

## Appendix A - Briefing Note - Unit 1 Temporary Body Storage Facility

### **BACKGROUND**

As part of our emergency planning with the Dyfed Powys Local Resilience Forum, Powys Teaching Health Board and Powys County Council are taking a proactive approach to managing the increase in deaths that are forecast to arise in Powys as a result of the Covid-19 epidemic. Based on the latest forecasts we are expecting that up to 600 people may die within Powys, over a 53-week period because of the COVID 19 pandemic based on a 40% compliance to lockdown rules.

We are aware that there may be insufficient capacity at some point during the pandemic to deal with so called excess deaths in our existing mortuary facilities.

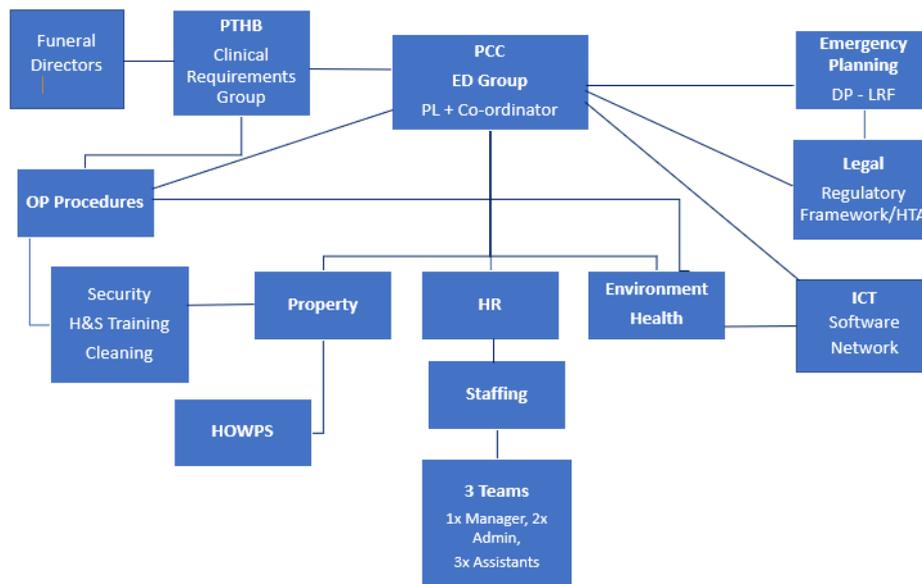
We are also aware that our neighbouring counties are going to be equally challenged to manage the increase in number of fatalities and are therefore working to be self -reliant within the Powys/PtHB area to ensure that we effectively and sympathetically manage the situation.

A central Temporary Body Storage Facility for people in Powys who die during this period is being established. It will be used to supplement the existing storage capacity available within the County. When the existing facilities are at capacity the Temporary Body Storage Facility will be utilised.

Unit 1 will not be used for any child death or unexplained deaths which may require a post-mortem. Access to the facility will not be possible by the bereaved or family members as there will be no facilities for viewing the deceased.

### **PROJECT STRUCTURE**

A multi-disciplinary team has been formed to progress the planning, establishment and operation of Unit 1 at considerable speed, to ensure the capacity is available as soon as possible, meets all regulatory, legal and operational requirements and provides the most dignified service possible in these unprecedented times.



## UNIT 1 KEY DETAILS

The current project planning for Unit 1 is based on:

- All deaths other than those stated above, that cannot be dealt within existing facilities will be directed to Unit 1.
- the reasonable worst-case scenario as informed by PTHB of circa 600 excess deaths due to Covid-19.
- Existing funeral rates would be at least maintained and increased where possible.



### Building Capacity

**Main room – 325**

**Side Rooms – 136**

**2 x trailers – 80**

**WG provided store – 90**

**Total Unit 1 Capacity – 631**

## UNIT 1 PICTURES



*Racking within main store. Each shelving unit is 660mm high*

## **REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS**

To operate solely as a body storage, no regulatory licence is required. However, if bodies are stored which may require a post-mortem, a licence from the Human Tissue Authority (HTA) is required. The Authority is progressing on the basis that an HTA licence will not be necessary as advised by PTHB. However, in keeping with contingency planning processes all required steps are being taken to have documentation drafted and prepared should we need to submit an application if required.

