

Update from the Chief Executive – 8 June

Dear Colleague

A short and snappy update for you today.

There were 5 new cases on Saturday of the virus across the Aneurin Bevan University Health Trust area and no new cases yesterday, so we are seeing a slowing of the spread of the virus, but we certainly can't be complacent. The contact tracing began last week across Gwent and we are expecting the new national IT platform to be introduced this week. Between the 1st and 7th June, 30 cases were identified and 91 subsequent contacts were made. It's a slow start but that is to be expected, given the low spread rates of the virus at the moment, but I expect this to increase alongside further relaxations of the lock down. The challenge of Government is to strike a balance between giving us a little more freedom and keeping that "R" infection spread rate number below 1.

The penetration of the contact tracing is a key risk for us in sustaining front line services, as we could be faced with a position where large numbers of staff in focussed areas are required to self-isolate. CMT have considered this scenario in detail and have contingency plans in place to ensure services such as social care, waste and schools can continue.

Last week was National Volunteers week and through all our communication channels we promoted the great work that our volunteers undertake in our communities. Since the pandemic outbreak, the role of our volunteers has been highlighted and brought to the forefront of our corporate response. They really are the "glue" that binds our communities together. I have attached an infographic that highlights the scale of our volunteer offer across our county borough.

I really do like these infographics that the Communications Team have pulled together, as they really provide a clever snapshot and when combined together, they offer a firm picture of the scale of our response, which we will be able to call upon when we are finally out the other side of this pandemic. The link below takes you to all of them – have a look and let me know what you think. (there's a few more being developed as we speak!)

<https://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/Covid-19/Care-first-coping-with-Covid-19/COVID19-In-Figures>

One of our services I bet you don't think that much about on a daily basis is Pest control! However, when you have a "pesky" problem, this is the team you will want to see! These guys and gals have been extremely busy since the restrictions were imposed and have responded to over a thousand calls between them over this period. Our two officers (we have one team member self-isolating at the moment) are entering properties for urgent calls relating to pests inside properties, as well as gardens for outside baiting. This is a great example of one of our many services that have reshaped and repurposed themselves over recent weeks with fantastic results – great work!

One of the benefits of the lock-down period has been a reduction in litter accumulation around our county borough (although we did see a peak in localised fly-tipping before the

HWRC's opened). This position is something we will want to focus our efforts upon retaining – it will need a positive response from our communities and some intervention from Government (such as bar-coding fast foods to car-registration numbers!). Take a look at the poster below, which is a very direct message councils in New Zealand are using. Quite effective I think!



The focus for this week will continue to be around schools. Our social media channels are telling us that our parents are concerned and have many questions they want answered. We are working hard to develop our plans so we can provide the much needed answers. Discussion will take place around our draft plans with the Cabinet this week, and after “sign-off”, working alongside our teaching staff, we will start to mobilise on the ground.

There's a lot of debate taking place nationally, around the use of face masks and their effectiveness and I am expecting an announcement from the First Minister sometime this week – so watch this space!

Have a great week, take care,

Christina

Christina Harrhy
Prif Weithredwr | Chief Executive
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili | Caerphilly County Borough Council