be as obvious in major emergencies that have a shorter time frame. In order to address these issues, it is necessary to examine how effectively the wider civil contingencies legislation supports the interrelation between those existing frameworks and structures currently being used to deliver the response and recovery functions. Delegates comments and this reports recommendations in relation to the wider legislation and policy are addressed in Finding Seven.

Timing of Strategic Decision Making

This sub-theme captures the delegates discussions of the speed at which strategic decisions have been made and the limited time they had between policy announcements or changes at the national level, and the expected time to implement them. The timeliness of decisions was regarded as more effective and appropriate at the regional and local levels. Delegates discussed the timeliness of setting up response processes in the early phases of the pandemic, and the impact on the timeliness of decisions. Three quarters of these comments were positive, many of which referred to the early stand up of SCGs and TCGs or subgroups that facilitated response. Other comments referred to fast response in general or the set-up of structures.

“The value of having a strong LRF membership helped us transition swiftly into a SCG for the response.”

“Implementation of SCG's / TCG's and relevant sub groups was put in place rapidly and established quickly.”

In contrast, challenges to a timely response structure were directed mostly to the Welsh Government who were noted as being slow to set up a response structure. The perception of delegates of the Welsh Government was that they failed to understand the seriousness of the situation in the early stages. As a result, there was a delay in setting up necessary structures and systems such as the ECCW, communications networks, and the formal UK/Welsh Government structures, which impacted on the coordination of decision making.

“Welsh Government slow response at the out set.”

“Waiting for welsh government to set up their reporting structure.”

“It was frustrating for me as a member of WG staff that so many delays were caused by inexperienced civil servants and not emergency planning experts.”

A number of delegates talked about decision making and prioritisation, an enabler of timeliness of decision making. Where these were positive, they were linked to fast and timely decision making and the structures (SCG) and leadership that facilitated that. Negative comments referred to lags in decision making due to a disjoint between the UK Government and Welsh

Government, and where decisions were sometimes made in isolation (e.g., Public Health Wales).

“The period where we had to wait for the WG to put their approach to a particular issue when national government has already made announcements which were in the media created additional work in having to respond to enquiries from citizens that reflected the national announcements and not the WG position and delays in getting the WG position added to the frustrations and failure demand.”

Delegates commented that there was generally little or no prior consultation or even notification ahead of policy announcements. This typically referred to ministerial announcements from the UK Government. Often when policies changed, these surprise announcements tended to be late in the week and late in the day, which presented significant challenges and negatively impacted on planning. Although appreciating that this was a fast-moving situation, it was felt by delegates that some advance notification ‘even a couple of hours’ would have helped to pre-empt issues on the ground, particularly regarding the interpretation and enforcement of these policy announcements. This also impacted on some staff who were required to work weekends in order to ‘embed the new directives in their organisations’.

“Announcements from Welsh Government came as a surprise meaning partners had to prioritise steps to react.”

“Consultation (even a couple of hours) on forthcoming/amendments to legislation would have helped pre-empt considerable issues in on the ground in interpretation/enforcement.”

“Speed of change to policy, e.g. care homes. Advice/instructions given (again on a Friday) to follow one particular pathway and test the whole care home population with outbreaks from a certain date, then 2 days later to be told that we should test all care homes and also asymptomatic staff and residents too (via a media announcement). This changes the parameters somewhat and requires significant uplift in resource.”

“Announcements were made at the daily briefings without any prior knowledge. We are always on the back foot but this is not always understood by the People in Wales, eg. schools to be opened – announcements were made and procedures had to be put in place in very tight time frames.”

Recommendations for Strategy and Decision Making

RAPID Recommendation 4.1: The Welsh Government working with key partners should clearly agree a Covid-19 strategy for Wales. This should be published and reviewed regularly, with and by, response and recovery partners to support and promote a coordinated approach across Wales.

RAPID Recommendation 4.2: The Welsh Government should rapidly review the existing decision making structures and (non-formal/ alternative) networks to ensure an agile and collaborative approach to decision making facilitates effective decision making and information sharing across Wales and at all levels. This should include an assurance regime to effectively test and embed any new and untested recovery and response structures.

Planning Enabled Through Transparency: Finding Five

This theme covers the chronic challenge of having limited information,

data, intelligence and the transparent use of that information to inform and evidence policy decisions. This has two sub-themes and the extent to which the issues pertaining to these sub-themes were generated by delegates is shown in Figure 8, with a greater focus on Transparency.

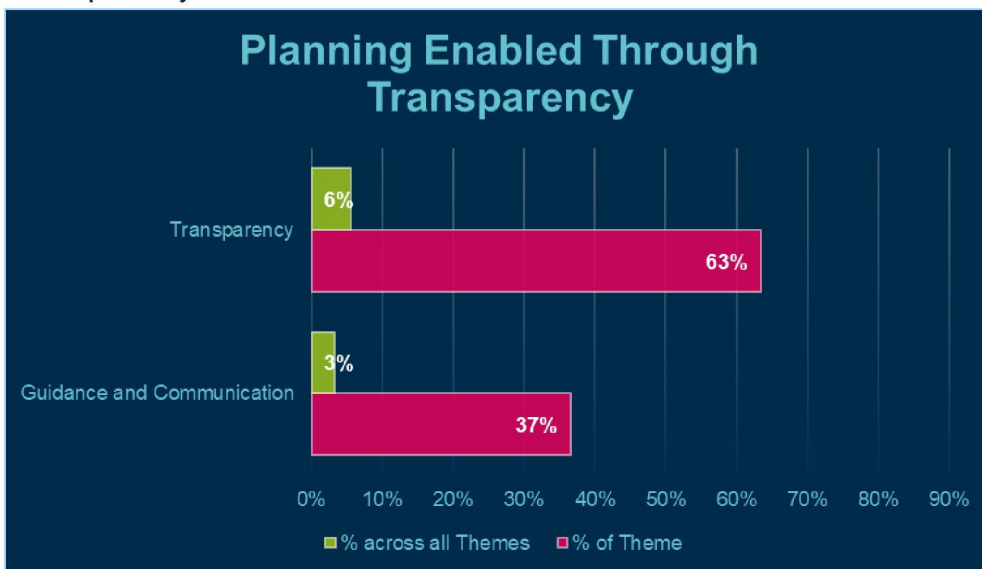


Figure 8. The percentage of the codes generated for each of the sub-themes in the overall theme of Planning Enabled Through Transparency (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes).

Transparency

This sub-theme refers to the lack of transparency in the sharing of modelling, data and information alongside the assumptions that underpinned strategic decision making. There were clear frustrations regarding the lack of, or timeliness of, data sharing, modelling and information at the local (community and LA) and regional (SCG) levels that was needed to inform response and recovery. There was also a strong call to the UK and Welsh Governments to account for how their decision making used the same evidence to inform decisions, yet they made different policy decisions about easing lockdown measures and the corresponding advice on behaviour for the public. The points of difference in interpretation or understanding was called on to be made transparent so that the public can understand the different approaches taken, given the same scientific inputs. In addition, the transparency of data, assumptions, planning, scenarios are called for to inform planning assumptions at local and regional level.

“I think the modelling and science has not been followed by UK government or if it has it has not been transparent...Disparity between governments appeared as the pandemic progressed. R rates are not that dissimilar across nations.”

“PHW and there provision of data - too little, too late, insufficient explanation, repeated versions of data, multiple routes in, avoidance of answers when support sought.”

Delegates discussed clear issues with data and information sharing. In terms of data and information sharing, these were frustrations of the lack of sharing at the national and the local level, particularly with regard to health data (from Public Health Wales), and with delays in sharing information that was

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made available. These issues were reflected in terms of sharing information more broadly. Going forward delegates requested earlier, more accurate, more detailed and timely information that they can use to enable an effective response and recovery. Concerns were expressed that there had been delays in getting modelling information from the UK government, no updates to the modelling that had been produced, inaccurate modelling (for the local level) and no sharing of the model.

Delegates suggested that initially there had been a lack of consistent and accurate data, which had caused difficulties in planning and response and meant that resources were not correctly targeted. These data errors may have been the result of the pressure that the situation placed on individuals and/or the lack of a ready to use IT system for recording deaths and general data capture. It was also suggested that data on the pandemic should have been made available to individual LAs so it could be properly understood and taken into account when response planning and this holds moving through to recovery.

“Daily death and testing figures are not clear and lack transparency.”

“Delays in death modelling data from PHW/WG.”

“At times, the modelling data felt like the preserve of the few - squirrelled away for others to guess about. Not helpful.”

“The absence of up to date complete data sets meant it was difficult to plan activity effectively.”

“Admittedly with the benefit of hindsight, the initial modelling data effectively produced a lot of scaremongering and unnecessary expense for units such as field hospitals and body storage facilities that are now mothballed.”

Vertical data sharing from the UK Government, was not the only challenge. Horizontal sharing of intelligence and data was also a challenge when establishing situational awareness. Sharing information at the regional level (e.g., SCG) was praised for providing good situational awareness, although a few comments also noted that this was also subject to some data sharing issues.

“From my agencies Point there was good direction given particularly around PPE this was changed and updated as soon as new scientific information arose.”

“WG also struggled to set out a rational as well so senior health professionals have not given advice or communication which has been useful for SCG's.”

Consequently, where there was limited horizontal sharing of information being used to establish situational awareness at regional level, situational reports gained a number of responses. These focussed on the approach and format leading to confusion, although it was noted that this improved over time.

“Confusion over reporting sit rep content and format distracted meeting from discussion of strategic issues, which was frustrating.”

Issues were noted in the alignment between the Government policies and the adoption of different policies, bearing in mind the same scientific advice is shared with all national leaders. Delegates felt that this should be addressed through greater transparency of their interpretation of the same scientific advice, data and knowledge. Delegates' sort answers on the differing interpretations

developed from the same data and advice from SAGE. They called for transparency on different decisions about policy and timing of relaxing different measures. This was not a call for consistency of the decisions made, but transparency for each nation to state how they have interpreted the scientific advice so that the public can see how and why different decisions have been made.

"I think the modelling and science has not been followed by UK government or if it has it has not been transparent. I'm unclear what the predicted impact of the easements happening in England has on the trajectory of bed use/deaths etc feels out of control. Disparity between governments appeared as the pandemic progressed. R rates are not that dissimilar across nations."

"Limited confidence in a senior professional in the forward planning of the UK Government and the rationale for its changing positions."

Guidance and Communication

There were frustrations with communication and guidance, from the UK Government, the Welsh Government, sectors, organisations and agencies. These frustrations focused on the clarity of guidance and communications, the changing nature of guidance, and the timeliness of policy announcements, which often led to reactive or delayed response at local level.

In terms of clarity, it was felt there was a lack of clarity around policy from the Welsh Government with slow clarifications forthcoming. This also included Public Health Wales. This hindered the formation of an intelligence picture due to limited sharing practices between partners, many not adopting the principles of transparency and duty of candour to support decision making at the LRF or SCG.

"No clear guidance from WG/PHW."

"More constancy on relevant guidance."

"Guidance from Central Government differs on occasions from guidance from Welsh Government. Difficulty in interpreting which was relevant/current."

"No interaction with the PHW comms team - this was a national health crisis and PHW were frequently conspicuous by the absence from comms meetings at regional and national level."