## **UPDATED FINANCIAL POSITION FOR UNIT 1 AT 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2020**

**Set up** – The table below provides the latest summary on set up of Unit 1, based on both actual and estimated costs as we await outstanding bills.

There have been additional costs added for the refrigeration units and the WG provided store. For completeness we have also included staff costs for the three lead officers who have spent the majority of their time on this project over the last two months.

<b>Set Up Costs</b>	<b>£</b>
Building Costs	50,000
Trailers / Cabin	35,000
ICT	13,051
Staff	19,600
Equipment	5,538
Other	1,081
	<b>124,270</b>

**Running** - The estimates are summarised below and cover the Unit and refrigeration units, costs are still being finalised and some like utilities will remain as estimates. The figures have reduced significantly since the last update as clarity on operational hours and other costs are better understood. The estimates assume:

- The facility remains operational until March 2021
- Revised opening hours due to the move to five day opening, and reductions to out of hour requirements likely through changed demand
- The Unit will be fully operational using redeployed council employees.

<b>Running Cost Estimates</b>	<b>£</b>
Staffing (inc out of hours, sickness)	399,701
Rent & rates	60,000
Security	77,929
Utilities, running and generator hire	88,350
Refridgerator trailers inc.maintenance	22,701
Other	10,000
	<b>258,980</b>
	<b>658,681</b>

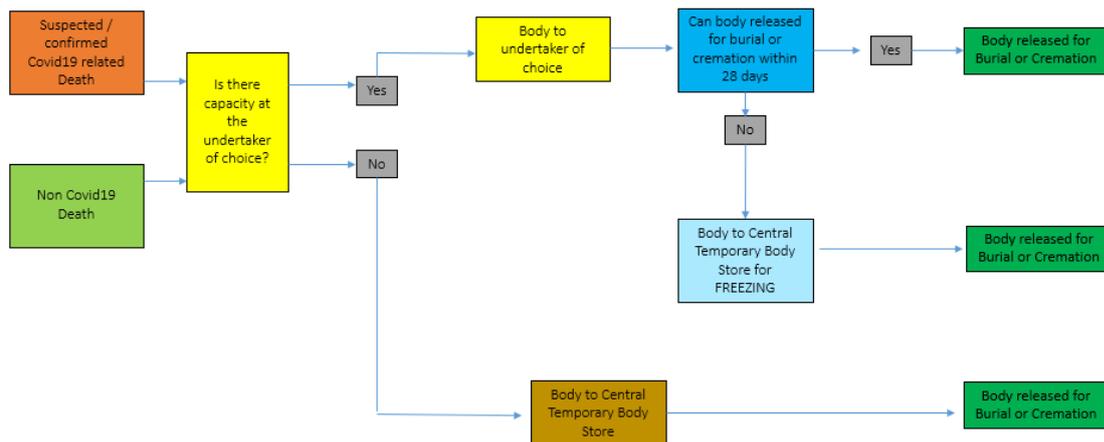
**Funding** – additional costs incurred will be charged against the COVID19 Hardship grant each month and recovered from Welsh Government, this covers non pay, and pay costs where possible.

It is likely that other officers supporting the Unit will incur costs that are charged against their core budgets.

