

PTHB BOARD		Date of Meeting: 27th September 2023
Subject:	To receive an update on the mitigation plan for Belmont Branch Surgery (Crickhowell Medical Practice)	
Presented by:	Director of Finance, IT and Information (as lead Executive Director for Primary Care) / Interim Deputy Chief Executive	
Prepared by:	Assistant Director of Primary Care Assistant Director (Engagement and Communication)	
Other Committees and meetings considered at:	Board Meeting 24 th May 2023 Task and Finish Group 7 th July 2023 Board Meeting 25 th July 2023 Task and Finish Group 1 st August 2023 Task and Finish Group 5 th September 2023	

PURPOSE:

This paper updates the Board on the continued development and delivery of the mitigation plan for the closure of Crickhowell Group Practice's Belmont Branch Surgery in Gilwern, Monmouthshire. It also updates the Board on ongoing liaison and correspondence with Llais in relation to the closure application.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

The Board is asked:

- To RECEIVE and NOTE the update on the mitigation plan, and take ASSURANCE in relation to the progress being made on the further development and delivery of the mitigation plan.
- To RECEIVE and NOTE the correspondence with Llais in relation to the closure application

Approval/Ratification/Decision	Discussion	Information
	✓	✓

THE PAPER IS ALIGNED TO THE DELIVERY OF THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE(S) AND HEALTH AND CARE STANDARD(S):

Strategic Objectives:	1. Focus on Wellbeing	✓
	2. Provide Early Help and Support	✓
	3. Tackle the Big Four	✓
	4. Enable Joined up Care	✓
	5. Develop Workforce Futures	✓
	6. Promote Innovative Environments	✓
	7. Put Digital First	✓
	8. Transforming in Partnership	✓
Health and Care Quality Standards:	1. Safe	✓
	2. Timely	✓
	3. Effective	✓
	4. Efficient	✓
	5. Equitable	✓
	6. Person Centred	✓

1. MITIGATION PLANNING AND DELIVERY:

1.1 Background

On 24 May 2023 the Board gave conscientious consideration to an application from Crickhowell Group Practice to close their Belmont Branch Surgery premises in Gilwern.

Given that no feasible alternatives were identified that satisfactorily address the twin challenges of both staffing and premises identified in the application from Crickhowell Group Practice, the Board agreed to approve the recommendation from the Branch Practice Review Panel to accept the application from Crickhowell Medical Practice to close their premises in Gilwern, with a planned closure date of 30 November 2023.

The Board also approved a series of proposed mitigations, recognising that the mitigation plan would be further developed in continued partnership with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB). This included the establishment of a task and finish group, and a requirement for regular updates to the Board.

The first update was presented to the Board on 25 July 2023, and this paper provide the second update.

1.2 Task and Finish Group

The task and finish group is now well established and has met on 7 July 2023, 1 August 2023 and 5 September 2023.

Membership continues to expand and includes representation from Powys Teaching Health Board, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Monmouthshire County Council, and Crickhowell Group Practice. Llais is represented in an observer capacity by the Llais Powys Region.

The next meeting will take place on 3 October 2023.

1.3 Progress on Development and Delivery of the Mitigation Plan

The attached Mitigation Plan Tracking document (Appendix 1) provides a summary of the current position and next steps.

Key highlights include:

- Regular meetings with local community transport providers keep the potential impact of this change under ongoing review and no significant concerns have been identified in relation to their capacity to accommodate any additional demand. These meetings will continue after the 30 November 2023 branch closure date.
- Changes in practice registration are being kept under review and no significant issues have been identified, although it is recognised that the closure in November may be a key trigger for further re-registrations.

- Planning is under way for the community development and participation event to engage local stakeholders in the Gilwern area in confirming opportunities to strengthen health and social care provision in the area.
- A letter to all households of registered patients in the Gwent area of the practice catchment has been developed through partnership between Crickhowell Group Practice, PTHB, ABUHB and Llais and has been agreed for issue. This includes detailed information about a range of alternative services.

1.4 Practice Sustainability

The application from the practice to close their premises in Gilwern reflected the twin challenges of staffing and premises.

- In relation to premises, it remains the case that no feasible alternatives have been identified.
- In relation to staffing, the practice has recently received the resignation of a salaried doctor.

Acceptance of the application therefore remains critical to support the ongoing sustainability of general medical services in the area.

2. LIAISON WITH LLAIS

Powys Teaching Health Board received a formal representation from Llais on 18 July 2023. The Health Board responded on 14 August 2023.

A copy of the representation from Llais, and the acknowledgment and response from the health board, is included in the appendices.

3. NEXT STEPS:

The patient letter is due to be issued to households of registered patients living in Gwent postcode areas by mid October, with plans also under way for community participation activities in the Gilwern area.

The next meetings of the Task and Finish Group are due to take place on 3 October 2023 and 7 November 2023.

