
National Covid Response Group

Terms of Reference

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1. Purpose

- 1.1. This Council of Ministers Sub Committee – National Covid Response Group - has been set up to oversee the Island’s strategic response to Covid, taking into account the developing situation and developments in intelligence and evidence, and make appropriate recommendations to Council of Ministers for responses. The Group will also take oversight for the “Living with Covid” programme which currently reports monthly.

In doing so, the Sub Committee will ensure that an appropriate strategy is in place and visible to the public at all times and any objectives are achieved within the life of the administration and that any issues with delivery of related priority projects are identified at the earliest stage and appropriately addressed.

- 1.2. The Sub Committee will set direction and establish work streams which will undertake detailed policy development on relevant strategically important issues. It will identify and draft policies to recommend to the Council of Ministers.

2. Role

The role of this Sub Committee is as follows:

- To monitor and review the declaration by the Council of Ministers [in accordance with regulation 3(1) of the Public Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020] that COVID-19 continues to constitute a serious and imminent threat to public health and that the measures outlined in the Regulations continue to be an effective means of delaying or preventing the further significant transmission of the virus.
- To monitor and assess the impact of Covid on the Island – from a social, economic and health and care perspective;

- To monitor any delegated responses that have been implemented by Public Health and other bodies, alongside the Winter Plan and their effectiveness;
- To monitor and assess the ongoing critical services that respond to the pandemic – reported up through Gold command when escalation is required;
- To propose and oversee any strategic public communications collateral or campaigns as required as part of any response;
- To consider appropriate options appraisals for any responses required, either driven by cases, escalations from Gold or external factors such as the development of a new Variant of Concern;
- Taking into account appropriate options and impact assessments, to make any recommendations to Council on any responses required.

3. Constitution

- 3.1. The National Covid Response Group was established by the Chief Minister and its constitution was formalised as a Sub Committee of the Council of Ministers by Minute No. 1023/2021¹.

4. Membership

- 4.1. The Committee shall comprise:

Chief Minister (Chair)
Minister for Health & Social Care
Treasury Minister
Minister for Justice & Home Affairs
Minister for Education, Sport and Culture

Officers routinely in attendance –

Director of Public Health
Cabinet Office – Chief Operating Officer
Cabinet Office – Senior Covid Response Officer
DHSC Chief Executive & Chair of Isle of Man Joint Public Health and Clinical Advisory Group
Head of Government Communication
Secretariat

External attendees –

The Chair of the Council of Ministers Emergency Advisory Group

Additional attendees may be invited from time to time to provide advice or input.

¹ Council meeting on 21.10.2021

- 4.2. The Executive Office (Cabinet Office) will provide administrative and research support to the Sub Committee. Other officers will be co-opted to attend as and when required by the Sub Committee.
- 4.3. The National Covid Response Group may co-opt persons from within Government or the community, in an advisory capacity, to assist with the consideration of issues referred to the Sub Committee.

5. Meetings and minutes

- 5.1. Meetings of the National Covid Response Group will be scheduled and agreed with the Chairman but shall take place at least monthly.
- 5.2. Minutes will be prepared in accordance with Minute Taking Guidance prepared by the Chief Secretary's Office and will be issued to the Committee no later than ten days following each meeting.
- 5.3. Agendas are compiled with the approval of the Chief Minister and / or the Director of Public Health.
- 5.4. A request for an item to be included on the agenda should always be accompanied by supporting documentation. The agenda and papers will, wherever possible, be distributed to members at least one week before each meeting by the Secretariat. In normal circumstances late papers will not be accepted, in exceptional circumstances approval for late papers to be circulated must be obtained from the Chair otherwise papers should be brought to the meeting under AOB and considered at the discretion of the Chair.
- 5.5. All documentation issued in relation to the National Covid Response Group including the terms of reference, proceedings and papers are subject to the same statutory confidentiality as applies to the meetings and proceedings of the Council of Ministers, and should be therefore treated accordingly, unless agreement is given.
- 5.6. Documents should not be circulated for wider distribution other than to nominated officers without the necessary permission which will be agreed by the relevant document owner (which may be at political level).

6. Reporting

- 6.1. The National Covid Response Group will report to the Council of Ministers; along with other Sub committees, the minutes will form part of a routine distribution process to all Ministers. Signed Minutes will be provided to the Assistant Secretary to Council for upload to the Council of Ministers BoardPad.

7. Quorum

- 9.1 In order for there to be a quorum at a meeting, a majority of political members must be present. Ministers may assign a Departmental Member to deputise for them as required.

8. Contracts and finance

- 8.1. The National Covid Response Group has no authority to contract out work and no finance is currently allocated.