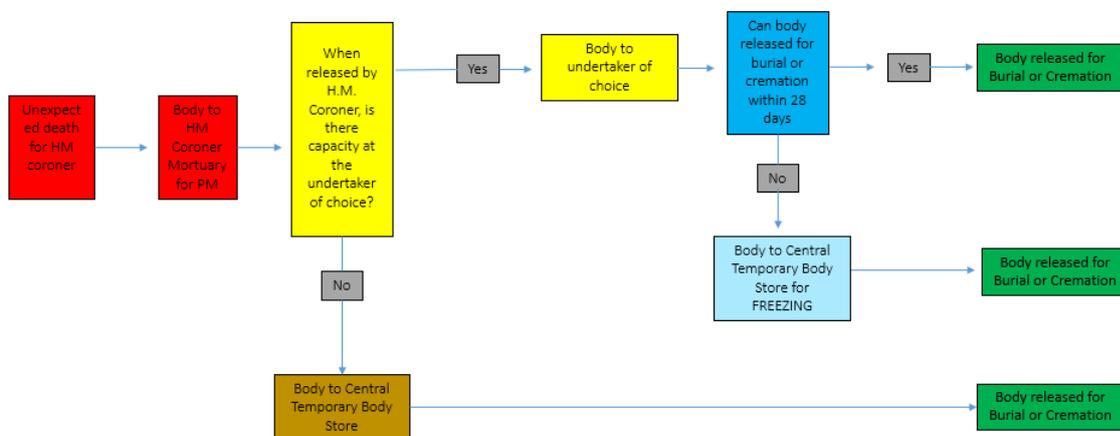
## FACILITY MORTALITY PATHWAYS

The following pathways have been produced to outline the process of bodies entering and exiting the facility. Wherever possible we anticipate that local undertakers will continue to take the lead in arranging for the appropriate handling of the deceased. However, should they become unable to manage this increase, all bodies (except those of children), will need to be taken to the temporary facility to await a time when they can be finally laid to rest.

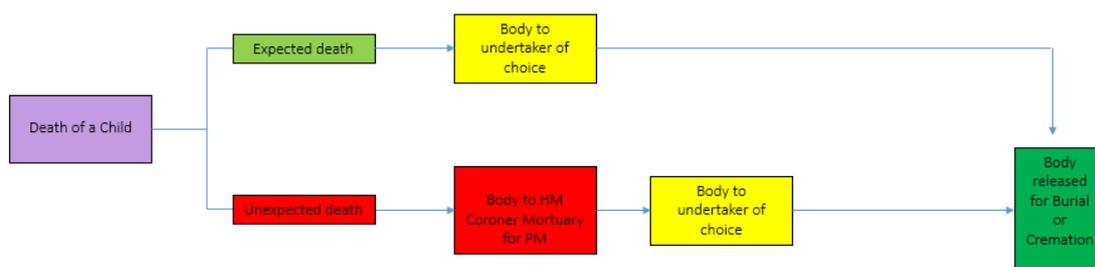
### Adult death (Non H.M. Coroner Cases)