A further update on the development and delivery of the mitigation plan will be presented to the Board on 29 November 2023.

The branch practice is scheduled to close from 30 November 2023.

Further detail on the next steps can be found in the Mitigation Plan Tracking document at Appendix 1.

The following Impact Assessment must be completed for all reports requesting Approval, Ratification or Decision, in line with the Health Board's Equality Impact Assessment Policy (HR075):

IMPACT ASSESSMENT				
Equality Act 2010, Protected Characteristics:				
	No impact	Adverse	Differential	Positive
Age	x			
Disability	x			
Gender reassignment	x			
Pregnancy and maternity	x			
Race	x			
Religion/ Belief	x			
Sex	x			
Sexual Orientation	x			
Marriage and civil partnership	x			
Welsh Language	x			
<p align="center">Statement</p> <p>Review and approval of this paper does not impact on equality protected characteristics or Welsh Language as this paper provides an update on work under way to continue to develop and deliver the mitigation plan for Belmont Branch Surgery. The key impacts of the decision to accept the application from Crickhowell Group Practice to close Belmont Branch Surgery were identified in the paper to the Board on 24 May 2023.</p>				
Risk Assessment:				
	Level of risk identified			
	None	Low	Moderate	High
Clinical	X			
Financial	X			
Corporate	X			
Operational	X			
Reputational	X			
<p align="center">Statement</p> <p>Review and approval of this paper does not have further risk impact beyond the key impacts identified in the paper to the Board on 24 May 2023.</p>				

Appendices:

- Appendix 1: Mitigation Plan Tracking
- Appendix 2: Letter from Llais to PTHB on 18 July 2023
- Appendix 3: Acknowledge from PTHB to Llais on 21 July 2023
- Appendix 4: Letter from PTHB to Llais on 14 August 2023

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Gilwern Branch Closure
Assurance report

Belmont Branch Surgery Mitigation Plan Tracking

Updated based on discussion and review at
Task and Finish Group meeting on 5 September 2023

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2. Strengthen the availability of telephone and online services for those who are able to use them – so that more face-to-face appointments are available for older people, people with disabilities, carers and others who may be less comfortable with these technologies and services

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	Commentary at 25 May 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
2.1: Review with the practice current use of online and telephone services, to understand potential development opportunity.	PTHB Primary Care Department / Crickhowell Group Practice	By 31 October 2023	Crickhowell Group Practice (CGP) have confirmed they will write to all households to confirm that the closure application has been accepted, that Belmont Branch Surgery will close from 30 November 2023, and that from 1 December 2023 all patients will remain registered with CGP and be able to continue to access services from the War Memorial Health Centre (WMHC). The letter will also provide information about the online and telephone services available to patients that will help reduce the need for travel to WMHC. Meeting arranged between PTHB and CGP to explore options further.	The position was reviewed between PTHB and CGP on 12 July. CGP have confirmed that they provide a range of services via their website (see below). The website is part of a cluster-wide initiative with scope to continue to expand and develop the range of online services available. Patients are able to use the telephone to book appointments and for all other queries that would otherwise be made at the reception desk. Patients can have appointments with all clinicians via the telephone where it is practicable, appropriate and safe to do so. The practice has multiple telephone appointment slots available each day. The Practice operates a 'call back' service whereby the patient is able to receive a return call from the practice in the event the line is busy. Although rarely needed, this reduces the need for patients to wait on the line at times of significantly high demand.	CLOSED 1 August 2023 <i>This transfers to business as usual as well as to the inclusion of information in the letter to patients (see 14.1).</i>

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Online services available via the Practice website: Self help advice; Advice on how to make an appointment; Requesting repeat medications; Requesting medication synchronisations; Requesting advice on medication; New patient registrations; Register a carer; Request medical report; Subject Access Requests; Ask reception a question; Change in personal details; Feedback and complaint submission; Wellbeing support services; Chronic disease management questionnaires."

