



Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP  
Prime Minister

I&S @no10.gov.uk

16 December 2021

Dear Prime Minister

I am writing to you following our discussions at COBR yesterday afternoon.

Let me repeat, as I have stated clearly through the course of the pandemic, that Wales has benefitted directly from the major measures deployed by HMT to support businesses and the wider economy in the extraordinary circumstances we have faced together this year and last year.

Through the pandemic period the four governments of the United Kingdom have had to take our own decisions to manage the public health crisis. I believe this is a strength because it has allowed us each to respond to the variable circumstances as the pandemic sweeps around our territories.

However, in the circumstances we now face, the Welsh Government is inhibited from considering a full range of mitigation measures because we are unable to access Treasury funding to support public health options. Put plainly, Wales and the other devolved nations can only access Treasury funds when the UK government decides the time is right for such measures in England. This position is fundamentally inadequate to the emerging circumstances where each of the four governments has to take decisions which reflect the public health needs of their local populations.

I enclose with this letter the advice which the Welsh Government has received from our own scientific advisors. I also enclose a link to our [Coronavirus Control Plan](#) which describes the Alert Levels deployed in Wales to mitigate the pandemic. You will see that measures from our Alert Level 4 may be necessary as early as the 27<sup>th</sup> December if we are to protect the NHS and people in Wales from the Omicron variant.

The Welsh Cabinet discussed this advice today. In our current circumstances we cannot act on that advice because the funding to support the Welsh economy is not available from the Treasury. We are unable to introduce measures supported by public health advice and,

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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.

in the meantime, some sectors of the economy such as hospitality and entertainment are suffering severely because the wider public is, inevitably, making its own decisions in response to available information and rational levels of concern.

Our Shadow Social Partnership Council met again this morning, where there was a unanimous call from employers, trade unions, and other partners for a reinstatement of measures such as the furlough scheme during the difficult days which lie ahead.

I urge you, therefore, either to re-introduce a furlough scheme, and allied measures, for the whole of the UK or provide Devolved Administrations with access to the necessary Treasury funding so that we can ourselves consider the introduction of measures where these are necessary. I emphasise that these measures are contemplated to save lives and to protect the NHS and Welsh businesses.

I will, of course, prioritise time for a call with you if you wish to discuss any of these matters further.

I am copying this letter to the First Minister of Scotland, the First Minister and deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities, and the Chancellor.

Yours sincerely

**Personal Data**

**MARK DRAKEFORD**