

Agenda Item

4.4

Joint Commissioning Committee

MANCHESTER ARENA INQUIRY UPDATE REPORT

Dyddiad y Cyfarfod / Date of Meeting	26/05/2026
Statws Cyhoeddi / Publication Status	Open/ Public
	Choose an item.
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Noddwr yr Adroddiad / Report Sponsor	Juliet Brown, Chief Commissioner

Pwrpas yr Adroddiad / Report Purpose	For Approval Choose an item.
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Engagement (internal/external) undertaken to date (including receipt/consideration at Committee/Group)		
Committee / Group / Individuals	Date	Outcome
Collaborative Commissioning Leadership Group	21/04/2026	Endorsed
Planning, Performance and Finance Sub-Committee	28/04/2026	Endorsed
Acronyms		
JESIP	Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles	

MAI	Manchester Arena Inquiry
NWJCC	NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee
WAST	Welsh Ambulance Services University NHS Trust

1. SITUATION/BACKGROUND

1.1 The Manchester Arena Inquiry Volume 2: Emergency Response report

The Manchester Arena Inquiry Volume 2 Emergency Response Report was published on the 3 November 2022. The report made 149 recommendations. Specifically for the Joint Commissioning Committee, recommendations 105, 106 and 107 are particularly relevant:

- **Recommendation 105** - Ambulance service trusts should review their capacity to respond to a mass casualty incident. That should include an assessment of whether they have an adequate number of trained specialist personnel to respond effectively to a mass casualty incident.
- **Recommendation 106** - Having carried out that review (rec 105), the trusts should make recommendations to their NHS commissioners about the additional and/or different resources they require in order to ensure that they are able respond effectively to a mass casualty incident in the numbers they require
- **Recommendation 107** - The Department of Health and Social Care should give urgent and close consideration to any recommendations made by the trusts and the NHS commissioners.

Following publication of the review, the Welsh Ambulance Service submitted their assessment of their requirements to the JCC in August 2024.

In recognising the specialist nature of the report, and the complexity of the assessment, the JCC designed a process of review which engaged support from all Health Boards, and external expertise in order to demonstrate due diligence to the assessment.

2. SPECIFIC MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

In order to test the proposals, examine feasibility and proportionality test assumptions and ensure decisions were evidence based, lawful and aligned with national standards, A multifaceted review process was undertaken by the Joint Commissioning Committee. The review included:

- structured stakeholder workshops,
- collaborative assessment sessions with Health Boards,
- independent legal advice from NWSSP Legal and Risk Services,
- an independent external review by Michael Bloomfield, OBE.

2.1 Health Board considerations

Health Board engagement highlighted broad support for strengthening WAST's preparedness and response arrangements, particularly in relation to control room readiness, command structures, exercising, and multidisciplinary interoperability. However, also offering a clear steer that a range of improvements would be required to existing processes before expanding capacity (eg role clarity, avoidance of duplication). Health Board representatives emphasised that, where proposals were supported, they should generally be delivered through internal prioritisation rather than additional commissioning resource at this time.

2.2 Conclusion of the external review

The external review conducted by Michael Bloomfield, OBE, concluded that several of WAST's proposals were proportionate, evidence based, and aligned with national expectations, whilst others require further development, benchmarking, or clearer justification. The reviewer also noted that certain proposals, most notably a large increase in emergency ambulance capacity, did not adequately address underlying system constraints, such as Emergency Department handover delays and dispatch inefficiencies, and would not materially improve immediate incident responsiveness.

2.3 Legal advice

Legal advice confirmed that the JCC must consider WAST's recommendations appropriately, in line with the principles of lawful, rational, and procedurally proper decision making. Further noting that whilst the JCC is not obliged to implement any recommendation, it must demonstrate that decisions are evidence based and proportionate, particularly given the link between MAI recommendations and statutory commissioning responsibilities. Advising that failure to do so could expose Health Boards to legal risk.

2.4 Position of the Joint Commissioning Committee

Taken together, the findings from stakeholder engagement, independent legal advice, and external expert review provide a clear basis for assessing the R106 WAST proposals.

As such the Ambulance Commissioning Committee team are able to recommend a position to the Joint Committee as follows:

- The majority of WASTs proposals represent proportionate and targeted enhancements, and there is commissioner support for these to proceed through the internal prioritisation mechanisms that WAST have at its disposal.
- Others require further development, the Director of Commissioning for Ambulance services and National Programmes will continue to work with WAST through the IMTP development process over coming years.
- One proposal, related to the proposed increase in emergency ambulances was not supported at the current time.