1. Explore options to improve the availability of transport between the Gilwern area and Crickhowell

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	Commentary at 25 May 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
1.1 Explore options to improve the availability of transport between the Gilwern area and Crickhowell.	PTHB Primary Care Department with Facilities Department	By 31 July 2023	A meeting is arranged between PTHB and the community transport schemes provided by Bridges and Crickhowell Volunteer Bureau for Monday 5 th June 2023 to discuss potential arrangements.	Meeting took place on 5 June, where it was confirmed that Gilwern residents can access the car scheme to be taken to Crickhowell. A further meeting is arranged for 25 July, with ongoing touchpoints being arranged every 4-6 weeks to keep impact and demand under review.	1 August 2023 Review meetings are in place every 4-5 weeks with community transport providers. Brecon Dial-A-Ride has confirmed that they can support patients using wheelchairs with travel from the Gilwern area to War Memorial Health Centre. Given the relatively limited level of services provided at the branch surgery, patients with transport needs will often be aware of the transport options available and the reception team is already familiar with providing information, advice and signposting. Further details will be included in the patient letter (see 14.1). CGP has also reconfirmed their commitment to flexibility with appointment timings (see 6.3).
1.2: ABUHB colleagues to explore option with GAVO and the Welsh Community Transport Association regarding potential improvements to interim transport services between Gilwern area and Crickhowell.	ABUHB	By 31 July 2023	ABUHB have provided the following response: “Bridges Community Car Share Scheme have confirmed that residents of Monmouthshire are eligible to access the scheme which can accommodate transport requests to services outside of the borough i.e. to the main site in Crickhowell: Bridges Community Car Scheme ”	A “transport to health” community transport directory is also maintained between local partners to identify the range of transport support available. This can be accessed at TRANSPORT TO HEALTH PROJECT (ctauk.org) .	23 August 2023 Meeting held with MCC’s Grass Routes Transport scheme 21 August (see 1.3). Assurance that the scheme has the capacity to support Monmouthshire residents requiring transport to/from the War Memorial Health Centre. Wording to be included in the patient letter to be included in the patient letter.

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2. Strengthen the availability of telephone and online services for those who are able to use them – so that more face-to-face appointments are available for older people, people with disabilities, carers and others who may be less comfortable with these technologies and services (continued)

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	Commentary at 25 May 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
2.2: Promote use of My Health Online and practice website for appointment booking and repeat medication ordering	PTHB Primary Care Department / Crickhowell Group Practice	By 31 October 2023	CGP will include information specifically relating to services available through My Health Online and the website, including how to access these services, in the letter to each household. Meeting arranged between PTHB and CGP to explore options further.	The position was reviewed between PTHB and CGP on 12 July. The national direction of travel in Wales is towards the new NHS Wales App. This has completed its beta testing with 10 GP practices and more than 700 people across Wales. During 2023 it has entered its next phase of testing. The NHS Wales app will include a variety of useful features such as appointment scheduling, test result access, and prescription ordering. PTHB will continue to work with DHCW and CGP on the implementation of the NHS Wales App for CGP patients.	23 August 2023 The Practice have committed to exploring the opportunity of becoming an early adopter practice for the rollout of the NHS Wales app.

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3. Specifically, work with children and young people to develop telephone and online options that work for them and recognise the need for consent and confidentiality.

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	Commentary at 25 May 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
3.2: ABUHB colleagues to confirm health promotion activities and understanding in the surrounding schools to Gilwern, particularly around the SPACE-Wellbeing project etc	ABUHB	By 31 October 2023	This will be taken forward through a Task and Finish Group with ABUHB.	ABUHB is working to develop a clear list of wellbeing options available for children and young people (e.g. SPACE-Wellbeing and Healthier Together) and will undertake a period of targeted engagement and marketing in the Gilwern area working with Monmouthshire County Council and GAVO, with oversight to be provided by the Monmouthshire Integrated Service Partnership Board.	1 August 2023 An invitation will be extended to Charlotte Drury from MCC to join the TFG. 18 September 2023 Information specific to children and young people to be included in the letter to households.
3.3: Scope possibility to promote healthcare and wellbeing options available to children and young people in surrounding education facilities, leisure facilities, social media options and direct correspondence to home addresses	ABUHB	By 31 October 2023	This will be taken forward through a Task and Finish Group with ABUHB.		

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3. Specifically, work with children and young people to develop telephone and online options that work for them and recognise the need for consent and confidentiality (continued).

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	Commentary at 25 May 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
3.1: Liaise with the practice to understand current use with a view to promote/enhance current options to contact the practice	PTHB Primary Care Department	By 31 October 2023	<p>CGP will include information specifically relating to services available to Children and Young People, including how to access these services, in the letter to each household.</p> <p>Meeting arranged between PTHB and CGP to explore options further.</p>	<p>The position was reviewed between PTHB and CGP on 12 July.</p> <p>CGP have confirmed they will include the ABUHB list of wellbeing options in the letter to each household.</p> <p>The practice will also keep hard copies of the information available in the waiting room at Crickhowell for patients to take home opportunistically.</p> <p>CGP are planning to install digital display units in their waiting room, and will then be able to also display this information digitally, to include QR codes where available for digital capture.</p> <p>In addition, the Practice have offered to reach out to the local Schools (see actions 3.2 and 3.3) to ensure young people are aware of the practice services, and wellbeing options available to them.</p>	<p>23 August 2023</p> <p>Point of contact for the plan to engage with secondary schools has been identified, further arrangements will be made through September following return to school. In the meantime, arrangements are underway for CGP information to be included in the School wellbeing leaflets for pupils, and inclusion on the school website.</p>

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4. Review the approach to home visits, recognising that some people would now have further to travel for their appointment – including recognising any carer responsibilities.

