

Meeting (31) of Tourism Group – 10:30, Friday 4th December 2020

Deputy Minister CST	WG	Adrian Greason-Walker	WTA
Jason Thomas - Director	WG	Stephen Jones	WLGA
Rob Holt	WG	Dave Chapman	UK Hospitality C
Claire Chappell	WG	Ian Edwards	VB Board rep
Lucy Von Weber	WG	Sean Taylor	UK TIC Rep
Jo Starkey	WG	Philippa George	SE Forum Chair
Tara Croxton	WG	Michael Bewick	North Forum Chair
Gill Richardson	WG	Andrew Campbell	WTA
Peter Kellam	WG	Steve Hughson	MW Forum Chair
Kelly Lovell	WG	Paula Ellis	SW Forum Chair
Andrew Wallace Forfar	WG	Anthony Rosser	UK Hospitality C

Version: Final

Main points of meeting

1. Update & Welcome

Jason Thomas welcomes everyone and discusses the new restrictions for hospitality from 18:00 today. Confirmed significant package to support the sector and importance of the funding rolling out as soon as possible. NDR payments will start coming out from Local Authorities before Christmas and ERF 4 will start in early January.

2. Vaccination rollout discussion.

Dr Gillian Richardson presents a power point and speaks of the strategic intent of the vaccination programme. Vaccinate as quickly, safely, swiftly with minimum waste possible. Rapid flow deployment models in every area of Wales, delivering this to as many eligible consented adult as possible within a prioritisation system. Dr Richardson describes the different vaccines available around the planning for delivery by working closely with the health boards.

3. Taskforce members raised the following points:

- Disappointed that hotels overshadowed by the decisions of the hospitality industry.
- Lifting alcohol on the 17th is far too late, people wouldn't have enough time for this option, plea is to have as much notice for the New Year.

JT reiterates that no changes will be on the 17th December.

- Concerns expressed that the R rate over the festive season will effect January and the opportunity of opening.
- Request for guidance to be available at the same time as announcements and for bullet points similar to hospitality to be given to accommodation providers.

JT explains in relation to guidance the challenges and sensitivity around this as decisions are made last minute.

Rob Holt explains that the guidance on hospitality came out on Monday night. Guidance for wider accommodation is the visitor economy guidance, UK hospitality guidance is part of this and is updated.

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- Anger and upset around the fact that counties like Gwynedd are included in tier 3 arrangements.
- Express the feeling of isolation in Mid Wales with low transmission rates to be in tier 3.
- Reiterates the anger, financial losses, terror and hurt of what the pandemic has done to the world. Receiving abuse from members.
- Fear of the North/Mid/South divide with lobbying going on in North Wales around the FM. Emphasis for the need to stick together to come out of this and communicate with each other.

Deputy Ministers expresses how these matters have become politicised, trying in WG to work alongside the devolved Gov for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland with political diversity across the UK.

- Key points of planning for the future and idea of creating predictive options as it's important not to underestimate the need to trade effectively at Easter.
- Concerns around the vaccine roll out and the need to share more with the businesses and public as there is a large portion of the public against the vaccine.
- Managing expectations and moving forward with the planning of the virus is endorsed completely.

JT said it's important to present the clear, rational evidence to anyone sceptical about vaccine.

Deputy Minister explained the argument around alcohol. The DM said 44% viability of the tourism hospitality businesses is to do with the sale of alcohol and has bought this up at Cabinet, with no takers for the argument and doesn't see this being any different on the 18th December.

- Roadmap from now to half term or even until Easter. WG need to tell the nation, be fair with them.
- ERF funding is absolutely critical.
- Cases per 100/1000 is out of control, came out of the FB too quickly and hope Cabinet have learned lessons from this.
- WG and Ministers can track scenarios, possible to do the same around scenarios from the FB?
- Concerns around that the only thing that matters is Public Health. Dignity, human dignity, jobs, livelihood all matter and this doesn't come through enough.

RH confirms it's not just the PH elements it's the economic, groups of low pay, wellbeing and other impacts which are all included in the Cabinet papers.

- Concerns that Government has lost the industry, lack of justifications and details to take such a massive hit wasn't there and there has been a breakdown in communication. Would help to have the economic impact assessments to show the consistent argument being weighed up.
- WG not able to recommend travel from tier 2, where does the self-catering agency stand in regards to marketing? WG need to admit to what they can't do. Ministers feel they are failing if they can't do something, it would be good to know what the WG can't do – easier for us to plan.

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RH expresses that the WG can't make regulations that impact on the PH basis, which shapes the decisions.

- Discussion around the debate in the Senedd on Tuesday, if there is a possibility this can turn over the decision on alcohol being served in hospitality?

Deputy Minister said that this would be very unusual to be defeated.

- Would be great to revisit the marketing plan for next year and go back to the voucher system.

RH closes the meeting by expressing how difficult the week has been for everyone. Made the case to let people know early to plan. Whatever rules around hospitality in place prior to the 23rd will remain in place. In relation to bubbles, can't go away together only one household to self-catering accommodation. Important to review the regulations when they come out. Most guidance have been right in these meetings. Will provide an update from the marketing team for the next meeting.

Ffion Evans-Humphreys
10th December 2020.

Annex 1

Questions to Gillian Richardson

- What is the perception on the length of time this programme will take to achieve a return to 'normality'?

GR discusses the amount of vaccine produced, huge contracts through the UK with Pfizer and if the Oxford vaccine is approved, hopefully should get through the population list by summer. This would take us to the 50yrs old and over, then look at guidance and based on evidence to offer over 18 and go down those age bands.

- What modelling is being done and the predictive analysis to have the impact on the R rate and infection rates in society? What is being done with that analysis to influence the thinking? Until WG lift the restrictions events can't happen, what happens to the 10% that isn't viable or who decide not to take the vaccine?

GR states that when the vaccine is launched that's when we learn the impact on transmission. This vaccine has had stringent trials like any others vaccine would have had, however, don't know the effect of transmission and will be studied as it's rolled out. The strategy is to protect those who are vulnerable and help social care services and NHS services.

-If the transmission rate gets to a state that it's not decreasing, perhaps it's still within lower age groups that are not becoming ill and if hospitalisations are positively affected -possibly could see restrictions lifted because everyone vulnerable is protected.

-Events by the summer will look different. Still need to have hand sanitiser, spacing and encouraging face masks in crowded places.

-Post Covid syndrome possibly manageable by society.

-Not everyone will have the vaccine for that 10% it's is perfectly safe.

-The vulnerable might need boosters, studies planed at UK level so that people within these categories can be followed up.

- Is there enough people resourced to deliver this?

GR said that they have this in control and thanks those who have come onwards with offer of support within the tourism, hospitality and events sector.