

**FROM: First Minister and deputy First Minister**

**TO: Executive**

**DATE: 2 JULY 2020**

**FINAL EXECUTIVE PAPER – COVID 19 – INDICATIVE TIMELINE, EXECUTIVE RATIFICATIONS**

**Introduction**

1. The purpose of this paper is to:
  - provide the Executive with an update on decisions which are required this week in relation to the lifting of Covid restrictions
  - Make recommendations on confirming indicative dates for museums and galleries, bookmaking offices, close contact economy such as massages, spas, and private clubs for hospitality purposes.

**Background**

2. On Thursday 25 June, the Executive agreed an indicative timeline for the lifting of restrictions in the Coronavirus Regulations. The Executive confirmed previous dates for caravan parks, hotels, hospitality and visitor attractions. Further, the Executive agreed specific easements for places of worship and elite sport indoor training.
3. On Monday 29 June, the Executive further agreed to move from 10 to 30 people who may gather outside.
4. Regulations amendments have been made for the above decisions.

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5. A further officials' workshop was held on Tuesday 30 June to review the timeline and to plan out when issues should be brought to the Executive for further discussion and ratification between now and the end of August.
6. A number of decisions are required (on 2 July) on restrictions in a range of areas, as detailed below. Departments have submitted their templates to DoH for risk assessment. The DoH summary is attached at Annex A which also provides advice on transmission rates as key context for decisions. CSA advice is included in the Annex for each easement sought, and should be built into communications with relevant sectors.

### **Museums and galleries**

7. DfC seek an enabling date of 3 July in line with tourism and hospitality. This relaxation will apply to museums and galleries.
8. Following conversations with the independent museums sector and liaison with the NI Museums Council (the sector's representative body) and the Arts Council NI it has been indicated that many sites will not open at the start of July due to operational or financial constraints. However the easing of this restriction will allow individuals organisations within the sector proceed at a speed which is safe and appropriate for their individual sites. Officials within DfC are discussing the re-opening of National Museums NI sites, however dates have not yet been finalised. When individual sites are ready for re-opening organisations will communicate this via press release and social media as appropriate.
9. As with other sites open to the public, museums and galleries will be required to follow PHA guidance and practice social distancing as appropriate. Additionally there is guidance related to the re-opening of museums and galleries as part of culture and heritage destinations guidance - <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/communities/dfc-culture-heritage-destinations-phased-return-guide.pdf>

**Bookmaking offices**

10. The Executive had given an indicative date of 3 July for bookmaking offices, in line with other forms of retail, and the opening of hospitality. DfC seek Executive ratification of this date.
11. In terms of guidance, general social distancing and hand sanitation guidance will apply and the industry has introduced additional measures including: floor markings and signage to further protect customers, removal of all seats to avoid groups sitting together, no refreshments will be served, they will only show short events such as horse racing and not longer events such as football, and screens have been put around betting machines which will be cleaned by staff after each customer.

**Close contact services – massage, tattooing and piercing, and spas**

12. The Executive had given an indicative date of 6 July for this group, in line with earlier decisions for the nail, hair, beauty etc close contact group. This easement (along with spa facilities, discussed below) would close out the close contact economy restrictions in the regulations and would ensure consistency. The commencement date for the re-opening of close contact businesses is 6 July.
13. The NI Engagement Forum has produced “Covid-19: Working Through it Together. A practical Guide To Making Workplaces Safer” guidance which businesses can access online at NI Business Info along with risk assessment templates to inform their preparations for the recommencement of business. In addition, UKG has produced workplace guidance for Close Contact Services, and advice and guidance is also available from trade and professional bodies.
14. Spa facilities are also proposed for 6 July in line with other close contact economy sectors. This will enable spas to recommence trading and to provide the wider range of well-being treatments that are often part of the spa experience. However, this will mean that the thermal treatment aspects of spas (sauna, steam room, spa

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& hydro-therapy pools, cold and ice rooms, monsoon showers, cryo pools & sanatoriums) will remain closed at this time.

### **Permit the restricted opening of restaurants and bars in Private Members' Clubs**

15. DfC propose to enable bars and restaurants to reopen in Private Members' Clubs from 3 July (please note that the risk template refers to 6 July but 3 July is the confirmed date for this easement). This proposal is in line with other hospitality decisions and the intention is that the same guidance and advice would be encouraged for this sector.

