

**EMERGENCY AMBULANCE SERVICES  
JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING**

**'CONFIRMED' MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON  
12 MAY 2020 AT 130PM VIRTUALLY BY SKYPE**

**PRESENT**

<b>Members:</b>	
Chris Turner	Independent Chair
Stephen Harrhy	Chief Ambulance Services Commissioner
Judith Paget	Chief Executive, Aneurin Bevan ABUHB
Nick Lyons	Medical Director, Cwm Taf Morgannwg CTMUHB
Tracy Myhill	Chief Executive, Swansea Bay SBUHB
Steve Moore	Chief Executive, Hywel Dda UHB
Simon Dean	Interim Chief Executive, Betsi Cadwaladr UHB
Carol Shillabeer	Chief Executive, Powys THB
<b>In Attendance:</b>	
Jason Killens	Chief Executive, Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST)
Stuart Davies	Director of Finance, Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC) and EASC Joint Committees
James Rodaway	Head of Commissioning & Performance Management
Ross Whitehead	Assistant Director of Quality and Patient Experience
Rachel Marsh	Director of Planning, Strategy and Performance, Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust
Gwenan Roberts	Assistant Director Corporate, National Collaborative Commissioning Unit (NCCU) (Committee Secretary)

<b>Part 1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS</b>		<b>ACTION</b>
EASC 20/38	<p><b>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS</b></p> <p>Chris Turner (Chair), welcomed Members to the first virtual meeting (using the Skype platform) of the Emergency Ambulance Services Committee.</p> <p>Prior to the presentation of the provider report, the Chair formally thanked Jason Killens and all of the staff at WAST for their excellent response to the Covid 19 Pandemic.</p> <p>The Chair also thanked the Chief Executives of health boards and their staff for their exceptional work and commitment in responding so well to the unprecedented situation.</p>	

	Members expressed their sincere sympathies and condolences to the families, friends and colleagues at WAST and those in the wider health service who had died during the time of this pandemic.	
EASC 20/39	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Len Richards and Sharon Hopkins. Nick Lyons, Medical Director at Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB was welcomed to his first meeting as the nominated deputy.</p>	
EASC 20/40	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS</b></p> <p>There were no additional interests to those already declared.</p> <p>Members noted that a new process was in development for declarations in line with advice from Audit Wales and updated forms would be circulated shortly.</p>	Chair  Committee Secretary
EASC 20/41	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 MARCH 2019</b></p> <p>The minutes were <b>confirmed</b> as an accurate record of the Joint Committee meeting held on 10 March 2019.</p>	Chair
EASC 20/42	<p><b>ACTION LOG</b></p> <p>Members <b>RECEIVED</b> the action log and agreed that a log be developed of pending actions delayed by the impact of the pandemic on normal business. Members <b>NOTED</b> specific progress as follows:</p> <p><b>Emergency Medical Retrieval Service (EMRTS) Gateway Review</b> The Chair requested that this be added to the 'pending' log.</p> <p><b>EASC 19/08 &amp; EASC 19/21 &amp; EASC 19/23 Emergency Medical Retrieval Service (EMRTS) Refresh of the commissioning framework</b> Members noted that the work to develop the framework was almost complete and would be provided at the next meeting (Added to the Forward Look).</p> <p><b>EASC 19/12 Risk Register</b> It was agreed that this would be received by the EASC Management Group and then by the Joint Committee in due course (On the Forward Look).</p>	Committee Secretary  CASC  Head of Commissioning  Committee Secretary

