

## ASSURANCE REPORT

### NHS WALES SHARED SERVICES PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

Reporting Committee	Shared Service Partnership Committee
<b>Chaired by</b>	Margaret Foster, Chair
<b>Lead Executive</b>	Neil Frow, Managing Director, NWSSP
<b>Author and contact details.</b>	Peter Stephenson, Head of Finance and Business Development
<b>Date of meeting</b>	18 November 2021

#### **Summary of key matters including achievements and progress considered by the Committee and any related decisions made.**

##### **Decarbonisation Agenda**

Chris Lewis, NWSSP, Specialist Estates, provided an update on the work being done within NWSSP, both internally and on behalf of NHS Wales, in terms of the decarbonisation agenda. The context is the global recognition of climate change, and the need to take action to minimise the extent of rising temperatures, as has been discussed recently by world leaders in the COP26 conference in Glasgow. The work that Chris and his team are doing is aligned to the Welsh Government agenda. There are a number of good examples where progress has been made in terms of improving the estate (e.g. through LED lighting and Solar Panels); reducing transport emissions through greater use of electric vehicles and the installation of charging points; and reducing waste, particularly in terms of single-use plastic. The Welsh Government target of 30% working from home should also contribute, although savings in commuting emissions might be partially offset by increased energy use in private homes. Procurement and the supply chain are also a big area of potential impact on NWSSP's carbon footprint, and one example of where a difference can be made is in changing the medical gases used by anaesthetists. How NHS Wales fits into the expected targets and associated timescales for Wales to be carbon-neutral were discussed by Committee Members.

The presentation generated informed discussion. Lisa Wise, who heads the Climate Change Team for Health and Social Care in Welsh Government stressed the need for the programme to include adaptation to a changing climate to ensure continued resilience. Others commented on whether the programme was sufficiently ambitious and on how NWSSP could support the rest of NHS Wales. It was also stressed that this is not just a responsibility that can be delegated to Estates, but one which needs to be picked up across whole organisations. The costs associated with addressing climate change are huge, and it was therefore important that organisations acted in a joined-up way, partnering with local authorities and other bodies where appropriate, to take advantage of UK wide

initiatives and to avoid any unnecessary duplication. Obtaining a number of electric HGVs for the NWSSP fleet is one example of where UK-wide funding has been successfully accessed to date.

### **Managing Director Update**

The Managing Director presented his report, which included the following updates on key issues:

- A graphical representation highlighting how volumes of transactions have increased in recent years for Accounts Payable, Recruitment and Payroll functions and in particular over the previous 6 months. In recent months, the need for Health Boards and Trusts to increase expenditure and recruit significant additional members of staff to respond to and recover from the pandemic is undoubtedly placing great strain on the NWSSP Recruitment and Payroll teams in particular. Pressures have been compounded through the need to further respond to one-off issues such as payment of the COVID bonus, overtime arrears for annual leave, and implementing the pay award. NWSSP staff have responded admirably to these challenges, but the level of current demand is difficult to sustain within existing resource and systems and additional resources are required. Internal measures are being implemented to increase staff available where possible but the issues arising from this level of unprecedented and unplanned demand have been added as a risk on the Corporate Risk Register.

Function	Activity	2012/13 Baseline	2021/22 Forecast	% Increase
Accounts Payable	Invoices Processed	1,368,590	2,024,935	48%
Recruitment	FTE's Advertised	7,720	39,462	411%
Payroll	Payslips Processed	1,311,130	1,670,006	27%

- Continued progress has been made on addressing the issues that have been raised following health and safety audits undertaken by NWSSP within the initial three laundries that transferred, and this has been regularly reported to the NWSSP Senior Leadership Group. Although not secured yet, and subject to planning and changes outside of NWSSP control, the following sites are the All-Wales Laundry “preferred sites” that will be subject to scrutiny and business case approval:
  - **South West Region:** Millstream Way – land at Millstream Way, Swansea Vale, Swansea; and
  - **North Wales:** Tir Llwyd Employment Parc - land at Tir Llwyd Employment Parc, Kinmel Bay, Rhyl

- The major Oracle upgrade was carried out following the completion of a substantial testing programme and the system went live on 19 October, with all milestones achieved. There have been some issues with system stability and performance causing disruption since go-live which is to be initially expected for major upgrades. These now have now been addressed and the system is operating at pre-upgrade levels.

## **Items Requiring SSPC Approval/Endorsement**

### **COVID-19 Inquiry Planning Update**

The Committee was advised of the arrangements currently in place to prepare for the UK (and potentially Wales) COVID Public Inquiry. A task group has been established comprising a number of directors and the terms of reference for the group were shared with the Committee. Action Plans have been documented and additional resource is being recruited to help collate relevant evidence. There was some discussion on the large number of groups across NHS Wales who are responding to the likely needs of the Inquiry and the resultant need to minimise the potential for duplication. The Committee **ENDORSED** the approach.

