



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR HEALTH

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, 1 October 2020

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Colm Gildernew (Chairperson)
Ms Pam Cameron MLA (Deputy Chairperson)*
Ms Paula Bradshaw MLA
Mr Gerry Carroll MLA
Mr Alan Chambers MLA
Mr Alex Easton MLA
Ms Órlaithí Flynn MLA
Mr Colin McGrath MLA*
Mr Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance: Ms Éilis Haughey (Clerk)
Ms Deirdre Farry (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Ms Roisin Donnelly (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Jonathan Lamont (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Brendan Miskelly (Clerical Officer)

**These Members attended the meeting via video-conference.*

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am in public session.

1. Apologies

None.

2. Chairperson's Business

There was no Chairperson's Business.

3. Draft Minutes

The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2020.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. COVID-19 Disease Response: Update from Minister of Health

The Minister of Health, Mr Robin Swann MLA and the Chief Medical Officer, Dr Michael McBride joined the meeting at 9.32 am.

Mr Alan Chambers joined the meeting at 9.32 am.

Mr Gerry Carroll joined the meeting at 9.33 am.

The Minister provided an update on the Department of Health's response and planning in relation to COVID-19.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session and the Minister and Chief Medical Officer agreed to provide the Committee with further information on a number of issues raised during the session.

The briefing session was reported by Hansard.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister of Health on the 6-monthly parliamentary review of the powers in the Coronavirus Act 2020.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note this correspondence pending its ongoing scrutiny of relevant statutory rules.

The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister of Health regarding the criteria used to determine the location of the Whiteabbey Nightingale facility.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask the Minister for further detail on the decision-making process, the weighting attached to the criteria and to enquire what consultation was undertaken in relation to this matter.

6. SR 2020/193 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (Amendment No. 9) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020

The Committee discussed concerns that have been previously raised regarding the provision of information to support the Committee's scrutiny of statutory rules.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Health to express its concern about the absence of information, which is impacting the ability of the Committee to complete its scrutiny role.

The Committee considered SR 2020/193 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (Amendment No. 9) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 which enables a regional approach to be taken to removals and additions to the list of exempt countries and territories, in respect of post-travel self-isolation requirements; excludes the Greek islands of Lesbos, Tinos, Serifos, Crete, Mykonos, Santorini and Zakynthos from the list of exempt countries; and amends the list of specified competitions relevant to the exemption, from the requirement to self-isolate for elite sportspersons.

Agreed: The Committee had considered SR 2020/193 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (Amendment No. 9) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 and had no objection to the Rule.

7. SR 2020/194 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (Amendment No. 10) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020

The Committee considered SR 2020/194 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (Amendment No. 10) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 which adds The Azores, Madeira and Sweden to the list of countries and territories exempt from the post-travel self-isolation requirements; and removes French Polynesia, Hungary, Portugal and Réunion from the list of exempt countries and territories.

Agreed: The Committee had considered SR 2020/194 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (Amendment No. 10) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 and had no objection to the Rule.

8. SR 2020/200 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (Amendment No. 11) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020

The Committee considered SR 2020/200 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (Amendment No. 11) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 which adds Singapore and Thailand to the list of countries and territories exempt from the post-travel self-isolation requirements; and removes Guadeloupe and Slovenia from the list of exempt countries and territories.

Agreed: The Committee had considered SR 2020/200 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, International Travel) (Amendment No. 11) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 and had no objection to the Rule.

9. Any Other Business

A Member advised the Committee of a Trust performance notice issued to a care home, in the context of the Committee's ongoing consideration of related matters.

10. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled to take place on Thursday, 8 October 2020 at 9.30 am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 10.49 am.

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Date: _____