

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET
19th May 2020

REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor James Evans
Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Housing & Regulatory Services

REPORT TITLE: Unit 1 Temporary Body Storage Facility

REPORT FOR: Information

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report seeks to provide Cabinet with an updated position in relation to the Council's response to the Coronavirus pandemic and development of the Unit 1 temporary body storage facility in Llanelwedd.
- 1.2 The report is supported by the following appendices:

Appendix A - Unit 1 Cabinet/EMT Update 01.05.2020

Appendix B - Frequently Asked Questions

Appendix C - Standard Operating Procedures

2. Background

- 2.1 Powys County Council continues working closely with Powys Teaching Health Board and wider partners to ensure dignified and safe care for the deceased during the Coronavirus pandemic.
- 2.2 The First Minister for Wales outlined his expectations that the NHS, local government, and funeral services should work together to ensure that additional mortuary capacity is in place across the country.
- 2.3 As the First Minister for Wales made clear in his press conference on Friday 3 April, current mortuary capacity in Wales will not be able to meet the needs of communities in the extraordinary times. He outlined that work is under way across the country with partners to put in place temporary additional capacity.
- 2.4 In Powys we supported this national work with the development of a temporary facility on the Wyeside Enterprise Park in Llanelwedd, this work was driven by a determination to respect human dignity during these challenging times. The temporary facilities will mean that the county can be confident that it has the capacity to provide dignity in death for the people of Powys.

3. Advice

- 3.1 This report is to provide details and information of our activities as contained within this report and the included appendices.

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 There are anticipated resource implications attributed to the set up and operation of Unit 1. The latest updated financial position circa 30th April 2020 is provided for Cabinets perusal in **Appendix 1**
- 4.2 The project costs incurred will be charged against the COVID19 Hardship grant each month and recovered from Welsh Government, this we are reassured will cover all such additional costs.
- 4.3 It is anticipated that other officers who have been redeployed to support the Unit will incur costs that are charged against their core budgets.

5. Legal implications

Not applicable.

6. Data Protection

- 6.1 The Standard operating procedure (SOP) outlines the confidentiality arrangements and data protection guidelines, these include legal, statutory, or contractual obligations developed in conjunction with the Council's Data Protection Officer.
- 6.2 All staff working at the temporary body storage facility will be required to adhere to and sign a declaration of confidentiality. Should attendance be necessary at the facility by third parties then they will also be subject to the confidentiality clause and statement and must undertake an induction which will include signing of the clause and agreeing to adhere to confidentiality guidelines.

7. Comment from local member(s)

- 7.1 Senior officers leading the development of Unit 1 temporary body storage facility have engaged and communicated with local members during the project.
- 7.2 Concerns that were raised have been considered addressed within the SOP. Given the sensitive nature of such a facility wider communication has been limited to key details as outlining operational detail would not be appropriate or dignified to the deceased.
- 7.3 A frequently asked questions guidance document was created by PCC & PTHB colleagues. The FAQ provides assurance and clear information to stakeholders who may have concerns regarding Unit 1.

8. Integrated Impact Assessment

- 8.1 An impact assessment is being prepared for the project which has been guided by national policies and guidance, these set stringent standards for the operation of such temporary mortuary facilities.
- 8.2 The project timescales were dictated by the rapidly emerging pandemic, working in conjunction with Welsh Government and DPP/LRF arrangements across the region the facility was developed at pace to ensure that our temporary mortuary facility was available well in advance of being needed. This would afford officers time to put in place training and procedures that will care for the deceased, be sensitive to the needs of the bereaved, and ensure safety for the staff and local community.
- 8.3 Regional Officers undertook a rapid assessment to identify locations across the county, and to assess whether a facility of this nature could be established quickly and safely.
- 8.4 A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has been produced for the facility. The SOP sets out the processes required for the safe operation of the Temporary Body Store. It provides guidance on managing the risks of infection from work activities which involve handling the deceased. It covers the safe handling, storage of bodies in the Temporary Body Store.

9. Recommendation

This report is for the purpose of informing Cabinet of developments related to Unit 1 as such no recommendations are required other than to note the contents of the report.

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