



**To:**  
**Councillor Clive Lloyd, Cabinet Member for  
Adult Social Care and Community Health  
Services**

**Councillor Elliott King, Cabinet Member for  
Children Services**

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**Summary:** This is a letter from the Joint Social Services Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Community Health Services and Cabinet Member for Children Services following the meeting of the Panel on 16 December 2020. It covers update on Covid-19.

Dear Cllr Lloyd and Cllr King

The Panel met on 16 December to receive an update on the current situation regarding the management of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

We would like to thank you both and Dave Howes for attending to present the item and answer the Panel's questions at this extremely busy and difficult time. We really do appreciate your engagement and input.

We are writing to you to reflect on what we learnt from the discussion and share any views of the Panel.

Firstly, I would like to ask you, on behalf of the Panel, to take a message back to the staff, expressing our wholehearted thanks and appreciation to all members of staff, who have had a huge burden placed upon them and are doing an amazing job in very difficult circumstances.

The main issues discussed are summarised below:

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## **Update on Management of Covid-19**

We heard that in order to support the risk of care home failure, you are proposing the creation of a mobile workforce of care and community health staff who can go into care homes that reach a point of crisis, and that you hope to be able to confirm shortly that arrangements are in place.

We discussed how it would be helpful for the leaders of all political parties to spread the message to their members and their communities by sharing the recording of the panel meeting.

We discussed the possibility of having to restrict care and the Director of Social Services agreed to re-circulate to councillors an explanation of what to do if contacted by members of the public regarding issues with care.

We were pleased to hear that the links between early help services, Children Services and schools is excellent and were reassured that everything that could be done for vulnerable children in the current situation is being done.

We heard the message to the public, to please limit household mixing over Christmas, and if mixing with other household to try and protect older loved ones; and the message to the Welsh Government that the firebreak did have an impact and that we need something similar sooner rather than later.

We were informed that there is huge pressure on staff in Track and Trace as well as Social Services. We heard that there is a plan in place to add additional resilience to Track and Trace over Christmas but that the capacity of this system is being exceeded.

We discussed testing and heard that you are not convinced that mass community testing would have sufficient value for the amount of resource it would take up. We heard that you believe that targeted use of lateral flow testing on a daily basis is the model that would work in theory for a large proportion of the workforce who are isolating, as they are a contact but may not have Covid. We also heard that you are discussing with Welsh Government how something like this could be rolled out for those people, as it could enable some staff to return to work earlier.

We heard that we are approaching saturation point of number of tests allocated to this region and that discussions are on-going at a national level to see if this could be increased.

Looking to the future, we expressed our concern about carers in the long term and asked that this be kept in mind.

## **Your Response**

We hope you find this letter useful and informative. We would welcome your views and comments on any of the issues raised but, in this instance, a formal response is not required.

Yours sincerely

*Paxton Hood-Williams*

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