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Minutes

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COVID-19 OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the COVID-19 Operations Committee
Held at **Irrelevant & Sensitive** and video conference on

THURSDAY 24th September 2020
At 15:00 PM

P R E S E N T

The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster

The Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP
Secretary of State for the Department of Health and Social Care

ALSO PRESENT

The Rt Hon Gavin Williamson MP
Secretary of State for Education

The Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Baroness Williams of Trafford
Minister of State, Home Office

Justin Tomlinson MP
Minister of State (Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work)
(Item 1)

Chris Heaton-Harris MP
Minister of State, Department for Transport

Caroline Dinenage MP
Minister of State (Minister for Digital and Culture)
(Item 1)

Disproportionately Affected
Groups

THE DIRECTOR, ANALYSIS AND DATA DIRECTORATE, COVID-19 TASKFORCE said that during the first wave of the pandemic, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities had seen higher case rates than their white counterparts. This was being repeated in the second wave of the Covid-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

Continuing, THE DIRECTOR, ANALYSIS AND DATA DIRECTORATE, COVID-19 TASKFORCE said that the data on coronavirus deaths and infection rates were, to some extent, skewed as the testing was being focused on areas of local intervention. A BAME person was still more likely to die from coronavirus, even once the socio-economic factors had been removed, with black men twice as likely to die than their white counterparts. The increased death rate of BAME communities was linked to the fact that these ethnicities were over-represented in eight of the twelve most high-risk coronavirus occupations. In addition, every BAME group scored higher on seroprevalence than their white counterparts. Household size was a very important factor in the infection and death rate of coronavirus, particularly those with six or more occupants.

Continuing, THE DIRECTOR, ANALYSIS AND DATA DIRECTORATE, COVID-19 TASKFORCE said that 60 per cent of those who had died from coronavirus identified as disabled and, even once accounting for other risk factors, disabled people were 1.6 times more likely to die from coronavirus. Individuals were 70 times more likely to die if over the age of 80, compared to those under the age of 40. Furthermore, men were twice as likely to die from coronavirus compared to women.

Continuing, THE DIRECTOR, ANALYSIS AND DATA DIRECTORATE, COVID-19 TASKFORCE said that a key challenge for the Government was communicating with these BAME communities and high occupant household groups. A significant proportion of the BAME communities registered as not having heard from the Government. As a result, nearly 20 per cent of BAME people were unsure of the social distancing rules.

Concluding, THE DIRECTOR, ANALYSIS AND DATA DIRECTORATE, COVID-19 TASKFORCE said that not going to school would exacerbate the long-term impacts on the most disadvantaged. and while the health impacts were worse for older communities, the socio-economic impacts may be worse in the young and in women. Coronavirus had exacerbated existing inequalities across race, age, gender and if left unchecked, would widen those inequalities.

THE SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER FOR