"Lots of guidance issued quickly which resulted in lots of questions which there were not necessarily answers to - put pressure on local service providers."

Delegates pointed to several challenges around the issuing of guidance in the crisis. Whilst some delegates felt that there was a lack of guidance, others felt that the problem was that the guidance was constantly changing. Although it was recognised that the emergency knowledge of Covid-19 transmission necessarily 'moved the goal posts' they called for more consistency or version control of guidance, as frequent changes caused confusion with the public.

“Welsh Government insisting on creating its own versions of UK guidance, which causes delays and uncertainty around local planning. This is especially so where the final WG product varies very little from the UK version. My comment and reference point are specifically in relation to the Framework for Managing the Deceased During a pandemic which is almost exactly the same as the original.”

“Version control of guidance across health and care sector. Fast changing and version control would be helpful.”

“Frequent changes to guidance (eg on PPE) created confusion and a focus on NHS rather than social care and other council services was a particular weakness.”

The flow of communication and guidance was sometimes poor or delayed, and yet at other times guidance was constantly changing, with multiple conflicting versions. At the national level, the communications with the Welsh Government were criticised for a poor flow of information, with guidance sometimes delayed, particularly when this required a reinterpretation of UK guidance for the Welsh context. Communication from Public Health Wales was also reported as being an issue, being seen as limited in frequency timeliness and quality of information shared.

There were a large number of respondents who talked about communications, both in positive and negative terms and covering a wide range of stakeholders. Concern was expressed about policy announcements, which were made with no warning. Sometimes this was from the UK Government, where there was no knowledge at the Welsh Government level, and sometimes from the Welsh Government who had not coordinated with SCGs. Communications with the Welsh Government were criticised for having a poor flow of information. This led to delegates feeling they were forced into a reactive position behind the curve. Delegates felt that better consultation prior to the release of guidance would be helpful and enable timely and effective implementation. There had been delays in issuing guidance regarding hospitals and care homes and as a result, a failure to protect vulnerable individuals. In some instances, there was a disconnect between regulations and guidance and this had a negative impact on policing in particular.

“Delays in receiving update from a national and WG level meant we were often responding to the latest media announcements which meant we were operating behind the curve and that made was frustrating when we were expected to respond quickly to new guidance/ policy and legislation that impacted on partner organisations.”

“Timeliness of UK gov announcements - no prior knowledge at devolved govt level so LRFs were constantly reacting to policy decisions.”

Guidance focussing on recovery was requested for the Covid-19 context, seeking clarity on the process of how to transition to recovery with some delegates noting that in some areas response has been stepped down despite probable local peaks.

“Clarity on the decision point from when you go from operations into recovery. It is felt that there wasn’t any clarity available on how the decision the made; acknowledging the difficulties of this which is a complex situation as not all agencies are synchronised in response / recovery activities.”

Recommendations for Planning Enabled Through Transparency

RAPID Recommendation 5.1: To ensure an effective response and recovery the Welsh and UK Government should adopt a transparent approach to data and decision making at all levels and ensure that, where appropriate, this is underpinned by a transparent ethical framework.

RAPID Recommendation 5.2: Communication between LRFs, Welsh Government and Public Health Wales needs to be immediately enhanced to deliver effective, timely and bi-directional information sharing in an ongoing public health emergency.

Learning, Sharing and Planning: Finding Six

This theme focusses on real time learning, sharing and planning while response and recovery are still active and there is no clear endpoint to pandemic management. This has two sub-themes sharing learning from planning and sharing learning from training events. The extent to which the issues pertaining to these sub-themes were generated by delegates is shown in Figure 9.

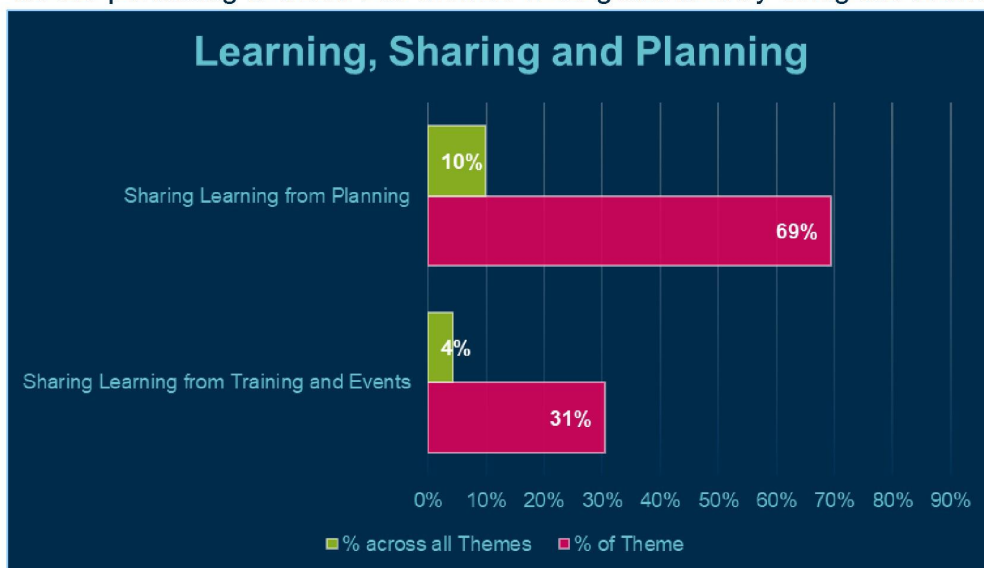


Figure 9. The percentage of the codes generated for each of the sub-themes in the overall theme of Learning, Sharing and Planning (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes).

Sharing Learning from Planning

This sub-theme captures the learning from exercises such as a recent tabletop exercise including ways in which learning associated with the management of Covid-19 has enabled the identification of gaps, priorities, areas of focus for preparedness and staffing challenges.

Delegates suggested that there was a lack of preparation for an event of this scale; instead, preparation that had taken place for a pandemic had tended to concentrate on a flu-like illness similar to that seen in winter pressures. In addition to the discussion around preparation, there was an acknowledgment that there was also no real training for this type of pandemic. Consequently, training and preparation in the future must be improved. Some delegates suggested that nothing could have prepared emergency management personnel for an event like this, but that people were adapting to the situation in a very positive manner.

Concern was expressed by delegates that the response to the pandemic did not follow the pre-planned, tested and exercised approach and it was suggested that the pandemic flu plan should have been followed. Having the plans but not using them was viewed as wasting time and effort, but it was also felt that deviating from the plan negatively impacted on response. Delegates felt that existing arrangements were not used and new plans were made without fully understanding the consequences. It was thought that the Welsh Government Resilience Team should have taken the lead, as per the original plan, but without that leadership, the result was a lack of clarity that was not helpful during response. Delegates suggested that the Wales Civil Contingencies Committee should be more visible, in line with the original plan.

As a way to share learning in real time and support planning currently being undertaken, delegates felt that the Resilience Direct platform could have been used better, with a standard way of it being used across LRFs.

Delegates discussed planning in real time for recovery activities and some noted that they lack the available time to plan for recovery.

“Don’t have much time for this at the current pace of work, need to carve out time but it is hard.”

Progression of recovery activities varied in their stage of development, from being in the initial stages of engaging, all the way through to having extensive plans in place. The learning that delegates discussed in relation to the planning for recovery and the consequences of Covid-19 are being framed in the following timelines, short, medium, and long term. There was broad recognition from delegates that the scale of recovery will be extensive. The range of work they described maps against society wide impacts and consequently varies significantly in scope to previous incident recovery. Delegates identified the learning taking place through planning activities across the country as an activity that should be shared to benefit all involved.

“Given that the impacts of this emergency are so deep and so broad - a national recovery framework is required.”

“More work needed. There is an underestimate, unhelpfully fuelled by political rhetoric (less so in Wales fortunately), of the time C19 will take going forwards.”

Delegates acknowledged the challenge in balancing returning to business as usual, the anticipation of needing an additional response, and moving to recovery. This became more complex when considering EU Transition and balancing the planning and preparation needed for a likely second wave of the pandemic. Delegates recognised the challenge of balancing the legacy effects from the first peak of Covid-19 with recovery. If not appropriately managed delegates reported that they could see the infection rate increase to the point of an R rate above one. Delegates reported that this planning is currently underway, but it would be enhanced through the vertical (government) and horizontal (regional and local) sharing of scenarios and planning assumptions.

“Life beyond the smog of COVID is going on. The implications of a No Deal are stark and would further stymied response and or recovery for example drugs/track and trace/economic recovery etc- yet here seems little being made of this potential risk to our strategic planning-which is only 6 months away!”

Balancing these significant areas of activity requires agility, and this was

reported as challenging when simultaneously maintaining the ability to return to response if necessary. A consequence of this was the need for continuation of reactive C3 arrangements. Delegates suggested that sharing how other LRFs, SCGs and local areas are approaching this would be beneficial.

“Time now is transitioning towards identifying legacy issues and future planning although this is in the context of having to be agile to move back to response phase if needed.”

Some delegates consider recovery as “building back better” most delegates agreed that recovery is not about returning to a previous place.

“We will not be returning to what we were doing in February, the changes will benefit all including the environment therefore supporting the reduction of risk and improving resilience.”

In the response phase, there has been very little business as usual activity due to the sheer encompassing nature of Covid-19. The need to return to normal was discussed by delegates and the return to substantive roles and duties was clear. Those heavily involved in recovery work are developing these business as usual activities, whilst completing the recovery work in their own role.

“The recovery phase requires a balance of prioritising continuing unprecedented acute response, with the bring back of a range of services.”

In addition to managing all these areas of activity, LRFs, LAs and other structures reported their need to ensure their learning on how best to balance all these activities at once. This should therefore be captured and shared horizontally.

Sharing Learning from Training and Events

There is a clear appreciation by delegates of how lessons learnt from recent concurrent events and training are being identified and shared quickly and widely across partnerships. They identified this as beneficial, useful and good practice and called for it to continue. Delegates highlighted a need to ensure all trained staff were well placed to utilise training within the pandemic and that there was a need to consider how this incident is built into future training programmes and plans. Delegates highlighted the importance of training and many noted that many attendees at SCGs had no specific training. Others noted that the training they received was valuable and that prior training had facilitated the development of networks that better enabled response. Going forward, delegates called for ongoing training in ‘peacetime’ and some discussed an accreditation system. Some delegates noted the need for ongoing learning with lessons needing to be shared from the response to Covid-19. *“Many examples of untrained delegates attending tactical and strategic meetings and the same delegates attending both work streams.”*

“Planning and training in the future needs to take us well beyond our comfort zones and we need to push the scenario to breaking point.”

Prior planning was seen as valuable, however, it was noted that flexibility was needed as well as dynamism. There was lots of evidence from the data that real time learning is happening across the partnerships. Methods had been used to identify updates for plans, specifically for evacuation, PPE issues, rest centres, physical distancing and cohorting of the public, as well as updating the LRF plan. Delegates concluded that structures, relationships and resources would be challenged if a concurrent event happened alongside this suite of activity but that they would function as required. The Voluntary and Community Sector have also been included in learning from other events and the tabletop exercise.