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	Commentary at 25 May 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
4.1: Obtain assurances from the practice regarding Home Visiting SOP (links with action 1.1)	PTHB Primary Care Department	By 31 October 2023	Crickhowell Group Practice have confirmed that all Home Visiting arrangements are currently made from the WMHC site, including those for patients living closer to the Belmont Branch site. CGP have confirmed these arrangements will continue unchanged post closure, and assure that all registered patients requiring a home visit will receive one where clinically appropriate.	COMPLETE Assurances have been provided by Crickhowell Group Practice that patients in the Gilwern area will continue to have access to home visits unaffected by the decision to close Belmont Branch Surgery. This action now transfers to routine monitoring through existing processes.	CLOSED 1 August 2023 <i>See left</i>

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5. Ensure that physical access to the practice premises and parking remained a priority, including availability of parking.

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	Commentary at 25 May 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
5.1: Review with NHSWSSP-Specialist Estate Services current parking provision.	PTHB Primary Care Department	By 30 June 2023	A meeting is being arranged between the health board, the GP Practice and shared services.	<p>The position was reviewed between PTHB and CGP on 12 July.</p> <p>The Practice have confirmed that the current parking potential is maximised due to the size of the car park and spaces available. However, the car parking is not often full and the level of activity transferring from Belmont Branch surgery can be accommodated within normal usage.</p> <p>In addition to car parking spaces within the practice car park, other nearby parking is available with a one hour or two hour wait limit. These spaces are within a short walking distance from the practice. Some neighbouring businesses may have underutilised parking. The practice is exploring opportunities for partnership working to use neighbouring spaces for staff parking which would increase capacity for patients within the practice car park.</p>	<p>CLOSED</p> <p>1 August 2023</p> <p><i>Conversations have taken place with neighbouring businesses but this has not identified options for use for staff parking by CGP.</i></p> <p><i>Beaufort Street Car Park is approximately 1/3 km on a 1.4% incline (source: Google Maps) with a charge of £2.50 for up to two hours.</i></p>
5.2: NHSWSSP-SES to scope improvements to current parking arrangements.	NHSWSSP-SES	By 30 September 2023	Meeting arranged with PTHB and CGP for initial discussion and scoping.		

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6. Review booking, appointments, prescriptions etc. including to reduce unnecessary trips (e.g., for ordering and collecting repeat prescriptions).

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	Commentary at 25 May 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
6.1: Review with the practice current arrangements and maximise opportunities for telephone and online options to book appointments.	PTHB Primary Care Department	By 31 October 2023	Meeting arranged between PTHB and CGP to discuss a transition plan to include maximising opportunities for telephone and online appointments where appropriate to the patient and their needs, in order to reduce unnecessary travel to WMHC.	See 2.1.	<i>TRANSFERRED</i> <i>The delivery of this action is covered under 2.1</i>
6.2: Explore options with community pharmacist for sample drop-offs and sample bottle collection, as Pharmacist already providing a daily prescription collection service from Crickhowell Practice.	ABUHB Pharmacy Contracting Team/PTHB Primary Care Department	By 31 October 2023	A meeting is being arranged between the health board and the community pharmacy. A new system of electronic transmission of prescriptions is also due to be launched in Wales. This will reduce the need for patients to travel to Crickhowell to pick up a physical prescription, as an electronic copy can be sent to the pharmacy of their choice.	There is ongoing communication with ABUHB and the community pharmacy, including discussion in relation to implementation timetable for electronic prescription systems. CGP has also committed to ensure Repeat Dispensing opportunities are maximised for patients.	23 August 2023 NHS hearing aid battery supply now transferred from Gilwern Branch and provided from Gilwern Community Pharmacy.
6.3 Explore options for appointment availability for patients reliant on public transport	PTHB Primary Care Department with Crickhowell Group Practice	By 31 October 2023	Meeting arranged between PTHB and CGP to discuss a transition plan to include appointment availability and inter-connectedness with travel options.	COMPLETE: The position was reviewed between PTHB and CGP on 12 July. CGP have confirmed they already accommodate (where safe and possible), appointment times to work around availability of patients (e.g. patient working hours, school run etc.). The Practice will ensure this process encompasses needs of those using public transport and car schemes. This will be reviewed through monitoring of the mitigation plan with CGP, and through routine monitoring of access standards.	CLOSED 1 August 2023 <i>This will be reviewed through monitoring of the mitigation plan with CGP, and through routine monitoring of access standards.</i>

7. Work in partnership with the community pharmacy in Gilwern to maintain and/or improve availability of services (continued overleaf)

