

CABINET OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS - POST MEETING STATEMENT

CABINET DECISIONS

5th and 8th July, 2021

Special Cabinet Meeting – 5th July, 2021

His Excellency, the Governor Mr. John J. Rankin, CMG, chaired the online Special Meeting held on 5th July, 2021.

All Members were present, with the exception of the Premier Hon. Andrew A. Fahie and the Attorney General Hon. Dawn Smith, who were away on personal leave.

The Cabinet:

1. Noted the Situation Report presented by the Health Emergency Operations Centre and:
 - a. advised that in-person visits to and from Her Majesty's Prison (Balsum Ghut) are restricted mandatorily effective 6th July, 2021 for a period of fourteen (14) days in the first instance, with the exception of emergency situations determined by the facility to necessitate a visit, subject to the contrary advice from the Attorney General, and with the opportunity to be reviewed thereafter;
 - b. advised that all facilities that serve as residential establishments, namely, the Adina Donovan Home for the Elderly, Virgin Gorda Elderly Home and Rainbow Children's Home; Safe Haven Transitional Centre and private residential facilities, prohibit visits in and visits out effective 6th July, 2021 for a period of fourteen (14) days in the first instance, with the exception of emergency situations determined by the facility to necessitate a visit;
 - c. decided that all private and public schools (including pre-schools), child care centres, summer programmes and extra-curricular activities are mandated to cease in-person activities with effect from Tuesday, 6th July, 2021 for fourteen (14) days in the first instance, and subject to a review by the Cabinet after seven (7) days;

- d. provided that all external/regional examinations may continue to be administered at public and private schools with the approval the Ministry of Education, in consultation the Chief Environmental Health Officer and the Chief Medical Officer;
- e. decided that, except with the approval of the Minister for Health and Social Development, all businesses and/or workplaces be required to restrict numbers to a limit of up to 65 persons at a time, per location, subject to adequate social distancing protocols being maintained in accordance with guidance from the Chief Environmental Health Officer, with effect from Tuesday, 6th July, 2021 for a period of fourteen (14) days in the first instance;
- f. decided that social gatherings, including faith-based organisations, weddings and funerals, should be limited to 25 persons at a time for a period of fourteen (14) days effective 6th July, 2021, and subject to a review by the Cabinet after seven (7) days; and noted that SI No. 61 of 2021 - Public Health (COVID-19 Control and Suppression Measures) (No. 3) (Amendment) (No. 5) Order, 2021 be amended accordingly;
- g. decided that, except with the approval of the Minister for Health and Social Development, all ferries be required to restrict numbers to a limit of up to 65 persons at a time, subject to adequate social distancing protocols being maintained in accordance with guidance from the Chief Environmental Health Officer, with effect from Tuesday, 6th July, 2021 for a period of fourteen (14) days in the first instance;
- h. decided that hairdressers, barbers, gyms, bars, clubs and entertainment establishments be closed; and that restaurants, for in-house dining, be limited to one (1) person per 36 square feet to a maximum occupancy of 25 persons, all inclusive of staff and patrons, with effect from Tuesday, 6th July, 2021 for a period of fourteen (14) days in the first instance;
- i. decided to test for COVID-19 at least once per fortnight, or as advised by the Chief Medical Officer, the employees of the following organisations:
 - i. police, customs, immigration, prison, sea and airport authorities, and residential facilities as outlined in item (b) and other high vulnerability settings during high incidences of the disease in the Territory, subject to contrary advice from the Attorney General;
- j. decided that, in addition to existing measures, all vaccinated persons be subject to a rapid test upon arrival, effective 12th July, 2021, at a fee of \$50.00; and

- k. decided that Cabinet advise the National Security Council to instruct the Attorney General to draft a new curfew order to implement a night time curfew from Tuesday, 6th July, 2021 from 11:00 pm to 5:00 am for a period of fourteen (14) days in the first instance.

Cabinet Meeting – 8th July, 2021

His Excellency, the Governor Mr. John J. Rankin, CMG, chaired the online Meeting held on 8th July, 2021.

All Members were present.

