

Bridgend health board change to 'strengthen regional partnership'

Health services for people in the Bridgend area are currently provided by Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board (ABM), with accompanying partnership structures in the delivery of social services across Western Bay.

This creates a particular challenge for public services in Bridgend which are increasingly working with others across the Cardiff Capital Region to deliver economic growth and improvement in education.

The change announced today will align economic, education, health and social services partnership arrangements for Bridgend County Borough firmly within the Cardiff Capital Region.

Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services, Vaughan Gething said:

“In making this decision we recognise that people’s health needs are best served by strong, integrated partnership arrangements. I am grateful to the health boards for their continued engagement throughout this process. I look forward to working with them and others over the coming months to deliver the new partnership arrangements, putting in place a strong foundation for sustaining and improving public services.”

The Welsh Government will bring forward legislation to effect the health board boundary change by April 2019 in due course.

Robot Doctors and Rockets – Welsh children’s vision for the future NHS

The competition, organised by the Welsh Government, asked primary school children across Wales to depict what they think the NHS in Wales will look like on its 100th birthday in 2048.

Cerith Hiorns, aged nine, who is a Year 4 pupil at Ysgol Gymraeg Llangennech in Llanelli, has won the 7-9 age category for his vision of a hospital with jet planes and rockets.

While, Cari Megan Lloyd, aged 11, a Year 6 pupil at Ysgol Dolgarrog, in Llanrwst, took the winning place for the 10-11 age category for her depiction

of a robot doctor alongside the slogan “people matter”.

The two winners were today congratulated by Health Secretary Vaughan Gething during a visit to the Royal Mint, where they got to strike a special coin from the Royal Mint’s Great British Coin Hunt A to Z Collection, with an N for NHS.

During the visit the pupils were also joined by Aneira Thomas, the first baby born in the NHS, for a tour of the Royal Mint.

Health Secretary, Vaughan Gething said:

“I had great fun going through the entries for our NHS 70 drawing competition and getting an insight into what today’s children think the health service will look like when they are adults. With jet planes, space rockets and robot doctors, they certainly have some exciting ideas for the next twenty years!

“It wasn’t easy picking the winners and Cerith and Cari should be very proud of their achievement.”

Aneira Thomas said:

“I was delighted to meet Cerith and Cari and to see their visions of what the NHS will look like in 30 years’ time. I was fortunate to have been born in the first few minutes of 5 July 1948 at the start of the NHS. I have seen many changes and improvements in the NHS throughout my life and career and it was a delight to meet Cerith and Cari to talk about those changes.”

Anne Jessopp, Chief Executive of The Royal Mint, which is based in Llantrisant in Cwm Taf Health Board said

“The ‘N’ for NHS has proved a very popular choice with the public as a Great British Coin Hunt 10p theme. The NHS is a well-respected national institution – most Britons will come into contact with it at some time in their lives, so it was a natural choice. Congratulations to both Cerith and Cari on winning this competition.”

In all, ten pictures were selected for special praise across the whole of Wales. The winners have been invited to join a service of thanksgiving to celebrate NHS70 at Llandaff Cathedral on the 4 July, where they will be presented with a special coin from The Royal Mint’s Great British Coin Hunt A to Z Collection, an N for NHS, by a special guest.

[“In Wales, we’re investing in and prioritising social care” – Huw Irranca-Davies](#)

Speaking at the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) National Conference and AGM in Cardiff, the Minister said the Welsh Government’s vision for the future is that of an integrated health and social care system which provides seamless services for those who need them.

Earlier this week, the Welsh Government unveiled A Healthier Wales, a long term plan for health and social care in Wales – the first national plan in the UK which integrates health and social care.

The Minister told the audience of social workers from across the UK about the four distinctive features of the Welsh Government’s approach: continuing investment in social care, prioritising prevention, developing and supporting the social care workforce and co-production with service users.

Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care, Huw Irranca-Davies said:

“In Wales, we have prioritised social care as a sector of national importance and despite significant cuts to the Welsh Government’s Budget, we have continued to invest in social services. This is in stark contrast to the situation in England, where we know social services have suffered due to large cuts in funding over the last six years.