This position has also been discussed and supported through other parts of the Joint Commissioning Committees Governance structures, namely The Planning, Performance and Finance sub-committee (28/04/26), the Collaborative Commissioning Leadership Group (21/04/26) and JCC strategy session (date).

As a result of JCC discussions, in considering the reports, the following recommendations have been made and will be enacted subject to endorsement of this report:

- Correspondence to Welsh Government outlining the due diligence that has been undertaken in response to the WAST report, and recommendations on appropriate roles and responsibilities to respond to this, including the role of Welsh Government.
- Correspondence to WAST on formal response to reports received, along with actions that will be required from the organisation following commissioner consideration, specifically including details of mutual aid explored and contributed to across the UK.

It is proposed therefore:

- that the Director of Ambulance Services and National Programmes continues to work with the provider on the prioritisation of risk mitigation for 2026/27 and beyond, and the development of a coherent and affordable implementation plan over the coming years aligned to the JCC's Integrated Medium Term Planning process
- Correspondence should be sent to the Welsh Ambulance Services Trust outlining the assessment process that has been undertaken, and presenting the concluding position of the committee, along with the process of business case development for any current outstanding actions that will address system resilience and operational consistency
- Discussion should take place between WAST and other Emergency services regarding the potential for arrangements surrounding mutual aid
- Correspondence should be sent to Welsh Government clearly articulating a) roles and responsibilities within the implementation of the recommendations, inclusive of responsibilities for funding and delivery; and b) progress that has been made to date on risk mitigation

3.KEY RISKS / MATTERS FOR ESCALATION

The Joint Commissioning Committee will wish to provide due diligence to both process and outcome of the recommendations received from the NHS Welsh Ambulance Services Trust. Moreover, will wish to continue working closely with the Trust on areas of risk mitigation and implementation, aligned with its established commissioning processes.

4. ASSESSMENT

Objectives / Strategy	
Dolen i Amcan (au) Strategol CBC / Link to JCC Strategic Objectives(s)	Maximise Value
Dolen i Ddeddf Llesiant Cenedlaethau'r Dyfodol – Nodau Llesiant / Link to Wellbeing of Future Generations Act – Wellbeing Goals 150623-guide-to-the-fg-act-en.pdf (futuregenerations.wales)	A Healthier Wales
	If more than one applies please list below:
Dolen i Hwyluswyr Ansawdd <i>(Canllawiau Statudol Dyletswydd Ansawdd (llyw.cymru)) / Link to Enablers of Quality</i> (Duty of Quality Statutory Guidance (gov.wales))	Whole-systems Perspective
	If more than one applies please list below:
Dolen i Feysydd Ansawdd <i>(Canllawiau Statudol Dyletswydd Ansawdd (llyw.cymru)) / Link to Domains of Quality</i> (Duty of Quality Statutory Guidance (gov.wales))	Efficient
	If more than one applies please list below:
Effaith Amgylcheddol/ Cynaliadwyedd (5R) / Environmental /Sustainability Impact (5Rs)	No - Not Applicable
	If more than one applies please list below:

Impact Assessment		
Ansawdd <i>Ydych chi wedi ymgymryd â Sgrinio Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Ansawdd? /</i> Quality <i>Have you undertaken a Quality Impact Assessment Screening?</i>	Yes: ☐	No: ☒
	Outcome:	If no, please include rationale below: Information paper to support discussion
Cydraddoldeb <i>Ydych chi wedi ymgymryd â Sgrinio Asesiad o'r Effaith ar Gydraddoldeb? /</i> Equality <i>Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment Screening?</i>	Yes: ☐	No: ☒
	Outcome:	If no, please include rationale below: Information paper to support discussion
Cyfreithiol / Legal	Yes (Include further detail below)	
	These are outlined in the attachment.	
Enw da / Reputational	Yes (Include further detail below)	
	Response to major incidents/mass casualty events is a system responsibility as such a collective and proportionate response to risk mitigation in this area is required.	
Effaith Adnoddau <i>(Pobl / Ariannol) /</i> Resource Impact <i>(People / Financial)</i>	Yes (Include further detail below)	
	The consequence of the implementation of the findings of the assessment will require the provision or re-allocation of financial resources.	

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the Joint Commissioning Committee are asked to:

- **Note** the report; and
- **Approve** the proposed way forward

6. NEXT STEPS

- Correspondence to Welsh Government
- Correspondence to Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust
- Continued discussions as aligned with established commissioning processes, prioritisation and risk mitigation