

**The Welsh Government
Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet
7th July 2020**

Present: Rt. Hon. Mark Drakeford MS (Chair)
Vaughan Gething MS
Hannah Blythyn MS

Via video link: Rebecca Evans MS
Lesley Griffiths MS
Julie James MS
Eluned Morgan MS
Ken Skates MS
Kirsty Williams MS
Jeremy Miles MS
Jane Hutt MS
Julie Morgan MS
Lee Waters MS
Dafydd Elis Thomas MS

Shan Morgan, Permanent Secretary (via video link)
Des Clifford, Director General Office of the First Minister
Carys Evans, Principal Private Secretary First Minister
Will Whiteley, Head of Cabinet Division
Toby Mason, Head of Strategic Communications (via video link)
Jane Runeckles, Special Adviser (via video link)
Madeleine Brindley, Special Adviser (via video link)
Alex Bevan, Special Adviser (via video link)
Dan Butler, Special Adviser (via video link)
Ian Butler, Special Adviser (via video link)
Kate Edmunds, Special Adviser (via video link)
Paul Griffiths, Special Adviser (via video link)
Clare Jenkins, Special Adviser (via video link)
Andrew Johnson, Special Adviser (via video link)
Gareth Williams, Special Adviser (via video link)
Mitch Theaker, Special Adviser (via video link)
Tom Woodward, Special Adviser (via video link)
Christopher W Morgan, Cabinet Secretariat (minutes)
NR Cabinet Secretariat
Jonathan Scourfield, Specialist Policy Adviser (via video link)
NR Specialist Adviser for Education Reform (via video link)
Tracey Burke, Director General, Education and Public Services (via video link)
Andrew Goodall, Director General Health (via video link)
Andrew Slade, Director General ESNR (via video link)
Frank Atherton, CMO (via video link)
Fliss Bennee, Deputy Director for Technology & Digital NHS
Simon Brindle, Director COVID-19 project team (via video link)
Reg Kilpatrick, Director Local Government (via video link)

Helen Lentle, Director Legal Services (via video link)
Dylan Hughes, First Legislative Counsel (via video link)
Terry Kowal, Snr. Legislative Counsel (via video link)
Tom Smithson, COVID-19 project team (via video link)
Nick Batey, COVID-19 project team (via video link)
NR Public Health (via video link)

Item 1: Three week review of Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) Regulations – Update from the CMO

- 1.1 The focus of the Cabinet meeting was the latest 21 day review of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) Regulations and other lockdown measures. In accordance with the Regulations, the imposition or continuation of a requirement or restriction had to satisfy three conditions.
- 1.2 The Regulations were for the purpose of preventing, protecting against, controlling or providing a public health response to the incidence, spread of infection or contamination. There must be a threat to public health and the restrictions had to be proportionate in what they were intending to achieve.
- 1.3 The First Minister invited the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) to provide an update on virus transmission rates and whether there was headroom to further relax the restrictions.
- 1.4 In broad terms the situation was stable and improving with around seven to eight new cases a day being confirmed, and somewhere in the region of 3,000 tests were being carried out each day. In addition, Wales had reported that Sunday was the first day of no COVID-19 related deaths since 19 March 2020.
- 1.5 The ‘R’ rate in Wales was still below one, but as the number of cases declined this measurement became more volatile and should be considered alongside a wider suite of indicators. The Summer period presented a safer opportunity to ease restrictions, however, there was a need for mitigation measures, such as continuing the messaging around social distancing and personal hygiene.
- 1.6 Test, Trace and Protect was in place and had helped to bring under control the two outbreaks in North Wales and the incident in Merthyr Tydfil. This was supported and strengthened by the surveillance system and the circuit breakers, which would enable restrictions to be re-imposed in specific areas should the rate of transmission increase.
- 1.7 It was also important to consider what was happening elsewhere in the UK and overseas, such as Australia, particularly as the Southern Hemisphere was experiencing Winter.

- 1.8 Overall, there was headroom to release some of the restrictions. However, each sector would need to take into account the guidance about controlling the spread of the virus and put measures in place to allow social distancing. There would also be a need to change behaviours and the environment, while ensuring that administrative changes were in place to avoid physical contact. These remained the most effective mitigation measures, while PPE should also be used when necessary as a final barrier.

Item 2: Three week review of Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) Regulations – review of lockdown restrictions

- 2.1 The First Minister advised Cabinet that, as the CMO had indicated that there was headroom, the Government would be able to lift some further restrictions, providing mitigation measures were put in place.
- 2.2 His announcement on Friday would provide the context of why changes were being made and highlight that the Government was continuing to follow a step by step, week by week approach. In addition to the specific restrictions being lifted, the available headroom would be utilised to recommence further health services, support the reopening of schools and support further mitigation on public transport, where it was not possible to observe the two metre distance rule.
- 2.3 It was proposed that from 11th July self-contained accommodation should be reopened. From 13th July restrictions on hair salons, barbers, mobile hairdressers and outdoor hospitality would be lifted. Playgrounds and outdoor gyms would be given permission to reopen, but as Local Authorities needed time to prepare, this was likely to coincide with the start of the school holidays. There would be a need for further definition on what types of indoor attractions could open.
- 2.4 The Regulations would also be amended to allow places of worship to restart outdoor services and some indoor congregational services providing COVID secure guidance was followed. Outdoor cinemas would also be allowed to open, with the necessary precautions and an exemption on gatherings would be applied to organised outdoor activities, providing they could be carried out in a COVID secure way.
- 2.5 From 20th July, alongside the gradual re-opening of playgrounds and outdoor gyms, the phased return of public services in community centres would be allowed, when Local Authorities confirmed it was safe to do so.
- 2.6 As part of the announcement on Friday, there would be a clear signal for further work and preparations for a potential reopening from 25th July of remaining accommodation, such as campsites with shared facilities, museums, galleries and potentially cinemas. Also included would be close-contact services, such as: nail and beauty salons; massage parlours; and establishments providing tanning services, body piercings, tattooing, electrolysis or acupuncture. However, conditions would need to remain favourable.

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Cabinet will wish to note that these minutes, except those items in italics, will be published in week commencing 17th August 2020

- 2.7 Furthermore, there would be an indication that work would commence with industry to inform the 30th July review, to potentially reopen indoor hospitality. It was too soon to reach any conclusions on the reopening of gyms, leisure and fitness centres as there was a need to use the next three weeks to have discussions with Local Authorities and owners of private facilities to ensure that safety precautions could be put in place.
- 2.8 Cabinet confirmed it was important to continue with the proposed step by step, week by week approach and agreed with the proposals outlined by the First Minister.