

JUNIOR MINISTER'S OFFICE MEETING NOTE

Date 9th December 2020

TITLE/ORGANISATION:		TEO	
PURPOSE:		STRATEGIC /COMPLIANCE GROUP	
DATE:	09/12/20	NOTE WRITTEN BY:	NR
Venue – Online - Zoom		Chaired by Minister Lyons and Minister Kearney	
LIST OF ATTENDEES: Junior Ministers, Alan Todd, PSNI, I&S PSNI, Mark Goodfellow, DoJ, Jacqui Dixon, SOLACE, Anthony Carleton, DfC, NR (DfE). TEO: Karen Pearson, Chris McNabb, Jane Holmes, NR NR (note taker)			
<p>Key Points</p> <p>Minister Lyons welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Updates</p> <p>Jacqui Dixon confirmed that the detail in the end paper had been agreed with PSNI and TEO and measures proposed were supported across the board. Jacqui confirmed that the DfC Minister would write to Councils today to ensure measures are in place for this weekend and adequate resources provided. Jacqui thanked all involved and said she would be looking for feedback at a later stage. Mark Goodfellow asked if a copy of the paper could be circulated for information which Jacqui agreed to do.</p> <p>Action Point 1: Jacqui Dixon to forward paper to Mark Goodfellow.</p> <p>Alan Todd said it had been a frantic time for PSNI in regard to house parties across all 11 districts which are expected to continue after the relaxation of restrictions. Enforcement action will continue to focus on house parties as opposed to checking household bubbles or the composition of 6/2 in restaurants. Operation Season's Greetings will commence this weekend with some PSNI vehicles used to broadcast a safe shopping message in town centres. Radio ads agreed with EIS will also run from this weekend. House gatherings and wet pubs which open will continue to be a focus for enforcement. Alan said crowding in public spaces could be a concern and a challenge so he welcomed the SOLACE initiative. Minister Lyons asked if there were any patterns to house parties, hot spots and how these were reported to PSNI. Alan said from the CCG sit rep the Holylands continued to be a cause for concern but over the last week had settled down. The demographics show that the age</p>			

groups range from 18 to 25, not exclusively students and incidents cover all 11 districts.

The incidents are generally reported by the public but known hotspots continue to be monitored by the PSNI.

Regulations and Legislation Update

Minister Lyons said most of the changes would take place on Thursday evening/Friday morning. Minister Lyons enquired about questions coming in especially about outdoor sport which could become enforcement issues if not addressed.

Karen Pearson informed the meeting that the department were on target to enable the Regulations to take effect from Friday. Meetings with relevant sectors had taken place and this afternoon arrangements had been made with PSNI and the hospitality sector for a thematic walk through of Regulations prior to Ministerial sign off.

Following sign off Karen confirmed the Regulations would be shared with colleagues.

Action Point 2: Karen to share new Regulations.

Christmas Arrangements

Minister Lyons said there was still confusion regarding the Christmas Bubble arrangements and it was necessary to re-enforce the message to ensure guidelines were adhered to and guidance was clear and concise.

Karen said there was a focus on 23rd to 27th December but pointed out there was a day's grace either side of the dates to facilitate travel due to ferry times and connectivity for travellers.

Appeals Process for Notices issued under No 2 Regs

Work has been ongoing between the Council, DSO, PSNI, DoJ and DfC to ensure an appeals mechanism is in place for Premises Improvement Notices and Prohibition Notices

A final position has been agreed.

The drafting of the regulations is well advanced and the intention is to include these in the regulations to be made this week.

Car Washes

Minister Lyons said clarification regarding car washes was an issue but the restrictions that prevent the opening of wholly / mainly non-essential retail come to an end at 23.59 this Thursday (10 December).

Way Forward

Minister Kearney emphasised the importance of communications and messaging to ensure it is heard and understood beyond the 11th December. There needed to be projected messaging beyond the Christmas period of 23rd to 28th December.

He said details on a report received by Ministers indicated there are very challenging times ahead. The lifting of restrictions would automatically result in a surge on High Streets which will need to be managed and this will be highlighted to the retail industry at a meeting to be held following the Executive Meeting. The inevitable rise in the R number will cause sizeable challenges which will have to be managed and raises the importance of communications and messaging. Minister Lyons agreed with Minister Kearney and said while the arrival of the vaccine is good news it will be some time before it is effective and the message of non-complacency needs to be enforced.

Mark agreed with the importance of strong messaging by Ministers.

Chris McNabb updated the meeting on current communications campaigns. A public information campaign will run over the Christmas and New Year period and from Friday a 'Safer Shopping' radio and social media campaign will commence. EIS are working with Councils to promote a 'Shop Safe Shop Local' message and have produced a poster which can be distributed to Councils. Chris said EIS were also working on Corporate Branding for a 'Safe and Happy Christmas' and if this was agreed can also be shared with Councils.

In the New Year a new creative may be tested but would be dependent on the health situation at the time.

Any Other Business

Karen said there was work going on to review settings where face coverings are required and this will go to Ministers shortly. There was a meeting with the disability sector this week and the "be kind" message was very important as the assumption as to why someone is not wearing one is very important and has been built into the messaging. For those who need to lip read need to facilitate shop workers to lower their face covering for a short time to communicate.

Next Meeting

Next meeting Wednesday 16th December.

Minister Lyons and Minister Kearney thanked attendees for their participation.

ACTION POINTS:	AP 1: Jacqui to forward paper to Mark. AP 2: Karen to share new Regulations.
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NR
