



Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
and Minister for the Cabinet Office
Cabinet Office 70 Whitehall London
SW1A 2AS

Mr Mark Drakeford
First Minister of Wales
Welsh Government
National Assembly For Wales
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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Dear Mark,

29th April 2020

Thank you for your letter of 20 April. I am also replying to your joint letter to the Prime Minister of 4 April, and therefore copying this response to colleagues in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

As you will know, officials and ministers from across the United Kingdom are working closely on our national response to the Covid-19 pandemic. I am grateful for the attendance of officials and ministers from the devolved administrations at 27 meetings of the GPS MIG committee. I was also grateful for our call on April 15 and for your attendance at the COBR(M) meeting on April 16, where a UK-wide decision was taken that the current social distancing measures would remain in place for a further three weeks. This decision will save lives by ensuring citizens in every part of the UK receive a clear and coherent message about the action they need to take, so that they are able to comply fully with the measures we have put in place.

To ensure that the response to Covid-19 is as effective as it can be, it is crucial we continue to take a coordinated approach to decisions related to the current measures. It is also particularly critical that our communications on these matters remain closely aligned. In light of this I propose we speak regularly to discuss our approach to social distancing and other measures as the situation evolves, both as a group and bilaterally, and including mayors, such as the Mayor of London, when appropriate. My office will liaise with yours to arrange times. Of course, we should speak ahead of any decision to convene a full COBR meeting.

I am grateful for your officials' ongoing input and hope that our officials can continue to work closely together, to share data and analysis and develop the evidence base that will inform upcoming reviews of current social distancing measures. In addition, our Chief Medical Officers and Chief Scientific Advisers should continue to engage closely.

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate this government's commitment to working in partnership with you. I hope that this spirit of joint working can continue so that we are able to deliver an effective response for every citizen in the United Kingdom throughout this crisis.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, the Secretaries of State for Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland,

With every good wish,

PD

**Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
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