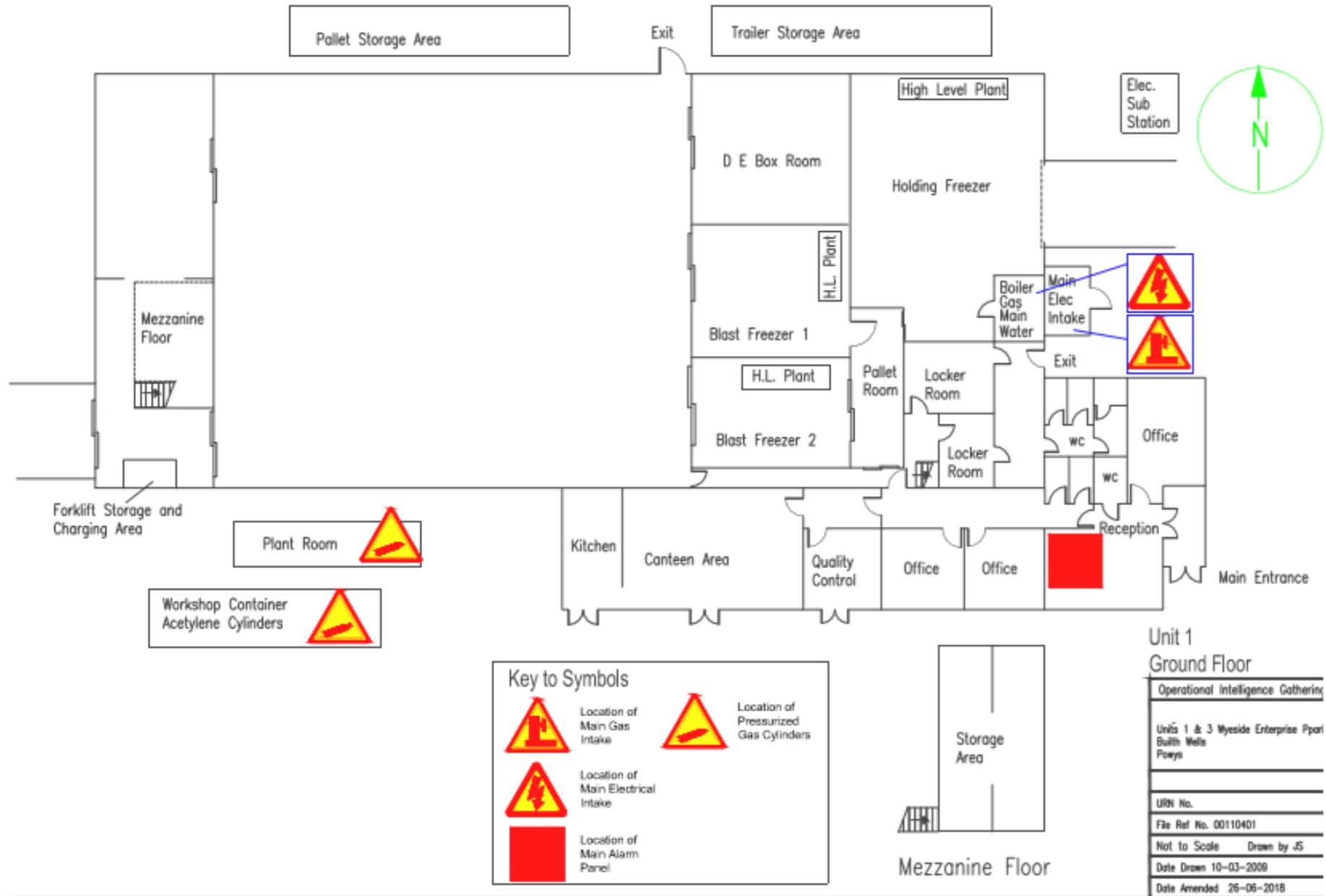
### H.M. Coroner Unexpected Deaths



### Child Deaths



UNIT 1 FLOOR PLAN



## **STAFFING**

Unit 1 body storage facility will be open core hours (**9am – 5:00pm**) with an out of hours service if required. This is likely to be revised during progression of Covid-19 outbreak such that if 24/7 opening may be necessary which will require multiple teams on a rota-based system.

To enable this, at least 3x teams of minimum 6 staff members are required to be trained.

Initially, to meet the core hour opening and ensure safe working practices with the equipment, the staffing requirement will be:

- 1x facility manager
- 2x admin staff
- 4x cold store operatives

Key tasks to date relating to staffing for Unit 1 include the following;

- A call for volunteers to operate and perform duties at Unit 1 (The response identified at least a dozen people with experience of forces / fire) and 40 plus staff to work on site (admin or other)
- An operational cell was formed to progress actions related with the identification, redeployment, and training of staff to undertake roles within the Unit
- Temporary JD's for roles and responsibilities and redeployment processes developed
- Volunteer list collated, identification and job matching of appropriate staff against role criteria undertaken, approaches and notifications of redeployment issued
- One team fully trained and ready to start duties at the Unit, Training is being rolled out to additional teams to ensure resilience with a pool of 18 staff
- An operational trial was held at the Unit on 23<sup>rd</sup> April with volunteer staff and funeral director supporting the project board

## **CAPACITY MODELLING**

A capacity modelling cell has been formed comprising of officers from PCC & PTHB with input from private sector funeral directors. The cell is undertaking pandemic capacity projection modelling for several potential scenarios and levels of pandemic severity to attempt to predict and manage future unit capacity.

Activity undertaken by the modelling cell will support contingency planning for facility capacity issues and allow prior work to be conducted to identify contingencies to increase capacity should they be required during the pandemic.

