

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE MEETING: 10 APRIL 2020

MEETING WAS CONDUCTED VIA VIDEO LINK

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

In attendance: Junior Minister, TEO (Mr. Lyons)
Junior Minister, TEO (Mr. Kearney)
Secretary to the Executive
Head of Executive & Central Advisory Division TEO

INTRODUCTION

The deputy First Minister chaired items 1 – 4.

AGENDA ITEM 1

E (M) (20) 15 Minutes of Executive meeting of 8 April 2020

1. The minutes of the Executive meeting of 8 April 2020 were deferred for agreement at the Executive meeting of 15 April 2020 pending amendments from the Minister of Justice and the Minister for Infrastructure.

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Matters arising

2. The Executive noted that with regard to COVID-19 allocations which had been agreed at the 8 April meeting, the Minister of Finance had subsequently confirmed that where the proposed allocations were not able to be spent by any Executive Ministers for their original intended purpose, the funding should be returned to the Department of Finance, to allow the Executive to consider how best to reallocate in light of emerging priorities.

AGENDA ITEM 2

COVID-19 Report by the Health Minister

3. The Minister of Health reported on key issues relating to COVID-19.

Personal protection Equipment (PPE)

4. The Minister of Health and the Minister of Finance addressed issues arising in relation to the procurement of PPE.
5. The Executive discussed the unauthorised release of documents and the consequent media coverage of the proposed procurement of PPE, which it was recognised could have a detrimental impact on the supply of such equipment.
6. The Executive agreed that:
 - (i) an internal leak inquiry should be established;
 - (ii) a formal complaint should be made to the BBC in relation to the coverage; and
 - (iii) the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Health should undertake media activity to counter the potential negative impact .

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7. The Executive recorded its support and appreciation for those officials who were responding with dedication to the challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

AGENDA ITEM 3

Actions from previous meetings

Action Log

8. The deputy First Minister advised that the Action Log from the previous Executive meeting had been circulated to Ministers.

AGENDA ITEM 4

CCG Sitrep

9. The Secretary to the Executive provided a read-out of the CCG meeting and the Situation Report which had been circulated to Ministers.

The First Minister chaired the remaining items on the agenda

AGENDA ITEM 5

COVID-19 Management

E (20) 51 (C) Executive Strategy & Plan

10. The Secretary to the Executive introduced this paper.

11. The Executive noted:

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- (i) the updated strategy and plan for managing the COVID 19 crisis attached to Executive Memorandum E (20) 51 (C); and
- (ii) that priorities, actions and metrics would be updated in liaison with Departments.

E (20) 53 (C) Private Tenancies (Coronavirus Modifications) Bill

12. The Minister for Communities introduced this paper.

13. The Executive agreed:

- (i) the Private Tenancies (Coronavirus Modifications) Bill as attached at Annex A to Executive Memorandum E (20) 53 (C);
- (ii) to the Bill's introduction in the Assembly; and
- (iii) to progress the Bill by an expedited accelerated passage procedure.

E (20) 54 (C) COVID-19 – Approval for Business Support Grant Schemes

14. The Minister for the Economy introduced this paper.

15. The Executive agreed to the £25K Business Support Grant Scheme as outlined in the attachment to Executive Memorandum E (20) 54 (C).

AGENDA ITEM 6

Schedule of Events/Media/Ad Hoc Committee

16. The First Minister advised of the statements to be given in the following week to the Ad Hoc Committee.

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17. The Executive agreed that the Minister for the Economy should make a statement to the Committee on Wednesday 15 April on the launch of the COVID-19 Business Support Grant Scheme.

AGENDA ITEM 7

Matters requiring Executive agreement

18. There were no papers for this agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM 8

Note of Urgent Decisions

19. There were no papers for this agenda item.

AGENDA ITEM 9

Any Other Business

Irrelevant & Sensitive

Essential Workers

21. The Minister for Infrastructure requested information on a timeline for issue of an updated list of essential workers, in the context of guidance for the taxi sector. The Minister for the Economy advised of work ongoing on the matter.

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Irrelevant & Sensitive

Hospice

23. The First Minister advised that she and the deputy First Minister had met with the Chief Executive of NI Hospice, who was also representing a number of other Hospice organisations, in relation to the severe pressures being caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

24. The Minister of Finance advised that his department, with the consent of the Department of Health, was working on a package of support for the Hospice sector.

Date of next Meeting

25. The next meeting of the Executive would take place at 12.00 on Wednesday 15 April 2020.