

**Minutes of a meeting of the Council of Minister's
– Emergency Advisory Group ("EAG") –
Held on Thursday 22 July 2021 at 4.00pm**

In the Department of Home Affairs Board Room and via MS Teams

Present:

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

In Attendance:

Mr D Davies, Chief Executive, Department of Home Affairs ("DHA")
 Mrs L Parks, Administration and Policy Executive, DHA (Acting Secretariat)

Apologies: Mr R Mercer MLC, Tynwald Representative

		Action
027/2021	Declarations of Interest or Conflict:	
	Mr S Christian – [married to the Hon Member for Douglas South]. Mr S Christian - [New job with Covid-19 testing company which is looking to set up a commercial operation in the Isle of Man.]	
028/2021	Public Health Protection (Coronavirus)(Amendment)(No.16) Regulations 2021	
	The Vice-Chair proposed that following the decision by Tynwald to defer approval of the Public Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Amendment)(No.16) Regulations 2021, the agenda be put aside, and that the primary purpose of the meeting be to seek the EAG's view on the changes proposed in the Regulations for the Council of Ministers, and what advice. EAG agreed . EAG noted that with the absence of the latest data and analysis it would be difficult to give an expert opinion and make informed decisions.	
	a) Amendment of regulation 5	

	EAG discussed the proposed changes and agreed that it would advise CoMIN that the Director of Public Health should be required to provide written advice to CoMIN before any determination is made to amend the Category of a country or territory. This would allow full consideration of the risk profile of that country.	
	b) Amendment of regulation 5A	
	EAG agreed that the timescales were very short and to continue reviewing the regulations but with the caveat that a meeting would be reconvened next week to give the EAG time to consider the changes in detail. EAG noted that as a general principle, EAG would advise that where CoMIN is given powers to make changes that may affect public health, that a formal written opinion from, the Director of Public Health.	
	c) Amendment of regulation 5B	
	EAG considered the proposed changes and discussed in detail the proposed change of age range in relation to self-isolation and testing for children. EAG queried the basis and rationale for choosing age 12 and requested that evidential justification or explanation be provided as to why the age was set at 12. EAG strongly recommends that any change in relation to age ranges of children should be determined after consultation with and on receipt of a written opinion from the Director of Public Health. EAG discussed LFD testing and the relationship with PCR testing, and the merits of introducing mitigations in relation to the return to school in September.	
	d) Amendment of regulation 9A	
	EAG considered the proposed changes and also the issues of ensuring CoMIN were given sufficient powers to make any necessary changes while the House of Keys was prorogued. EAG agreed that a short interim piece of advice to Council be prepared, which sets out clearly the difficult position in which the EAG feels it has been put, and outlines the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the EAG would have welcomed earlier formal consultation on this matter and the provision of more detailed information; 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the EAG believes that the context in which the regulations are being drafted needs to be taken into account – i.e. the current infection rate in the Isle of Man. • that the EAG believes that Public Health has a key responsibility and that the regulations do not appear to have enough reference to, or give weight to, the recommendations of the Director of Public Health; • that the EAG wish to consult with Public Health on the above matter before providing further recommendations; and • that the EAG strongly advises that Council implement mitigations so as to reduce the spread of virus on the Island. <p>EAG noted that this is just initial advice and more time will be needed to consider the regulations in depth.</p> <p>Action: Mr Davies to prepare a short interim piece of advice to Council of Ministers on this basis, including the disappointment felt by members of the EAG that it had not been formally consulted earlier.</p>	(DD)
029/2021	Other matters	
	<p>EAG briefly discussed the difficulties with the NHS App.</p> <p>Paper 009/2021 was briefly discussed and EAG members were asked to make and circulate any comments.</p> <p>Mr Davies advised the EAG that he had made some amendments to the National Outbreak Plan and agreed to circulate the revised version.</p> <p>Action: Mr Davies to circulate the revised National Outbreak Plan (MS Teams) – for EAG feedback</p>	(DD)
030/2021	Date of next meeting:	
	<p>EAG decided on the following date as the date of the next meeting:</p> <p>Wednesday 28th July 2021 at 4pm</p>	
The meeting closed at 17:50pm		

Signed:

Date: