

**Confirmed Minutes of the Public Health Wales  
Knowledge, Research and Information Committee  
Public Meeting 5 March 2024, 10:00  
Held in 3.4 CQ2 and via Microsoft Teams**

<b>Present:</b>		
Sian Griffiths	(SG)	Committee Chair and Non-Executive Director (Public Health)
Diane Crone	(DC)	Non-Executive Director (University)
Nick Elliott	(NE)	Non-Executive Director (Data and Digital)
<b>In Attendance:</b>		
Sumina Azam	(SA)	National Director of Policy, and International Health, World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre
Iain Bell	(IB)	National Director for Public Health Knowledge and Research
Fliss Bennee	(FB)	Head of Data
Liz Blayney	(LB)	Deputy Board Secretary and Board Governance Manager
Alisha Davies	(AD)	Head of Research and Evaluation (For item 5.2.1)
Stuart Silcox	(SS)	Assistant Director of Integrated Governance
Rebecca Hill	(RH)	Senior Public Health Specialist, Policy and International Health, WHO Collaborating Centre
Dafydd James	(DJ)	Head of Digital Experience and Services (For item 5.1/5.1.1 - joined 11:12)
Elen De Lacy	(EDL)	Public Health Research and Development Manager. (For item 6.2)
Jim McManus	(JM)	National Director Health and Wellbeing
Louisa Nolan	(LN)	Head of Data Science
Paul Veysey	(PV)	Board Secretary and Head of the Board Business Unit
<b>Apologies</b>		
Huw George	(HG)	Acting Chief Executive
Jan Williams	(JW)	Chair
<i>The meeting commenced at 10:00</i>		
<b>KRIC 1/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Welcome, Introductions and Apologies</b>	
The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all present.		

The Committee **noted** that the meeting was being recorded to support the accuracy of the minutes, the recording would be deleted once the minutes had been agreed at the following meeting in June 2024.

The Committee **noted** the apologies.

<b>KRIC 2/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>
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There were no declarations of interest made, in addition to those already declared on the Declarations of Interest Register.

<b>KRIC 3/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Minutes, Action Log and Matters Arising</b>
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The Committee **considered** and **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2023 in English and Welsh.

The Committee **approved** an extension to 4 June 2024 for action 2023/13 on the Action Log regarding cancer vaccination census and **approved** all other actions to be marked as completed.

There were no Matters Arising.

<b>KRIC 4/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Deep Dives</b>
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<b>KRIC 4.1/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Mental Health Data, research and analysis</b>
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JM/AD/EV gave a presentation on the role that Public Health Wales had in addressing mental health issues in Wales and the work that Public Health Wales was undertaking in the areas of mental health research and services.

AD updated the Committee on the work undertaken by the Research and Evaluation Division on the mental health and well-being programme (4.1 KRIC 2024\_03\_05 - Presentation Mental Health.pptx (live.com), containing three research projects on young people aged 11-24. This looked at the routes of access to care and diagnosis. Public Health Wales/Networked Data Lab Wales considered examples of mental health crisis within young people, such as those who were at greatest risk, and considered where young people access help.

The focus of the discussion was to understand what good looks like for mental health in Wales and the role of PHW in the system, focusing on creating resilience to deal with challenges across the life course and how data can be used effectively to support action and impact.

The Committee queried whether, given the importance of understanding mental health, the research was looking at different demographics such as ethnicity, diversity and inclusion as risk factors particularly in relation to health inequalities and was assured that these were under consideration.

The Committee questioned whether one of the current aims of the research (to avoid implementing wellbeing initiatives) was advisable due to their benefit for mental health recovery, Concerns were expressed about older populations for whom data on should be considered given mental health issues arising from loneliness and isolation.

The Committee also discussed how Public Health Wales could have a greater focus on using research data to influence policy to influence service provision. It was agreed that this should be considered in the context of the long-term strategy and the aims from Welsh Government. KRIC would review progress on a future agenda.

EV presented the research into school level interventions and support for schools, such as training for school-facing staff, and the Hapus programme noting that the Framework for Wellbeing was published in 2023 (4.1 KRIC 2024\_03\_05 - Presentation Mental Health.pptx (live.com)). This was well received, and the committee asked for further updates. When discussing the life course, the point was made that we often forget to include stages such as the menopause which are known to be linked to mental health issues.

SG thanked colleagues for the presentation and the work undertaken by the team. She noted the opportunity to show a completed version of the life cycle graph shown on slide 29 of the presentation to Board.

The Committee commented that data from Public Health Wales should look to understand what gaps exist in current mental health service provision and ensure that health and social care providers are aware of this information, highlighting the architecture of the mental health service system and the organisations' role.

It was recognised that gaps in provision may exist due to a lack of resources and/or funding, and an improved strategic/systematic approach would allow for a better use of funding and service improvement. This raised the question of how to decide on areas of priority within available resources, and the importance of early prevention services to both address the determinants of poor mental health and to address the connection between mental and physical health. Such data would be useful to WG particularly since they had just launched the consultation for a draft Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The Committee discussed what measures should be used to measure success of programmes and services, and the differences between success for communities and for individuals. They were advised that these were to be discussed at the Hapus partners event at the end of March 2024.

SG asked LB to add Mental Health to the agenda for a future Board Development session to give the Board assurance that work on data and research on mental health in Wales is ongoing and will be kept under review/support delivery of the strategy.

**Action: LB**

<b>KRIC 5/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Digital and Data Strategy Update</b>
<b>KRIC 5.1/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Update on the Implementation of the Digital and Data Strategy</b>

DJ provided an update to the Committee on the progress of the implementation of the Digital and Data Strategy, including progress against the five key areas outlined. This information was presented to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on 29 January who gave assurance on the work. It was also noted that the Lead Delivery Manager is now in place. IB also gave an overview of the route map of the work.

The Committee discussed needing an understanding of when projects were beginning and how long they would take to complete, a detailed timeline would be beneficial for the Committee to understand the planned activity. They also noted that a timeline would assist in planning ahead for any service disruption as part of this work. The Committee decided that the full timeline would be brought to the next Committee meeting in June and then presented to Board.

The Committee discussed a reference to the Health Equality Framework which had been developed to allow service areas to collect data on the support provided to those with protected characteristics, specifically referencing those with learning disabilities. This framework would migrate into and become part of the NHS Executive.

The Committee took assurance that Public Health Wales was delivering the projects that it had committed to, and was improving its use of digital, data and technology to deliver excellent public health services. The Committee also noted the full timeline would be brought to the next Committee meeting in June.

**Action – DJ/IB** to bring a completed version of the timeline to the next Committee meeting on 6 June 2024.

<b>KRIC 5.1.1/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Assurance report on Breast Test Cohort Selection Tool and DESW automation work</b>
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DJ gave a presentation covering an overview of the Breast Screening Cohort Selection Module. This covered updates in the development of the module 'Dewis' which would replace the previous demographics system that was being decommissioned in June 2024. This presentation included examples of bugs that had been addressed. It also included the expected timeline of the project, including the shift to a permanent version of the module by April 2024.

The Diabetic Eye Screening Wales automation of GP referrals with testing was to be completed throughout March 2024, with engagement with stakeholders in April 2024.

SG thanked DJ for the update, and the Committee took assurance on the progress of the Breast Test Cohort Selection Tool and DESW automation work.

<b>KRIC 5.1.2/2024.03.05</b>	<b>WHESP update</b>
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SA gave an update on the work on Welsh Health Equity Solutions Platform (WHESP) as an initial evaluation on impact and approach of the project.

It was noted that project was still in the early stages of development as it was launched in June 2023 to deliver on a commitment between Welsh Government and World Health Organisation. A formal evaluation was scheduled for 2026 in the next Integrated Medium-Term Plan cycle.

The Committee highlighted that this work could benefit from a framework aligned around the domains of quality in order to cover any potential issues from the evidence data.

