

**OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE - CABINET**  
*Cabinet will wish to note that these minutes, except those items in italics, will be published in week commencing 13<sup>th</sup> April 2020*

**The Welsh Government**  
**Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet**  
**4<sup>th</sup> March 2020**  
**Coronavirus – COVID 19**

Present: Vaughan Gething AM (Chair)  
Rebecca Evans AM  
Lesley Griffiths AM  
Julie James AM  
Eluned Morgan AM  
Kirsty Williams AM  
Jeremy Miles AM  
Jane Hutt AM

Hannah Blythyn AM  
Julie Morgan AM  
Dafydd Elis Thomas AM  
Lee Waters AM

Shan Morgan, Permanent Secretary  
Des Clifford, Director General Office of the First Minister  
Carys Evans, Principal Private Secretary to the First Minister  
Will Whiteley, Head of Cabinet Division  
Frank Atherton, Chief Medical Officer  
Reg Kilpatrick, Director Local Government  
Toby Mason, Head of Strategic Communications  
Jane Runeckles, Special Adviser  
Madeleine Brindley, Special Adviser  
Alex Bevan, Special Adviser  
NR, Special Adviser  
Paul Griffiths, Special Adviser  
NR, Special Adviser  
Clare Jenkins, Special Adviser  
NR, Special Adviser  
Tom Woodward, Special Adviser  
Christopher W Morgan, Head of Cabinet Secretariat  
NR, Cabinet Secretariat  
Andrew Goodall, Director General Health  
Andrew Slade, Director General ESNR  
Sioned Evans, Director Business and Regions  
Chrishan Kamalan Deputy Director Coronavirus

**Apologies** Rt. Hon. Mark Drakeford AM  
Ken Skates AM

**OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE - CABINET**

*Cabinet will wish to note that these minutes, except those items in italics, will be published in week commencing 13<sup>th</sup> April 2020*

**Item 1: Introduction and Chair's Items**

- 1.1 The Minister for Health and Social Services informed Cabinet that he had been asked by the First Minister to chair the meeting, which had been arranged to consider the latest risk assessments and Welsh Government preparations for the spread of the Coronavirus, COVID 19.
- 1.2 The situation was fast moving and it was essential that all Ministers were fully informed of developments. The four nation Coronavirus action plan, which outlined the response across the UK, had been published the previous day. This would help with the public information campaign.

**Item 2. Latest risk assessment and advice: Chief Medical Officer**

- 2.1 The Minister for Health and Social Services invited the Chief Medical Officer to brief Cabinet on the latest risk assessment and advice.
- 2.2 There had been eight weeks since the first reported case in China. So far there had been over 87,000 cases world-wide, with just under 3,000 fatalities being reported in China. There were also serious outbreaks in South Korea, Iran and Northern Italy.
- 2.3 As of Tuesday, 51 cases had been identified in the UK, with more being reported overnight. Most of these were a result of people returning from infected areas, but two had contracted the virus from within the UK and more were expected. So far, there was only one reported case in Wales.
- 2.4 Unlike seasonal flu, it was doubtful that the spring would bring about any improvements. The current emphasis was on containment and research phases, but planning for delay and mitigation was already in motion. This would allow the NHS more time to prepare for the escalation of infection.
- 2.5 Unfortunately, there would be sometime before a vaccine could be developed and there was no specific proven antiviral medication. Therefore, it was important to consider the implications beyond the NHS.

**Item 3: UK Government mobilisation and Health and Emergencies internal governance: Director for Local Government**

- 3.1 The Minister for Health and Social Services invited the Director for Local Government to provide Cabinet with an update on UK Government mobilisation and the internal governance structure for dealing with health and emergencies.

**OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE - CABINET**

*Cabinet will wish to note that these minutes, except those items in italics, will be published in week commencing 13<sup>th</sup> April 2020*

**Item 4: Communications: Director: Head of Strategic Communications**

- 4.1 The Minister for Health and Social Services invited the Head of Strategic Communications to provide an overview of communication issues.

**Item 5: Conclusion**

- 5.1 Cabinet thanked the Chief Medical Officer, the Director of Local Government and the Head of Strategic Communications for their presentations.
- 5.2 Cabinet would have a further opportunity to discuss developments at its regular meeting the following Tuesday and a core group of Ministers would meet each week on a Wednesday.