“[ANONYMOUS RESILIENCE FORUM] ran a virtual exercise with colleagues across [GEOGRAPHY] which was beneficial in outlining some gaps that needed to be prepared for

during a second incident. This allowed us to prioritise and prepare. Useful. Staffing would have been a major issue.”

These lessons identified from the tabletop exercise are being incorporated in to planning, exercises and training. There was a request from a smaller number of delegates for the exercise outcomes to be shared across Audit Wales Good Practice Exchange. Learning and updates to operational guidance was also evidenced as being amended following the sharing from recent incidents including real concurrent events that have occurred. In these instances, most of the delegates involved stated that their structures changed to accommodate a concurrent event and they had set up two TCGs.

In addition to the learning from shorter concurrent events, delegates also reported learning from EU Transition preparedness and the benefit they had learnt from this experience of working together at strategic levels alongside the Welsh Government. Most delegates reported being confident of their Covid-19 response plans as they were based on EU transition plans with appropriately aligned risk assessments for Covid-19. At the time this interim review was taking place, Business Continuity Plans were being tested through LRF exercises, with the requirements of Covid19 incorporated and where the operational response takes priority in those continuity plans. Delegates reported that new guidance had been produced to manage rest centres during Covid-19. Planning for concurrent emergencies also included planned increases in demand from societal changes such as stay at home holidays, which are likely to increase demand compared with the average year. Some delegates referenced the development of a traffic light approach that is designed for escalation and de-escalation to the Welsh Government. This includes earlier triggers for mass casualty arrangements and procedures for spreading casualty surge across a larger area to ease pressures to treat from an incident. Updating of risk registers, the activity of horizon scanning, the regional sharing of documents and the process for evacuation were all identified as needing consistency. Further concurrent planning advice was called for as these challenges have been solved at local level without leadership from the UK Government.

“I see in my own organisation that decision-making has become more dynamic than in “peacetime”; resources are quickly made available or redeployed as necessary. I think this is true of other partners as well.”

“As LRF's, our role is to plan, train and exercise collectively (with one voice) to ensure that we can deliver in moments of crisis and emergency. We can only be as good as our resources allow. In times of financial austerity in recent years, the lack of preparedness of some organisations (or LRF's) for a pandemic cannot be laid at their door. UK National Pandemic NHS guidance has been delayed for over 12 months, this has not assisted in planning for where we are now.”

The usual procedures of scrutiny and auditing to facilitate business as usual accountability of service design and delivery were requested to be paused or applied in a more sympathetic way whilst the phases of managing Covid-19 are live (until a vaccine is delivered across the population). There are currently reviews and refreshes of business continuity plans with response mode structures in place. The structures for the pandemic have not yet stepped down as this interim review was conducted, meaning they can react quickly. The command, control and communications (C3) arrangements and contingencies remain in place at gold level and delegates report SCG and Welsh Government support is there as required. The strategic level

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has sub cells, which allow flexibility to expand and prepare for future peaks. Delegates reported that they had sufficient knowledge and experience amongst the partners for a second independent SCG if needed. However, they did warn that members of the SCG must step up and organisations must select them carefully. The development of SCG members partly comes through memberships of TCG and SCG subgroups, which develops knowledge, expertise and skill sets. A small representation from the review cautioned that if an individual completes the training, then they must do that job of being the SCG member. The activity and learning from the Covid-19 management experience should be captured and used in future training activities.

Recommendations for Learning, Sharing and Planning

RAPID Recommendation 6.1: The Welsh Learning and Development Group should rapidly develop a common debrief methodology and shared learning mechanism to ensure learning and good practice is captured, shared and acted upon in real time, to both mitigate harm now, and influence the future response, to Covid-19.

Recommendation 6.2: The Wales Government should review the national training, exercising and competency framework for the management of major incidents to improve the capability, capacity, and sustainability of the multi-agency response across Wales. It should introduce arrangements that provide clear assurance that agencies and individuals at all levels are fully prepared to deliver an effective and coordinated multi-agency response to all foreseeable risks.

Enabling Forward Direction and Resources: Finding Seven

This theme considers aspects that would enable the LRF partnership organisations to move forward in to the new emergency management space post Covid-19. This has three sub-themes and the extent to which the issues pertaining to these were generated by delegates is shown in Figure 10. As is evident, these sub-themes were evident in the data in similar amounts.

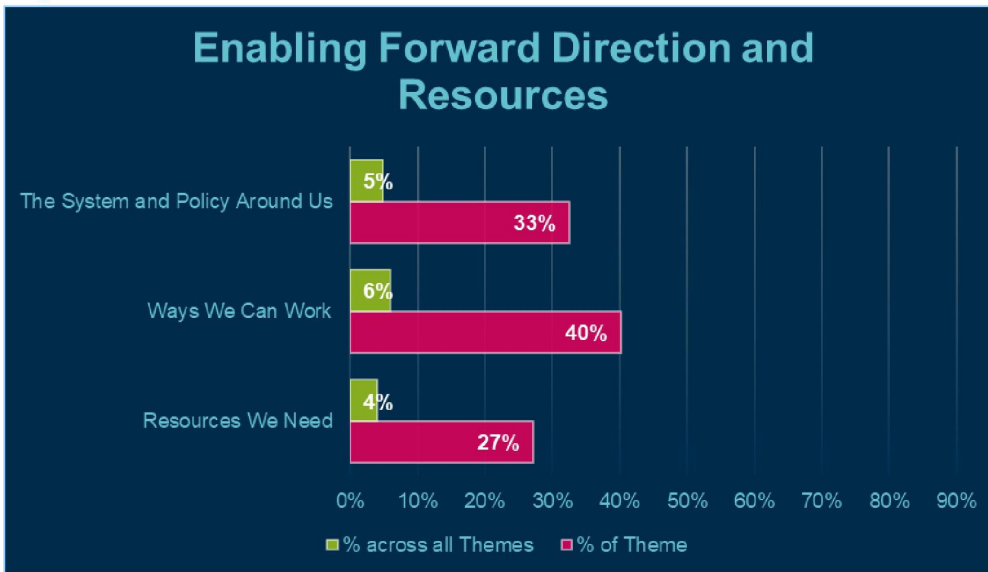


Figure 10. The percentage of the codes generated for each of the sub-themes in the overall theme of Enabling Forward Direction and Resources (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes).

The System and Policy Around Us

There was common consensus from delegates that the response has used an agile and flexible set of systems and processes. Delegates reflected that these need further review or updates to facilitate new ways of working during the management of Covid-19. Delegates discussed the suitability of the emergency management policies and processes for the current Covid-19 situation and reflected on whether they could simultaneously be suitable for something as systemic as Covid-19 and a more common major incident. Delegates did agree that it would be useful to update temporary policy and advice to accommodate the demands of Covid-19 as although the agility and flexibility displayed in response is likely to be identified as good practice, it also deviated from guidance in the Civil Contingencies Act.

“Its re- writing some of the civil contingencies handbook. operating in a space and making up some good practice by necessity.”

“Our incident management systems are set up to deal with acute incidents lasting days (e.g.: stratification of business critical activities based on service return times of hours or days, not on attrition over months). We adapted to this with a parallel Covid19 incident management structure and risk management.”

There was, on balance, a consensus that the civil contingencies legislative framework needs to be examined in light of Covid-19 and protracted incidents. This included a small consensus to create full time roles for

emergency planners at the local level. This was often accompanied by comments which indicated that emergency management roles and structures need to be facilitated or prioritised more than they are currently.

“There needs to be more full time staff who's day job is to examine risk, preparedness and training and exercise needs on a pan-Wales basis.

The current set up of adding this into people's day job is not an appropriate or useful way of ensuring that Wales is sufficiently prepared for the hazards and threats in the National Risk Register.”

“The current set up of adding this into people's day job is not an appropriate or useful way of ensuring that Wales is sufficiently prepared for the hazards and threats in the National Risk Register.”

“I think it's more about senior management actually understanding the role of civil contingencies, not just seeing it as a minor insurance policy.”

Delegates agreed that more resources are required to support the emergency management structures and their activities. Particularly in the context of Covid-19, the required resources are needed to support a sustainable response, recovery and manage local outbreaks. At the community level, the identification of primary and secondary impacts of Covid-19, and new and emergent demand, as well as the building of community resilience all needs to be resourced to ensure that the structures remain effective and the communities in Wales are given every opportunity to flourish as they live alongside Covid-19.

“Re - Introduction of ring fenced budgets for Emergency Planning / Business Continuity / Civil Contingencies will afford additional resilience at times like these.”

“There is a question here about how much value the organisation sees in the emergency planning function/team/service and what they are then prepared to fund accordingly.”

“Really important for the LRF to step back and consider wider implications of this. Its re-writing some of the civil contingencies handbook. operating in a space and making up some good practice by necessity.”

“We need to rewrite the Civil Contingencies Recovery Plans and use a different lexicon. Too stuffy and hierarchical - and not written for a response phase of such longevity and impact.”

“I think that a key factor will be to 'see' how the emergency planning function fits into the recovery phase and structures.”

Although there was an expression by delegates to develop guidance, this should be balanced with the recognition that working flexibility, and in an agile manner, is celebrated as a strength. Delegates reported that C3 arrangements have been largely strong, and well placed to foresee the consequences of Covid-19 during response, with a small minority reporting that there is scope for improvement.

“Our region (PLACE) gave good, early consideration to the recovery process and has carefully put something in place. Whilst this doesn't match the structures in place in the UK recovery guidance, this situation is such that it cannot. Seeing that flexibility was encouraging.”

“Internally C3 has been a success story especially given the national remit. A critical incident was declared early and strategic and tactical command groups set up to lead and review C3.”

The enduring nature of Covid-19 response means that the potential to learn from experiences in real time and to feed these forward to future planning and incident management should be captured, embedded and shared. Delegates reflected that this should ideally be achieved in collaboration with the Welsh Government.

“Things will never be the same again. We will need to reframe our medium term plans and long term strategies on the basis of what has changed and what we have learnt.”

“We are learning so much - out of necessity for organisational and service transformation.”

“This event has been unprecedented and there is significant learning as a result. Clear aims and objectives at a national and WG level, with clear roles and responsibilities, actions and targets that cascade down to a formal Recovery Coordinating Group.”

Although delegates shared a collective view that the Welsh Government had worked hard and had significant strengths in their response, delegates requested that with a forward look in to the future, the Welsh Government produce a national strategy and priority set which would help inform local strategy and planning. With strong leadership being demonstrated through timely two-way communication such as briefings.

“We are already working on the recovery phase but need a steer from national and regional government on their strategic intentions and priorities.”

“One of the fundamental ways in which we can identify and address legacy issues is in the way we support our leaders.”

One challenge identified by delegates was that the structural footprint and regulations do not match up across geographical areas; this is mostly related to governmental relationships, the health sector, but also the third sector. The third sector understandably needs to maintain contact with the UK Government and the Welsh Government, as there are different need profiles of the populations. Some issues are specific to devolved nations; others are not (for example welfare reform, furlough). Public Health England and Public Health Wales have also had to bridge gaps. These have highlighted policy conflicts in the structural footprints of politics and of health specifically.

“Policy conflicts – UK Gov vs Welsh Gov vs PHW vs UHB.”

“I believe it's been a jumble at times. Regional has been left to sort the gaps that appeared between PHE and PHW.”

