

16-3-20

9.40

FM

Intro

DOH - speaker phone

① Minutes

Agreed: Yes

② M.A.

DOH

COVID 19

Met with Taoiseach / Minister - Sir
Matt Hancock - FCI

Will issue numbers later

1083 tests

45 confirmed cases

Some community transmission

Test on those in hospital - change

Surge sub grp.

Hospitals - redeploying wards as
required.

Ventilators - not enough. Will need
more. We will [] theatres,
no operations, ICU units.

Work ongoing.

P.R. on FCI - curtail health care/
elective procedures.

Replicated in Scot / Wales

- consistent message.

DOH No.
Guidelines - travel.

DFI How many people in NI have COVID.

DOH Worst case scenario - 80% of population.
- some - no symptoms
" - mild
" serious - medical system
Can check figs.

DFI Public Health England - testing for community transmission - why not NI?

DOH Test positive - we can check where came from
Comm transmission - don't know where came from

DFI Doing same as PHE England

DOH Same procedures

dfm If don't test everyone who has symptoms - will fail.

DOH Resources

* FM Get figs/response for DFI

We are getting medical advice.
Vulnerable, elderly people need protection.

DFC

[Herd immunity] policy

DOH

Not policy we are following

* DOJ

Get this message out publicly.
Delay until after winter pressures.
Herd immunity - not one policy.
Panic - internet.

Respect people's fears.

Provide daily update from AHO + relevant links

- Daily media briefing?

Also - messaging

Closing schools not necessarily right
but some schools closing

Exec always seems to be reacting
not leading.

Exams - young people stressed.

Legal action against depts re schools.

People taking responsibility

We will eventually have to enforce

- encourage people to start now,
work from home, self-isolate.

Take reasonable precautions, don't
wait for Govt.

But - respond to Govt advice,

Following CMO advice, no-one else.
Also, be honest with schools - closure
for 2 weeks is pointless, misleading.
Schools need to close for very long
time.

DOJ

Accept entirely - long school closure
Proposition - if we agree, public will
be confident.
Concerns re CMO advice, raised with
him at meeting.
Community - leading confidence.

DOJ

Not my view
Position we can reach through
discussion
Respect medical advice - no basis
for decisions we take.
Experts know best - not us, not
Twitter.
As mature leaders - look at
schools, come up with plan, agree^m
that everyone is satisfied with.
Not pretend we all get on, but
find way to agree, resolve
disagree^m.

10.40 * FM

Adjournment 15 minutes

~~DOH~~
FM

TKS, TKS to OLC colleagues.

PR

2016 - joined,
first OLC experience for some staff.

③ Emergency Response COVID 19

CStewart

Planning

Table at back of paper

Depts can prepare own plans but
have to join up

No Deal planning - experience
helped.

Delivery partners

DPE

Need to move to - good handle on
mitigation measures.

Tourism - categorized at red/amber
Shd be just red

65,000 people employed.

Huge impact now.

1st 9 days of March - Titanic
has 40% drop in visitors.

Meeting banks, hospitality
stakeholders today.

Reflected in budget.

Significant work to do.

lot of people rely on small
business - rates relief v

important.

DOF

COVID 19

Things moving on.

Advance outline COBRA

Much more restrictive.

Not going to work

Social distancing.

Increasingly - logic undermined by develop^{ment}.

Responsibility

Not restricted to 1 piece of advice

Advice across Europe.

Communities, schools, churches are ahead of us - closing.

We have to build community confidence

CMO advice

On this island - 2 different procedures re schools.

Children - not likely targets of virus, but can be carriers.

Appeal for agreed views.

Opportunity to give sense of leadership.

Rationale for position.

Make announce^{ment} after this meeting.

Significant differences

Announce re schools.

DE

Appreciate v sincere views.

Have to rely on CMO advice

If we go against CMO advice, +
lost someone their life

Abide by medical advice.

Our CMO + other CMOs say - not time
to close schools.

Vulnerable people.

Special needs - not the same.

lot of children with special needs -
lot of children with medical issues →
not Sp Ed Needs.

Happy to abide by CMO advice,
long path - duty of leadership.

Right thing - everything we can
to protect health.

Ground my decisions in medical advice,
Can't force people to take children to
school.

Positive impact because we did
right thing.

DFM

I'm not convinced it's the right
thing.

[600] social distancing.

DOH

Get letters all the time,

Will not deter me from CMO advice

COBRA meeting.

longer distances

Defined long term med. conditions

- free flu vaccine entitlement.

larger spaces between classes

DE

Social distancing - difficult in schools.
Physically rearrange desks.
May not be a solution - don't want to
mislead.