<p><b>EASC 19/55 &amp; 19/92 Mental Health</b> It was agreed that this be added to the 'pending log'.</p> <p><b>EASC 19/78 Reference document on the WAST Relief Gap Emergency Ambulance Service</b> It was agreed that this be added to the 'pending log' and would also form part of the work for the Ministerial Ambulance Availability Taskforce.</p> <p><b>EASC 19/79 WAST Service Transformation</b> It was agreed that this be added to the 'pending log'.</p> <p><b>EASC 19/97 Serious Adverse Incidents (SAIs)</b> Members noted that SAIs had been included in the WAST Provider Report and a recent Quality and Delivery meeting with the CASC had discussed the approach in detail. Information would be included in every WAST Provider report going forward (<b>Added to Action Log</b>).</p> <p><b>EASC 19/100 Emergency Department Quality and Delivery Framework</b> It was agreed that this be added to the 'pending log'.</p> <p><b>EASC 19/103 &amp; EASC 20/16 Governance</b> A report would be received at the next meeting which would include the Annual Governance Statement, highlight reports from Sub Groups and the risk register.</p> <p><b>EASC 20/12 Ministerial Ambulance Availability Taskforce</b> Members noted that the work had been delayed and the Minister was aware. This would be added to the 'pending log'.</p> <p><b>Emergency Medical Retrieval and Transfer Service</b> A meeting had been planned to take place before the end of March with the Air Ambulance Charity. This would be rearranged and this was added to the 'pending log'.</p> <p><b>EASC 20/15 Finance Report</b> A Finance Report would be received at the next meeting and would include the 'A Healthier Wales' allocation.</p>	<p>Deputy CASC</p> <p>CEO WAST</p> <p>CEO WAST</p> <p>CEO WAST</p> <p>CASC</p> <p>Committee Secretary</p> <p>CASC</p> <p>Chair and CASC</p> <p>Director of Finance</p>
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	<p>Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NOTE</b> the Action Log.</li> <li>• <b>AGREED</b> that a 'matters pending log' be developed as a result of the impact of the current pandemic.</li> </ul>	CASC / Committee Secretary
EASC 20/43	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <p>There were none.</p>	
EASC 20/44	<p><b>CHIEF AMBULANCE SERVICES COMMISSIONER'S REPORT</b></p> <p>The Chief Ambulance Services Commissioner's (CASC) report was received. In presenting the report, Stephen HARRY highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Year End Accounts</b> – Members noted that the draft year end accounts had been received and there were no problems or risks anticipated with finalising and submitting to the Audit and Risk Committee at Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB in June 2020.</li> <li>• <b>Ministerial Ambulance Availability Task Force</b> – Members noted that the plans for the Taskforce were currently on hold and the Minister had been informed. Consideration would be given when the work would formally recommence. Members noted that much of the work undertaken over the last few months in responding to the pandemic would be helpful in terms of the demand and capacity plan and would be particularly helpful to learn from the operational changes made at pace.</li> <li>• <b>Annual Governance Statement</b> – Members noted that this was in the drafting stage and would be submitted to the Audit and Risk Committee at Cwm Taf Morgannwg in June 2020. The draft once completed would be shared with Members for an opportunity to comment.</li> <li>• <b>Emergency Medical Retrieval and Transfer Service (EMRTS)</b> – Members noted the work to develop the commissioning framework and the work to develop 24/7 working. The EMRTS Delivery Assurance Group would discuss and develop detailed operational plans for approval at a future Committee meeting.</li> <li>• <b>EASC Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMTP)</b> – Members noted that a letter of support had been received from the Welsh Government for the EASC IMTP although the planning processes were now on hold. A revised delivery plan would be developed and Members noted the importance of responding to the updated operating framework process. A revised plan would be developed and presented to the Committee for consideration and approval in due course.</li> </ul>	<p>Director of Finance</p> <p>Committee Secretary</p> <p>CASC</p> <p>CASC</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Co-Chair Task and Finish Group</b> – Members were reminded that the CASC had been asked to work with the fire and rescue service; this work had been put on hold. Further information would be shared when available.</li> <li>• <b>Ambulance Quality Indicators (AQIs)</b> – Members noted that performance targets were on hold, although data continued to be collected; Stats Wales had paused the publication of the AQIs.</li> <li>• <b>Meetings with WAST</b> – Members noted that the CASC had a weekly meetings with the Chief Executive of WAST. A Quality and Delivery meeting was held last week and the CASC reported that progress was being made.</li> <li>• <b>EASC Management Group</b> - Members noted that the Group would recommence shortly and would work on developing the 'new normal' in line with the requirements of the operating framework.</li> <li>• <b>Covid response</b> – Members noted that the CASC and the EASC teams had continued to work closely with WAST and commended the positive way in which the WAST Executive Team and all of the staff had responded to the pandemic. Members noted that in terms of the additional expenditure related to the pandemic response, this was being monitored and this would not be the responsibility of health boards to fund. Members noted that the importance of the revised financial plan and clarification of the additional expenditure incurred by WAST.</li> </ul> <p>Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NOTE</b> the Chief Ambulance Services Commissioner's report.</li> </ul>	<p>CASC</p> <p>CASC</p> <p>CASC</p>
<p>EASC 20/45</p>	<p><b>WELSH AMBULANCE SERVICES NHS TRUST (WAST) PROVIDER REPORT</b></p> <p>The update report from the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST) was received and in presenting the report Jason Killens highlighted key areas which included:</p> <p><b>Pandemic and response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members noted that the team at WAST had aimed to double their capacity across key operational areas. Areas highlighted included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 111: Members noted that early on in the pandemic a 350% increase had been seen in the number of calls received for several weeks; additional call handlers and clinical staff had been recruited to assist and the online symptom checker was operational; as the activity reduced the team had been realigned.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

- More call handling capacity had been developed in Swansea and Cwmbran (2) with the potential to open in North Wales if required. This approach allowed safe working practices, conforming to social distancing rules, to operate in call centres.
- The surge in activity over the most recent weekend which saw the highest peak in activity over the last 3 months.
- 999: capacity had been doubled.
- Emergency Medical Services: the limiting factor was the availability of vehicles.
- Workforce issues: weekly overtime had doubled, support had been received from the military and underlying sickness absence had reduced.
- Performance: good outturn performance at over 65% across Wales in April and also expected in May.
- Non-emergency patient transport services had been maintained for renal and oncology patients; shadow plans had been developed to increase capacity when required, although not this had not yet been deployed.

#### **Activity and performance**

- Amber performance had improved from the beginning of the financial year, activity reduced, production and lost hours had all contributed which was the best position for a number of years.

