

**The Welsh Government  
Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet  
19<sup>th</sup> April 2021 (via Teams)**

Present: Rt. Hon. Mark Drakeford MS  
Rebecca Evans MS  
Vaughan Gething MS  
Lesley Griffiths MS  
Julie James MS  
Eluned Morgan MS  
Jeremy Miles MS  
Ken Skates MS  
Kirsty Williams MS  
Jane Hutt MS

Hannah Blythyn MS  
Julie Morgan MS  
Dafydd Elis Thomas MS  
Lee Waters MS

Officials: Shan Morgan, Permanent Secretary  
Will Whiteley, Deputy Director Cabinet Division  
Toby Mason, Head of Strategic Communications  
Jane Runeckles, Special Adviser  
Dan Butler, Special Adviser  
Ian Butler, Special Adviser  
Sara Faye, Special Adviser  
Clare Jenkins, Special Adviser  
Andy Pithouse, Special Adviser  
Gareth Williams, Special Adviser  
Tom Woodward, Special Adviser  
Christopher W Morgan, Cabinet Secretariat (minutes)  
NR, Cabinet Secretariat  
Dewi Knight, Specialist Policy Adviser  
Tracey Burke, Director General, Education and Public Services  
Andrew Goodall, Director General, Health  
Andrew Slade, Director General ESNR  
Reg Kilpatrick, Director General, COVID-19 Crisis Coordination  
Frank Atherton, CMO  
Rob Orford, Chief Scientific Adviser for Health  
Simon Brindle, Director, Recovery and Restart  
Fliss Bennee, Co-Chair TAC  
Helen Lentle, Director Legal Services  
Dylan Hughes, First Legislative Counsel  
Tom Smithson, Deputy Director Restart  
Liz Lalley, Deputy Director Recovery  
Emma Watkins, Deputy Director, Economy  
Jason Thomas, Director, Culture Sport and Tourism

**OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE - CABINET**

*Cabinet will wish to note that these minutes, except those items in italics, will be published in week commencing 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021*

Rob Holt, Deputy Director Tourism and Major Events

Neil Buffin, Senior Lawyer

Terry Kowal, Senior Legislative Counsel

**NR** Restart Social Policy

**NR** Restart Impact Assessment

Alyson Francis, Deputy Director Communities Division

Nicola Edwards, Deputy Director Childcare, Play & Early Years

Karen Cornish, Deputy Director Children and Families Division

Steffan Roberts, Deputy Director Culture and Sport

**NR** Head of Childcare Offer, Implementation

**NR** Head of Community and Third Sector Policy

Jo Trott, COVID-19 response team

**Item 1: Minutes of the previous meeting**

- 1.1 Cymeradwydd y Cabinet gofnodion y 29 a 31 Mawrth / Cabinet approved the minutes of 29 and 31 March.

**Item 2: Review of Coronavirus Restrictions (No 5) Regulations – 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021  
CAB(20-21)80**

- 2.1 The First Minister introduced the paper, which sought a steer from Cabinet on easements planned for the current review cycle and those that could be signalled following the next review, scheduled for 13<sup>th</sup> May.
- 2.2 The restrictions relating to COVID-19 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. There was a requirement that the Welsh Government should review these restrictions every three weeks.
- 2.3 The First Minister invited the CMO to provide the latest advice in respect of the transmission of the virus and the impact on the NHS. In general terms, the situation was stable. Testing data indicated that positivity for COVID-19 continued to fall slowly, but consistently. This pattern was similar across the UK, with Wales still having the lowest case rates overall.
- 2.4 The seven day average was around 16 to 17 in every 100,000 of population and the 'R' rate was between 0.6 and 0.9. The number of people with confirmed COVID-19 occupying hospital beds stood at 54, with 11 of these in intensive care.

- 2.5 The vaccination programme continued at pace, with almost 50% take up of first vaccinations for the 40-49 age range. However, the extent to which it had broken the link between community transmission and direct COVID-19 harms was not yet clear. There was also a concern about transmission of new variants of the virus, particularly as international travel was expected to recommence from 17 May.
- 2.6 The paper outlined the package of amendments being planned for the current review cycle, primarily for 26<sup>th</sup> April and to complete the move to Alert Level 3 by 3<sup>rd</sup> May. There was also a suggestion that consideration should be given to signalling a move to Alert Level 2 on either 17 or 24 May, providing the conditions remained favourable.
- 2.7 Ministers noted the progress in preparing for the areas already signalled for reopening on 26<sup>th</sup> April and agreed that outdoor swimming pools should be classified as outdoor attractions. *It was reported that the guidance for the relevant sectors would be finalised after the Cabinet meeting.*
- 2.8 Cabinet agreed that the current rule of six people from two households being able to meet outdoors should be amended to consist of a maximum of six people from six households. Children under 11 and carers would be exempt from this limit. This change would take effect from 24<sup>th</sup> April. It was also agreed that this should be signalled as soon as possible to enable outdoor hospitality, which was scheduled to recommence the following Monday, to make the necessary preparations and take bookings in accordance with the amended rule of six. *It would be important to ensure that the communications surrounding this change were as clear as possible.*
- 2.9 In addition, the Regulations and guidance would be changed to increase the number of designated indoor care home visitors from one to two. This would be from 26<sup>th</sup> April to allow residences to prepare. Furthermore, the Regulations would be amended to clarify that routine working in other people's homes was permitted at Alert Levels 3, 2 and 1. This would also apply from 26<sup>th</sup> April.
- 2.10 Cabinet particularly welcomed the proposal for a full move to Alert Level 3 from 3<sup>rd</sup> May. This would encompass what had previously been announced and the re-commencing of organised children's activities, including swimming lessons. Organised activities for up to 15 people, such as exercise classes, could take place and community centres could re-open. It would be important to ensure that people were aware of the risks associated with increased social mixing.
- 2.11 *In terms of signalling for the next review, Ministers were reminded that the approach to date had been necessary and important in navigating the uncertainty in coming out of lockdown under the Kent variant, whilst rolling out the vaccination programme.*