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	Commentary at 25 May 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
7.1. ABUHB to confirm existing Community Pharmacy services offered, identify whether scope for any expansion (within the parameters of the Regulations).	ABUHB Pharmacy Contracting Team	By 30 June 2023	<p>ABUHB have confirmed that currently the pharmacy dispenses between 6500 and 7000 prescription items per month and is commissioned to provide a range of additional clinical services including: Emergency Supply, Common Ailments, Contraception, Flu Vaccination, Medication Administration Records, Discharge Medicines Reviews, Supervised Consumption, Smoking Cessation, and the Waste Reduction Scheme.</p> <p>There are opportunities to promote these services to the local community as an alternative to some GP practice attendances. For example, the common ailment service provides access to free NHS treatment for a range of common ailments and the Emergency Supply Service may help patients who need their next dose of prescribed medication before they can obtain a prescription. Increased use of these services will also maintain the viability of the pharmacy.</p> <p>ABUHB has confirmed that where new services become available through the pharmacy contract, they will be offered for commissioning to all pharmacy contractors.</p>	There is ongoing communication with ABUHB and the community pharmacy.	<p>CLOSED</p> <p>1 August 2023</p> <p><i>Ongoing service delivery by the pharmacy is addressed through “business as usual” contract monitoring arrangements in ABUHB.</i></p>

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7. Work in partnership with the community pharmacy in Gilwern to maintain and/or improve availability of services (continued from previous page)

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	Commentary at 25 May 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
7.2 Support & enable promotional activity to raise awareness of the services to the local community.	ABUHB	By 31 October 2023	<p>When Crickhowell Group Practice writes to all households regarding the forthcoming closure, the letter will include information about the services available from the community pharmacist in Gilwern.</p> <p>PTHB communication team will also work with ABUHB communication team on options for promotional activity for the Gilwern area outlining the range of local services available including alternatives to GP practice in line with the national primary care model.</p>	PTHB will ensure this is included in the patient letter (see 14.1)	<p><i>TRANSFERRED</i> 1 August 2023 <i>The delivery of this action is covered in 14.1</i></p>
7.3: ABUHB to explore options if viability of pharmacy is affected	ABUHB	By 31 October 2023	<p>ABUHB has confirmed that currently the pharmacy dispenses between 6500 and 7000 prescription items per month, and should the closure of Belmont Branch Surgery affect the pharmacy to the extent that its prescription volume falls below 35,160 items per year (approximately 2,930 items per month), the pharmacy contractor can apply to ABUHB for inclusion in the Essential Small Pharmacies Scheme to ensure continued viability.</p> <p>As highlighted above, promotion of the range of services provided by the local pharmacy e.g. Common Ailments Scheme will help to maintain the viability of the pharmacy.</p>	There is ongoing communication with ABUHB and the community pharmacy.	<p>CLOSED 1 August 2023 <i>Ongoing viability of the pharmacy is addressed through business as usual contract monitoring arrangements in ABUHB.</i></p>

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8. Explore opportunities for working together across partners - are there ways of strengthening partnerships with ABUHB, public sector, third sector and business sector in Northwest Monmouthshire to consider alternative provision and to address the disadvantage that older people, people with disabilities, and carers may experience from any changes

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	Commentary at 25 May 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
8.1: ABUHB to confirm opportunities to strengthen the health and social care provision in the area.	ABUHB	By 31 October 2023	<p>ABUHB has provided the following response: “ABUHB are working with Monmouthshire County Council and GAVO to explore the potential for developing community wellbeing activities for older people, people with disabilities and carers in Gilwern and surrounding areas through the Monmouthshire Community Wellbeing Network. Oversight will be provided by the Monmouthshire Integrated Service Partnership Board.</p> <p>“The approach we would like to take with this initiative would be to work with local community to utilise participatory budgeting opportunities to provide services in line with an asset-based approach.”</p>	<p>A range of schemes is in place to support the development of local events and activities.</p> <p>Communities & Well-being – Monmouthshire</p> <p>The Wellbeing Links Service GAVO</p> <p>Grant funding is also available for participatory budgeting.</p> <p>A community development and participation event is due to take place by the end of September to engage local stakeholders in taking this work forward.</p>	<p>1 August 2023</p> <p>A smaller task group reporting to the Integrated Service Partnership Board is proposed in order to plan and complete this work. A more detailed plan and confirmed timing will be confirmed at the next TFG meeting.</p> <p>It was proposed that examples be gathered from elsewhere of actions that had been taken following branch practice closure to strengthen local wellbeing options.</p> <p>Widespread publicity of the community event will help to ensure awareness of the forthcoming closure, ahead of the issue of the patient letter which is expected by late September 2023 (see Action 14).</p> <p>5 September 2023</p> <p>First meeting of smaller task group planned for 5 September with representatives from ABUHB, MCC, Monmouthshire Housing Association, Pobl, GAVO and PTHB Engagement. The community event will be publicised via the</p>

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9. Specifically for patients in the Clydach area, explore appetite for other practices to extend their catchment to provide further opportunities for re-registration for those patients who are furthest from Crickhowell.

