

DRAFT MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE MEETING: 17 APRIL 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)
Secretary to the Executive
Head of Executive & Central Advisory Division TEO

INTRODUCTION

The deputy First Minister chaired items 1 – 4.

AGENDA ITEM 1

E (M) (20) 15 Minutes of Executive meeting of 8 April 2020

E (M) (20) 16 Minutes of Executive meeting of 10 April 2020

E (M) (20) 17 Minutes of Executive meeting of 15 April 2020

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1. The minutes of the Executive meetings of 8 April 2020, 10 April 2020 and 15 April 2020 were agreed. The Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Development requested that the minutes of 8 April record that he had raised concerns in relation to the impact of Covid-19 on the fishing, horticulture and agri-food sectors.

Matters Arising

Irrelevant & Sensitive

AGENDA ITEM 2

COVID-19 Report by the Health Minister

3. The Minister of Health provided updates on, and the Executive discussed, developments in the COVID-19 pandemic, including modelling, Personal Protective Equipment, Testing, and Hospital and Care Home visiting.
4. The Minister of Health agreed to bring forward a paper on Overview of Health in Care Homes for the Executive meeting of 20 April.
5. The Minister of Health proposed, and the Executive agreed, that he should publish his updated paper on modelling on Monday 20 April.

AGENDA ITEM 3

Actions from previous meetings

Action Log

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6. The deputy First Minister advised that the Action Log from the previous Executive meeting had been circulated to Ministers.

AGENDA ITEM 4

CCG Sitrep

7. The Secretary to the Executive provided a read-out of the CCG meeting and the Situation Report which had been circulated to Ministers.
8. The Executive noted concerns about the release of information about its intended future business within the local government sector. The Secretary to the Executive agreed to raise this matter with SOLACE.

The First Minister chaired the remaining items on the agenda

AGENDA ITEM 5

COVID-19 Management

E (20) 57 (C) Amendments to the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020

9. The Minister of Health introduced this paper.
10. The Executive adjourned at 12.30 to allow the Minister for Infrastructure to participate in a MIG meeting.
11. Following discussion on resumption, the Executive agreed that consideration of the paper should be resumed at its meeting on 24 April 2020.

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E (20) 60 Temporary Time Limited Financial Support for Airports

12. The Minister of Finance introduced this paper which reflected consultation with and requirements advised by each of the three local airports.

13. The Executive:

- i. agreed to the provision of up to £2.003m (half the total cost) of temporary financial support to NI local airports to ensure a continued air-bridge with Great Britain;
- ii. noted that Department for Transport (DFT) would finalise any package with the airports and make any necessary payments;
- iii. noted that it was planned that NI's contribution be made by a technical transfer to DFT;
- iv. agreed that officials from the Department of Finance, the Department for Infrastructure and the Department for the Economy would engage with DFT to consider the longer term approach when this initial assistance period ends;
- v. agreed that the Minister of Finance would write to Treasury to confirm the Executive's agreement to their conditions; and
- vi. noted that any announcement of the proposed package would be agreed with DFT and may have to wait for any necessary EU approvals.

E (20) 59 (C) COVID-19 response - Departmental Allocations 17 April 2020

14. The Minister of Finance introduced this paper.

15. The Executive:

- a) noted the level of funding currently available;
- b) noted the previous agreement that £95 million be held for support for the transport sector;

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- c) agreed that £1.6 million would be provided to the Department of Justice for temporary morgues;
- d) agreed that £22 million would be used for support for charities, social enterprises and the wider third sector;
- e) agreed that the Department of Health would have first call on the £49 million provided in respect of NHS workforce costs;
- f) noted that further recommendations would be brought on the allocation of the remaining £39.4 million;
- g) agreed that Departments should seek to reprioritise existing budgets where necessary; and
- h) agreed that measures should not be announced until funding was agreed by the Executive.

16. In the light of discussion of Executive Memorandum E (20) 63 (C) - Request for Additional University Hardship Funds, and Executive Memorandum E (20) 61 (C) - COVID-19 Business Relief, the Executive agreed that its meeting of 22 April 2020 would focus on strategic financial issues and that the Minister of Finance would bring a paper to that meeting for that purpose.

E (20) 62 (C) Labour Relations Agency: Engagement Forum on COVID-19

17. The Minister for the Economy introduced this paper.

18. Following discussion, the Executive agreed that:

- a. the Forum be commended for coming together in a spirit of common purpose to protect lives and to make every effort to sustain the continued operation of key industries and businesses;
- b. the Priority Sector list be published with the instruction that this list was for information purposes only and that if a company could work within the social distancing guidelines then it should do so;

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- c. the Forum's 'Covid-19: Working Through This Together, A Practical Guide to Making Workplaces Safer, as attached at Annex A to Executive Memorandum E (20) 62), be published; and
- d. the Executive seek Legal Advice from the Attorney General in relation to the Priority Sector Framework and list as attached at Annex B to Executive Memorandum E (20) 62 (C) of recommendations made by the Forum.

E (20) 56 (C) COVID-19 - Executive and Strategy Plan

19. The First Minister introduced this paper.

20. The Executive noted the updated strategy and associated heatmap for managing the COVID 19 crisis which would be updated for consideration by the Executive on a weekly basis.

E (20) 65 (C) Shielding Intervention and Gaps

21. The Minister of Communities briefed the Executive on shielding, distribution of food parcels and support to vulnerable people and those experiencing food poverty.

E (20) 64 (C) Supply Chain Resilience – Update

22. As the Minister of Infrastructure had had to leave the meeting, consideration of this paper was deferred to the Executive meeting on 20 April. .

AGENDA ITEM 6

Schedule of Events/Media/Ad Hoc Committee

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23. The First Minister and deputy First Minister advised that they would consider what statements should be made to the Ad Hoc Committee in the following week.

AGENDA ITEM 7

Matters requiring Executive agreement

Issues not requiring discussion

Irrelevant & Sensitive

AGENDA ITEM 8

Any Other Business

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