



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

Cabinet meeting: 10 January 2022

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet on 10 January 2022.

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Present

Previous meeting

Senedd business

Government response to COVID-19

Present

- Rt. Hon. Mark Drakeford MS
- Rebecca Evans MS
- Vaughan Gething MS
- Lesley Griffiths MS
- Jane Hutt MS
- Julie James MS
- Jeremy Miles MS
- Eluned Morgan MS
- Mick Antoniw MS

- Dawn Bowden MS
- Hannah Blythyn MS
- Julie Morgan MS
- Lynne Neagle MS
- Lee Waters MS

Officials

- Andrew Goodall, Permanent Secretary
- Des Clifford, Director General Office of the First Minister
- Will Whiteley, Deputy Director Cabinet Division
- Toby Mason, Strategic Communications
- Jane Runeckles, Special Adviser
- Alex Bevan, Special Adviser
- Daniel Butler, Special Adviser
- Ian Butler, Special Adviser
- Kate Edmunds, Special Adviser
- Sara Faye, Special Adviser
- Clare Jenkins, Special Adviser
- Owen John, Special Adviser
- Andrew Johnson, Special Adviser
- Mitch Theaker, Special Adviser
- Tom Woodward, Special Adviser
- Christopher W Morgan, Head of Cabinet Secretariat (minutes)
- Damian Roche, Cabinet Secretariat
- Catrin Sully, Cabinet Office
- Tracey Burke, Director General, Education and Public Services
- Reg Kilpatrick, Director General, COVID-19 Crisis Coordination
- Judith Paget, Director General Health
- Andrew Slade, Director General, Economy, Skills and Natural Resources
- Helen Lentle, Director Legal Services
- Frank Atherton, CMO
- Rob Orford, Chief Scientific Officer – Health
- Andrew Sallows, Delivery Programme Director NHS
- Brendan Collins, Head of Health Economics
- Sioned Evans, Director Business and Regions
- Jason Thomas, Director Culture, Sport and Tourism
- Ffion Thomas, Civil Contingencies & National Security

Item 1: Minutes of previous meetings

1.1 Cymeradwyodd y Cabinet gofnodion y 20 a 21 Rhagfyr / Cabinet approved the minutes of 20 and 21 December.

Item 2: Senedd business

2.1 Cabinet considered the contents of the Plenary grid and noted sessions that week would be held in virtual format. Voting time was scheduled for 5:30pm on both Tuesday and Wednesday.

Item 3: Government response to COVID-19

3.1 The First Minister invited Health officials to provide an overview of the public health situation.

3.2 The CMO advised Cabinet there was still a difficult situation in Wales with significant community transmission of the virus. The 7 day average had dipped below 2,000 in every 100,000 of the population, down from 2,300 the previous week and cases in the over 60s had also reduced.

3.3 However, it was too early to tell whether the trajectory of cases had reversed and it was important to recognise that case numbers would be affected by the changes to the testing regime. Furthermore, children returning to school and people being required to attend workplace settings was likely to have an impact on infection rates.

3.4 Pressures on NHS services were expected to continue throughout January.

3.5 The Chief Scientific Officer for Health reported there was still some uncertainty around when the current wave would peak, but modelling suggested cases would rise to between 12,000 and 18,000 a day before beginning to

decline. Hospital admissions were tracking close to the scenario planning but symptoms were less severe for those who had been vaccinated.

3.6 ICU occupancy rates were not as high as England which suggested that the Alert Level 2 protections were having the desired impact.

3.7 The Chief Executive of the NHS informed Cabinet that there were 500 more people in hospital beds when compared to the same time the previous year. Of the 8546 patients, 1,030 were COVID-19 related, with 786 confirmed cases. This was an increase of 40% over the previous week. Critical care was in surge capacity, of the 170 patients occupying ICU beds only 42 were coronavirus related.

3.8 More critical for the NHS were staff absences due to sickness and self-isolation requirements, which were between 8% -15%, with nursing and midwifery being the most affected. Absence numbers were expected to increase. Therefore, some appointments and treatments had been postponed and staff were being transferred to work in urgent and emergency services.

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