

**E (M) (20) 09**

**MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE MEETING: 16 MARCH 2020**

**Present:** First Minister (Chair)  
deputy First Minister (Chair)  
Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs  
Minister for Communities  
Minister for the Economy  
Minister of Education  
Minister of Finance  
Minister of Health  
Minister for Infrastructure  
Minister of Justice (via phone link)

**In attendance:** Junior Minister, TEO (Mr. Lyons)  
Junior Minister, TEO (Mr. Kearney)  
Secretary to the Executive  
Head of Executive & Central Advisory Division TEO  
  
Mr Paul Bedding, Office of Legislative Counsel  
Mr Chris Stewart, Director of Executive support and  
Programme for Government, TEO

**INTRODUCTION**

The First Minister chaired items 1 – 3.

**AGENDA ITEM 1**

**E (M) (20) 08      Minutes of Executive meeting of 10 March 2020**

1. The minutes of the Executive meeting of 10 March 2020 were agreed.

## **OFFICIAL - EXECUTIVE**

### **AGENDA ITEM 2**

#### **Matters Arising**

#### **COVID 19 (Coronavirus)**

2. The Minister of Health provided a briefing on the latest developments in relation to COVID 19 / Coronavirus.
3. The Executive discussed its response.
4. The Executive meeting was adjourned.

#### **Westminster Coronavirus Bill**

5. On reconvening of the Executive meeting, Mr Paul Bedding of the Office of Legislative Counsel briefed the Executive on the powers contained in the Westminster Coronavirus Bill.

### **AGENDA ITEM 3**

#### **E (20) 34      Emergency Response to COVID-19**

6. Mr Chris Stewart, Director of Executive Support and Programme for Government, The Executive Office, introduced this paper.
7. Following discussion, the Executive:
  - (i) agreed the phased activation of the NI Central Crisis Management Arrangements to deal with the impacts of COVID-19;
  - (ii) noted the wide ranging and protracted non health sectoral impacts and associated mitigations arising from COVID-19; and
  - (iii) agreed to monitor these impacts and associated mitigations to ensure the cumulative risks arising were managed.
8. The Executive meeting was adjourned until 7pm.

## **OFFICIAL - EXECUTIVE**

**OFFICIAL - EXECUTIVE**

The deputy First Minister chaired the remaining items on the agenda.

**AGENDA ITEM 4**

**E (20) 35     RHI Inquiry Report**

**Irrelevant & Sensitive**

**AGENDA ITEM 5**

**Issues not requiring discussion**

**Irrelevant & Sensitive**

**OFFICIAL - EXECUTIVE**

**Irrelevant & Sensitive**

**AGENDA ITEM 6**

**Note of Urgent Decisions**

13. The Executive noted the following urgent decisions taken in accordance with paragraph 2.14 of the Ministerial Code:

**Irrelevant & Sensitive**

**OFFICIAL - EXECUTIVE**

**E (UP)(20) 06**

**Coronavirus (Emergency) Bill**

**Irrelevant & Sensitive**

**Any Other Business**

**Irrelevant & Sensitive**

**COVID 19 – Executive Response**

17. The Minister of Finance raised the Executive's response to the COVID 19 pandemic, and proposed to the Executive that a plan to close schools be included in a package of measures agreed by the Executive.
18. There being no consensus evident, the Executive voted on the Minister of Finance's proposal. The deputy First Minister, and the Ministers of Finance, Communities and Infrastructure voting for; and the First Minister, the Ministers for the Economy, Education, Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs, Health

**OFFICIAL - EXECUTIVE**

## **OFFICIAL - EXECUTIVE**

and Justice voting against, the Minister of Finance's proposal was not agreed by the Executive.

19. The Executive voted on a proposal by the First Minister that the closure of schools should be handled in accordance with the Chief Medical Officer's advice. The First Minister, the Ministers for the Economy, Education, Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs, and Health voting for; and the deputy First Minister, and the Ministers of Finance, Communities and Infrastructure voting against, the First Minister's proposal was agreed by the Executive. The Minister of Justice did not vote on the First Minister's proposal.

### **AGENDA ITEM 9**

**Media Handling/Notification of decisions to the Assembly/Date of Next Meeting.**

20. The next meeting of the Executive would take place on Thursday 19 March in Stormont Castle.

**OFFICIAL - EXECUTIVE**