

**Civil Contingency Group (COVID-19 Response) Meeting
Tuesday 14 April 2020**

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Note of Meeting

Attendees

David Sterling (Chair)
Arlene Foster - FM
Michelle O'Neill - dFM
Declan Kearney - JM
Gordon Lyons – JM
Anthony Harbinson - TEO
Chris Stewart – TEO
Karen Pearson – TEO
Katrina Godfrey - DfI
Richard Pengelly – DoH
Mike Brennan - DfE
Denis McMahon – DAERA
Peter May - DOJ
Sue Gray - DOF
Jill Minne – NICSHR
Derek Baker - DE
Tracy Meharg – DfC
Simon Byrne – PSNI
Alan Todd - PSNI
Aidan Jennings – NIFRS
Michael Bloomfield - NIAS
Stephen Reid – Local Government
Joan McCaffrey – Local Government
Maria Jennings – Food Standards Agency
Mark Larmour – NIO
Chris McNabb – EIS TEO
Hugh Widdis – DSO
NR – TEO
Lesley Hogg - NI Assembly
Jane Holmes – NI Hub
Andy Cole – NI Hub
NR – NI Hub
NR – NI Hub

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

2. COVID-19 - CURRENT SITUATION AND PROGNOSIS

- Richard Pengelly (DoH) updated the meeting:
 - To date there had been 1,882 confirmed cases in NI and 124 deaths.

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

- Dr George O'Neill's attack on the provision of PPE, rebutted by the Head of NI's Royal College of GPs with BMA advising that enough PPE is making its way to GPs.
- Chief Constable Simon Byrne asked if variances in the trend could be identified in the figures being issued in the Sitrep or at the meeting, Richard advised that this could not be done on a daily basis but could be looked at over a longer period of time. He also suggested it would be helpful to revisit the modelling work that had suggested a peak in cases from 6 April on.
- Richard said that at present the hospitals were stable and coping well but that we should not take anything for granted.

3. ACTIONS REVIEW

David Sterling asked for updates on the actions from the CCG meeting on 13 April.

- Hugh Widdis gave an update on **CCG1304/01** regarding **legal advice on institutional responsibility**. DSO has spoken to several experts and consulted with PSNI and the Prison Service. All are content that the handling has been equivalent and proportionate. He has spoken to Jill Minne and suggested that a reminder be issued to staff to further comply with health and safety requirements and human rights considerations under articles 4 and 5.
- Chris Stewart updated on action **CCG1304/02 – timing of policy paper**. He advised that a draft Executive paper has already been submitted to Ministers on the three week review of the regulations and would be considered at the Executive meeting tomorrow (15/04/20).
- A second Executive paper on restrictions on recycling centres is in progress and will be informed by the Strategic Management Group meeting being held tomorrow. Chris anticipated having this paper ready by the end of the week.
- Anthony Harbison updated on **CG1304/03 – military aid to civil authorities** (MACA). A paper has been prepared and will be discussed at the Executive meeting on Wednesday 15 April.
- Chris Stewart gave an update on **CCG1304/04 - Legal advice on travelling to exercise** and other potential changes to regulations. He has discussed with PSNI and it has been agreed that there is no need to change the regulations at this time.

On the remaining outstanding issues, HOCS advised that work is ongoing and he anticipates many actions can be closed off in the next few days.

4. SIT-REP UPDATE

Anthony Harbinson took the meeting through the main issues arising from yesterday's Sit-Rep as follows:

- An increase in the number of ventilators by 32 from 165 to 197.
 - There has been an increase in traffic monitoring sites from 9 to 20. Indications are that there has been a positive fall in traffic volumes over the period down 18% on the same day last week.
 - Some countries in Europe are beginning to ease restrictions on lockdown, which is a welcome sign and an indication of where they are on their infection curves. The UK, however, remains closer to Ireland and France on the curve in terms of number of cases and is unlikely to lift restrictions soon. This will be discussed by UK and Executive Ministers this week.
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- PSNI advised that the Sitrep figure in relation to the imposition of fines for not complying with social distancing requirements had been updated and there had been 40 additional fines issued bringing the total to 147 fines as of 0800 this morning. PSNI also continues to issue Community Resolution Notices and verbal requests by officers.
 - On the issue of PPE to funeral directors, Peter May advised the meeting that there had been difficulties in getting this sorted through Health. He agreed to update the CCG meeting tomorrow on the latest position.

Action: Peter May to provide an update on the provision of PPE to funeral Directors to the CCG meeting on Wednesday 15 April.

5. LEGISLATION UPDATE

- Chris Stewart (TEO) advised that he had nothing further to add to the earlier discussion.

6. MEMBER UPDATES

- Chief Constable Simon Byrne (PSNI) noted that funerals had been identified as a potential issue in terms of the numbers attending and social distancing which needed sensitive handling, they are currently looking into this.
- There was a query over the size of the additional financial allocation being given to NI – was it £200m or £80m. Clarity was required in advance of the Executive meeting scheduled for Wednesday 15 April.

Action: Sue Gray and Mark Larmour to provide clarity on the additional financial allocation to NI in advance of the Executive meeting 15/04/20

- Mark Larmour (NIO) advised that the Social Care Strategy is being announced today and that Michael Gove, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, would be calling FM and DFM later today in advance of the upcoming COBRA meeting on social distancing on Thursday. He confirmed NIO is continuing to work with DfI, DfE, HMT and DfT on the transport and ferry issues.

7. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

- Chris McNabb (EIS) advised that conversations with the media are ongoing around Executive efforts to secure and distribute more PPE; it is currently a live and sensitive issue.

8. AOB AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Chief Constable Simon Byrne advised that PSNI had just completed a 28 day review of policing operation and wondered if there was any plan for CCGNI to conduct a similar review.
- David Sterling said that this was a useful suggestion and he would review and advise at tomorrow's CCG meeting 15/04/20.

Action: HOCS and NI Hub to consider the necessity for a review of the work of CCGNI and discuss at CCG tomorrow (15/04/20).

Date of next meeting

- 08:30, 15 April 2020

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