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	Commentary at 25 May 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
9.1: ABUHB to link in with relevant practices in the Abergavenny area to expand their practice area to include Clydach	ABUHB Primary Care Department	By 30 June 2023	<p>ABUHB has provided the following response: “All GP practices within ABUHB have an ‘open list’ and therefore patients can choose to register with the GP practice of their choice, subject to residing within the practice boundary/area, as per the GMS contract regulations.</p> <p>“It is acknowledged that the boundaries of the 3 local practices in Monmouthshire did not extend as far as Clydach. This area is covered by Crickhowell Practice and Brynmawr Medical Practice, therefore those individuals living in Clydach could re-register with Brynmawr Medical Practice if they so wish.”</p> <p>ABUHB has additionally confirmed that there have been no expressions of interest from the Abergavenny practices to extend their boundaries to include Clydach.</p>	<p>The position remains unchanged with all practices having open lists and no practices expressing an interest in extending their boundaries.</p> <p>This is kept under ongoing review by ABUHB primary care department.</p>	<p>1 August 2023</p> <p>The position remains unchanged with all practices having open lists and no practices expressing an interest in extending their boundaries.</p> <p>This is kept under ongoing review by ABUHB primary care department.</p>

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10. Consider options for monitoring health impact so that action to address this can be kept under review and agree a schedule for reporting to the Citizen Voice Body, the Local Authority and the local community on progress to deliver agreed mitigations and on monitoring of health impact.

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	Commentary at 25 May 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
10.1: ABUHB to consider the population needs assessments and any impact post closure	ABUHB	Ongoing	ABUHB and PTHB will continue to listen and respond to the concerns of the local community and other stakeholders such as Citizen Voice, Llais and elected members. If the branch surgery request is supported the mitigations put in place will be formally reviewed after 6 months. The transition will be monitored by the Monmouthshire North Neighbourhood Care Network and the Monmouthshire Locality team based within the Primary and Community Care Division.	This will transfer to “business as usual” through existing mechanisms in place in ABUHB.	CLOSED 1 August 2023 <i>Transferred to “business as usual” mechanisms</i>
10.2: ABUHB to confirm health impact reporting arrangements to the Monmouthshire Citizen Voice Body, Local Authority and the local community	ABUHB	By 30 November 2023	ABUHB and PTHB will continue to listen and respond to the concerns of the local community and other stakeholders such as Citizen Voice, Llais and elected members. If the branch surgery request is supported the mitigations put in place will be formally reviewed after 6 months. The transition will be monitored by the Monmouthshire North Neighbourhood Care Network and the Monmouthshire Locality team based within the Primary and Community Care Division.	This will transfer to “business as usual” through existing mechanisms in place in ABUHB.	CLOSED 1 August 2023 <i>Transferred to “business as usual” mechanisms</i>

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11. Identify options for working with partners to understand and mitigate wider Future Generations impact on the economic, cultural and social vibrancy of the community

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	Commentary at 25 May 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
11.1 ABUHB to identify and work with relevant partners	ABUHB	By 30 November 2023	ABUHB has provided the following response: “The Gwent Public Services Board, often called the PSB, have undertaken a Well-being Assessment to look at how to improve well-being across the region. ABUHB will continue to work with partners to deliver on the Gwent Well-being Plan, when published, which focuses on ensuring that decisions made today give consideration to economic, cultural and social vibrancy in the communities across Monmouthshire for future generations.”	When published, the Gwent Wellbeing Plan will provide the framework for taking this work forward through existing mechanisms.	1 August 2023 The Gwent Wellbeing Plan is not yet published. An update will be provided to the next meeting.

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12. Maintain ongoing viability of Crickhowell Group Practice to continue to provide GMS services for patients from South East Powys and North West Monmouthshire

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	Commentary at 25 May 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
12.1 PTHB to work with practice on ongoing sustainability	PTHB	Ongoing	This will be implemented through our existing practice sustainability framework	Practice sustainability continues to be kept under review through the existing PTHB practice sustainability framework arrangements.	1 August 2023 The quantum of change in practice roll will be included below in the next report. 5 September 2023 ABUHB confirmed low number of patients (27 since April) re-registering elsewhere. ABUHB, PTHB and CGP agree unlikely to cause sustainability issues. Keep action open.

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13. Monitor impact on neighbouring practices in ABUHB and take steps in response to significant increases in registration

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	New action added June 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
13.1 ABUHB to work with practices on ongoing sustainability	ABUHB	Ongoing	This will be implemented through the existing practice sustainability framework.	Since notification of the branch surgery closure, no concerns have been raised by any of the local GP practices. ABUHB Primary Care Department is monitoring increases in registrations and no significant changes have been identified.	1 August 2023 The latest update on re-registrations is included below. To date, no issues have been raised by any of the neighbouring practices. Whilst this quantum is within normal expected range for practice list fluctuations, ABUHB to be asked whether data can be identified at ward level to understand any specific patterns or trends associated with the Gilwern area. Sustainability of neighbouring practices continues to be kept under ongoing review through ABUHB sustainability framework. 5 September 2023 ABUHB confirmed low number of patients (27 since April) re-registering elsewhere. ABUHB, PTHB and CGP agree unlikely to cause sustainability issues. Keep action open.

