

OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE - CABINET

*Cabinet will wish to note that these minutes, except those items in italics, will be published in week commencing 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021*

**The Welsh Government  
Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet  
Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020  
(Teams)**

Present: Rt. Hon. Mark Drakeford MS (Chair)  
Rebecca Evans MS  
Vaughan Gething MS  
Lesley Griffiths MS  
Julie James MS  
Eluned Morgan MS  
Ken Skates MS  
Kirsty Williams MS  
Jeremy Miles MS

Hannah Blythyn MS  
Jane Hutt MS  
Julie Morgan MS  
Dafydd Elis Thomas MS  
Lee Waters MS

Officials: Des Clifford, Director General Office of the First Minister  
Carys Evans, Principal Private Secretary First Minister  
Will Whiteley, Deputy Director, Cabinet Division  
Toby Mason, Head of Strategic Communications  
Jane Runeckles, Special Adviser  
Madeleine Brindley, Special Adviser  
Alex Bevan, Special Adviser  
Ian Butler, Special Adviser  
Kate Edmunds, Special Adviser  
NR Special Adviser  
Paul Griffiths, Special Adviser  
Clare Jenkins, Special Adviser  
NR Special Adviser  
Gareth Williams, Special Adviser  
NR Special Adviser  
Tom Woodward, Special Adviser  
Christopher W Morgan (minutes)  
NR Cabinet Secretariat  
NR Specialist Policy Adviser  
NR Specialist Adviser for Education Reform  
Tracey Burke, Director General, Education and Public Services  
Andrew Goodall, Director General, Health  
Andrew Slade, Director General ESNR  
Reg Kilpatrick, Director General COVID-19 Crisis Coordination  
Frank Atherton, CMO  
Rob Orford, Chief Scientific Adviser for Health  
Dylan Hughes, First Legislative Counsel

Helen Lentle, Director Legal Services  
Emma Watkins, Deputy Director Economic Policy  
Tom Smithson, Deputy Director Restart  
Liz Lalley, Deputy Director Recovery  
Terry Kowal, Senior Legislative Counsel  
Neil Buffin, Senior Lawyer  

NR

 CMO's Office

**Item 1: COVID-19 - Establishing the Position after 27 December**

- 1.1 The First Minister informed Cabinet that the purpose of the meeting was to confirm arrangements from 28<sup>th</sup> December, should there be no improvement in COVID-19 transmission rates.
- 1.2 Ministers were reminded that any restrictions relating to COVID-19 would be for the purpose of preventing, protecting against, controlling or providing a public health response to the incidence, spread of infection or contamination. There must be a threat to public health and the restrictions had to be proportionate in what they were intending to achieve.
- 1.3 The previous day Ministers had been asked to discuss with stakeholders the potential for Wales to move to an Alert Level 4 and they were invited to provide feedback on any important action that had been taken in the past 24 hours.
- 1.4 It was reported that, with COVID-19 infection rates across Wales now exceeding 370 in every 100,000 people, a decision had been taken to move secondary schools and colleges to online learning from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December. The only exceptions would be classroom support for vulnerable children and professional examinations in FE colleges.
- 1.5 There was real concern within the NHS about the potential risk of harm to patients who required access to essential healthcare services. Therefore, a framework of actions had been developed to help mitigate the potential risk of harm.
- 1.6 Cabinet considered the paper and agreed, in principle, that after the festive period, Wales could be classified as at Alert Level 4 and that this decision should be conveyed to the public as soon as possible.
- 1.7 Cabinet approved the paper.