

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTER
Diane Dodds MLA



From: Diane Dodds MLA
Minister for the Economy

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To: Arlene Foster MLA and Michelle O'Neill MLA
First Minister and deputy First Minister

RESTRICTIONS FROM 11 DECEMBER

Thank you for your Executive paper of 3 December 2020 regarding the above.

I have considered the paper and note that while it provides a range of options it does not provide any accompanying analysis of the specific impact each option may have on the R Rate. I consider the provision of such data would have been critical and provided the Executive with an up to date empirical assessment of the impact of previous interventions.

My correspondence to Executive colleagues of 9 October ("Preparing for the Next Stage of the COVID Response detailed the need for a wider consideration of the impact of proposed interventions. I am disappointed the principles detailed in my letter do not appear have been considered in the drafting of this paper.

As such, the paper does not consider any alternative interventions for example the potential re-introduction of shielding or impact of the traditional closure of the construction sector over the festive period and or position of care homes.

From a narrow economy perspective obviously the restrictions are highly impactful in curtailing economic activity and the maximum unwinding of those restrictions could be expected to have the greatest positive impact in the very short term.

In addition, the stop/ start nature highlights the necessity for a Covid 19 Strategy, and as detailed in our response to the Terms of Reference Paper for the Covid Task Force, this has not been included in their work schedule.

I look forward to exploring these issues in more detail at today's Executive meeting.

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