



Rt Hon Boris Johnson
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street,
London,
SW1A 2AA

Irrelevant & Sensitive

28 September 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you once again for convening last week's COBR(M), which I think demonstrated the benefits of the direct and open dialogue between the four nations of the United Kingdom. It was useful to share intelligence on the state of the virus, and how the four administrations' decisions impact on each other.

I am writing to raise again one of the issues we discussed at last week's meeting. I have significant concerns about the potential infection risks arising when people travel from areas of high infection to other parts of the UK.

We have taken a decision in Wales to place travel limits on people living in each of our areas under local restrictions, with the primary objective of limiting the spread of the virus. These mean that people in these areas are not allowed to leave their local areas without a reasonable excuse.

My concern, as I set out at COBR(M), is that under the current model of local restrictions in England, people living in high-infection areas are still able to – and do - travel long distances from these areas into others, potentially spreading the virus well beyond their locality. This is clearly of particular concern in cross-border areas.

Our equivalent local regulations in Wales, which we have already implemented in several areas of high infection, mean that people in those areas are prevented from travel without reasonable excuse, thereby reducing the risk of spreading the virus.

In the interests of UK solidarity and co-ordination expressed at the COBR(M) meeting, and through our joint statement issued earlier this week, I ask that you give urgent consideration to the introduction of similar travel restrictions in the current high infection areas of England

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
I&S
YP.PrifWeinidog@llyw.cymru • ps.firstminister@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

to those we have here in Wales.

This would be a significant step in lessening the risk that we collectively face, and give communities in border areas considerable reassurance that we are taking every possible step to protect them.

Policy officials and lawyers from the Welsh Government would be happy to advise on the way these measures have been implemented in our areas of local restriction.

Although we have implemented different policy responses in the four nations of the UK at different times during this pandemic, and, of course, this will continue, I urge you to consider these additional measures as part of our shared aim of public health protection for all four nations.

Our previous 'Stay Local' five mile limit placed blanket restrictions on travel within Wales, including to visitors from other parts of the UK and beyond. As we move to a more localised approach to controlling the spread of the virus, a more targeted approach to travel is much more desirable and appropriate, but this requires broadly equivalent measures to be taken across the UK.

I welcomed your indication last week of further COBR(M) discussions, and ask that a further meeting is convened urgently to discuss this and other imminent challenges.

I am copying this to the First Ministers of Scotland and Northern Ireland, deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland and the Secretary of State for Wales.

Yours sincerely

Personal Data

MARK DRAKEFORD