The Cabinet:

- 1. Noted the policy document that outlines the monitoring and evaluation phases of the collection of data from the recipients of the COVID-19 Economic Stimulus Programmes that were implemented by the Premier's Office.
- 2. Noted that:
 - a. that the rehabilitation of the Ralph T. O'Neal Administration Complex (RTOAC), the seat of government, is an ongoing major undertaking by the Government of the Virgin Islands in order to restore the facility and make it ready for full occupancy in the near future;
 - b. initial demolition works and disposal of the waste material from the West Wing of the RTOAC have been undertaken at a cost of one hundred seven thousand one hundred eighty-five dollars and thirty-nine cents (\$107,185.39), and there is approximately fifty-one thousand twenty-three dollars and fifty cents (\$51,023.50) worth of remaining demolition works on the same Wing, for a total West Wing Demolition of one hundred fifty-eight thousand two hundred eight dollars and eighty-nine cents (\$158,208.89); and noted the Demolition Works for the East Wing of the RTOAC is estimated to cost one hundred ninety-five thousand thirty-six dollars and forty-four cents (\$195,036.44). Decided that:

- c. the outstanding demolition works of Office Spaces, corridors and ceilings in the RTOAC, exclusive of the basement which requires professional services, be executed using the procurement procedures provided for under the Policy on Procurement in Emergency, Disaster, Pandemic and Catastrophic Situations as it will assist in keeping the local economy stimulated; and
 - d. the demolition works approved in decision (c) is not to exceed the sum of two hundred forty-six thousand fifty-nine dollars and ninety-four cents (\$246,059.94) and be expended via a blend of Petty Contracts and Work Orders only.
 3. Considered and approve the consultancy of Ministerial Political Adviser, similar to the model as used in the United Kingdom, where the Premier would be assigned no more than three (3) Ministerial Political Advisers and each other Cabinet Minister and Junior Minister would be assigned no more than one (1) Ministerial Political Adviser; reviewed and decided on the Terms of Reference for the Ministerial Political Adviser to include research and analysis, assisting in speech writing for the Minister, and other areas as outlined in the job description. Decided that:
 - a. the tenure of each Ministerial Political Adviser, who will be hired as an independent contractor, to be the same as the tenure of the Minister to whom they are assigned;
 - b. each Ministerial Political Adviser be subject to all Public Service Laws, Regulations and Policies during their tenure, save and except where research, advice and other support to the Minister may incorporate political considerations into their analysis, advice, speech writing etc. in a manner that would not be permissible for a permanent public officer;
 - c. Ministerial Political Advisers would be required to adhere to the Code of Conduct for Ministerial Political Advisers;
 - d. consider and decide that an Integrity Committee for Ministerial Political Advisers shall be set up comprising the Permanent Secretary, Premier's Office as Chair; Permanent Secretary, Deputy Governor's Office; and one of the four other Permanent Secretaries in rotation each year;

- e. Ministerial Political Advisers would be required to declare any private interests that they may hold in any matter that may be deemed relevant to their work, upon assumption of duties and periodically as circumstances may require, and this disclosure shall be made by letter to the appointing Minister and copied to the Permanent Secretary in the Premier's Office as Chair of the Integrity Committee for Ministerial Political Advisers; and to the Premier;
 - f. the Integrity Committee for Ministerial Political Advisers would have the authority to call and question Ministerial Political Advisers on their adherence to the Code of Conduct for Ministerial Political Advisers or matters of conflicts of interests, and that the Committee may submit a report to the Premier for his or her consideration; consider and decide that the contract will not exceed one hundred and twenty thousand dollars (\$120,000.00) per annum in accordance with the established pay bands;
 - g. each contract for each Ministerial Political Adviser does not cover gratuity payments, annual leave and sick leave;
 - h. each Ministry will allocate payment of remuneration for Ministerial Political Adviser under their Consultancy vote, and payments for the Ministerial Political Adviser to Junior Ministers will be borne from the Consultancy vote of the Premier's Office; and
 - i. considered and approve the waiver of the tender process to allow Ministerial Political Adviser to be contracted for any tenure that allows the cumulative compensation to be no more than one hundred and twenty thousand dollars (\$120,000.00) per annum.
- 4. Approved the recommendations of the BVI Scholarship Committee for the award of Government Scholarships to 52 applicants to pursue studies for the period commencing Fall 2021 – Spring 2022.
 - 5. Approved a number of Non-Belonger Land Holding Licence applications and a compensation for encroachment to private property for use as a public road.

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Guidelines:

- 1. Cabinet decisions will be published by the Cabinet Office following confirmation of the Minutes.
- 2. Only a summary of the decisions will be published.

3. Cabinet discussions will not be disclosed.
4. Cabinet decisions of a sensitive nature, matters of national security, those where publication breaches regional or international conventions and those relating to personal privacy will not be disclosed.
5. Cabinet decisions will be published in the weekly issues of the Virgin Islands Official Gazette at www.eservices.gov.vg/gazette.
6. Cabinet decisions will be also available on bvi.gov.vg and on Twitter.