

Eluned Morgan MS
Minister for Health and Social Services
Welsh Government

Dr Tracey Cooper
Chief Executive, Public Health Wales

26 November 2021

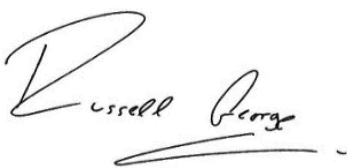
Dear Eluned and Tracey

Provisional common framework: Public Health Protection and Health Security

At our meeting on 18 November 2021 we considered our approach to scrutinising the provisional Public Health Protection and Health Security Common Framework.

To inform our consideration of the Framework, we would welcome the views of the Welsh Government and Public Health Wales on the matters set out in the annex to this letter **by Thursday 13 January 2022**.

Yours sincerely



Russell George MS
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

cc Huw Irranca-Davies, Chair, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Annex: Provisional common framework: Public Health Protection and Health Security

To assist our deliberations on the provisional common framework, we would welcome further information on the matters listed below. We would be grateful to receive your response **by Thursday 13 January**.

General

1. Why is a common framework needed for this policy area?
2. How will this common framework link up with frameworks in related policy areas, such as food and feed safety and hygiene and animal health and welfare?
3. The provisional framework sets out that the parties will develop a shared work programme. Will this shared work programme be published?
4. The framework sets out that part of its purpose is to manage potential divergence between different parts of the UK. Parties will seek to agree common approaches 'where agreeable'. How will the parties decide when divergence would be acceptable?
5. How would this framework affect the handling of any future pandemic?

UK and EU

6. Public Health Wales has previously raised concerns about the risks of leaving EU institutions for public health protection and health security. How are the Welsh Government and Public Health Wales mitigating these risks?
7. Under the Health Security (EU Exit) Regulations 2021, Public Health Wales and the Welsh Government have taken on some responsibilities formerly exercised at EU level, such as representing Wales at the new UK Health Protection Committee. Could you confirm what new responsibilities Public Health Wales and the Welsh Government will be undertaking and what resources have been allocated for this? How do the new arrangements differ from your previous arrangements when the UK was an EU Member State?
8. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) will carry out some coordinating functions previously exercised at EU level. Is the Welsh Government content that the UKHSA has sufficient resources to carry out these functions?

International

9. Is the Welsh Government content that the framework takes into account its existing international commitments?

10. Please provide the Welsh Government's assessment of how the framework accommodates divergence and alignment between the four nations' international health commitments and activity, for example the Welsh Government's MOU with the WHO on health equity or its public health protection support to African nations during the pandemic.
11. Please confirm how existing international obligations were considered and incorporated into the framework and explain how future obligations will be incorporated.
12. Please provide more information on the role of the Welsh Government or Welsh bodies in delivering the framework's international aspects. For example, whether the framework provides opportunities for a devolved role in the development of UK foreign policy, as provided in other frameworks.
13. Please confirm whether the framework provides opportunities for Welsh representation at international forums, either by the Welsh Government or Welsh bodies.

Disputes

14. Is the Welsh Government content that the dispute resolution mechanism for the framework is fit for purpose?
15. Who will be the final arbiter in the event of a dispute, and will there be a right of appeal in the event that one of the parties is dissatisfied with the resolution of a dispute?
16. Will the Welsh Government notify the Senedd of disputes raised through the framework?

Transparency and accountability

17. Did the Welsh Government and Public Health Wales engage with any stakeholders in Wales in developing the provisional framework? How does the provisional framework reflect the response of stakeholders?
18. How will the Senedd and stakeholders be updated on the continuing operation of the framework?
19. How will the Senedd and stakeholders be able to contribute to the review and amendment process for the framework?