Delegates commented further on resources through their discussion of the supply of logistics such as mortuary arrangements and PPE, which were agreed to be timely and met required needs. For example, additional mortality management logistics from the UK Government were coordinated well by the Welsh Government. Local capacity was quickly increased when required, providing reassurance that capacity could cope with the initial projected number of deaths. Delegates requested that LRFs keep the refrigerated units until the pandemic is over.

“The UK government stepping up to provide us (WELSH REGION) with local additional body storage capacity in the form of bespoke Portakabin units was much appreciated – and well facilitated/brokered by WG.”

The logistics regarding PPE were less positive and described by delegates as UK wide confusion regarding national PPE procurement and the supply of that PPE. Despite the frustrations with the logistics of PPE, there was positive regard for the speed of PPE guidance produced by UK Government and PHE.

“Speed of UK government/PHE producing guidance for all sectors.”

“Confusion with UK wide national procurement with reference to PPE.”

Capacity challenges were in part addressed through the adaptation and population of a parallel Covid-19 incident management structure and risk management process. The initial allocation of roles on the SCG was a challenge as the incident management system is designed to be activated over days not months. Delegates highlighted this as a challenge to the sustainability of the SCG, alongside the increasing workload of partner organisations becoming increasingly difficult to manage alongside incident response. With emerging and latent demand and staff abstraction the volume of work and complexity of demands are increasing.

“As the incident has carried on the workload has become increasingly difficult to manage with incident response adding c30% to our workload, on top of business as usual and perhaps 30% max. attrition in staff availability.”

“UK gov have enough staff to do their day job. Devolved Nations have less staff but the volume of work / responses / returns etc to normal everyday work still continues at pace.”

“We adapted to this with a parallel Covid19 incident management structure and risk management.”

Ways We Can Work

Despite some initial technical issues, online or remote working using new IT platforms was seen as a positive step forward, particularly for emergency management. Moreover, the move to this new way of working was broadly seen as a positive outcome of the situation, with remote working and the way individuals have adapted to it to enable them to complete their roles at home being seen as a significant success.

Although it was recognised that IT kit and connections were essential, virtual meetings were hailed a success as they enhanced the ability to conduct business and transformed engagement and information sharing. Delegates noted the successful transition of SCGs and TCGs to an online environment and recognised the work involved in moving things online. Many of the changes felt were felt to be positive by delegates and they were clear that opportunities should be taken to keep the changes that have worked and not revert to less effective or suitable ways of working.

“Excellent use of MSTEAMS to work as a team across SCG.”

“This pandemic has probably jolted more culture change within WG than anything anyone was doing to shift thinking. I worry about the organisation missing the opportunity to record the best practice that has come out of this and how to harness it.”

In terms of frustrations with new ways of working, these focused on the IT infrastructure, particularly the dial in technology, and then issues with various platforms, connectivity and bandwidth. Many issues appeared to relate to the systems initially in place. Given the urgency of the response required, insufficient infrastructure at the outset was clearly frustrating for many responders.

“What didn’t go so well: It issues prevented efficiency in remote meetings initially.”

“Network connections were problematic. Interaction on teams would have been better if we could have used Video but we kept it switched off to save bandwidth.”

There have been other changes to working practices that delegates defined as positive, and delegates were clear that opportunities should be taken to keep the changes that have worked and not revert to less effective or suitable ways of working.

“This pandemic has probably jolted more culture change within WG than anything anyone was doing to shift thinking. I worry about the organisation missing the opportunity to record the best practice that has come out of this and how to harness it.”

A number of comments highlighted that online ways of working would produce efficiencies in the future and create wider societal benefits (e.g., carbon footprint). It was recognised that this may impact the future physical footprint of organisations.

“Commitment and dedication of staff, many of which have worked tirelessly to develop and implement solutions.”

“Organisational - more extensive remote working. technology-enabled meetings which are good for time management whilst reducing car use/ CO2 emissions.”

“As an organisation we committing considerable to reimagining the new normal and what opportunities will emerge as we have proven we can slash our carbon footprint and we are a multi million £ organisation which no longer needs big buildings.”

However, an increase in remote and online working has created significant working challenges (management of increased email, home working), with both opportunities and costs of flexible working which need to be managed. There has been a lot of innovation required to meet the challenges of dealing with the situation, whilst not being able to physically co-locate with some consequences of this.

“Negative impact on staff well-being due to new (more remote) ways of working – loss of “corridor” conversations.”

“Working virtually is hard. The ‘over the desk’ chat has been replaced by massive email volumes and constant virtual calls. There is no time to do the real work.”

Delegates reported that staff have demonstrated considerable flexibility in responding to the pandemic, many being redeployed and integrating well into temporary teams. The agility of the staff in the Welsh Government was praised and individuals stepped up and filled roles within the ECCW. The pandemic has provided opportunities for individual development as people have had the chance to work outside their grade and portfolio of activities, which may ultimately lead to progression within their organisations. In some areas, a vacuum had been created due to a lack of leadership and again individuals were praised for stepping up. It was also recognised that a 'small number of senior leaders' had worked tirelessly throughout the crisis. However, concerns were also expressed about their well-being as it was thought that some had now reached the point of burnout.

Resources We Need

Requests for an aligned approach to facilitate online remote working were frequent and this included aligning IT platforms. Resource requests also included sustainable funding for emergency planning, the move to trained accredited staff in roles of emergency management, the capacity to deal with a concurrent health protection issue, resources to facilitate the testing and tracing policies, and assurances of mutual aid.

There was a clear frustration regarding the resourcing of LRFs. This related to historical under-resourcing of emergency planning and a need for it to support the development of competency and skills sets of individuals to enhance its capability. Issues with funding were identified by delegates both historically and currently, which they defined as having created barriers to working.

PPE was mentioned relatively few times, with issues relating to sourcing, supply, distribution and lack of oversight. Mutual aid across industry, sector and organisation was discussed, as was mutual aid between the voluntary and community sector and category one responders. Mutual aid of staff and role allocation to populate structures should also include professional services staff.

"Mutual aid from partner agencies, or assistance from other "back room" departments."

The track, trace and isolate system could cause entire teams to isolate for two weeks was seen as a big threat for the ability to respond to a concurrent event. This means that reduced availability of staff and absences might be compounded by tracing guidance where one positive result for a frontline worker may cause a large cohort of keyworkers to be unavailable to work for 14 days due to staff abstraction following exposure. There was some discussion of increasing trained cadre to predict and fill instances of abstraction of senior positions.

Delegates considered additional resources in the context of a concurrent event. Through exercising and planning, PPE plans had been updated for both staff and the public, physical distancing had been considered, and training for additional staff had been scoped. This had been planned with the challenges of real capacity as opposed to planned capacity, this was a distinction delegates made between what should be done on paper versus what can be done with actual capacity in real time. Delegates discussed how these additional resources need to be met to continue their levels of response during Covid-19.

“What has diminished what has changed, what is needed differently because of Covid 19. Finally as mentioned what does this mean in regards to finances and resources. This the needs to raised all the way to the top.”

“Staff capacity is always a pressure point in CC as teams are usually small. In addition there is no dedicated funding for CC and this is sometimes an area which becomes overlooked in LA budgets. Dedicated funding streams for CC would be very welcomed.”

Delegates reported that the biggest challenge in the ability to stand up for a concurrent emergency is the potential of staff burnout. This is partly due to there not being enough people to resource and manage likely concurrent events alongside longer term planning such as EU Transition and planning for the second wave of Covid-19. The capacity in partnerships has also been reduced.

“Capacity concerns given how preparations for no deal exit and covid19 have stretched us individually. Both happening concurrently a worry let alone adding in other incidents.”

If the concurrent event requires the use of mass acute hospital settings or mass casualty, then plans would manage a major incident involving health or injury. If there were a large number of casualties in a short timescale then there would be tremendous pressure on the health and social care sector. Mutual aid and national resources would reduce the challenge of a health or public protection incident. Public Protection Services are at full capacity, so a concurrent event would bring this to near breaking point for these services given that with Public Protection Services, there is no 'backfill' cover.

“Public Protection services (environmental health, trading standards, licensing etc) are now stretched to full capacity in dealing with CV regs, TTP, design of recovery of LA. A concurrent emergency would see breaking point reached. There is no "backfill cover" available for public protection services in Wales. WG must oversee a workforce review to ensure a return to pre austerity levels. Public health (and animal health) will always depend upon a functioning public protection service.”

“We need more resources to ensure we can deal with concurrent events – currently this would put a massive strain on already stretched partnership resources.”

All of the above need to be considered when planning what resources are needed for the future management of all areas of activity across the LRFs. Alongside discussions on managing concurrent events and retaining new ways of working the delegates also explored the factors prohibiting progress. Delegates noted that underfunding in civil contingencies has led to reduced preparedness. The finances and resources available were questioned by delegates as to what impact they have on real capacity. Funding for Civil Contingencies in Local Authority budgets would be welcome as would funding for LRF coordinators so that they could have a consistent structure. Delegates made an ask for the UK Government and Welsh Government to redesign for the new normal which should support intuitive models and financing.

“Limited support resources available for LRF Coordinators with no consistent funding or structure - some areas are better off than others, yet we all plan for the same risks and respond to the same incidents.”

“Emergency Planning and Civil Contingencies have been under recognised, under funded, and not recognised as an essential function of Government. If there was only one thing that we could make happen from all this - this would be it. Professionalising would mean not having to fight for resources within the organisation when setting up a response.”

Regarding the ability to maintain communications and this new flexible way of working, delegates notes that broadband and telephone capacity would need to be addressed. There was a call for a cross-Wales approach to a shared IT infrastructure and platform.

“Move to agreed multi partner ICT platform”.

“Emergency Planning and Civil Contingencies have been under recognised, under funded, and not recognised as an essential function of Government. If there was only one thing that we could make happen from all this - this would be it. Professionalising would mean not having to fight for resources within the organisation when setting up a response.”

Recommendations for Enabling Forward Direction and Resources

Recommendation 7.1: Building on the innovative and enabling practices developed in response to Covid-19, the Welsh Government working with stakeholders, should evaluate how they can better support integrated and multi-agency working during a major/national incident and ensure enough resources are made available to support delivery. This should be tracked and evaluated by an appropriate body.

Recommendation 7.2: Building on the ongoing lessons learnt from Covid -19, the Welsh Government should lead a comprehensive review into how civil contingencies is being delivered across Wales at all levels in order to develop an effective, integrated and properly resourced civil contingencies framework that provides the capability, capacity and resilience required to meet current and future challenges in an agile, flexible and sustainable way.

Recommendation 7.3: The Welsh Government needs to engage UK Government to examine the effectiveness of the civil contingencies legislative framework in the context of learning from Covid-19.

Summary of Main Findings and Conclusions

This was the first national review to capture Wales' response to Covid-19. This was carried out at the time point where the public narrative was focussed on easing lockdown measures in Wales, and when response and recovery activities were operating in full together. This is therefore a unique piece of work that captures the voice of a large range of individuals spanning 50 organisations. The delegates were all involved in the response and recovery from Covid-19 at a crucial time as they managed a range of diverse and complex activities in a dynamic landscape. This review aimed to capture the duality of response and recovery and to better understand the challenges and learning from delegates who were managing these.

