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MEMORANDUM E (20) 37

FROM: FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER

DATE: 19 MARCH 2020

TO: EXECUTIVE

FINAL EXECUTIVE PAPER - COVID 19 – PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to seek Executive agreement on the headline objectives for a planning framework to support a joined-up whole society response to COVID-19.

Summary

2. The paper attached at Annex A, which builds on the work already being undertaken in Departments, proposes 6 planning clusters and workstreams under which planning considerations for COVID-19 should be progressed. Joined up working across the NICS and wider public sector will be vital, and lead responsibilities at Senior Civil Service level will be allocated to each work stream
3. The proposed workstreams are:
 1. The Health and well-being of our citizens
 2. Economic well-being
 3. Societal and community well-being
 4. Our delivery priorities and service delivery
 5. Our people
 6. Good governance

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4. Illustrative outcomes that the Executive should be aiming to achieve under each workstream are set out within each workstream. These will require more work to ensure Departmental Plans align with them.
5. There are cross-cutting elements running through all these workstreams which will be the subject of separate papers shortly:-
 - Communications
 - Finance
 - Resources

Recommendation

6. The Executive is asked to agree
 - (i) the 6 headline planning clusters (as set out in para 3); and
 - (ii) that the illustrative outcomes are further developed in line with departmental plans.

**THE RT. HON. ARLENE FOSTER MLA
FIRST MINISTER**

**MICHELLE O'NEILL MLA
DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER**

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Annex A

COVID- 19 - Departmental Planning Clusters and Workstreams

1. The health and well-being of our citizens

Draft Executive aims/outcomes

- 1.1 A Health and Social Care response.
- 1.2 Extended testing capacity (with frontline health workers remaining the priority).
- 1.3 Continued supply and production of essential goods and critical services (medicines, food, water, chemicals, fuels) and arrangements to support distribution to vulnerable people and groups (school meals, people in custody, the homeless, self -isolating and other vulnerable groups)
- 1.4 Nutritious replacement for free school meals to be made available to eligible children
- 1.5 Vulnerable children and adults with special needs and cared for children continue to receive appropriate care.
- 1.6 The health and well-being of our young people, their education and their future prospects including arrangements around examinations
- 1.7 Arrangements in place for protection for workers including those on zero hours and self-employed
- 1.8 Effective support for vulnerable citizens (benefits and debt advice)
- 1.9 Consider other measures as position develops (such as utility bills, housing and rent)
- 1.10 Ensure appropriate arrangements for people in our care (looked after children and people in custody)

2. Economic well-being

Draft Executive aims/outcomes

- 2.1 Resources and financial assistance provided to businesses quickly and without delay.
- 2.2 A package of support to businesses
- 2.3 Mitigate the economic impacts short, medium and long-term
- 2.4 Engagement fully with business leaders from all sectors.
- 2.5 Arrangements in place to co-ordinate and manage demand and supply challenges within the various sectors)

3. Societal and community well-being

Draft Executive aims/outcomes

- 3.1. Role of and impact on the VCS fully considered and integrated in planning and response
- 3.2. Arrangements in place that protect the dignity and respect for the deceased and bereaved
- 3.3. Response arrangements in place for pressures and tensions.

4. Our delivery priorities and service delivery

Draft Executive aims/outcomes

- 4.1. Local government fully integrated into our planning and response
- 4.2. Critical services maintained such as water and waste collections
- 4.3. Full engagement with stakeholders on sectoral issues

5. Our people

Draft Executive aims/outcomes

- 5.1. Timely supply of appropriate equipment to allow emergency services to carry out their work safely.
- 5.2. Circulation of guidance to ensure the well-being and resilience of our staff
- 5.3. Prioritisation of COVID-19 planning and response

6. Good governance

Draft Executive aims/outcomes

- 6.1. Appropriate level of governance and decision-making
- 6.2. Appropriate level of Assembly and committee liaison
- 6.3. Effective working with Whitehall, other devolved administrations and the Irish Government