

To:

The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP – Secretary of State for Health and Social Care

Humza Yousaf MSP – Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport

Robin Swann MLA – Minister of Health

Eluned Morgan MS – Minister for Health and Social Services

From:

**Joint Biosecurity Centre,
Policy and Legislation Team,
and the Devolved
Administrations**

Date: 19 July 2021

UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) update and engagement with the Devolved Administrations

Issue

To note the previous commitment made by the then Secretary of State for Health and Social Care the Rt Hon Matt Hancock at the Ministerial Board on 22 March 2021 to continue the JBC-DA four nation approach into the UKHSA.

Recommendation

That you:

- **Note** the current position on JBC transition to UKHSA and
- **Note** the previous commitment made at the Ministerial Board on the UKHSA/DA relationship.

Background

1. The UKHSA was formally announced in April 2021 and is planned to be fully operational by 1st October 2021. It brings together capabilities in analytics and genomic surveillance with scale testing and contact tracing capability and combines key elements of Public Health England, the Joint Biosecurity Centre and NHS Test and Trace.
2. Dr Jenny Harries is the first Chief Executive of the new UKHSA, supported by a new Chair, Ian Peters.
3. The UKHSA is committed to working closely with the DAs on UK wide issues, building on existing collaborative working arrangements and the **Common Framework on Public Health Protection and Health Security**. It is anticipated that the UKHSA will take on the UK wide roles that PHE currently has (including fulfilling the duties set out in the International Health Regulations (IHR) and under bilateral agreements) and those currently undertaken by NHS Test and Trace and the JBC.

Current position

4. The 'JBC as a four nations entity' paper presented to this board today documents the considerable progress made in collaboration between JBC and the Devolved Administrations, including the progress towards producing joint analytical products. The JBC and Devolved Administrations are keen to maintain the momentum.
5. The UKHSA is committed to working closely with DAs on UK-wide issues, building on the collaborative working arrangements already in place.
6. The JBC will become part of the Data and Analysis directorate within the UKHSA and the current relationship between the JBC and the four nations will continue.
7. It was also noted at the last Ministerial Board that the transition to the UKHSA would be an opportunity to build in four-nation involvement from the outset and transfer learning from the setting up of JBC.
8. Following the on-going consultation period with staff, the future structure of the UKHSA will become clearer. At that stage the JBC will set out and agree with DAs a timetable for a full review of the Agency Agreement and other

governance arrangements and structures as required. This is likely to be in autumn 2021.