Further contingency planning activity has been undertaken to explore and identify provision for temporary capacity should it be required. Key activities include the following;

- Funeral directors providing weekly updates on capacity to the cell to provide an up to date picture of county capacity
- Registrar data has been reviewed by the modelling group to review deaths against previous years, reviewing numbers of burials and cremations enabling us to ascertain likely preference routes to model potential pinch points during the pandemic

- Body storage capacity mapping undertaken plotting 21 burial authorities across Powys and their likely capacity and operating capabilities during the pandemic
- Capacities being tracked at natural burial sites, town and community councils, church, and chapels sites within the county
- Funeral directors providing weekly updates to inform burial and cremation figures through their facilities thus providing evidence to support output modelling

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

External communications have been reasonably limited to date due to the sensitive nature of the unit and commercial sensitivities regarding the securing of the site.

A FAQ was produced and circulated on the 17th April, the FAQ provided background detail and answers to questions including links to further guidance and support to provide the target audience with information to ease concerns and understand the purpose, parameters and operation of the unit.

We originally confirmed that we were looking at a site in Llanelwedd for a Temporary Mortuary Facility and then on the 08/04/20 advised as follows:-



<b>Rhagor o gyfleusterau mortiwari</b>	<b>Additional mortuary capacity</b>
<p>Yn ddiweddar, amlinellodd Prif Weinidog Cymru ei ddisgwyliadau y dylai'r GIG, llywodraeth leol a gwasanaethau angladdol weithio gyda'i gilydd i sicrhau bod rhagor o leoedd mortiwari ar gael ledled y wlad.</p> <p>Fel y gwnaeth Prif Weinidog Cymru ei wneud yn glir yn ei gynhadledd i'r wasg ddydd Gwener (3 Ebrill), ni fydd capasiti mortiwariau yng Nghymru yn gallu cwrdd ag anghenion cymunedau yn y cyfnod eithriadol y gwyddom sy'n dod. Amlinellodd fod gwaith ar y gweill ar draws y wlad i weithio gyda phartneriaid i sefydlu capasiti ychwanegol dros dro.</p>	<p>The First Minister for Wales recently 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.</p> <p>As the First Minister for Wales made clear in his press conference on Friday (3 April), mortuary capacity in Wales will not be able to meet the needs of communities in the extraordinary times that we know are coming. He outlined that work under way across the country to work with partners to put in place temporary additional capacity.</p>

Ym Mhowys rydym yn cefnogi'r gwaith hwn drwy ddatblygu cyfleuster dros dro ar Ystâd Ddiwydiannol Wyeside yn Llanelwedd, ac mae'r gwaith hwn yn parhau i gael ei arwain gan benderfyniad parhaus i barchu urddas pobl yn ystod y cyfnod heriol hwn. Bydd y cyfleusterau dros dro yn golygu y gall y sir fod yn hyderus bod ganddi'r gallu i roi urddas mewn marwolaeth i bobl Powys.

*Dyweddodd Carol Shillabeer, Prif Weithredwr Bwrdd Iechyd Addysgu Powys: "Mae pob ymdrech yn cael ei wneud drwy bellter cymdeithasol i leihau nifer y bobl sy'n cael eu heffeithio gan y coronafeirws. Ond, yn anffodus mae llawer o bobl yn dal i gontractio'r feirws ac yn mynd yn sâl. Mae hyn yn arwain at gynnydd yn nifer y marwolaethau o fewn Cymru a ledled y DU. Yma ym Mhowys mae angen i ni baratoi ar gyfer hyn, ac felly mae angen i ni gynyddu capasiti mortiwariau yn y sir. Mae hyn yn arbennig o bwysig gan fod claddu ac amlosgiadau hefyd yn debygol o gael eu heffeithio yn ystod y cyfnod hwn*

*"Gallaf sicrhau'r bobl sy'n byw ac yn gweithio ym Mhowys fod yn rhaid i unrhyw gyfleuster o'r math hwn fodloni safonau caeth iawn mewn perthynas â gofal y sawl sydd wedi marw. Cyhoeddwyd canllawiau cenedlaethol wedi'u diweddarau, a byddwn yn sicrhau bod y rhain yn cael eu dilyn yma ym Mhowys. Bydd hyn yn sicrhau'r safonau uchaf o urddas a diogelwch i bawb.*

