

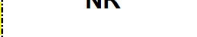



## OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

FM and Dfm Meeting with Justice Minister Long and ACC Alan Todd- 9 October 2020

### Attendees

- First Minister, Rt Hon Arlene Foster MLA (FM)
- Deputy First Minister, Michelle O'Neill MLA (dFM)
- Junior Minister FM, Gordon Lyons MLA (JML)
- Junior Minister dFM, Declan Kearney MLA (JMK)
- Minister of Justice, Naomi Long MLA
- Julie Harrison, DoJ

-  PS FM
-  S dFM
-  JM FM
-  PS JM dFM
- PS DoJ

Minister Long opened the meeting.

- Enforcement needs to be considered in line with proportionality and there is potential for impact community policing
- Unfair media coverage – around not enforcing wearing of masks but police are focusing their resources based on the health guidance ie – house parties and gatherings
- Additional penalties – ahead of next week – weight of enforcement will be and how we manage that going forward
- During Lockdown the crime rate was lower – now crime rates nearly back to pre-covid rates
- Police haven't isolate themselves – hits resourcing

ACC Alan Todd agreed with Minister Long's assessment. He noted that policing resource was a concern but not the main one.

Current police availability 88% - first time 90% for first time since covid. Increasing community rates – that will see impact on police too – with more police isolating.

Public perception and media focus a concern. This is a health emergency – police are partner to that – human rights and proportionality applies to that.

We were nervous re lots of enforcement – retail 13th on infection list

Important to have a health-led partnership group with strong data to focus on targeting resources

Upcoming inspection by Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) will look at the partnership working – Police keen to get that in place and working before inspection

FM queried the data e the retail sector. ACC Todd said that it came from England and Wales data that he had seen looking at where the community transmissions were taking place.

**Action point** – DFM issued FIR to DoH re data mentioned by ACC Todd.

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Everyone agreed more and better data was vital to decision making going forward.

ACC Todd welcomed the work from this week and the new penalties. He also highlighted that in his discussions with retail he found that were not adverse to doing more to aid compliance but they needed support. Especially smaller businesses. Enforcement is only one tool.

Police have visited over 4k businesses since early August and masks came in. Masks are not easily detected or dealt with.

FM spoke with Joe McDonnell of ASDA recently and felt they could ask them and other big retailers to do more.

Minister highlighted it was useful to use analogies around messaging – ie Taxi drivers wouldn't let someone travel without a seatbelt, and supermarkets wouldn't let someone smoke in one of the aisles.

Minister Long also felt more could be done with messaging

ACC Todd highlighted the needs for a joined up communications approach. We need a structure with collective responsibility – with Chris McNabb and others. We need community messaging and key voices in the community.

JM Kearney summarised the Enforcement Group meeting today – some key action points:

- Refine structure of that group – early discussion needed next week
- Examine command and control structure – CCG
- Good work from councils re MOU with police and engaging with retailers
- EIS and public messaging – need to be front-footed
- Set piece press event with police councils retailers for next week
- Other voices key to comms
- DfE to engage with retailers at strategic level

FM felt the press event should be Wednesday at the latest.

JM Lyons also felt the meeting this morning was very useful.

- Councils really engaged – very positive.
- Reiterated we need messaging, not just sporting codes but community groups as a really good way of getting message out.
- We need clearer data as well – suggested more graphics so people easily see the rates – more visual
- Need to emphasis personal responsibility that people have – here's what you can do on a personal level – decisions you make – that needs to permeate down a little bit more

FM compared what the Scottish were doing re TikTok with what was happening here.

Minister Long agreed with JM Lyons re more personal messaging on responsibility.

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Minister Long also felt it was time for the hub to stand up and more data to start coming through.

Ministers agreed that they would review outcomes from the Enforcement Group meeting, and take a further look at standing up CCG structures early next week. This group would meet again to discuss.

Minister Long said she would be able to play her role going forward with the enforcement group – unfortunately she hadn't been available to join this morning – but her officials were there.

**[ENDS]**