In relation to action 13.1, please see table below detailing the patient list sizes for the neighbouring practices. These are total increases/decreases and do not identify registrations from any particular ward/area.

	01/04/23	01/07/23	Difference
Hereford Road	5010	5028	+18
Old Station	10544	10603	+59
Tudor Gate	8661	8697	+36
Brynmawr	10718	10706	-12

To date, no issues have been raised by any of the above practices.

14. Write to patients in line with Stage 5 requirements and recommendation at the meeting of the Board on 24 May 2023

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	New action added June 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
14.1 PTHB to work with CGP to prepare and issue letter	PTHB with CGP	30 September 2023	<p>Based on the mitigation plan, the patient letter to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of timetable Reassurance that all patients remain registered with CGP and do not need to take action Information about how to register for online services, and the range of services available online and by telephone Information about the services provided by Gilwern pharmacy Useful about services for children and young people (including relevant local community provided by ABUHB) Information about alternative practices and their practice boundaries, and how people can re-register if they choose Information about transport options 	<p>Household letter distribution is suggested to be planned for end September 2023 in order to capture all relevant information patients may need, and also include any new patient queries which may arise due to seasonal influences.</p> <p>A draft will be reviewed by the Task and Finish Group prior to issue.</p>	<p>1 August 2023</p> <p>The TFG agreed with the principle that a single definitive letter to patients was the preferred approach but in the meantime there should be ongoing engagement and communication with local residents including through publicity for the proposed community event in September. No further changes to the proposed content of the letter were identified, and the TFG agreed that a draft letter would be prepared for review at next meeting.</p> <p>5 September 2023</p> <p>Draft letter received by TFG. PTHB and Llais will work with CGP to finalise the letter, with input from ABUHB. TFG agreed that the letter will be distributed to CGP registered households within the ABUHB area only. The community event will be promoted via the letter if details are confirmed before the print deadline.</p> <p>18 September 2023</p> <p>Letter has been updated to reflect comments and re-circulated.</p>

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15. Extend notice period for branch closure to six months (compared with three month period in branch closure process) to support transition and mitigation

Action	Responsibility	Timetable	New action added June 2023	Position at 17 July 2023	Current position (with date of update)
15.1 PTHB to confirm six month notice period to CGP	PTHB with CGP	30 November 2023	Practice have been informed that a six month notice period will	Belmont Branch Surgery will remain open until 30 November 2023. However, the staffing challenges identified in the practices Branch Surgery Closure application continue to affect the ongoing delivery of services.	CLOSED <i>Six month notice period to 30 November 2023 is agreed and being implemented.</i>

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Our ref JM/KB
18 July 2023

Hayley Thomas
Interim Chief Executive
Powys Teaching Health Board

Letter sent by email

Copied to: Minister for Health and Social Services Office
Welsh Government Partnership team

Dear Hayley

Formal letter of representation

Crickhowell Group Practice - Branch Surgery Closure (Gilwern Branch)

Thank you kindly for your letter of response dated 27 June 2023 to our request for formal public consultation as per the NHS service change guidance.

We have sought formal advice in respect of the Health Board's position that the next steps for public consultation are not intended and that the Health Board is of the view that the engagement exercise has fulfilled the requirements of public consultation.

This position is disappointing as we remain concerned that public engagement and public consultation are two separate phases in the NHS service change process, and the need for public consultation is not known until the conclusion of the engagement exercise because public views, feedback and the impact of the proposals will not be known until the engagement phase is complete.

Cadeirydd / Chair: **Athro / Professor Medwin Hughes, DL**

Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive: **Alyson Thomas**

E-bost / E-mail: **enquiries@llaiscymru.org**

Ffôn / Tel: **02920 235558**

Mills Belinda
25/09/2023 17:09:11

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg. Os byddwch yn ysgrifennu atom yn Gymraeg, byddwn yn ateb yn Gymraeg. Ni fydd hyn yn arwain at oedi wrth ymateb i'ch gohebiaeth.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh and English. If you write to us in Welsh, we will answer in Welsh. This will not lead to a delay in responding to your correspondence.

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Powys Teaching Health Board's policy is clear on this two-phased approach where indicated:

“Stage 2 – Primary Care Department – Engagement & Consultation with key stakeholders:

A bilingual patient engagement process will take place by the Engagement & Communications Team. If agreed in stage 2, a formal consultation process will take place in line with the NHS communications guidance. All patients accessing the Branch Surgery will be communicated with. If the practice is unable to identify specifically those patients who have accessed the branch surgery, then the total practice population will be subject to the patient engagement.

