

Message

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Sent: 13/10/2020 18:29:23
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Subject: COVID FIRE BREAK - IMPLEMENTATION GROUP 8.30 14 OCTOBER 2020

The First Minister is considering the next stage in dealing with controlling and containing Covid. Following the series of local lockdowns and developments in England, we are in discussion about implementing a ‘fire-break’ – essentially a period of significant non pharmaceutical intervention measures with the purpose of returning R to around 1. That period might last two weeks and might look like:

- A form of stay local travel restrictions

- Work from home mandatory where possible
- Suspend household visiting in all settings, with very limited exceptions
- Revise household mixing rules to encourage compliance (e.g. alignment across UK on extended households [reduce to 2 households bubbling] and 'rule of 6' [one other household indoors socially distanced]).
- Early years and childcare to include half term holiday period, but otherwise remain open (some limits to childcare, such as for wrap-around provision)
- Some secondary provision and HE/FE to be fully remote learning
- Healthcare remains open and activity continues
- Hospitality takeaway only
- Leisure, personal services and non-essential retail closed
- Current rules on 10pm curfew and table service for hospitality
- Some managed indoor activity (e.g. care home visits)

Our initial thinking on timing is not yet final but the sooner the measures are put in place the greater the effect they will have. The FM has asked for advice on this option for Thursday morning which is in preparation already and may require an input from you. Tom Smithson is coordinating that.

More critically, there is a significant issue of implementation over the next two weeks, requiring revision and developing new FAQs, consultation with stakeholders and preparation of guidance. This group will oversee the implementation including identifying tasks, commissioning action and undertaking the necessary bilateral discussions with Ministers to establish policy positions and leading stakeholder engagement. We won't have much time so I would be grateful if we could keep this group to the invitees please.

These will be difficult decisions for Ministers but implementing complex measures in a very short time is going to be a real challenge although the lessons we have learnt over the last six months should help us deliver.

Reg Kilpatrick

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