*"Gyda'n gilydd, dylem anelu at sicrhau nad oes byth angen inni ddefnyddio'r capasiti ychwanegol hwn, ac yn gwbl ganolog i ni allu cyflawni hyn yw i bob un ohonom fabwysiadu pellter cymdeithasol er mwyn lleihau lledaenu'r haint.*

Dyweddodd y Cyngorydd Rosemarie Harris, Arweinydd Cyngor Sir Powys; "Rydym yn cydnabod y sgiliau, y wybodaeth a'r profiad sydd gan Gyfarwyddwyr Angladdau ym

In Powys we are supporting this work with the development of a temporary facility on the Wyeside Industrial Estate in Llanelwedd, and this work is 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.

*Carol Shillabeer, Chief Executive of Powys Teaching Health Board, said: "Every effort is being made through social distancing to reduce the number of people affected by coronavirus. But unfortunately, there are still many people contracting and becoming ill with coronavirus. This is resulting in an increase in the number of deaths within Wales and across the UK. Here in Powys we need to prepare for this, and therefore we do need to increase the mortuary capacity in the county. This is particularly important as burials and cremations are also likely to be affected during this time.*

*"I can reassure the people living and working in Powys that any facility of this nature must meet very stringent standards in relation to the care of the deceased. Updated national guidance has been published, and we will ensure that this is being followed here in Powys. This will ensure the highest standards of dignity and safety for everyone.*

*"Together our aim is that we never need to use this additional capacity, and absolutely central to achieving this is for all of us to adopt social distancing to reduce the spread of infection.*

Powys County Council Leader, Councillor Rosemarie Harris said; "We recognise the skills, knowledge and experience that Funeral Directors in Powys have and we are working closely with them to manage the expected increased number of deaths. Critical to making this happen will be how we transport the

Mhowys ac rydym yn gweithio'n agos gyda nhw i reoli'r nifer gynyddol ddisgwyliedig o farwolaethau. Elfen hanfodol i wneud hyn i ddigwydd bydd sut y byddwn yn cludo'r ymadawedig i'r safle hwn. Mae trefnwyr angladdau lleol i gyd yn bobl hynod brofiadol a gofalgar sy'n cael eu cydnabod am ddod ag urddas i'r meirw a chysur i'r rhai sydd mewn profedigaeth ac rydym yn gweithio gyda hwy i sicrhau bod y cyfleuster yn rhedeg yn dda.

"Ystyrir bod y risg o drosglwyddo'r feirws wrth ymdrin â chyrrff pobl sydd wedi marw o COVID-19 neu'n amau o fod wedi dioddef ohono yn isel. Mae Iechyd Cyhoeddus Lloegr, sy'n gyfrifol am y gwaith cydlynu cenedlaethol wedi cyhoeddi canllawiau diweddar i gynghori teuluoedd a galarwyr, ac i arwain y rhai sy'n gweithio gyda'r ymadawedig. Byddwn yn sicrhau bod y canllawiau hyn yn cael eu dilyn yma ym Mhowys. "

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deceased to this site. Local funeral directors are all highly experienced, thoughtful caring people who are acknowledged for bringing dignity to the dead and comfort to the bereaved and we are working with them to ensure the facility operates well.

"The potential risk of transmission related to the handling of bodies of deceased persons with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 is low. Public Health England, who are responsible for national coordination, has recently published updated guidance to advise families and mourners, and to guide those who work with the deceased. We will be ensuring that this guidance is followed here in Powys."

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#### **RECENT KEY ACTIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

- Staff training and rostering.
- Funeral directors to be inducted and verified to use facility
- Induction pack has been prepared and has been sent out to funeral directors
- Unit 1 commissioned and was ready for use from w/c 4<sup>th</sup> May
- SOP has been finalised and signed off
- Communications being developed to provide an update on Unit 1 for Powys Clergy

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- Project officers arranged a site visit from Dyfed Powys Police colleagues to discuss visible security arrangements and operation once the facility begins accepting bodies.
- A meeting was held with the Disaster Victim Identification team who, through the LRF, have been providing advice to LAs about temporary body storage facilities. In both cases, Unit 1 and officers were complimented with regards the systems, design, and procedures in place.