### **Regulation changes for reasons of consistency and clarity**

16. It is proposed to make two changes for reasons of consistency and clarity:

- a. removing reference in Regulation 5 to who might attend a committal, now that permitted numbers to gather outside have increased; and
- b. addition of text in Regulation 6 to allow for summer schools to open

### **Communications and forward look**

17. Annex B suggests when the remaining steps will need to be considered by the Executive. Work is ongoing to ensure decisions of the Executive can be delivered into outcomes given the recess period and if needed, decisions can be brought forward to earlier dates.

18. Issues for the meeting of the Executive on 9 July are highlighted in the attached. In addition, the Executive is asked to note:

- there will be advice to Monday's meeting on weddings and baptisms;
- there may be a request next week for an enabling easement to allow a small number of cinemas to open in advance of the current indicative date of 29 July;

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- there may be a request to enable equestrian events to begin ahead of other competitive sport; and
- consideration is underway of pubs which may wish to serve drinks without food.

### **Recommendation**

19. The Executive is invited to:

- i. note the risk assessment at Annex A;
- ii. ratify indicative dates for museums and galleries, bookmakers, close contact economy, and private clubs.
- iii. note the plan for bringing remaining restrictions to the Executive, at Annex B; and
- iv. note in particular the likely issues for next week.

**The Rt Hon Arlene Foster MLA**  
**First Minister**

**Michelle O'Neill MLA**  
**deputy First Minister**

### **Coronavirus restrictions: amendment proposals, 2 July 2020: Department of Health assessment of risk**

- 1 This paper sets out the case for 5 proposals to amend the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020; offers an assessment of the level of risk associated with each proposal, along with the potential benefits of each; and offers an holistic view of the level of risk if these are implemented as a package of changes at this stage of the epidemic.
- 2 The following 5 proposals have been submitted to, or prepared by, DoH:
  - 1) Permit the reopening of museums and galleries from 3 July
  - 2) Permit the reopening of bookmaking offices from 3 July
  - 3) Further permit the reopening of close contact services i.e. massage, tattooing & piercing businesses from 6 July
  - 4) Further close contact services i.e. reopening of spas from 6 July, but restricting them to close contact services that are permitted in other settings and retaining a restriction on high-risk activities involving water, steam and wet areas.
  - 5) Permit the restricted opening of restaurants and bars in private members' clubs ("registered club") from 6 July

#### Current state of the epidemic in Northern Ireland

- 3 The value of R is currently estimated, from modelling, to be in the range 0.3 – 0.8. The 7 day rolling average for a positive test was 2 on 27 June. The seven-day rolling average of hospital admissions for confirmed COVID-19, as of 27 June, was 1, having peaked at 40 on 3 April. In the past 7 days (from 24 June), there have been 4 deaths reported.
- 4 There have been in total 5,761 confirmed cases. 111,698 individuals have been tested. 137,857 tests have been completed. Testing capacity is 6,021. There have been 551 deaths.

#### Summary assessment of amendment proposals

- 5 The Chief Medical Officer and the Chief Scientific Adviser have considered the risks associated with each proposal. The risk ratings in the matrix table reflect their views of the level of risk associated with each relaxation to the regulations at this stage in the epidemic.
- 6 They have also considered the totality of the risk associated with the implementation of the proposals as a package at this stage in the epidemic. In the context of a low level of community transmission of the virus, they advise that this would carry a reasonable prospect of maintaining transmission at a

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level where the track, trace and protect system would have sufficient capacity to manage any increase, given the summer season.

### DoH RISK AND BENEFIT ASSESSMENT

#### Overall rating of risk or potential benefits: key

- 3: highest risk
- 2: significant risk
- 1: moderate risk
- 0: negligible risk or benefit, or neutral
- +1: moderate benefit
- +2: significant benefit
- +3: greatest benefit

#### Notes

- 1 The ratings for each proposal are intended to reflect a qualitative assessment of the risks and potential benefits. They are not scores that can be summed.
- 2 The risk is rated with full account taken of the **current** rate of virus transmission.