#### **Demand and Capacity Review - Implementation progress**

Overview of the work to date was provided which included:

- Members noted that WAST had also retained this review as priority work during the Covid 19 pandemic response.
- Aim to recruit a net additional 136 WTE staff and the majority would be emergency medical technicians (EMT).
- Undertaken virtual recruitment events and virtual online training courses.
- Had already secured 40.28 WTE of the staff required and were also aiming to over-recruit the numbers of paramedics due to some slippage in the programme.
- Members noted that the Demand and Capacity Review was undertaken across NHS Wales and did not include the anticipated changes as a result of the Grange University Hospital opening. As a result Members noted that it was anticipated that a potential further 84 WTE staff would be required. Urgent discussions were underway to match the potential to open the new hospital in the Autumn as opposed to March 2021.
- Members noted that other developments and plans were on hold (apart from the work with the Grange Hospital).

### **Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS)**

- Members noted that work was continuing to improve the national booking process.
- The Demand and Capacity Review of NEPTS had now been reconvened and was being managed through the NEPTS Delivery Assurance Group.

### **WAST Integrated Medium Term Plan (IMTP)**

- Members noted that the WAST Board had approved the IMTP and a letter in support had been sent by the CASC although the planning processes had been put on hold by the Welsh Government.
- Members noted that WAST would respond to the new operating framework and intended to submit on 18 May. Members noted the intention to give the CASC sight of the final draft for comment by the end of the week.

### **Regional Escalation**

- Members noted that this process had been disrupted due to the response required for the Covid 19 pandemic.
- The WAST team suggested that it would need to continue to refine plans for the previously agreed revised regional escalation process in the future to weave in learning and management of activity due to the impact of the pandemic.

In receiving and noting the WAST provider report Members highlighted:

- The excellent progress made with the recruitment of staff and asked whether health boards also searching for additional staff had impacted on WAST; Jason Killens suggested that he would welcome a further opportunity to discuss recruitment, for example of paramedics, across NHS Wales and the potential impact of this, although no issues had been experienced to date.
- Performance issues - in terms of the improving trend but also of the variation in performance across Wales.
- The Amber performance was positive.
- Further discussions would need to take place in relation to how the extra resources (136WTE staff) would be deployed and it was agreed that the EASC Management Group would lead on the work and report to a future Committee meeting (**Added to Forward Look**).
- The additional capacity in the transfer and discharge service and plans for the medium and long term which was encouraging.
- The impact on WAST staff during the pandemic and the challenges faced; Jason Killens explained that efforts were being made to capture the learning and not lose the agile way in which staff were responding.

	<p>It was felt that IT had been an enabler and the team were aiming to capture the learning from this. The WAST team were planning a Covid 19 Wave 1 debrief session to capture any learning and recovery actions. Work included an online digital version for front line staff to bring together in time for the WAST Board meeting in June. This information would be shared with Members (<b>Added to Action Log</b>). Generally, staff appeared to be coping well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matters relating to personal protective equipment (PPE) and the impact in relation to the time taken to respond to incidents. The issue remained on aerosol generating procedures and cardiac arrest in relation to the type of PPE used.</li> <li>• Additional information was sought regarding performance and the possibility that due to the reduction in demand coupled with increased production that this would impact more on red performance. Members noted that in responding to the pandemic the number of rapid response vehicles had been reduced and community first responders had not been utilised as previously, primarily to ensure the safety of the staff. However, this was changing and the performance was now on an improving trajectory.</li> <li>• The evaluation of winter was raised and the work to do in planning for the next winter period alongside the Covid 19 impact. It was suggested and agreed that it would be helpful to undertake more planning than normal to ensure the NHS would be able to respond effectively. Members noted that WAST would increase the ambulance fleet by 100 new vehicles but would retain the older vehicles for an additional 12 months to ensure a contingency for the fleet. Additional staff were also trained and available such as the Fire and Rescue service staff. The impact of the winter in the Southern Hemisphere would also be monitored and WAST were keen to work closely with Health Boards in taking this work forward.</li> </ul> <p>Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NOTE</b> the provider report and the actions agreed.</li> </ul>	
EASC 20/46	<p><b>FORWARD PLAN OF BUSINESS</b></p> <p>The forward plan of business was received. Members discussed the arrangements for the Committee and agreed that a pending log be developed and closely monitored to ensure that necessary actions can be captured and completed in a timely way.</p>	Gwenan Roberts



	Following discussion, Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>APPROVE</b> that the Chair and the Chief Ambulance Services Commissioner further review the Forward Plan for future meeting in line with the discussions held.</li> </ul>	Chair and CASC
EASC 20/47	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>  There was none	

<b>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</b>		
EASC 20/48	A meeting of the Joint Committee would be held at 09:30 hrs, on Tuesday 14 July 2020 at the Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC), Unit G1, The Willowford, Main Ave, Treforest Industrial Estate, Pontypridd CF37 5YL.	Committee Secretary

Signed .....  
**Christopher Turner (Chair)**

Date .....

Confirmed