Main Findings

The seven main themes were presented based on the analysis. The seven main themes are;

- 1) how the four nations approach to policies and guidance within the pandemic should be communicated to the public more clearly,
- 2) the focus on communities within Wales,
- 3) how the emergency management teams are working together,
- 4) the coordination and timing of decision making and strategy,
- 5) the challenges of planning and the benefit of increasing transparency both in decision making and in communicating,
- 6) learning, sharing and planning in real time through the elongated incident and the forward direction,
- 7) the resources, systems, policy and ways of working necessary to enable future activity.

This report has presented each of those seven themes and their associated subthemes, detailing nineteen recommendations that have been developed from those themes.

Next Steps

The recommendations from this report will be disseminated to the Joint Emergency Services Group. We call on the JESG to take these recommendations forward to tackle to ongoing response and recovery in Wales.

Conclusions of the Review Process

This review was carried out online by The Hydra Foundation, and required a significant scale up of the existing technology and capacity. The technology and methodology was successful and yielded a rich set of data. The analysis process adopted enabled a fast turn-around of high-level findings followed by rapid development of this more in-depth final report with academics working alongside subject matter experts. This process was to ensure the learning from the review could be fed back in real-time. The importance of this review is that it took place mid response and brought together the breadth of LRFs across Wales. This is the first time this has been done, and it means the learning contained in this report is unique as it is not limited to a single LRF, nor is it a post-incident debrief. The review took place at a distinctive point in time, as recovery became a dual focus alongside response. The findings provide a comprehensive overview of the different issues arising in that context, provide key learning, and identify current challenges. A measure of the success of the review process and the flexibility of the national response and recovery structures will be whether these challenges can be engaged with effectively and the learning influence policy and practice in real time.

That it has taken place mid-response and gone from data collection through to analysis and then production of a signed off report within five weeks has been a significant, but highly worthwhile challenge.

Summary of Recommendations

RAPID Recommendation 1.1: A more collaborative and coordinated approach to the development of guidance is advocated. This approach should articulate clearly where a common four nations approach is adopted, and where there are policy differences. This will support the effective coordination and duality of response and recovery across the UK in the next phase of the enduring management of Covid-19. This should also be considered ahead of time for EU transition and other types of systemic UK wide national emergencies.

RAPID Recommendation 1.2: Recognising that devolution may lead to a different approach within Wales, the Welsh and UK Governments should agree a joint strategy on public communications to ensure greater clarity of guidance and regulations and how they apply in each nation in the event of national emergencies.

RAPID Recommendation 2.1: LRFs should undertake a rapid review of the impacts of the pandemic on local communities to identify and reduce risks to the most vulnerable, assess the effectiveness of community engagement and provide partners with a clear plan to strengthen community resilience for the enduring nature of Covid19 and other types of major incident. The Welsh Government and LRFs should agree a common methodology for doing this to promote consistency in approach and enable sharing of learning.

RAPID Recommendation 2.2: Response and recovery organisations should urgently consider the merits of establishing a duty of care framework and encouraging mutual aid between organisations more experienced in supporting the health and wellbeing of first responders.

RAPID Recommendation 2.3: A review of response and recovery organisations arrangements to manage prolonged and concurrent emergencies should be undertaken immediately with a particular focus on assessing the psychosocial impacts on the wellbeing of staff involved in major incident response and recovery both during and after an emergency.

RAPID Recommendation 3.1: The Welsh Government, NHS Wales and the LRFs must urgently review the alignment and awareness amongst partners of key roles and responsibilities of the multi-agency and NHS response structures to ensure the maximum integration of these to increase the coordinated enduring management of Covid-19 and other types of future major incidents.

RAPID Recommendation 3.2: All responder agencies should ensure a sufficient trained and accredited cadre of staff are used to continue to support an effective and sustained response and recovery.

RAPID Recommendation 3.3: Building on the good practice of a single Public Health Strategic Co-ordinating Support Group which provides advice to all levels, the Welsh Government and LRFs should consider where other national level groups of this kind could provide a more effective option than separate LRF groups for Covid-19 and other national emergencies.

RAPID Recommendation 4.1: The Welsh Government working with key partners should clearly agree a Covid-19 strategy for Wales. This should be published and reviewed regularly, with and by, response and recovery partners to support and promote a coordinated approach across Wales.

RAPID Recommendation 4.2: The Welsh Government should rapidly review the existing decision making structures and (non-formal/alternative) networks to ensure an agile and collaborative approach to decision making facilitates effective decision making and information sharing across Wales and at all levels. This should include an assurance regime to effectively test and embed any new and untested recovery and response structures.

RAPID Recommendation 5.1: To ensure an effective response and recovery the Welsh and UK Government should adopt a transparent approach to data and decision making at all levels and ensure that, where appropriate, this is underpinned by a transparent ethical framework.

RAPID Recommendation 5.2: Communication between LRFs, Welsh Government and Public Health Wales needs to be immediately enhanced to deliver effective, timely and bi-directional information sharing in an ongoing public health emergency.

RAPID Recommendation 6.1: The Wales Learning and Development Group should rapidly develop a common debrief methodology and shared learning mechanism to ensure learning and good practice is captured, shared and acted upon in real time, to both mitigate harm now, and influence the future response, to Covid-19.

Recommendation 6.2: The Welsh Government should review the national training, exercising and competency framework for the management of major incidents to improve the capability, capacity, and sustainability of the multi-agency response across Wales. It should introduce arrangements that provide clear assurance that agencies and individuals at all levels are fully prepared to deliver an effective and coordinated multi-agency response to all foreseeable risks.

Recommendation 7.1: Building on the innovative and enabling practices developed in response to Covid-19, the Welsh Government working with stakeholders, should evaluate how they can better support integrated and multiagency working during a major/national incident and ensure enough resources are made available to support delivery. This should be tracked and evaluated by an appropriate body.

Recommendation 7.2: Building on the ongoing lessons learnt from Covid-19, the Welsh Government should lead a comprehensive review into how civil contingencies is being delivered across Wales at all levels in order to develop an effective, integrated and properly resourced civil contingencies framework that provides the capability, capacity and resilience required to meet current and future challenges in an agile, flexible and sustainable way.

Recommendation 7.3: The Welsh Government needs to engage UK Government to examine the effectiveness of the civil contingencies legislative framework in the context of learning from Covid-19.

Technical Appendices

This gives further detail and context to the discussions throughout the report.

Essential Context of the Civil Contingency and Emergency Management Structures within Wales

Dr Wyn Price.

The provisions of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 ('the Act') apply equally in Wales as they do in England. However, there are fundamental differences in how these provisions are applied in terms of planning, response and recovery. This document provides a summary of these differences and sets out how civil contingencies is delivered in Wales across all levels. This is a brief overview only and intended as an aide for understanding contextual differences.

Constitutional Position

Following a Transfer of Functions Order in 2018, several Executive Functions under the Act were transferred to Welsh Ministers. On policy, the Welsh Government can develop its own guidance and regulations in relation to the various civil contingencies functions and Welsh Ministers intend to do this in close collaboration with the Local Resilience Forums, emergency services, local authorities, NHS and other responder agencies. Welsh Ministers have powers to issue guidance in relation to the civil contingency duties, monitor compliance of the duties of devolved services under the Act and to enforce duties under the Act by way of proceedings in court. Additionally, after consultation with a Minister of the Crown, Welsh Ministers will be able to make regulations, orders and directions in relation to devolved responders (all Category one responders apart from the Police and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA)) and to make an order amending the list of responder organisations that fall within devolved competence.

Welsh Ministers now play a more influential role in setting the direction and delivery of civil contingencies in Wales. This not only includes developing appropriate policy for Wales but also, being able to provide greater support to the devolved agencies delivering those services.

Powers under Part 2 of the Act have not been transferred. This part of the Act deals specifically with Emergency Powers, which the UK Government reserves on a UK basis. A Concordat between the UK Government and the Welsh Government establishes an agreed framework for co-operation between the UK Government and the Welsh Government on issues pertaining to Part 2 (Emergency Powers) of the Act, which applies to the UK as a whole. The Concordat also sets out how the UK Government and the Welsh Government will co-operate in taking forward Part 1 of the Act.

Planning

As in England, the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) is the principal form of multi-agency co-operation in a local resilience area, based on the police force areas of North Wales, South Wales, Gwent and Dyfed-Powys. The LRF is not a legal entity and it does not direct its members, but it does play an important role in facilitating co-operation between the partners. The LRF is fundamentally a planning group but, during an emergency, members of the Forum are likely to come together as a multi-agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) to deliver their functional responsibilities.

An LRF Chairs Group, comprising the four LRF Chairs and Welsh Government facilitate co-operation on planning across the LRFs.

Planning at the LRF level is supported at an all-Wales level by the multiagency Wales Resilience Partnership Team (WRPT), chaired by Welsh Government. The WRPT co-ordinates the work of several sub-groups established to develop resilience across Wales in such areas as risk assessment and mass fatalities.

At the strategic level, the Joint Emergency Services Group (JESG) brings together all the emergency services in Wales (including MCA and British Transport Police). This includes NHS Wales, Welsh Government and armed forces at the most senior level. JESG considers their organisations' contributions to civil contingencies and counter-terrorism across Wales whilst also addressing wider cross-service issues of joint interest.

Ministerial engagement in the national planning structure is through the Wales Resilience Forum (WRF). Chaired by the First Minister for Wales, the WRF supports good communication and improves emergency planning across agencies and services. The Chairs of JESG and the LRF Chairs Group are permanent members of the WRF to form necessary operational links with the other national strategic groups.

Response

Each LRF has its own multi-agency response plan for managing the response to emergencies impacting on their areas. These are based on the same principles as those governing LRFs in England as set out in the non-statutory guidance, Emergency Response and Recovery. For emergencies on a national level requiring an integrated response across the four LRFs, the Pan-Wales Response Plan (PWRP) sets out a framework for the management of the crisis encompassing the Government, all-Wales, LRF and individual agency response. Under the plan, the Welsh Government establishes its Emergency Co-ordination Centre (Wales) (ECC(W)) to act as a focal point for information flows and national decision making. Operating under a single command, control and co-ordination structure, the ECC(W) establishes a battle rhythm for situation reporting to ensure decisions are made from accurate factual information providing a 'single version of the truth' of the impact on the ground in Wales. To support engagement with the four SCGs, Welsh Government Liaison Officers (SCG) attend all SCG meetings.

To co-ordinate the response on a national level, the PWRP establishes a multi-agency Wales Civil Contingencies Committee, led at official level by Welsh Government. Based at the ECC(W), the WCCC acts as an advisory body to Welsh Ministers. The ECC(W) also links into the UK Government's COBR response at both official and ministerial levels to integrate the structure and information flows on a UK basis.

Recovery

Each LRF has its own multi-agency recovery plan based on a framework agreed by the Wales Recovery Group. At the first meeting of any SCG established to respond to an emergency, a Recovery Co-ordinating Group (RCG) will be set up, largely under the leadership of the Local Authority mostly affected by the incident. The RCG will work in parallel with the SCG developing a strategy for recovery. As the work of the SCG diminishes over time, it will officially sign over leadership to the RCG, which will operate in the longer term to facilitate recovery and regeneration.

