

**FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTER**  
Diane Dodds MLA



**From: Diane Dodds MLA**  
**Minister for the Economy**

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**Date: 6 November 2020**

**To: Robin Swann MLA**  
**Minister of Health**

**MODELLING THE COURSE OF THE COVID EPIDEMIC AND THE IMPACT OF  
DIFFERENT INTERVENTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Thank you for your Executive paper of 5 November 2020 regarding the above.

I have noted the contents and recognise your obligation to protect the Health Service from being overwhelmed.

I note the proposed recommendations of a two week extension of the current restrictions and in recognition of the particular impact on the hospitality sector that the Executive gives urgent consideration to any mitigating financial support measures brought forward by the Minister for the Economy. However, these recommendations are framed solely within the confines of the health lens.

The paper indicates that previous SAGE modelling suggested that an effective TTP service would reduce R by approximately 30%. A separate paper on the NI TTP position has been provided.

On the issue of TTP there is very limited information on the role that TTP has played in any of the aspects of the paper which is the subject of this letter. In the context of the SAGE modelling suggesting that an effective TTP service would reduce R by approximately 30%, it would be important to know what effect our TTP System in NI is having on the R Rate here, and if it were improved what effect it could have. As an aid to informing businesses who have invested in PPE and introduced Covid compliant operations for the staff and customers this is vital information which is not detailed.

In my previous correspondence to Executive colleagues on "Preparing for the next stage of Covid Response" I highlighted "the need to know the effectiveness of measures in controlling the spread of the virus, but we also must know the impacts of these measures on our communities and services". My correspondence referenced the Executive's need "to simultaneously respond to the evolving nature of the virus while also taking steps to rebuild a more competitive, inclusive and greener economy".

In setting out your recommendations I am not convinced that the Executive is being presented with a comprehensive analysis of alternative pathways such as, additional guidance to allow businesses to continue to enhance the precautions they can make for staff and customers, or a balanced approach to allowing businesses currently closed to have confidence that they will be permitted to trade at the end of the proposed (further) extended restrictions.

I am copying this to the Attorney General, Departmental Solicitor's Office, First Legislative Counsel and to Executive Secretariat.

Yours sincerely

**Personal Data**

**DIANE DODDS MLA**  
**Minister for the Economy**