<p>The Committee took <b>assurance</b> on the progress on the WHESP to date and the monitoring and evaluation that was underway and planned.</p>	
<p><b>KRIC 6/2024.03.05</b></p>	<p><b>Update on the Implementation of the Research and Evaluation Strategy</b></p>
<p><b>KRIC 6.1 /2024.03.05</b></p>	<p><b>Progress following implementation of Strategy and Monitoring and assurance of delivery against the Strategic Priorities</b></p>
<p>AD and EDL provided an update on the progress with the implementation of the Research and Evaluation Strategy.</p> <p>The update noted the oversight group that is comprised of senior leader representatives from across different directorates that meets on monthly basis to ensure co-ownership and an organisational strategy across key areas.</p> <p>The Committee commented on the benefits of research links with other organisations and questioned what the dissemination plans were for the SAIL databank/feasibility hub. AD confirmed that 10 licences had been purchased and would go through the Research and Evaluation oversight group to determine the key staff they should go to. It was highlighted that there were aims to move from Decipher into a more strategic relationship with Cardiff University, and that the areas of research interest would be published in April 2024. SG asked for this to be distributed to Committee.</p> <p><b>Action: IB</b></p> <p>SG thanked AD and EDL for the update and the Committee took <b>assurance</b> on the progress and implementation of the Public Health Wales Research and Evaluation Strategy.</p>	
<p><b>KRIC 6.2 /2024.03.05</b></p>	<p><b>Academic Public Health update and implications for PHW role as system convener</b></p>
<p>EDL gave a verbal update on the progress of the analytical work around the academic public health work, including the mapping of the academic public health research landscape in Wales and opportunities for funding.</p> <p>This update highlighted the call for evidence to all Welsh Higher Education Institutions for their aims and current work which was reviewed by the recent Academic PH Steering Group. Interviews had been conducted by an external consultant with senior academics and researchers from universities and Public Health Wales/Welsh Government and a report is being prepared. An executive summary for further discussion would be disseminated after the feedback from the external panel meeting in April 2024, and would be shared on the Public Health Wales website.</p> <p>The Committee highlighted the positive feedback from the recent Academic Steering Group meeting around Public Health Wales's role as a system leader/facilitator in this space, but emphasised this would need time and resource. In addition, how further opportunities for staff to be involved in research should be explored, whilst also considering the cost and whether enough funding was available. The Committee commented that staff should be supported in developing research skills, and that this</p>	

could also be of benefit to support staff looking to develop a career in research. This needs further discussion.

The Committee also questioned how to evaluate the impact from research projects. IB emphasised the need for outcome-based evaluation and noted an example of Welsh Ambulance Trust changing their delivery model based on research results. The Committee also highlighted the benefit of chaining the outcome of research projects into future work to achieve a greater impact.

SG thanked EDL for the update, and the Committee **took assurance** that the work undertaken to develop a vision for academic public health research was progressing with milestones, and noted the plan for publication of the forthcoming report.

<b>KRIC 6.3/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Genomics - Update</b>
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MK and TC gave an overview on areas of development of the Genomics programme and the progress made to date. This covered the timelines of the programme and the increase in the capacity of work being undertaken by the Genomics team. 6.3 KRIC 2024\_03\_05 - Genomics Programme\_summary\_slides.pdf

The presentation highlighted the international partnerships that had been made as a result of the programme and how Wales was seen as leader in UK genomics. The Committee commended the growth made in this research. Future work was highlighted, including the UK Genomics Board on 12 March and Welsh Government paper on liquid biopsy with a possible funding opportunity. This was a brief update, and the committee requested an in-depth discussion at a further meeting – with consideration of when this could be discussed at a Board Development session

SG thanked TC for the update. The Committee took assurance that good progress was being made and endorsed the aim to develop a research plan for Public Health Genomics to be discussed at a later date.

<b>KRIC 7/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Risk</b>
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<b>KRIC 7.1/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Strategic Risk Register</b>
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SS gave an overview of the papers on the management of the strategic risks that were under the remit of this Committee. He highlighted that the Board had approved a change of the Committee for Risks 1 and 2 to this Committee from the Quality, Safety and Improvement Committee.

Changes to the Risk template were also noted, such as increased narrative around movement in risk score, changes since the last report had been highlighted and sharpening the focus of risks and the risk process. The Committee noted that this would return as an item at the Committee meeting in June after being discussed at Board to give an overview of the risk rearticulation.

The Committee **noted** that the Board approved the change to assuring Board Committee for Strategic Risk 1 and 2 from the Quality, Safety and Improvement Committee to the Knowledge, Research and Information Committee. The Committee



<b>considered</b> the Strategic Risks within the remit of the Committee and took <b>assurance</b> on the management of these Strategic Risks	
<b>KRIC 7.2/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Corporate Risk Register</b>
The Committee considered the Corporate Risks within the remit of the Committee.  The Committee took <b>assurance</b> on the updated Corporate Risk Register.	
<b>KRIC 8/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Committee Governance</b>
<b>KRIC 8.1/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Policies for Approval</b>
LB introduced the Intellectual Property policy for approval. It was noted that this policy has been out for consultation and had been endorsed by the Leadership Team.  The Committee approved the Intellectual Property Policy.	
<b>KRIC 8.2/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Committee Governance Update</b>
LB agreed to provide a summary of this item via email. <b>Action: LB</b>	
<b>KRIC 9/2024.03.05</b>	<b>Closing Administration</b>
Any other business: None.  The Committee were invited to provide feedback from the meeting via e-mail to LB, including any areas that worked well, and any areas for improvement.  Date of Next Meeting: 4 June 2024.	
The meeting closed at 12:37	