DFM

Measure - confusing + misleading.
We were told today - a week further on
than we thought.

DE

[]

DFM

Approach is fundamentally flawed.
WHO says - test + test again. We're
not doing this.

DOH

Don't have capability.

DOF

Resource issue.

DOJ

Science - social distancing vulnerable
people.

Teachers - reluctant to expose.
Child in class - positive. Have to
send child + class home.

School closures coming - but dis -
agree^m on timing.

Need timetable for closure.

Controlled measure - guidance for
what children shd be doing.

Children of healthworkers to
continue at school.

At the moment, we are losing message.
No space for social distancing.
Concern re teachers, classroom assistants
Will end up with bigger classes if teachers
leave
Have agreed timetable for closures
- not herd immunity, is about
flattening peak.
If we don't manage together, will
have bigger problems.

DFI

Have to follow scientific advice - but two
different sources of advice Nth + Sth.
Pm - counter-intuitive.
Disappointed we are caught on school
closures.
Causing damage to Exec - need to give
agreed message.
Have to address this evening. Need
one message

Reality is - people are fragile, need
direction.
Political problem

FM

We will not be moving from medical
advice

DOF

Half of children not learning
Schools will shut down willy-nilly
Need to be responsible

People following own science.

DFI We are mismanaging

FM Hugely disrespectful to CMO, to Health

ROI ^{Min. advice} Didn't match up with []
I won't move from CMO advice -

DAERA Reasonable thing to do - maintain school system.

Delivering system
Elderly are at risk.

Vulnerable children or teachers - take out of school.

Otherwise keep open.

Can't support at home. Financially difficult for families.

Thousands of health staff will be at home with children - no work.

DOJ Austria, Germany - schools closed except for exam years. Social distancing.

Supply teachers - retired, i.e. elderly, at risk.

Not agreeing to depart from medical advice.

Chart in Diane's paper - delay includes school closures.

Phased closure - from fci - give

people time to make arrangements:

Provide for people doing exams.

Provide for children where families can't cope.

People/schools will act individually, ~~to~~
Range of actions we can take within medical advice.

Politically toxic, undermining all our other messages

Timing issue is key.

DAERA

Exec shd have stood together

We have to warn people of seriousness, but give calm leadership.

People with no comprehension, we need to be led by people with knowledge, expertise.

Need grounds not to abide by CMO advice.

DFC

People have right to differ.

Public pressure in Britain - contradicted []

letter today from range of people.

WHO

We have a right to question advice.

Agree to disagree.

People moving ahead with closures.

Public opinion is ahead of us.

Healthcare staff saying something different.

Support Conor's call.

DOF Begin process of closing schools.
Fewer children turning up.
Announce^m today re [case].
On basis of managing big challenge -
difference of opinion.
Genuinely held beliefs
Announce - plan to close schools.
* Propose, as package of measures,
we announce planned closure of
schools.

FM Nothing about []

DSE I haven't seen package

DFC We're being told - schools will close
- phased approach. What is timetable
of when this is going to move

DOH Modelling

DFC Modelling has no timetable.

DFI Take step back
We will have to close schools.

DE CMO - will advise.

DOF Announce we will close schools
- plan a timetable

DOJ

Announce - planning to close; give indication of timing.
Not just knee-jerk
looking at local medical advice
Don't say "schools will close on specific date".
Say when is likely to happen.
Give assurance / pathways.
Schools have closed in other European countries
Is it worth massive blow-up?
Find consensus.

DE

"When" is advice from CMO.
What public think, what England do
- we need what is right for NI.
Saving life is most important issue.
Deal situation - DE + DFC officials considering.
Critical issue - fundamentally wrong to go against advice of CMO -
massively outweighs ~~advice~~ credibility of Exec.

DAERA

Id say we are asking schools to prepare
- continuing to follow medical advice, + if advice changes, ready to move quickly

DOF

logical question will be - when

dFM Vote on Conor's proposition

HOCS Explain process
Consensus

dFM Vote

in favour - dFM
DOF
DFC, DFI

DOJ not immediately

Against - FM
DFE
DE
DAERA
DOH

DOF Will raise again on Wed.

FM Propose
- close schools when CMO advises

FOR FM DFE DE DAERA DOH
Against dFM DOF DFC DFI
DOJ?

JWK Test, intensify
- we can't []
common approach across island.

DOH Capability to test only []