To support the work of the RCG, the Welsh Government has in place arrangements for national support through individual Welsh Government Departments or it can draw upon wider support from the UK Government. Where necessary, the PWRP sets out arrangements for a Ministerial Recovery Group to be established to help facilitate the Government support required.

Training and Exercising

Each LRF has its own group responsible for co-ordinating multi-agency training and exercising in the LRF area and which is responsible for delivering an annual programme.

At the all-Wales level, the Wales Learning and Development Group (WLDG) co-ordinates a programme of national training and exercising to enhance the compliment the programmes delivered at the local level. Funded by Welsh Government and JESG, the WLDG delivers training to provide people with the necessary skills to operate in an SCG (Wales Gold) or Tactical Co-ordinating Group (Wales Silver). The WLDG also provides specific training for SCG Chairs and delivers an annual Wales Civil Contingencies Conference, which brings the entire civil contingencies community in Wales together to consider emerging issues. A national Prepare Delivery Group (PDG) takes responsibility for all counter-terrorism training and exercising in Wales. The PDG Chair is a substantive member of the WLDG to ensure that civil contingencies and counter-terrorist training and exercising in Wales is fully integrated.

Theme and Sub-theme Structure of Findings One to Seven

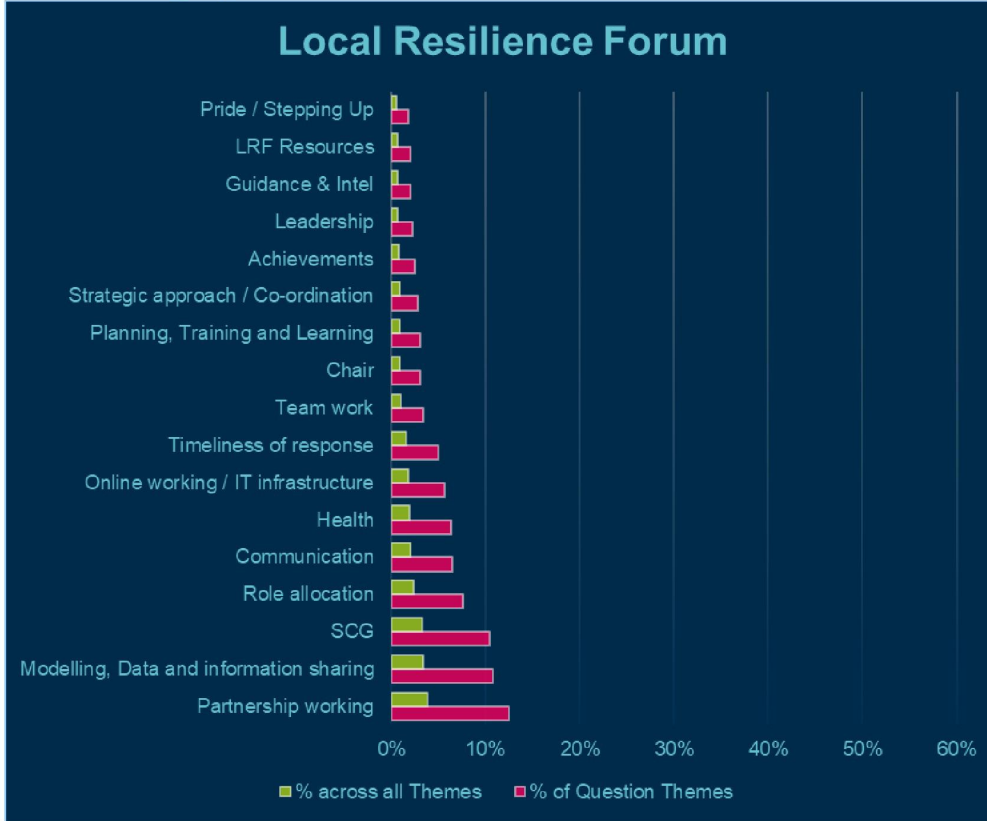
Overall Theme	Sub-theme	Theme generated in section (LRF/Welsh Government/UK Government/Concurrent/ Forward Look/Personal Reflections)
Four Nations Approach	Sub-theme 1 - Four Nations Approach	UK - National Relationship
	Sub-theme 2 - Communicating Four Nation Guidance to the Public	Welsh Gov - Four Nations Approach
		UK - Devolution Not Acknowledged
Sub-theme 3 - Managing National Differences in Guidance to the Public	UK - National Differences in Policy	
Community and Place	Sub-theme 1 - Communities in a Place	LRF - Community/Volunteers
		Concurrent - Community & Place
		Forward Look - Managing Public Response

		Forward Look - Point Scoring
		Forward Look - Societal Impacts
		Reflections - Inequality
	Sub-theme 2 - Communities of Our Team	Concurrent - Task & People Fatigue
		Forward Look - Personal Considerations
		Reflections - Resilience of Our People & Resources
Working Together: MultiAgency Working	Sub-theme 1 - Team Working	LRF - Partnership Working
		LRF - Pride / Stepping Up
		LRF - Team Work
		Reflections - Decision making
		Reflections - Military
		Reflections - Partnerships & Collaborations
	Sub-theme 2 - Team Challenges	LRF - Communication
		LRF - People
		LRF - Role allocation
		LRF - Testing
	Sub-theme 3 - Organisational Working	LRF - Achievements
		LRF - Health
		LRF - Partnership working
		Welsh Gov - Multi agency Working
		UK - Multi agency Working
Strategy and Decision making	Sub-theme 1 - Coordinated Approach to Decision making	LRF - Chair
		LRF - Leadership
		LRF - LRF Function
		LRF - Politics
		LRF - SCG
		LRF - Social Care
		LRF - Strategic Approach / Co-ordination
		Welsh Gov - Problems & Issues
		Welsh Gov - Structures and Strategies
		Forward Look - Integrated Approach
		Reflections - Links to wider Government
		Reflections - Pride & Success
		Reflections - SCG
	Sub-theme 2 - Timing of Strategic Decision making	LRF - Decision making / Prioritisation
		LRF - Timeliness of Response
		Welsh Gov - Problems & Issues

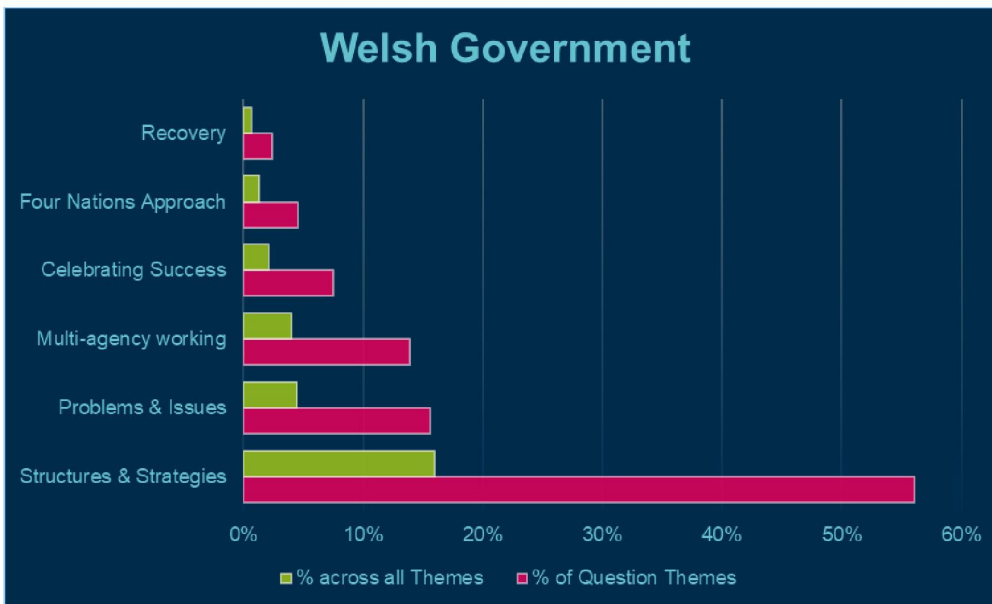
Overall Theme	Sub-theme	Theme generated in section (LRF/Welsh Government/ UK Government/Concurrent/Forward Look/Personal Reflections)	
Planning Enabled through Transparency	Sub-theme 1 - Transparency	LRF - Modelling, Data & Information Sharing	
		Welsh Gov - Problems & Issues	
		UK - Decision making Transparency	
	Sub-theme 2 - Guidance and Communication	LRF - Communication	
		LRF - Foresight	
		LRF - Guidance & Intel	
		LRF - Recovery	
		Welsh Gov - Problems & Issues	
	Learning, Sharing and Planning	Sub-theme 1 - Sharing Learning from Planning	LRF - Planning, Training and Learning
			Welsh Gov - Problems & Issues
Welsh Gov - Recovery			
Concurrent - Enablers			
Concurrent - Plan forward and BC			
Forward Look - Allocating Time to C19			
Forward Look - C19 language use			
Forward Look - Next Priorities			
Sub-theme 2 - Sharing Learning from Training and Events		LRF - Hydra Review	
		LRF - Other	
		LRF - Resilience Direct	
		Concurrent - Lessons and Learning	
		Forward Look - Other	
		Reflections - Preparation & Training	
		Reflections - System & Agreements	
		Reflections - Technology	
Enabling Forward Direction & Resources	Sub-theme 1 - The System and Policy Around Us	UK - Policy Process & People	
		Forward Look - People, Policy & Processes	
	Sub-theme 2 - Ways We Can Work	LRF - Online working / IT infrastructure	
		Welsh Gov - Celebrating Success	
		Forward Look - Working Arrangements	
		Reflections - New Ways of Working	
	Sub-theme 3 - Resources We Need	LRF - LRF Resources	
		LRF - PPE	
		Concurrent - Prohibitors of Progress	
		Concurrent - Tension Points	

Appendix Table 1. Mapping of the themes generated during the coding of each section to the overall themes/sub-themes reported in the main report

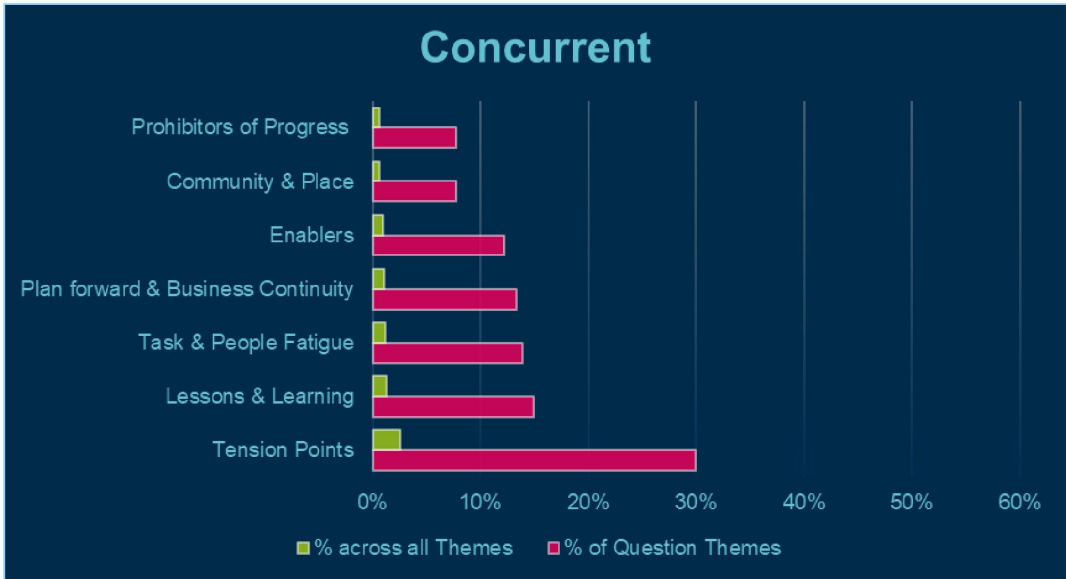
Graphs Showing the Percentages of Codes Contributing to The Review Workshop Questions



