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RESTRICTED HANDLING

SCN(21)6th Conclusions

SCOTTISH CABINET

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN ST ANDREW'S HOUSE, EDINBURGH
AT 9.30 AM ON TUESDAY, 22 JUNE 2021**

Present:	Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP	First Minister
	John Swinney MSP	Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery
	Keith Brown MSP	Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans
	Kate Forbes MSP	Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy
	Mairi Gougeon MSP	Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands
	Michael Matheson MSP	Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport
	Rt Hon Angus Robertson MSP	Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture
	Shona Robison MSP	Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government
	Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP	Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
In Attendance:	Leslie Evans	Permanent Secretary
	George Adam MSP	Minister for Parliamentary Business
	Maree Todd MSP	Minister for Public Health, Women's Health and Sport
	Dr Gregor Smith	Chief Medical Officer
	Paul Johnston	DG Communities (*)
	Ken Thomson	DG Constitution and External Affairs
	James Hynd	Director for Cabinet
	Dominic Munro	Director, Exit Strategy (*)
	David Rogers	Director, Constitution
	Shirley Rogers	Director, Organisational Readiness (*)
	Michelle Rennie	First Minister's Principal Private Secretary (*)
	Amanda Gordon	Deputy Director, Outbreak Management Policy (*)
	Alan Johnston	Deputy Director, Covid Co-ordination (*)
	Dougie McLaren	Deputy Director, Budget, Pay and Pensions (*)
	Miranda McIntosh	Deputy Director, Outbreak Management (*)
	Jeanette Campbell	Special Adviser (*)
	Ross Ingebrigtsen	Special Adviser (*)
	Colin McAllister	Special Adviser
	Callum McCaig	Special Adviser (*)
	Chris Mackie	First Minister's Official Spokesperson (*)
	Julie Grant	Assistant Head of News (*)
		FM Covid Briefing Unit (*)
		First Minister's Policy and Delivery Unit (*)
		PS/First Minister
		Tackling Child Poverty Unit (*)

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- ♦ The physical distancing requirement outdoors should be removed altogether;
- (h) That, when the gateway condition was considered to have been met – indicatively, 9 August – the physical distancing requirement indoors should also be removed;
- (i) That the next formal review of allocation of Levels should take place on a timescale to allow Level allocations to change from 19 July, with the intention that all areas should move to Level 0 at that point;
- (j) That hospitality closing times in Levels 1 and 2 should be temporarily extended to 11.30 p.m. from 26 June to 11 July, to allow for Euro 2020 football matches running to extra time and/or penalties;
- (k) That, with effect from 28 June:
- ♦ Suppliers and others employed at a wedding should no longer count towards the cap on attendance;
 - ♦ A bride, groom and other designated persons accompanying them should no longer be required to wear face coverings when walking down the aisle;
 - ♦ Live entertainment should be permitted at weddings;
 - ♦ More than one household should be permitted to carry the coffin and/or take a cord at a funeral; and
 - ♦ Crematoriums and churches should be permitted to relay funeral services to outside areas;
- (l) That, with effect from 19 July:
- ♦ Life events other than weddings and funerals should be permitted; and
 - ♦ Different households should be able to share a bedroom in a hotel.
- (m) That Regulations should be made to give effect to these decisions, where required;
- (n) That these decisions should be announced in the First Minister's planned statement to the Parliament on Tuesday, 22 June;
- (o) That the *Strategic Framework Update* and *Review of Physical Distancing* documents should be published on the same date;
- (p) For the purposes of COVID-19 decision-making during the summer recess, to delegate to the First Minister decisions that were broadly consistent with the *Strategic Framework* and timetable, noting that the First Minister would be supported as required by the Gold Group structure of key Ministers, including Mr Swinney, Mr Yousaf, Ms Forbes, and any other Ministers with an interest, with input from LPP [REDACTED] chief advisers and senior lead officials; and

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(q) In the event that the First Minister and Gold Group were to reach a decision that differed materially from the *Strategic Framework*, that Cabinet should be advised through correspondence and, if the First Minister requested it, at a meeting of the Cabinet (which she could convene at any time should circumstances require).

(Action: First Minister; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery; DG Constitution and External Affairs)

Resource Spending Review 2021 (Paper SCN(21)12)

20. Ms Forbes introduced paper SCN(21)12 which described the current challenging and uncertain fiscal context and set out proposals for a Resource Spending Review to help address this situation.

21. On 1 June (*SCN(21)3rd Conclusions refers*), Cabinet had agreed a process designed to align the work to address the significant over-commitment in the 2021-22 Budget with work to develop the new Programme for Government (PfG). This work was not yet complete, and Cabinet Secretaries were invited to consider all available options to deprioritise while at the same time delivering key commitments.

22. The paper described how a multi-year spending review might operate, covering the period from the 2022-23 Budget due in December 2021 through to the end of the Parliament. To this end, the paper sought Cabinet's agreement to a staged approach to the spending review exercise, with a primary focus on statutory targets for reducing child poverty (*see below*) and addressing climate change, alongside other high impact areas priorities for resource spending on health, local government, education and transport. Two further cross-cutting themes were also proposed covering pay and workforce and universal policies.

23. The paper also sought Cabinet Secretaries' individual engagement over the life of the programme: for while responsibility for the Government's overall fiscal stance would always rest with the Finance Secretary, responsibility for the balance of financial and political risk underlying each significant spending decision lay ultimately with each portfolio Minister.

24. Lastly, the paper invited Cabinet to allow the principles it embodied to guide their work to shape the PfG and then to take forward the Government's delivery programme.

25. In discussion the following points were made:

(a) It was unlikely to be productive to focus on the theoretical savings that might result from changes in eligibility for free or subsidised universal services. Although possible, such options had been explored on many previous occasions and been found unlikely to command political or popular support;