From 3 July 2020

# 1 Museums and galleries

Possible change to restrictions / requirements	Impact on transmission leading to serious disease as at 1 July	Health impacts medium to long term	Society	Economy
	<b>RISK</b>	<b>POTENTIAL BENEFIT</b>		
Permit reopening of museums and galleries.	-1	+1	+1	+1
<p>Proposed by DfC</p> <p><u>Commentary by DfC</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The reopening of museums and galleries will not pose a substantial impact in relation to further transmission of COVID-19. The provision of guidance for cultural sites will enable organisations to manage in line with best practice.</li> <li>2. Museums and galleries can manage their visitors in such a way that contamination of sites will be relatively minimal – unlike retail sites where individuals may handle goods / touch shelves etc.</li> <li>3. It is anticipated that initial numbers will be lower than normal due to a lack of international tourism. This should make it easier to ensure social distancing. Additionally, not all museums and galleries will open when restrictions are eased – this will allow the sector to benefit from learning lessons from other organisations.</li> <li>4. Museums and galleries are key parts of tourism and cultural infrastructure. Re-opening them will help people to re-engage with a broader cultural life and assist in the restart of the economy.</li> <li>5. Additionally, as it is anticipated that cultural engagement in theatres/concert halls is likely to be limited for a period of time, the opening of Museums and Libraries provides an opportunity for people to access culture in a relatively safe environment.</li> </ol> <p><u>Risk assessment by the Chief Scientific Adviser</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. CSA, 01/07/2020: Given the nature of these spaces and that social distancing is likely to be achievable relatively easily, risk should be low with other mitigations in place.</li> </ol> <p><u>Link to Executive Approach to Decision-Making</u></p>				



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Step 2: Museums and galleries open. Libraries open. Concert and theatre rehearsals resume.

From 3 July 2020

### 2 Bookmaking offices

Possible change to restrictions / requirements	Impact on transmission leading to serious disease as at 1 July	Health impacts medium to long term	Society	Economy
	RISK	POTENTIAL BENEFIT		
Schedule 2, Part 3 – types of businesses that may operate				
Permit reopening of bookmaking offices.	-2	0	+1	+3

Proposed by DfC

#### Commentary by DfC

1. Restriction in place due to potential for increased infections - however, actions/protocols/guidance can be put in place to mitigate this.
2. The bookmaking industry (Northern Ireland Turf Guardian Association) has been pro-active, developing social distancing measures and redesigned shop layouts – including removal of furniture and spacing of machines - as well as increased hygiene measures, signage and screening. Screens have been put around betting machines and these will be cleaned by staff after each customer. Bookmakers will not be serving refreshments and will only show short events such as horse racing, they will not show longer events including football.
3. Re-opening of bookmaking offices will allow people to leave their homes, improving wellbeing and increasing the sense of normality.
4. Protecting the jobs of those who work in bookmaking offices will contribute to restoring people's livelihoods – this in turn will provide more people with the ability to spend money across other sectors of the economy
5. While steps can be made by bookmaking offices to protect both customers and staff, customers will need to comply with steps in place to mitigate transmission and keep social distancing.
6. Slightly higher risk of person to person transmission but this will be minimised through implementation of social distancing and hygiene measures, especially in respect of public areas

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7. The approach taken to re-opening the tourism and hospitality industry, in terms of starting assumptions and guiding principles will apply also to bookmaking offices.

### Risk assessment by the Chief Scientific Adviser

8. CSA, 01/07/2020: Individuals are likely to spend relatively large amounts of time in bookmakers. Proposal would be strengthened by clear plans to limit the amount of time for which customers could be present, along with a record of who is present for contact tracing purposes. Face coverings should also be worn. While not COVID related, there are additional risks to health as a consequence of facilitating gambling.

### Link to Executive Approach to Decision-Making

Step 2 Indoor activities involving limited contacts of less than 10 mins and interactions of only 2-4 people that maintain social distancing and prevent congregating in places for any extended period.

**From 6 July 2020**

### **3 Close contact services – massage, tattooing & piercing**

Possible change to restrictions / requirements	Impact on transmission <i>leading to serious disease</i> as at 1 July	Health impacts medium to long term	Society	Economy
	RISK	POTENTIAL BENEFIT		
Schedule 2, Part 2 (or 4 (1))– types of businesses that may operate				
Permit reopening of close contact services as set out in Part 2 of Schedule 2 - massage parlours and tattoo & piercing parlours.	-3	+1	+2	+2
Proposed by DfE				
<u>Commentary by DfE</u>				

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1. The restriction was put in place due to potential for increased infections, however, a momentum is growing in line with the reopening of the economy and the preparations of the sector to be able to open this sector safely and support business and employees to return to work.
2. Consideration is being given to actions/protocols/guidance which can be put in place to mitigate any risks associated with the application of UKG Guidance, in NI.
3. The inclusion of massage within this category of service providers may also be having a mental health impact on many people who rely on this therapy as a means of support
4. Re-opening of this sector allows people to leave their homes for these purposes, improving physical and mental wellbeing and increasing the sense of normality
5. Protecting the jobs of those who work in these sectors and restoring people's livelihoods – this in turn provides more people with the ability to spend money across other sectors of the economy.
6. However, the proposal enables the situation to be managed, a timetable to be set, mitigations to be planned, compliance to be encouraged and preparations to be made.

