

Report on	Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020
Date of Meeting	13 th October 2020
Reporting Officer	Mark Kelso, Director of Public Health and Infrastructure

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To advise Members on current enforcement arrangements for the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020 ("the 2020 Regulations").
2.0	Background
2.1	Members will be aware that Council considered a report at their Council meeting held on Thursday 28 th May 2020 regarding enforcement and the designation of Mid Ulster District Council as a relevant person under Regulation 7 and as an authorised person under Regulation 9 of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020 ("the 2020 Regulations").
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Council had received correspondence from the Minister of Health regarding the decision of the NI Executive at its meeting on 14 th May 2020 to designate Councils as an enforcement body for the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020 alongside PSNI and Harbour / Transport Police teams.
3.2	The designation authorised Council to enforce any requirement imposed by regulation 3 of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020 (requirement to close businesses or premises during the emergency) or regulation 4 (further restrictions and closures during the emergency period).
3.3	A Memorandum of Understanding was prepared which set out the respective roles and responsibilities of each organisation. The PSNI were identified as the Lead regulator for all outdoor /domestic and 'licensed' activities. Council to act as joint lead authority in general commercial and retail premises for the purposes of the regulations where scrutiny of risk assessments and associated documentation was required.

	Amendment No.5 and 7 to the Regulations
3.4	Following an increase in general community infection rates – ‘r’ number , the NI Executive brought in a series of amendments to the Regulations curtailing social and community activity and more recently placing revised restrictions on some activities .
3.5	On 22 nd September NI Executive made Amendment No 5 to the Regulations which allowed ‘wet pubs’ to open for the first time since mid March subject to a number of restrictions regarding risk assessments , seating plans , gathering of patron data and restrictions on numbers.
3.6	On 30 th September NI Exec introduced further restrictions through Amendment No 7 on the closing times of all venues serving alcohol , establishing last orders by 10.30 pm with premises vacated by 11.00 pm .
3.7	I understand representatives from the NI Hospitality Industry have been in detailed discussions with the Hospitality Working Group to discuss further potential refinements on the current controls. The Department for Communities are also liaising with the Department’s of Justice , Health and Economy to agree the best mechanism for applying the revised restrictions and supporting PSNI and regulators with increased enforcement mechanisms for this purpose . I understand these proposals are likely to come to the NI Executive for further consideration shortly . These deliberations to link with wider controls which have already been imposed on some geographical areas to reduce the spread of Covid infection .
3.8	Unfortunately I do not have any further detail on these proposals at present in the preparation of this report however I will endeavour to keep members informed, should there be any proposed change to the current enforcement arrangements.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: None at present
	Human: Potential regulatory resource implication dependent on what NI Exec determine.
	Risk Management: None
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None
	Rural Needs Implications: None
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Members are asked to note the content of the report.
6.0	Documents Attached & References