



**EMERGENCY AMBULANCE SERVICES  
JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING**

**'CONFIRMED' MINUTES OF THE 'SPECIAL' MEETING HELD ON  
20 JULY 2021 AT 13:30HOURS**

**VIRTUALLY BY MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**PRESENT**

<b>Members:</b>	
Chris Turner	Independent Chair
Stephen Harrhy	Chief Ambulance Services Commissioner
Judith Paget	Chief Executive, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board ABUHB
Jo Whitehead	Chief Executive, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board BCUHB
Len Richards	Chief Executive, Cardiff and Vale CVUHB
Paul Mears	Chief Executive, Cwm Taf Morgannwg CTMUHB
Steve Moore	Chief Executive, Hywel Dda HDdUHB
Carol Shillabeer	Chief Executive, Powys Teaching PTHB
Mark Hackett	Chief Executive, Swansea Bay SBUHB
<b>In Attendance:</b>	
Eluned Morgan MS	Minister for Health and Social Services, Welsh Government
Jason Killens	Chief Executive, Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST)
Steve Ham	Chief Executive, Velindre University NHS Trust
Stuart Davies	Director of Finance, Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC) and EASC Joint Committees
Ross Whitehead	Assistant Director of Quality and Patient Experience, National Collaborative Commissioning Unit (NCCU)
Aled Brown	Welsh Government
Kath McGrath	National Collaborative Commissioning Unit

<b>Part 1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS</b>		<b>ACTION</b>
EASC 21/51	<b>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS</b> Chris Turner (Chair), welcomed Members to the special meeting (using the Microsoft Teams platform) of the Emergency Ambulance Services Committee to meet with the Minister for Health and Social Services. Eluned Morgan MS was warmly welcomed to the meeting.	Chair
EASC 21/52	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> There were none.	Chair
EASC 21/53	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS</b> There were no additional interests to those already declared.	Chair

<p>EASC 21/54</p>	<p><b>MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES</b></p> <p>Eluned Morgan MS thanked the Chair and Members for the invitation to the Special meeting of the Emergency Ambulance Services Committee.</p> <p>The Minister welcomed the opportunity to meet with the Members of the Emergency Ambulance Services Joint Committee and specifically wanted to provide clarity in relation to the expectations for the whole system across the NHS and social care in Wales.</p> <p>The Minister raised the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Business continuity incident at the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST) on 19 July 2021</b> – asking how Members reflected on this issue, how lessons would be learned in order to minimise such occurrences and also drew attention to workforce and staffing issues</li> <li>• <b>Workforce issues</b> – of concern across the system and Members were asked to consider how a more proactive approach could be developed (forecasting) to be in a better position to respond to peaks in demand</li> <li>• <b>Communications</b> – the Minister felt that this was good after the business continuity incident (crisis) and asked how his could be improved with the public before any such serious actions were taken?</li> <li>• <b>Ministerial Ambulance Availability Taskforce</b> – asking Members to consider how the outputs could be implemented or accelerated. The Chair and the Chief Ambulance Services Commissioner were asked to develop a delivery plan for improvement which outlined the actions, timescales and identified leads with responsibilities for delivery (as soon as possible)</li> <li>• <b>Commissioning approach</b> – asking Members to consider how the approach could be more robust and specifically the exploration of possibilities towards incentives and sanctions</li> <li>• <b>Learning from the pandemic</b> – WAST was asked specifically what lessons could be learned in relation to the reduction in demand and the management of activity as a result of the pandemic</li> <li>• <b>Working effectively and safely</b> - WAST and HBs were asked to consider how they support ambulance staff to work to the limit of their professional practice (reducing variability in clinical practice and access for WAST staff to access services directly at health boards and communities)</li> <li>• <b>6 Goals for Urgent and Emergency Care Policy</b> – Members noted that the policy handbook would be published soon and asked how the Joint Committee and health boards would support the delivery of the policy.</li> </ul>	
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The Chair thanked the Minister for Health and Social Services for raising the issues and provided an opportunity for Members to respond.

Jason Killens responded and highlighted the following areas:

- WAST forecasting and plans in place; gave an overview of the summer plan
- Explained the staffing levels at WAST on 19 July 2021
- 30% increase in 999 compared to a normal Monday (adverse weather conditions temperatures >30°C)
- currently bolstering resources with St John Cymru
- The Ministerial Ambulance Availability Taskforce had been helpful in gathering views on the modernisation of ambulance services and WAST was developing its ambition to 'flip the organisation on its head' (shifting from a primarily a response service to providing remote clinical advice and support)
- EASC support had led to increased staffing and recruitment
- New rosters were being developed across Wales
- achieving the 'hear and treat' rate identified within the ORH Demand and Capacity Review of Emergency Medical Services and also trying to increase rates across Wales.

Members also responded including:

- thanking the Minister for the opportunity to discuss matters across the whole system together to improve services for patients
- raising the question of how the Members should work across the whole system
- suggesting that the organisational recovery plans would deal with many of the issues and the focus on urgent and emergency care and primary care recover with the plans; how the current plans were supported and funded was also raised
- needing to consider a broad set of resources to respond during high levels of demand
- recognising the need to have a system wide response but operating in an environment where demand had increased but the capacity in organisation had decreased and the challenges such as the limitation of the bed base
- that the Members would need to reflect on incentives and sanctions as they had not previously worked in this way in the past but would need to be seriously considered
- recognising that the focus needed to be on the entirety of the patient journey not just emergency departments but also the 'back door'

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the increased demand for social care of 25% in some areas was also impacting on flow</li> <li>• emphasising the need to strengthen community resilience across Wales.</li> </ul> <p>The Chief Ambulance Services Commissioner, Stephen HARRY responded to the Minister’s request for a comprehensive action plan and confirmed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the plan would be developed as requested</li> <li>• the plan would not provide a range of new actions but would seek delivery on those actions already identified within recovery plans</li> <li>• progress would be reported monthly</li> <li>• digital enablers would also be important for implementation</li> <li>• the focus on each of 5 steps to have the maximum ambulance contribution for each part of the service.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair thanked all Members for their contributions and invited the Minister to close the meeting with final remarks, these included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jason Killens was asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- provide advice on any opportunities to speed up roster reviews</li> <li>- Asked regarding the level of current pressures and how to avoid the need for business continuity issues in the future.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Urging Members to act and not wait for every part of the jigsaw to align – ‘do your own bit’</li> <li>• Raising public responsibilities to work with services and suggested that better education and communication regarding why services were under pressure to manage demand</li> <li>• Working with officials to try to move the recovery plans forward as soon as possible and recognised the many challenges for health and social care particularly in relation to the domiciliary care staffing levels</li> <li>• Reiterated receiving an action plan, with clear timescales and appropriate responsibilities assigned</li> <li>• Closed by articulating concerns regarding winter and the need to do all we can.</li> </ul> <p>Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NOTE</b> and thank the Minister for attending the meeting</li> <li>• <b>APPROVE</b> the development of a comprehensive action plan</li> </ul>	
<p>EASC 21/55</p>	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>There was none.</p>	

## Agenda Item 1.4

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING		
EASC 21/56	A meeting of the Joint Committee would be held at 13:30 hrs, on Tuesday 7 September 2021 at the Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC), Unit G1, The Willowford, Main Ave, Treforest Industrial Estate, Pontypridd CF37 5YL but likely to be held virtually on the Microsoft Teams platform.	Committee Secretary

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

Date .....