- Consultation should last a minimum of six weeks (extended if this coincides with holiday periods). This will be agreed with the Community Health Council.*
- The Primary Care Department will progress an Equality Impact Assessment on the process undertaken to conduct the patient engagement.”*

In view of the above policy indicators, and the NHS service change guidance, formal consultation is the next phase following the engagement exercise where substantial change and impact is identified. We therefore need to highlight that procedural unfairness appears to now exist, given the Health Board's decision to support the application at its Board meeting on 24 May 2023.

Your letter refers to a lack of prompting by the former Community Health Council's and now Llais as to the need for consultation at an earlier point, but as explained, the necessity for public consultation is not determined until the conclusion of engagement and when public feedback demonstrates significant adverse impact. Furthermore, our concerns for service change process handling were raised in the closed Branch Practice Review Panel meeting held on 26 April, with concern expressed by Jemma Morgan that further work was required, in line with guidance, given the level and nature of the

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responses received and that it could be premature to put a recommendation for decision to the Public Board on the 24 May 2023. We were clear in this meeting that the panel may wish to advise the Board of a deferred recommendation pending the further work required, with a reconvened Panel at a later date. Minutes of this meeting have been requested and we have been advised that minutes are not usually recorded.

In view of our remaining concerns on behalf of the affected population, about procedural unfairness and a lack of further consultation, we ask what actions the Health Board will take should the mitigation plan/actions not meet peoples' needs, e.g. travel concerns where community transport providers have stated that they could not assist, given that a decision to close the Branch surgery and support a draft mitigation plan has already been taken?

For Llais to consider any next steps in a timely way, we would appreciate a response by the Monday 24 July 2023 please.

Yours sincerely

Katie Blackburn
Regional Director – Llais Powys Region

Jemma Morgan
Regional Director – Llais Gwent Region

Cc: Nicola Prygodzicz – Chief Executive – Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
Minister for Health and Social Services Office
Welsh Government Partnership Team

Please let us know if you would like to communicate with us in Welsh.

Cadeirydd / Chair: **Athro / Professor Medwin Hughes, DL**

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 Powys Teaching
 Health Board

Hayley Thomas, Prif Weithredwr Dros Dro/ Interim Chief Executive
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21st July 2023

Katie Blackburn, Regional Director, Llais Powys Region
 Jemma Morgan, Regional Director, Llais Gwent Region
 Llais
 33-35 Cathedral Road
 Cardiff
 CF11 9HB

Dear Katie and Jemma

Thank you for your letter dated 18th July, received via email on Tuesday evening. I will work with colleagues to consider your letter and respond upon my return from annual leave, week commencing 7th August 2023.

Yours sincerely

Hayley Thomas

Hayley Thomas
Interim Chief Executive Officer

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14th August 2023

Katie Blackburn, Regional Director, Llais Powys Region
Jemma Morgan, Regional Director, Llais Gwent Region
Llais
33-35 Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9HB

Dear Katie and Jemma

Thank you for your letter dated 18th July 2023.

I am very grateful for the time and consideration that Llais has given to these matters including making a representation to the health board in support of co-development of health services.

As Chief Executive Officer, I have ensured that the health board has given due regard to the issues you have raised.

Following conscientious consideration, I remain content that the thorough and comprehensive eight week period of engagement from 10th January 2023 to 6th March 2023 has enabled the health board to involve and consult service users (including through Llais/CHC) in fulfilment of the requirements set out under s183 of the National Health Service (Wales) Act 2006 and the previous and current guidance on changes to health services.

With regard to the Branch Practice Review Panel, held on 26th April, this panel would not normally meet again to review and approve minutes, and therefore in accordance with the terms of reference the proceedings are instead recorded through the report made to the Board as a matter of public record.

The record of proceedings can be found in Section 3.3 of Paper 2.1 of the meeting of Powys Teaching Health Board on 24 May 2023. The papers and a recording of the meeting of the Board are available from our website at <https://pthb.nhs.wales/about-us/the-board/board-meetings/2023/24-may-2023/>

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We look forward to continuing to work with you as we review and refresh our Branch Practice Review Process to draw on experience and the latest guidance.

You will be aware from discussions at our Board and my letter on 27th June 2023 that the delivery of the mitigation plan remains a priority focus both for Powys Teaching Health Board and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.

The Task and Finish Group has been established, and includes representation from Powys Teaching Health Board, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Crickhowell Group Practice and Monmouthshire County Council. I am grateful to the Regional Director for Llais Powys Region for joining this group in an observer capacity.

Monthly meetings of this group are in place to ensure a co-ordinated and partnership approach to mitigation action.

An update on mitigation action was received and discussed at the meeting of the Health Board on 25 July 2023 (<https://pthb.nhs.wales/about-us/the-board/board-meetings/2023/1/>). Further updates will be presented to the Board on 27 September and 29 November. This ensures that we have a process of assurance in place.

I have also attached the latest update on the Mitigation Plan reflecting the meeting of the Task and Finish Group on 1st August 2023.

Yours sincerely



Hayley Thomas
Interim Chief Executive Officer

Enc

Mills Belinda
25/09/2023 17:09:11