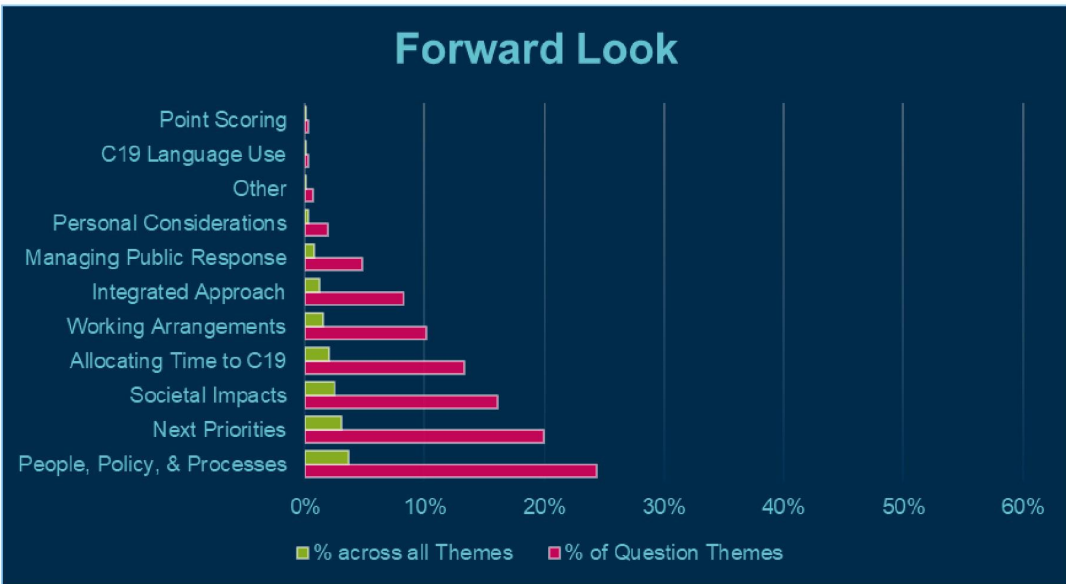
Appendix Table 1. Mapping of the themes generated during the coding of each section to the overall themes/ sub-themes reported in the main report



Appendix Figure 2: Theme percentages for Section 2 - Welsh Government Regional Support

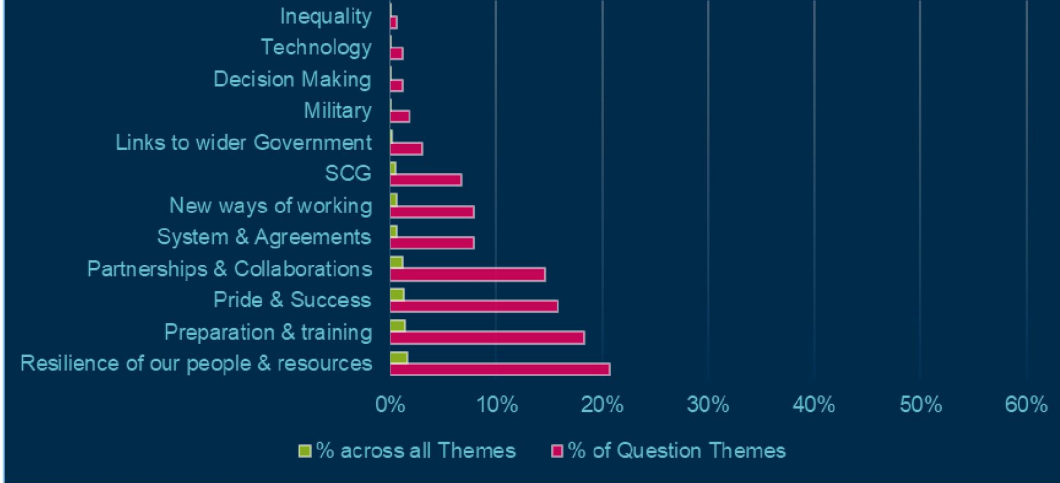


Appendix Figure 4: Theme percentages for Section 4 - Concurrent Emergency



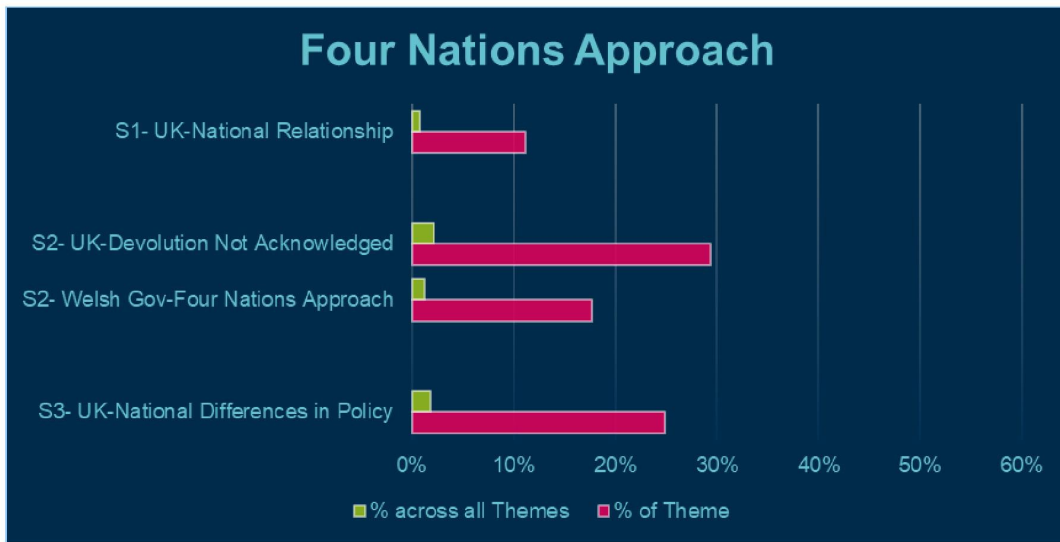
Appendix Figure 5: Theme percentages for Section 5 - Forward Look

Personal Reflections and Insights



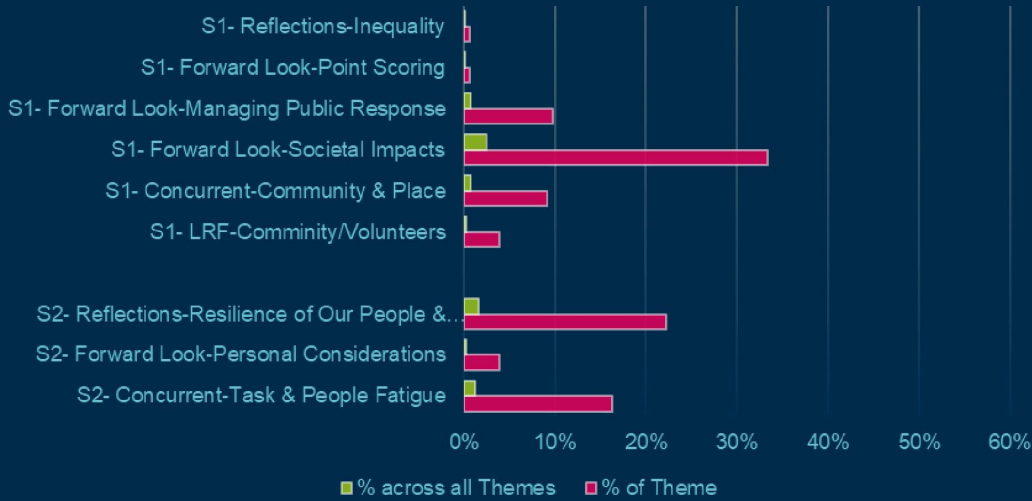
Appendix Figure 6: Theme percentages for Section 6 - Personal Reflections & Insights

Graphs Showing the Percentages of Codes Contributing to Sub-themes and their Main Themes



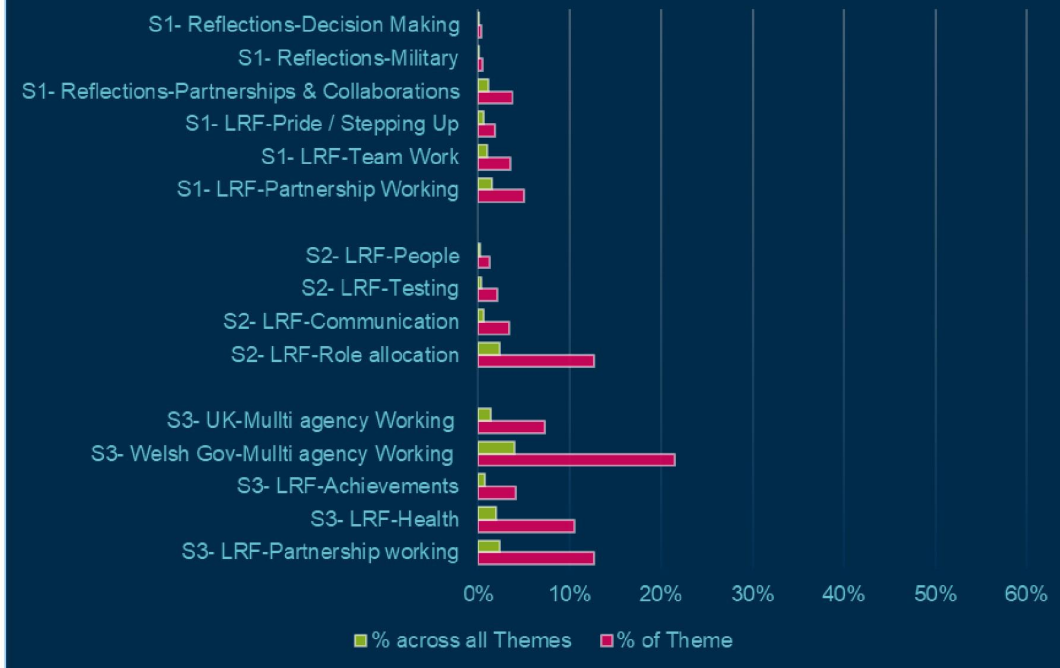
Appendix Figure 7. The percentage of the codes generated for each of the sub-themes in the overall issue of Four Nations Approach (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes). Also shown is the percentages for the themes generated when coding each section, and their mapping to the sub-themes (labelled S1-3 and given in Appendix Table 1) for the overall theme.

