



Rt Hon Boris Johnson
Prime Minister
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16 October 2020

Dear Prime Minister

Thank you for your letter of yesterday's date.

I welcome your emphasis on the importance of minimising transmission from areas of high prevalence to those where it is lower. The UK Government's stance as you set out is identical to ours. We differ only on the delivery mechanism: through regulation or guidance. Given the current trajectory of the virus, I believe that advice alone is not sufficient.

I recognise the points you make about UK Government action in support of the response to the virus in Wales, and welcome your indication that the CDL will convene an urgent meeting to discuss next steps. As you know, I said on Monday that a COBR(M) was needed to consider collaboratively the SAGE advice on circuit breaker action.

In this spirit I wanted to let you know that this week we have begun consideration of a circuit-breaker in Wales for two or three weeks, aimed at starting on Friday 23 October. Our modelling indicates that this will bring the R number below 1 and delay the growth of the epidemic by 3 to 5 weeks. This will stem the current steep rise in covid related hospital admissions and bring case numbers down to a level that can be managed through test and trace and other measures.

I do not believe I can delay action for Wales beyond this date. Scheduling to coincide with school half term will minimise disruption to children's education, and get case numbers down ahead of the winter. We will use the time gained to develop our plan for the run-up to Christmas and will be keen to share thinking on this.

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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.

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

Yours sincerely

PD

MARK DRAKEFORD