“However, whilst additional funding helps to combat current pressures, sustaining a level of funding to meet the increasing demand for social care remains challenging. I know there are many views about how to address the funding of social care in the long term and raising additional public funds via a social care levy for Wales is one option we will be exploring over the coming months.”

The Minister also set out the Welsh Government’s approach to reforming social care – with the introduction of the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014 and the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care Act 2016.

He said:

“Together these two Acts have radically changed the face of social care, paving the way for a person-centred, outcome focussed approach to the delivery of care and support. One which concentrates on individuals, their families and carers and the

outcomes they want to achieve.

“We took a collaborative approach to the development of this legislation and continue to do so in its implementation. As a result we are beginning to establish a culture of real improvement. The need for care and support services is growing and there is pressure to do more and to do it differently – that is difficult.

“Our long-term plan for health and social care was published this week, having been developed through a co-productive process. The plan responds to some of the challenges we face. It sets out a vision for the future based on an integrated health and social care system which provides seamless services for those who need them.”

[Options work underway to improve A494 River Dee Bridge](#)

Environmental and land surveys are currently being carried out in the area and Public Information Exhibitions will be taking place in July to introduce the team, inform the public on the current situation and how they will be looking at options to improve the crossing.

The upgrade of the River Dee Bridge is identified in the Welsh Government’s ‘Moving North Wales Forward’ as a scheme for development to address the existing traffic bottleneck and overcome issues with the existing bridge.

The crossing, which was built in 1960, forms a key strategic route between North East Wales and North West England and carries more than 61,000 vehicles per day.

That figure is set to increase over the next 20 years and possible improvements are now being looked at to strengthen the crossing’s resilience.

The Welsh Government, through the North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent, has commissioned Mott MacDonald and their partners Richards, Morehead & Laing to examine the improvement options.

The Public Information Exhibitions will take place at Deeside Leisure Centre on Saturday 14 July between 10am-4pm and at St Andrews Church Hall in Garden City on Monday 16th July between 2pm-8pm. Both are free to attend and everyone is welcome.

Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport, Ken Skates said:

“We are investing significant funding in the Deeside area to

improve transport infrastructure and address existing traffic issues.

“The A494 River Dee Bridge improvement scheme is an important development which will improve the resilience of the existing bridge and provide opportunities for better carriageway alignment to help relieve congestion and enhance safety.

“Initial work is underway with surveys currently being carried out and the upcoming Public Information Exhibitions are a good opportunity for people to meet the team and learn more about the scheme.”

[New report sets out steps for a stronger post-16 education system](#)

Last year, Education Secretary Kirsty Williams announced the appointment of Professor Harvey Weingarten, President and CEO of the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO), to undertake a Review of Systems for Monitoring and Improving the Effectiveness of Post-compulsory Education in Wales.

The Review, which has been published today, recognises the fragmentation of the current system for performance monitoring and provides 10 recommendations for how this system could be improved.

The recommendations are based on a more comprehensive and holistic assessment of the contribution of Wales’ individual institutions and its PCET system as a whole.

Professor Weingarten said:

“In conducting my review, it was clear that there is a high quality of people in the Welsh PCET system. This is true in the institutions, government and agencies, each with a passion and commitment to Welsh education and students. There was a willingness to consider how the Welsh PCET system could be improved and do an even better job of helping students and Wales achieve their goals.

“My recommendations would provide government and institutions with the evidence base to determine the effectiveness of the PCET system, inform decisions necessary to improve the effectiveness of the system and maximise the contribution of each institution and the system as a whole to the most important Welsh objectives.

“I provide this final report in that spirit – as an analysis and set of recommendations offered to best monitor, and improve the effectiveness of the PCET system in Wales.”

Welcoming the report, Kirsty Williams said:

“Professor Weingarten’s review has given us some really valuable input to help support the longer term reform of post-compulsory education and training in Wales, which includes the current technical consultation on the creation of a new Tertiary and Education and Research Commission for Wales.

“It is an excellent piece of work, which I know has benefited hugely from Professor Weingarten’s engagement right across the sector in Wales.

“We will now take the time to give careful consideration to the 10 recommendations in the report, which must be seen in the context of our ongoing development of systems for monitoring and supporting the post-compulsory education system in Wales.”