

## **FOI Request (received 08 July 2021) - Reference: DFI/2021-0258**

I note recently that the Minister has been discussing relaxation of facemask requirements on public transport. She has stated:

"The data tells us it acts as a mitigation against the virus but it also gives passengers confidence to come back onto our public transport network...To date I haven't seen any evidence that would warrant the immediate removal of face coverings from public transport"

Please can the minister provide this exact data which shows that this specific non-pharmaceutical intervention has been successful in driving down transmission of SARS-CoV-2 on public transport in Northern Ireland?

## **Response (issued 30 July 2021)**

Thank you for your email dated 8 July 2021 requesting, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the above information.

In response to your request, I can confirm that this information is not held by this Department.

The decision to make face coverings mandatory on public transport was taken on 2 July 2020 by the Northern Ireland Executive, who have since kept this issue under close review. The scientific evidence and data considered by the Executive in relation to decisions on this matter is provided by the Chief Scientific Advisor to the Department of Health. You may therefore wish to redirect your request to the Department of Health, which can be contacted via email at: [FOI@dhsspsni.gov.uk](mailto:FOI@dhsspsni.gov.uk).