

31. The deputy First Minister introduced this paper. .
32. Following discussion, the Executive agreed to Option 3 of Executive Memorandum E (21) 125 (C) – to lift the guidance but retain mitigations, which may take the form of retaining guidance on not travelling if people had symptoms, not travelling if people knew they were positive, to take tests before departure, to take tests at days 2 and 8 and the need to self-isolate if positive after arrival.
33. The Minister of Health wished to record that he remained of the view that the guidance on CTA travel should be retained until the impact of the easing of restrictions from Monday 24 May could be assessed, and in order to delay the importation of variants of concern here for as long as possible, allowing time for wider vaccination roll-out and minimising any potential for community transmission. The Chief Medical Officer and the Chief Scientific Adviser advised that the Executive's decision to remove the guidance on self-isolation on intra CTA travel would accelerate the introduction of the B.1.617.2 variant into NI.
34. In response to a query from the Minister for Infrastructure on payment for Lateral Flow Tests, the Director of EU Relations advised that in existing guidance regarding travel to visit family and friends, tests would be provided free of charge.

Date of next meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Executive would be Thursday 3 June 2021.