

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

RESTRICTED HANDLING

SCN(21)12th Conclusions

SCOTTISH CABINET

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN ST ANDREW'S HOUSE, EDINBURGH
AT 9.30 AM ON TUESDAY, 31 AUGUST 2021

Present:	Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP	First Minister
	John Swinney MSP	Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery
	Keith Brown MSP	Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans
	Mairi Gougeon MSP	Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands
	Michael Matheson MSP	Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport
	Rt Hon Angus Robertson MSP	Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture
	Shona Robison MSP	Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government (<i>part of meeting only</i>)
	Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP	Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
	Humza Yousaf MSP	Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care (*)
In Attendance:	Leslie Evans	Permanent Secretary
	LPP	
	George Adam MSP	Minister for Parliamentary Business
	Richard Lochhead MSP	Minister for Just Transition, Employment and Fair Work
	Dr Gregor Smith	Chief Medical Officer
	Penelope Cooper	Director, Covid Co-ordination (*)
	James Hynd	Director for Cabinet
	LPP	
	Dominic Munro	Director, Exit Strategy (*)
	David Rogers	Director, Constitution
	Michelle Rennie	First Minister's Principal Private Secretary
	Anne Aitken	Head of Portfolio Management Division (*)
	Tim Ellis	Head of Performance and Outcomes (*)
	Marion McCormack	Deputy Director, Covid Ready Society (*)
	Lisa McGuinness	Permanent Secretary's Principal Private Secretary (*)
	Miranda McIntosh	Deputy Director, Exit Strategy (*)
	Name Redacted	Head of Performance and Delivery Unit (*)
	Leanne Dobson	Special Adviser (*)
	Liz Lloyd	Special Adviser (*)
	Colin McAllister	Special Adviser
	Callum McCaig	Special Adviser (*)
	Stuart Nicolson	Special Adviser (*)
	NR	PS/First Minister (*)
	June Grant	Assistant Head of News (*)
		Unit Head, Non-Clinical Public Health (*)
		FM Covid Briefing Unit (*)
		Head of the First Minister's Policy and Delivery Unit (*)
		PS/Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture (*)

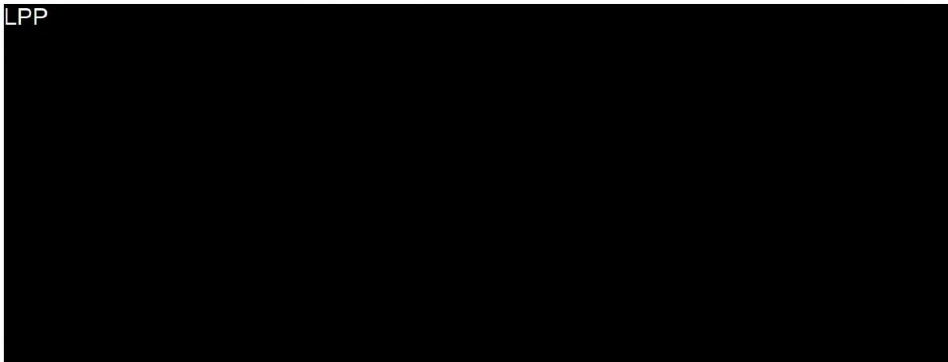
SCN(21)12th Conclusions

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(w) Although it was acknowledged that excessive restrictions impacted on people's fundamental rights (and might, under some circumstances, give rise to legal challenge), it was also important to recognise that the virus itself – especially insofar as its spread impacted upon NHS capacity in non-COVID areas – significantly affected people's fundamental right to NHS treatment for life-threatening conditions such as heart attacks, strokes and cancer;

(x) The health service was perhaps a few weeks away from capacity constraints which would seriously affect general healthcare, and this must be the central message in any public communications and in further talks with stakeholders about the need to implement and, where possible, reinforce existing protective measures.

24. Cabinet:

(a) Agreed to give further consideration to the developing situation, as the epidemic progressed, and to the approach that should now be taken;

(b) Agreed that, at this stage, it remained proportionate to maximise existing and planned interventions, as set out in the paper, short of re-imposing further restrictions;

(c) Agreed that all Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers should continue to engage vigorously and pro-actively with their respective sectors to maximise the impact of baseline measures and report back on further progress by close of business on Thursday, 2 September, so as to enable consideration of further action at the following meeting of the Cabinet, which was planned for Tuesday, 7 September;

(d) Noted the heightened communications and marketing material set out in the paper at Annex D, and agreed to seek to reinforce such messages through each Cabinet Secretary's respective portfolio channels;

(e) Noted the latest position on vaccinations and the preparation under way to implement rollout rapidly should advice from the JCVI widen eligibility for the vaccination programme;

(f) Noted the proposed position on certification, as set out in paragraphs 44 to 47 of the paper, including the commitment to secure Parliamentary approval for any proposals in this regard;