Community and Place



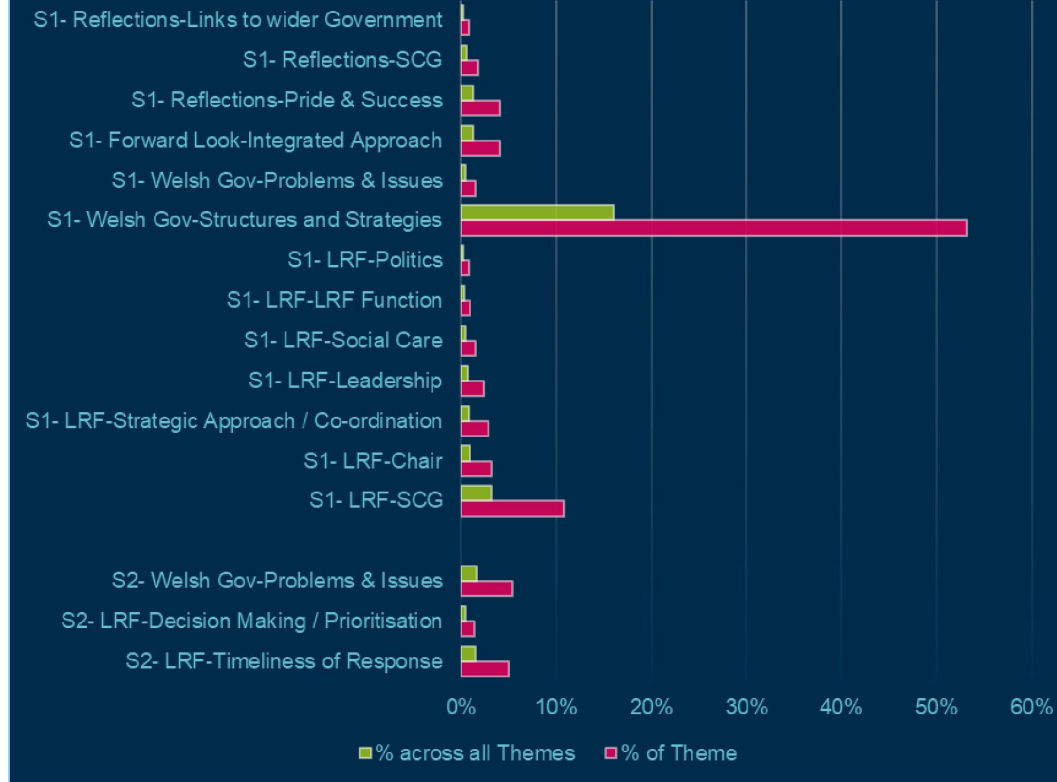
Appendix Figure 8. The percentage of the codes generated for each of the sub-themes in the overall issue of Community and Place (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes). Also shown is the percentages for the themes generated when coding each section, and their mapping to the sub-themes (labelled S1-2 and given in Appendix Table 1) for the overall theme.

Working Together: Multi-Agency Working



Appendix Figure 9. The percentage of the codes generated for each of the sub-themes in the overall issue of Working Together: Multi-Agency Working (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes). Also shown is the percentages for the themes generated when coding each section, and their mapping to the sub-themes (labelled S1-3 and given in Appendix Table 1) for the overall theme.

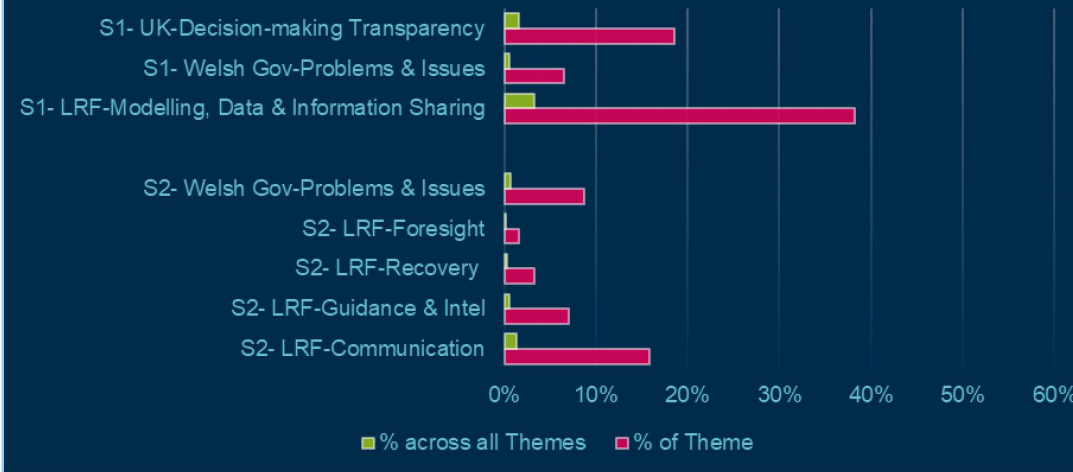
Strategy and Decision-Making



Appendix Figure 10. The

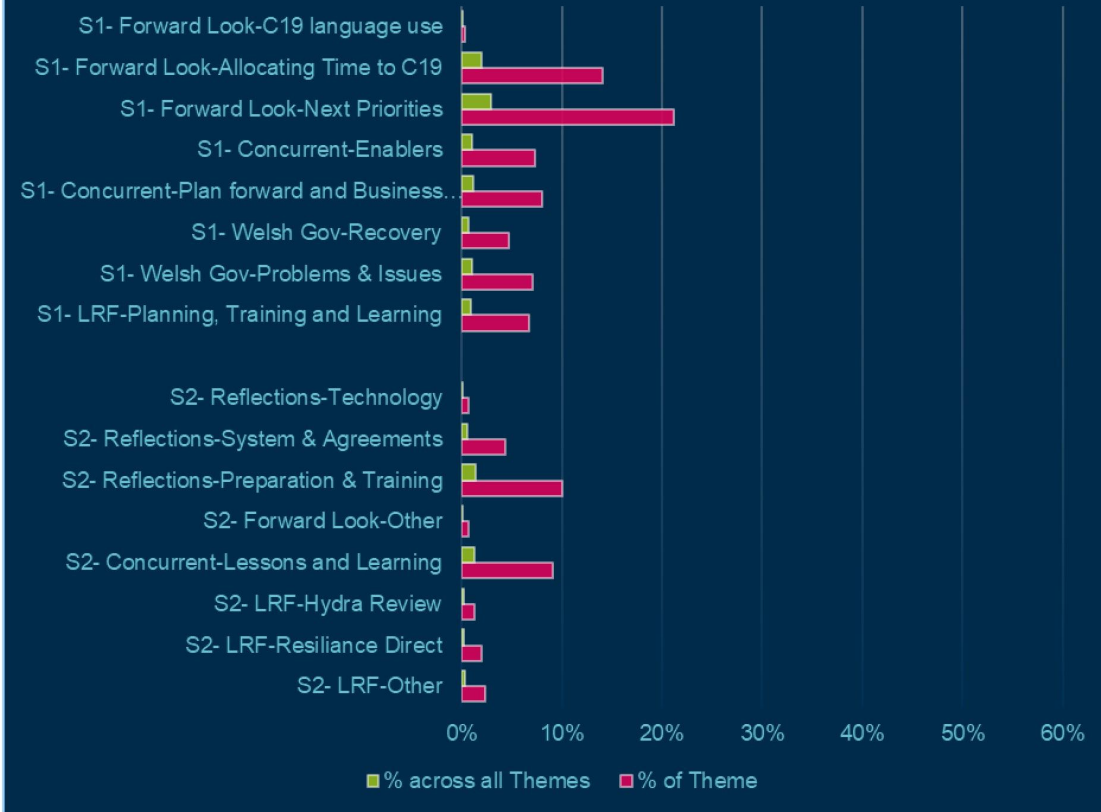
percentage of the codes generated for each of the sub-themes in the overall issue of Strategy and Decision making (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes). Also shown is the percentages for the themes generated when coding each section, and their mapping to the sub-themes (labelled S1-2 and given in Appendix Table 1) for the overall theme.

Planning Enabled Through Transparency



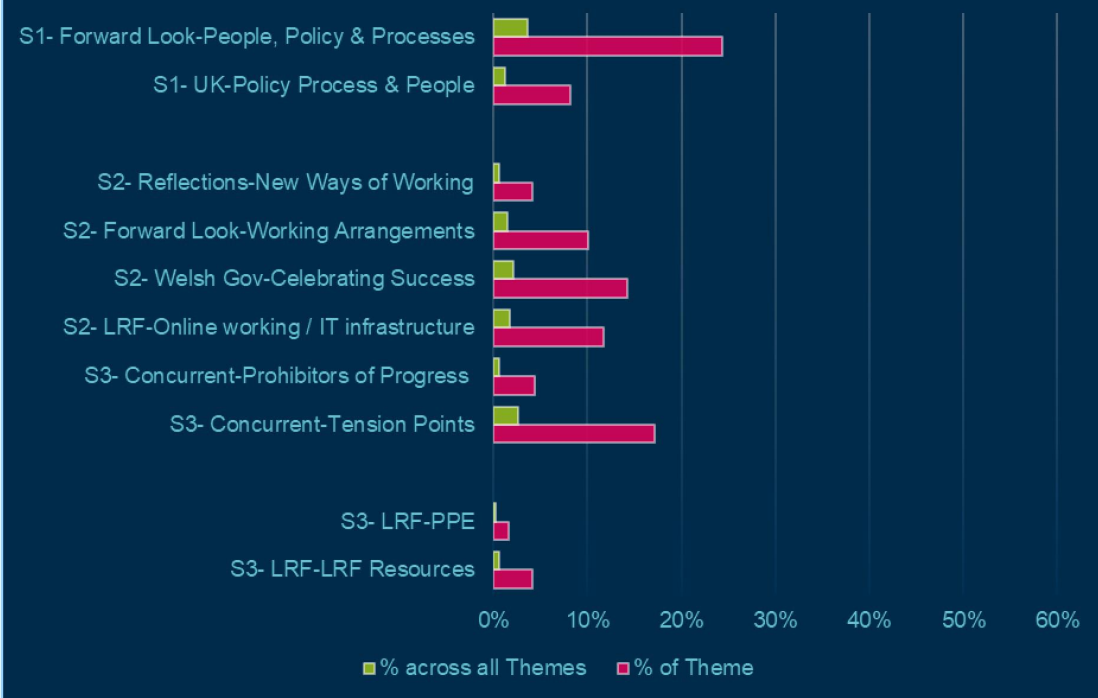
Appendix Figure 11. The percentage of the codes generated for each of the sub-themes in the overall issue of Lanning Enabled Through Transparency (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes). Also shown is the percentages for the themes generated when coding each section, and their mapping to the sub-themes (labelled S1-2 and given in Appendix Table 1) for the overall theme.

Learning, Sharing and Planning



Appendix Figure 12. The percentage of the codes generated for each of the sub-themes in the overall issue of Learning, Sharing and Planning (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes). Also shown is the percentages for the themes generated when coding each section, and their mapping to the sub-themes (labelled S1-2 and given in Appendix Table 1) for the overall theme.

Enabling Forward Direction and Resources



Appendix Figure 13. The percentage of the codes generated for each of the sub-themes in the overall issue of Enabling Forward Direction and Resources (% of Theme), and as a percentage of the total codes generated across all themes (% across all Themes). Also shown is the percentages for the themes generated when coding each section, and their mapping to the sub-themes (labelled S1-2 and given in Appendix Table 1) for the overall theme.

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