### Risk assessment by the Chief Scientific Adviser

7. CSA, 01/07/2020: Risk is relatively high with close contact services with multiple customers. Mitigations will therefore need to be rigorous, along with a record of customers for contact tracing purposes.

### Link to Executive Approach to Decision-Making

Step 4 Other 'contact' retail (hairdressers, fitness studios, tattoo/piercing) can open subject to mitigations following risk assessment.

**From 6 July 2020**

#### **4 Close contact services – limited reopening of spa facilities**

Possible change to restrictions / requirements	Impact on transmission <i>leading to serious disease</i> as at 1 July	Health impacts medium to long term	Society	Economy
	RISK	POTENTIAL BENEFIT		
Schedule 2, Part 2 (or 4 (1))– types of businesses that may operate				

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Permit limited reopening of close contact services as set out in Part 2 of Schedule 2 - Spa facilities	-3	+1	+2	+2
<p>Proposed by DfE</p> <p><u>Commentary by DfE</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The restriction was put in place due to potential for increased infections in spa premises. However, as part of the progress we are making to reopen the economy we wish to move towards allowing these businesses to reopen, subject to meeting social distancing and hygiene requirements.</li> <li>2. The application for the consideration of massage, tattoo and piercing services (including Well Being provision) under consideration may lead to policy questions pertaining to the provision of these services many of which are undertaken within spas.</li> <li>3. We are aware that the sector has been making preparations to be able to reopen under the necessary operating restrictions, taking account of social distancing and hygiene requirements and guidelines drawn up by sectoral bodies. Spas will be required to adhere to the guidance underpinning the re-opening of the wider hospitality and advice from professional bodies &amp; trade associations.</li> <li>4. The inclusion of spas within this category of service providers may also be having a mental health impact on many people who rely on this therapy as a means of support.</li> <li>5. Re-opening of this sector allows people to leave their homes for these purposes, improving physical and mental wellbeing and increasing the sense of normality</li> <li>6. Protecting the jobs of those who work in these sectors and restoring people's livelihoods – this in turn provides more people with the ability to spend money across other sectors of the economy. Therefore there are social and economic benefits.</li> <li>7. It is recognised that within spas there may be issues of maintaining social distancing. However this can be mitigated by providers introducing appropriate measures to minimise this risk while allowing other elements of the spa experience to function subject to appropriate social distancing and health precautions including use of PPE. The proposal enables the situation to be managed, a timetable to be set, mitigations to be planned, compliance to be encouraged and preparations to be made.</li> <li>8. Health advice is key in relation to some aspects of what may be provided such as saunas, Jacuzzis and transmission risk where water/wet areas are used. <b>It is suggested that at present the thermal treatment aspects of spas (sauna, steam</b></li> </ol>				

room, spa & hydro-therapy pools, cold and ice rooms, monsoon showers & saunas) will remain closed and re-open as part of the wider relaxation of Regulations in line with leisure centres – however, the scientific advice will inform the way forward.

Risk assessment by the Chief Scientific Adviser

9. CSA, 01/07/2020: Risk is relatively high with close contact services with multiple customers. Mitigations will therefore need to be rigorous, along with a record of customers for contact tracing purposes. Thermal treatment aspects should be considered at the same time as swimming pools.

Link to Executive Approach to Decision-Making

Step 4 Other ‘contact’ retail (hairdressers, fitness studios, tattoo/piercing) can open subject to mitigations following risk assessment.

