

PRESS RELEASE

Statement by First Minister on additional measures announced by Prime Minister

First published:
20 March 2020

Last updated:
20 March 2020

“This afternoon I attended a COBR meeting, where further significant measures to combat the coronavirus outbreak were agreed across the 4 nations of the United Kingdom.

“Earlier this week, we agreed a number of important actions aimed at stopping the spread of the virus.

“We asked people to take action, for example by not attending pubs, clubs, restaurants and other public places. Many people have heeded that strong advice, and behaved responsibly in the interests of our whole society. We have seen that all around us over the past days and I am very grateful to all those who have done so.

“However, we now need everyone to do what most people are doing already because otherwise, we will not slow the disease at the rate that we must.

“COBR therefore considered and agreed a series of further measures, which are designed to increase the level of public compliance with the earlier advice.

“Health is a devolved responsibility, and as Welsh Ministers, we will tonight exercise our powers under the 1984 Public Health Act in order to close restaurants, pubs, bars and other facilities where people gather. This also includes leisure centres, gyms, cinemas, theatres and betting shops. I will sign the necessary regulations later tonight, and they will come into force immediately.

“We do not take this move lightly, and we know this will be immensely difficult for those employed in the industries affected.

“But this is the right thing to do. We are tackling this virus in a controlled and determined way to protect and care for the most vulnerable people in our society.

“Together we can make that difference.”