

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE MEETING: 21 SEPTEMBER 2020

MEETING WAS CONDUCTED VIA VIDEO LINK

Present: First Minister (Chair)
deputy First Minister (Chair)
Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Minister for Communities
Minister for the Economy
Minister of Education
Minister of Finance
Minister of Health
Minister for Infrastructure
Minister of Justice

In attendance: Junior Minister, TEO (Mr. Lyons)
Junior Minister, TEO (Mr. Kearney)
Head of Executive and Central Advisory Division, TEO

Dr Michael McBride, Chief Medical Officer
Prof Ian Young, Chief Scientific Adviser
Karen Pearson, Director of EU Relations, TEO

INTRODUCTION

The First Minister chaired agenda item 1.

1. The First Minister advised that this meeting had been convened specifically to consider the paper circulated by the Minister of Health on the need for urgent restrictions in additional areas due to the increase in COVID-19 infections.

AGENDA ITEM 1

E (20) 218 (C) Need for urgent restrictions in additional areas

2. The Minister of Health introduced this paper.

3. Following discussion, the Executive agreed:
- (i) that current local restrictions should be applied NI wide with effect from 6pm on 22 September;
 - (ii) that the announcement of these further restrictions should be accompanied by strong messaging about the potential need to apply further local restrictions if numbers of infections continued to rise; and
 - (iii) that at its next meeting, the Executive should consider a range of options for further restrictions should these be required, in relation to which the Minister of Health would circulate a draft Executive paper.
4. The Executive also agreed that a number of mitigations relating to opening of wet pubs should be included in regulations. These would include a curfew to be applied to wet pubs and other parts of the hospitality sector; live music to be prohibited, with background music only to be permitted at levels which would allow normal conversation; and numbers at tables to be restricted to six people from no more than two households, with children aged 12 and under discounted from that figure. Ministers were requested to provide views by close of business on whether the curfew should be set at 10pm or 11pm.
5. The deputy First Minister emphasised the importance of all Ministers giving a consistent message in relation to the Executive's response to the COVID pandemic in the coming weeks. It was agreed that lines to take for use by all Ministers would be circulated.