

15.2.21 - Discussion

Karen / Peter

Jenny would like a zoom early next week. Would you both be available after Stock Take on Monday? Say 1145 – 1215?

Thanks

NR

From: TEO HOCS (JP)

Sent: 11 February 2021 12:15

To: NR NR y@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: FW: Task Force

Can I get a Zoom with Karen and Peter as soon as possible next week please

From: Pearson, Karen [mailto:Karen.Pearson@executiveoffice-ni.gsi.gov.uk]

Sent: 10 February 2021 11:57

To: HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gsi.gov.uk; Toogood, Peter <Peter.Toogood@executiveoffice-ni.gsi.gov.uk>

Cc: McCormick, Andrew (TEO) <Andrew.McCormick@executiveoffice-ni.gsi.gov.uk>

Subject: Task Force

Morning Jenny

A couple of updates and reflections.

I am trying to get a transcript of CMO's Tuesday media brief, which got quite a lot of attraction yesterday. To be fair, there were some things in it which I completely agree – including the need to take baby steps and reflect on impact. But the two issues which attracted most attention are not familiar to me – that we need 70-80% vaccinations (I have heard Michael talk about that in terms of peak vaccine benefit, but not in the context of restrictions. I can see the logic but it is a difficult narrative and doesn't take account of economic drivers), and that restrictions might be with us in some form into next year (again I can see the logic but it's not something that has been discussed).

The issue I have with this is lack of notice and the optics of this at a time where we are working closely with other Departments on the Pathway. For instance, Depts (in good numbers) invested 2 hours with me and my team yesterday and we did not know what Michael was about to say. Health were on the call and while there were a couple of fair comments on the need for CMO's views to be built into the Pathway work, there was no indication from health of what would be said later in the day. Perhaps they did not know.

It hasn't knocked the Pathway work out of kilter and, if what Michael said is right, it is important context. I am concerned about how the Executive members might react. So I want to see the transcript in total to be fair but I think this could have been handled differently.

A linked concern, with Peter May shares (and would be happy to talk to you about it) is that it doesn't sit well with the work on adherence and behavioural science (which DoH pushed very heavily for). People will have taken a kicking in the past couple of weeks over not having holidays,

and the thought of another year of this won't help keep people with us. Again, to be fair, I need to see the whole transcript. But it was very likely that the media would focus on these two issues, as they did.

On Recovery, Peter and I might see if we can get half an hour with you later before I head off. A good meeting with EY today and some options to explore with you. These are around how we can co-ordinate at the centre to avoid a silo approach. My nagging concern is whether that is sufficient to get a joined up approach. Would welcome a chat.

Karen