From 6 July 2020

**5 Permit the restricted opening of restaurants and bars in private members’ clubs (“registered clubs”)**

Possible change to restrictions / requirements	Impact on transmission <i>leading to serious disease</i> as at 1 July	Health impacts medium to long term	Society	Economy
	RISK	POTENTIAL BENEFIT		
Schedule 2, Part 3 – types of businesses that may operate				
Permit restricted opening of restaurants and bars in private members’ clubs with effect from 6 July 2020.	-3	0	+1	+1
Proposed by DfC				
<u>Commentary by DfC</u>				
1. Proposal is to enable the opening of both indoor and outdoor catering spaces in private members’ clubs along the same lines as the opening of restaurants, cafes and bars in other settings (in line with Amendment Regulations Number 8):				

- i) indoor spaces of restaurants and bars permitted to open for the provision of substantial meals with the serving of alcoholic drinks being ancillary to this. Permission to open would be on a table service basis, ie members not permitted to order either food or drink from the bar area of a clubhouse; and
- ii) restaurants and bars in outdoor spaces to be permitted to supply alcohol on a table service basis, ie food not a pre-requisite for outdoor spaces but members not permitted to order directly from the bar or access the bar area. Use of outdoor spaces only permitted where a private members' club holds a registration certificate under the Registration of Clubs (NI) Order 1996 and the outdoor space is included in their plan of registration.
2. Restriction was in place due to potential for increased infections - however, actions/protocols/guidance can be put in place to mitigate this. DfC will engage with the representative body for private members' clubs to ensure that clubs are aware of and are encouraged to follow guidance
  3. Outdoor activities at members' clubs are permitted but those partaking are not able to obtain refreshment from the clubhouse. Re-opening the restaurants and bars of members' clubs on a restricted basis will allow people to remain at the club for longer, improving wellbeing and increasing the sense of normality
  4. As with the re-opening of restaurants, cafés, coffee shops and pubs and bars, protecting the jobs of those who work both in this sector and as part of the sector's supply chain.
  5. Slightly higher risk of person to person transmission but this will be minimised through implementation of social distancing and hygiene measures, especially in respect of public areas. While steps can be made by clubs to protect members, guests and staff, members will be personally responsible for complying with measures in place to mitigate transmission and keep social distancing.
  6. It should also be noted that members' clubs are open to members and guests only so footfall would be less than that in other restaurants and bars.
  7. Would be consistent with opening up of other catering and hospitality on 3<sup>rd</sup> July, and would appear to be of similar risk.

Risk assessment by the Chief Scientific Adviser

8. CSA, 01/07/2020: Social distancing likely to be difficult to maintain, and wearing of face coverings unlikely to be practical. Individuals may stay in close proximity for relatively long periods of time. Therefore likely to be high risk. A register of those present should be maintained if possible for contact tracing purposes.

Link to Executive Approach to Decision-Making

Step 5 - Hospitality retail (restaurants, cafes, pubs) can open subject to risk assessment, on a limited basis to start with.

ANNEX B

FORWARD WORK PLAN FOR BRINGING REMAINING RESTRICTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE

Relaxation Type	Relaxation Date	Final Submission Deadline to DoH	Executive Date
Betting Shops; and private clubs for food and refreshments	03-Jul	25-Jun	02-Jul
Museums & Galleries	03-Jul	25-Jun	02-Jul
Close Contact Services	06-Jul	25-Jun	02-Jul
Indoor Gyms	10-Jul	02-Jul	09-Jul
Outdoor Leisure Playgrounds, courts, & gyms	10-Jul	02-Jul	09-Jul
Outdoor Horse Racing & Equestrian Competitions	[15-Jul]	02-Jul	09-Jul
Libraries	16-Jul	09-Jul	09-Jul
Competitive Sport Limited Spectators	17-Jul	09-Jul	09-Jul
On-site Working Phased Approach (TBD)	TBD	TBD	TBD
Wider Range of Gathering (TBD)	TBD	TBD	TBD
Active Venues inc arcades	29-Jul	16-Jul	23-Jul
Seated Venues inc bingo	29-Jul	16-Jul	23-Jul
Outdoor Spectators More Permitted	31-Jul	23-Jul	23-Jul
Soft Play Areas	07-Aug	30-Jul	23-Jul
Third household support group (TBD)	TBD	TBD	TBD
Indoor Sports & Leisure	07-Aug	30-Jul	23-Jul
Teaching Staff	17-Aug	06-Aug	23-Jul
Schools Return (Certain Year Groups)	24-Aug	13-Aug	23-Jul
Extended Group Gatherings (TBD)	TBD	TBD	TBD
Indoor Spectators	28-Aug	20-Aug	23-Jul
Open Air Museums (Late August)	TBD	TBD	TBD
On-site Working Return to work (TBD)	TBD	TBD	TBD
Further Education (TBD)	TBD	TBD	TBD

Key Milestone Dates	Date
Regulation Review	09-Jul
Holiday Period	13-17 Jul
Summer Recess Start	27-Jul
Regulation Review	30-Jul