

## Update from the Chief Executive – 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

Dear colleague,

I hope you are all keeping well and looking forward to the bank holiday weekend – I know I am!

It's been a while since I offered you a comprehensive health based update. So I thought I would offer you this today. I have attached a full analysis of where we find ourselves as a county borough currently, as well as a region and nation. There are quite a few numbers and charts so please let me know if you have any questions. This data provides you as truthful a picture as I can muster at the moment and I am grateful to Dr Arif Mahmood in Public Health Wales for pulling it together in such a comprehensive way.

Across the organisation things continue to progress well on all fronts. Everything we need to do is being done and being done exceptionally well and I'm so grateful for everything you are all continuing to do.

I have mentioned many times that our approach is based upon a risk assessment and that our corporate risk assessment is pretty dynamic and ever changing. We don't have any black, or red risks but we have a few amber risks which we are keeping a close eye on. These include, Testing, Contact tracing, Financial resilience, threat of cyber-attack and a few more. Key areas that CMT continue to focus upon include:

- HWRC's (our recycling centres) which are scheduled to open next Tuesday. Despite all the communications we have pushed out, I am still expecting large queues at each of them first thing Tuesday. Please if you do need to visit, don't go on Tuesday!
- Care homes – infection rates in our care homes. You would have seen a WG announcement confirming that testing will now take place in care homes across Wales. My own view, is that this has been a long time coming and should have been set up much earlier.
- Contact tracing – getting ourselves mobilised to operate contact tracing as part of the national approach to Track, Trace and Protect which will operate alongside any relaxation of the lockdown.
- Re-opening of schools – Lots of noise in the system across England at the moment but across Wales, a much more methodical and steady approach is being taken. As I have said in previous updates, the safety of our staff and children must come first and we will open our schools when we are confident that we can meet these important requirements.
- Virtual decision making – We are starting to move back into the political decision making arena, albeit it will look and feel very different, as the meetings will be conducted on a virtual platform, using Microsoft Teams. This is a big ask of our Members, and colleagues across Democratic and Digital Services are in the process of getting our Members ready for this massive change. We have some dates in the diary –
  - o Planning Committee - 17<sup>th</sup> June & 1<sup>st</sup> July.
  - o Cabinet – 24<sup>th</sup> June
  - o Annual General Meeting (where the Mayor, Leader and Cabinet are appointed) – 3<sup>rd</sup> September
  - o Council meeting – 10<sup>th</sup> September.

These meetings will signal a move to some normality but the decisions will continue to be very much focussed upon our Covid19 response for some time yet.

Over recent weeks, I have mentioned so many of our services. I'm so proud that we have managed to maintain most of our services throughout this period whilst also introducing so many more! Our 500+ services that we deliver each and every day, are still so very relevant and valued by our communities. One such example, is the Telecare Service Operators. These guys and gals work out of Plas Hyfryd in Caerphilly. I know they have continued to work tirelessly throughout this difficult period working 12 hours shifts whilst dealing with additional shift cover due to staff illness through Covid 19. This team are the lifeline to our older population who because of them, are able to live independently, knowing that they are at the end of a "red cord" and telephone in their home. Their reach is not only across the county borough but across the region as a whole. I know that the nature of this service has changed in response to the pandemic, but the staff have adapted so they are able to provide much needed comfort and support to people in our communities, who are very frightened and lonely. I'm sure you will agree this is another example of the great public service we are offering.

We will continue to feature your amazing efforts on our social media channels and include as much as we can in the Team Caerphilly newsletters, please keep the stories coming.

So, as we look forward into next week, we are expecting an announcement from the First Minister where he will review the current position of lockdown. Given the media chatter over the last few days, I am expecting him to announce some relaxation around being able to meet those from outside our households, in outdoor spaces. If this happens, this will be a relief to so many, as I know we are all missing our wider family members and friends so much.

I would like to close this week, with the last of our "deep dives" into the organisation. This week's feature, is the Communities Directorate. A long and detailed account of the breadth of front line services that are offered has been provided by Mark S Williams (Interim Corporate Director). It's a bit of a read, but it just demonstrates the scale of our service offer. Enjoy!

I have also attached an infographic that really highlights the scale of what we are achieving as Team Caerphilly - it's simply astounding!.

Hope you enjoy a relaxing bank holiday weekend and for those of working throughout, I offer my sincere thanks.

Take care  
Christina