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Prìomh Mhinistear na h-Alba



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



**Northern Ireland
Executive**

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
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04 April 2020

Dear Prime Minister

We hope you and your Cabinet colleagues are recovering well from your recent Covid-19 diagnosis and subsequent period in self-isolation.

On 23 March, in a meeting of COBR(M), we agreed to put in place additional measures to ensure effective and appropriate levels of social distancing. This was based on advice from SAGE and our respective Chief Medical Officers, and with the objective of slowing the spread of Covid-19 in the community, and reducing the likely level of infection at the epidemic's peak. You announced at the time that the measures would be reviewed after 3 weeks. That would suggest a further set of co-ordinated announcements on or around 13 April.

We are writing to suggest that a COBR(M) be scheduled now for next week, to allow for proper individual and joint analysis of the options at head of government level. Whereas hurriedly convened COBR(M) meetings earlier in the pandemic were understandable, given the rapid evolution of the scientific advice, there is no reason not to ensure an orderly process is established ahead of this predictable milestone. Nor do our Ministers' participation in the Ministerial Implementation Groups substitute for close engagement and joint working at head of government level on these most important issues.

In addition to a proper process, we would also urge a transparent and collaborative approach to sharing and producing analysis, options appraisal, and papers for any COBR meeting next week.

These proposals seem to us the minimum commensurate with an approach founded on partnership across our four nations. They should be the principles on which all COBR(M) meetings are founded for the duration of the current crisis, and indeed for all such meetings in the future.

Yours sincerely

PD

NICOLA STURGEON

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MARK DRAKEFORD

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ARLENE FOSTER

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MICHELLE O'NEILL