

**Minutes of a meeting of the Council of Minister's  
– Emergency Advisory Group ("EAG") –  
Held on Wednesday 23 June 2021 at 4.30pm  
In the Department of Home Affairs and via MS Teams**

**Present:**

Hon G Cregeen, Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, Vice-Chair  
Mr R Mercer MLC, Tynwald Representative  
Professor Peter Edge (\*via MS Teams)  
Mrs Jacqueline Bridson  
Dr Rachel Glover  
Mr Steven Christian  
Mr Peter Davidson  
Ms Julie Hotchkiss (\*via MS Teams)  
Mr John Spellman  
Mr Jonathan Wild

**In Attendance:**

Mr D Davies, Chief Executive, Department of Home Affairs  
Mr C Phillips, Policy and Performance Manager, Cabinet Office (Secretariat)

**Apologies:** N/A

**Action**

**022/2021 Declarations of Interest or Conflict:**

Mr S Christian – [married to the Hon Member for Douglas South].

**023/2021 Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 14 June 2021**

At page 2, insert: "EAG noted caution should be used when dealing with small data size."

At page 3, omit the reference to the "third sector" in error.

With these amends, EAG **approved** the minutes for publication.

**Action: Secretary to upload Minutes to website.**

**(Sec)**

**024/2021 Matters arising from the minutes:**

**a) Election of Chair**

EAG noted the continued Chair vacancy, and were content for the Vice-Chair to facilitate the present meeting.

**b) Data Requested**

EAG noted data had been requested of DHSC (Vaccination Pause) and the Covid-111 Teams (Travel Numbers).

**c) Additional Standing Item**

EAG **requested** that "Long Term Strategy" be added as a standing agenda item. **(Sec)**

#### **d) Communications Strategy**

EAG noted the upskilling of Government's communications strategy remained a topic of interest. Further to this, the EAG considered limited improvement had been evidenced to-date.

EAG discussed communications in respect of consistency, and noted technical issues in respect of the NHS app, including pre-registration, and verification issues for those travelling off-Island.

Engagement with young people, and travelling with children, were two areas mentioned as worthy of particular attention. Alongside effective use of social media for audience reach. A clear Question & Answer infographic was recommended for clarity.

**Action: EAG resolved to prepare a Council of Ministers Advice Note – to outline risks in relation to communications, particularly in respect of inbound arrivals, mitigation and public messages.** **(DD)**

**Action: EAG resolved to form a Communications Sub-Group and advised they would welcome discussion with the Executive Director of External Relations / Head of Government Communications in this area.** **(SC, JB, JS, JH)**

#### **025/2021 Standing Agenda Items:**

##### **a) Vaccine Update**

EAG noted the present stock levels held. Discussion followed on future plans in respect of third doses and booster vaccinations. The Vice-Chair requested this standing agenda item be retitled: "*Vaccine supplies, boosters and preparation for Quarter 4*".

**Action: Secretary to rename standing item: "Vaccine supplies, boosters and preparation for Quarter 4".** **(Sec)**

##### **b) Variant Update**

EAG noted considerations in respect of emerging variants were ongoing, and discussion would likely follow at the next meeting.

EAG further noted the need for continued public messaging of "hands, face, space, and ventilation".

##### **c) Mitigation (Outbreak Management Plan)**

EAG noted all Government Departments, agencies and bodies were now required to have a CV-19 Outbreak Management Plan available for inspection by the Director of Public Health.

EAG was advised that a National Outbreak Plan was in advanced preparation and that a copy would be circulated.

EAG discussed the principle of frontline "blue light" services potentially being double-vaccinated for resilience.

EAG considered that surge testing, contact tracing capacity, a surveillance programme, and border mitigations – were of ongoing relevance and importance.

Further discussion followed on the status of the NHS App, and potentially permitting screenshots in lieu of certification.

**Action: Mr Davies to circulate the National Outbreak Plan (MS Teams) – for EAG feedback. (DD)**

#### **d) Communications**

Paper: 005/2021 [Note]

EAG noted a paper submitted by JH in respect of core communication principles. Addressing misinformation was also considered helpful.

EAG discussed the merits of a coordinated pre-recorded message (or video) for distribution via air or sea routes, to capture inbound arrivals – and recommended this be considered.

EAG noted that cases reported in the media required clarity, as to whether they were either Day 01, or Day 06.

**Action: Paper 005/2021 to be appended to the next Council of Ministers Advice Note. (Sec)**

#### **e) Community Support**

EAG noted that leads would continue discussions and dialogue with community stakeholders, working towards a future paper, potentially including consideration of the impact of "long Covid" on the Island's community.

EAG noted some local community groups and charitable entities had reportedly gone into reserve finance usage, with a potential cost implications for Government services.

#### **f) Economic Support**

EAG noted an Economic Dashboard infographic submitted by the Department for Enterprise and **requested** sight of relevant economic sector impact studies, e.g. KPMG consultancy.

**026/2021 Any Other Business:**

**6.1 – EAG Summary Position / Council of Ministers Advice Note:**

EAG considered the content of a draft Council of Ministers Advice Note – which was agreed in principle, commensurate on the inclusion of the additional points raised in the meeting.

**6.2 – Long Term Strategy / Contingency Planning:**

EAG considered there could be merit in conducting a “lessons identified” database – with potential follow-on workshops to inform future emergency planning in the Isle of Man.

EAG noted that Council could be invited to consider such, within the content of EAG Advice Note(s).

**Action: EAG Advice Note(s) to include a recommendation in respect of future emergency contingency planning.** (SC)

**6.3 – Risk Matrix**

EAG considered a draft Risk Matrix model [circulated by SC] and discussed various applications. EAG was invited to reflect and revert with any comments at the next meeting.

**Action: Risk Matrix diagram to be reflected on further at the next meeting.** (SC)

**6.4 – Surveillance Testing**

EAG discussed the possibility of using such, and suggested a Day 10 test, providing forward intelligence.

**6.5 – Long Covid**

EAG discussed issues pertaining to matters covered under the phrase “Long Covid” and queried what work was ongoing on this topic.

**Action: Mr Davies undertook to advise what work was ongoing in respect of Long Covid.** (DD)

**6.6 – Tynwald Members Dialogue**

EAG considered a drop-in session for Tynwald Members with EAG members, to facilitate dialogue and interaction – and noted this suggestion for the future.

**6.7 – Date of Next Meeting**

Rescheduled on account of numbers and availability to Thursday 22 July 2021.

EAG contributions via MS Teams were noted as live and ongoing.

**The meeting closed at 6:00pm**

Signed: .....

Date: .....