### **Matrix House Business Case**

An opportunity to purchase Matrix House in Swansea (NWSSP West Wales Regional Hub), which is currently occupied by NWSSP, PHW and WAST, as well as some private tenants, has arisen. All three NHS organisations have long leases remaining and are committed to utilising this building for the foreseeable future and in particular WAST have recently incurred significant capital expenditure to provide a comprehensive training centre at the site. The purchase of the property would generate revenue savings and is supported by both PHW and WAST. The Committee **APPROVED** the business case and endorsed NWSSP requesting capital funding from Welsh Government to facilitate the purchase of Matrix House.

### **SMTL Expansion**

The Committee were presented with options for the expansion of the Surgical and Medical Testing Laboratory (SMTL) within IP5. SMTL were at the forefront of ensuring the efficacy of PPE equipment during the pandemic and generate substantial levels of income from both health bodies across the UK and the private sector. Expansion of the service within IP5 would reduce the need for certain types of equipment having to be sent to the US and Europe for specific testing. There were two options suggested for this expansion, a smaller expansion providing 325 square metres of additional space or a larger expansion delivering an additional 750 square metres. Funding for the smaller expansion has been agreed with Welsh Government and it was confirmed that the selection of this option does not preclude the larger expansion being undertaken in future. The Committee **ENDORSED** development of the smaller expansion at a cost of £572,600 including VAT.

## Revisions to Standing Orders

The Committee **ENDORSED** some minor amendments to the Standing Orders. These included the removal of the temporary increase in expenditure limits and the increase in tenure for the Chair, both of which resulting from the need to respond to the pandemic.

## IMTP – Emerging Themes

The Committee were provided with the initial emerging themes from the NWSSP IMTP process. Individual meetings between each Committee member and the NWSSP Director of Planning, Performance and Informatics will be held over the coming weeks, with the IMTP being brought back to the Committee in January for formal approval. The Committee **ENDORSED** the approach.

## Finance, Workforce, Programme and Governance Updates

**Project Management Office Update** – The Committee reviewed and noted the programme and projects monthly summary report, which highlighted the team's current progress and position on the schemes being managed.

**Finance Report** – The Committee reviewed the finance report and noted the additional savings that had been generated during the year to date. £2m of non-recurrent re-investments have been agreed within NWSSP to accelerate benefits and efficiencies and an additional £1.25m distribution confirmed to NHS Wales and Welsh Government in 2021/22 as approved at the last SSPC. The financial position will be continually reviewed over the coming months to inform any further funding and/or distributions. £4.5m of capital funding has been confirmed against the £10.5m included in the IMTP. £1.02m has been spent to date with plans in place to fully utilise the funding within the financial year. The outcome is awaited of the additional capital funding request of £11.5m to Welsh Government. Welsh Risk Pool expenditure to M7 is £32.7m, compared to £56m at this point last year. The M7 DEL forecast is £125m compared to the IMTP forecast of £123.5m. Welsh Government have locked the £16.5m risk share in September with UHBs/Trusts so any movement from forecast will be managed with WG. The forecast remains within a range which can be managed to meet the total Welsh Government resource available by the end of the year and cases are continually reviewed to identify if additional expenditure can be incurred in 2021/22 to ease pressure on the risk share agreement in future years.

**Audit Wales** – Copies of the Audit Wales NWSSP Management Letter and the review of Hosted Systems were provided to the Committee for information. Both provide positive assurance over the systems operated by NWSSP on behalf of NHS Wales which account for approximately 95% of total NHS expenditure .

**People & OD Update** – In-month sickness levels remain very low at 2.51% with the cumulative figure for the last 12 months at 2.92%. Headcount continues to grow with 4408 staff in post, and 1165 new starters in the last 12 months. Most of these relate to the Single Lead Employer, but significant numbers have also been recruited or transferred relating to new services such as the Laundry,

Medical Examiner and TMU Services. Statutory and Mandatory training compliance has improved to 85.5%, but there is still room for improvement with completion of PADRs which are at 65%.

**Corporate Risk Register** – there are currently no red risks on the register, as good progress is being made with the replacement of the NHAIS system which has seen the risk down-graded to amber. A new risk has been added relating to the impact of the significant pressures from increased activity being experienced within Recruitment and Payroll services.

### Papers for Information

The following items were provided for information only:

- Wales Infected Blood Support Services Annual Report;
- Quality and Safety Assurance Report;
- Audit Committee Highlight Report;
- Audit Committee Annual Report;
- Counter Fraud Annual Report; and
- Finance Monitoring Returns (Months 6 & 7).

### AOB

The meeting was the last chaired by Margaret Foster, who retires as the NWSSP Chair at the end of November. Margaret has held the post for nine years and has overseen a substantial growth in the size, range, and complexity of the services provided by NWSSP. The Committee paid tribute to Margaret and provided her with a small gift to acknowledge her efforts and contribution. Professor Tracy Myhill commences as the new NWSSP Chair with effect from 1 December. Tracy was appointed following a very robust recruitment process that attracted some excellent candidates.

### Matters requiring Board/Committee level consideration and/or approval

- The Board is asked to **NOTE** the work of the SSPC and ensure where appropriate that Officers support the related work streams.

### Matters referred to other Committees

N/A

### Date of next meeting

20 January 2022