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**FROM:** KAREN PEARSON

**DATE:** 9 DECEMBER 2020

**TO:** FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER

**SUBJECT:** INV-1597-2020 WEEKLY MEETING WITH CDL & DAS -  
INTRA UK TRAVEL AND FORWARD LOOK TO JANUARY  
2021

**Issue:** Ministers are meeting with CDL later this afternoon to discuss the proposed 'intra UK Travel principles'. CDL is seeking DA agreement to the principles and clearance of a draft communique for issue. A forward look at approach post-Christmas to January 2021 is also on the agenda.

**Timescale:** IMMEDIATE – CDL meeting today at 5.15pm 9 December

**Press Office Advice:** Issues to be discussed are of significant interest to the media.

**FOI Implications:** Potentially disclosable.

**Financial Implications:** None

**Legislative Implications:** Any decision may require an amendment to the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (No 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020.

**Executive Referral:** May conflict with a previous Executive decision, any action would need to be referred.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that Ministers:

- Note the agenda for today's meeting (Annex A);
- Review the amended version of the proposed travel principles with Scottish and Welsh comments and signal your agreement or comments/changes (Annex B);
- Review the draft communique in advance of the meeting (Annex C); and
- Note the lines to take on January 2021 arrangements (Annex D).

## Background

1. Officials from the Cabinet Office (CO) have been discussing the issues of CTA travel restrictions with colleagues in the DAs. CO has indicated its desire for a consistent approach across the CTA in relation to this matter.
2. TEO officials sought Ministers' approval of the CO principles, **SUB-1862-2020 refers**. The submission is currently under consideration.
3. A draft communique based on the principles has been shared with DAs (Annex C). CDL is expected to seek a joint position on the communique with DAs at this afternoon's meeting.

## Intra-UK Travel

4. In relation to intra-UK travel, the CO has been seeking an agreed position and have drafted a set of 'Core Principles' which they have proposed to DA officials. The principles proposed by CO are attached at **Annex B**, together with details of proposed high level exemptions.

5. At its meeting on 19 November, the Executive agreed that the issue of travel should be covered in guidance rather than in legislation. The guidance currently states:

*“Stay at home, work from home if at all possible, otherwise only leave for essential purposes such as education, healthcare needs, to care for others or outdoor exercise.”*

6. Whilst there is overlap between this and the proposed principles put forward by CO, their proposal goes further by creating travel restrictions, which would imply the need for regulations to be put in place.
7. The Scottish and Welsh have now shared their comments on the CO principles submitted to Ministers previously under **SUB-1862-2020**. A PDF version has been attached so Ministers can see the tracked comments. However, please note they have not tracked changes where they have amended text.

#### **Draft Communique**

8. A draft communique based on the principles has been shared with DAs (**Annex C**) and CDL is expected to seek a joint position at this afternoon’s meeting.

#### **Approach to January 2021**

9. CDL also plans to discuss the post-Christmas period, up to January, including any opportunities for further alignment and collaboration with the DAs. Lines to take are available at **Annex D**.

#### **Recommendations**

10. That the First Minister and deputy First Minister:

- Note the agenda for today’s meeting (**Annex A**);
- Review the amended version of the proposed travel principles with Scottish and Welsh comments and signal your agreement or comments/changes (**Annex B**);
- Review the draft communique in advance of the meeting (**Annex C**); and

- Note the lines to take on January 2021 arrangements (**Annex D**).

**KAREN PEARSON**

Ext Irrelevant & Sensitive

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TEO Press Office

**OFFICIAL SENSITIVE**

**9 December 2020**

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**DA-UKG | Conference Call**

**AGENDA**

**1. Approach to intra-UK travel**

*The UK Government and devolved administrations to discuss principles to help underpin activity and communications surrounding intra-UK travel*

**2. Approach to January**

*The UK Government and devolved administrations to discuss respective approaches to the post-Christmas period, including any opportunities for further alignment and collaboration*

**AOB**

## ANNEX B



PRINCIPLES ON  
INTRA-UK TRAVEL - C

***Draft***

**Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and First Ministers Call**

**Communiqué: 9 December 2020**

**This communiqué summarises the meeting chaired by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on 9 December 2020.**

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster chaired a meeting with the First Ministers of Scotland and Wales and the First and deputy First Ministers of Northern Ireland to discuss the ongoing COVID-19 response on Wednesday 9 December. The meeting took place by video conference.

The attending Ministers were:

For the UK Government: The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Rt Hon Michael Gove MP; The Secretary of State for Wales, Rt Hon Simon Hart MP; The Secretary of State for Scotland, Rt Hon Alistair Jack MP; The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis MP.

For the Scottish Government: First Minister, Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP

For the Welsh Government: First Minister, Rt Hon Mark Drakeford MS

For the Northern Ireland Executive: First Minister, Rt Hon Arlene Foster MLA; deputy First Minister, Michelle O'Neill MLA.

The group discussed the COVID-19 response, including the approach taken by the UK Government and the devolved administrations to travel across the UK, and priority areas for continued joint working.

The participants agreed that the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster will continue to lead regular engagement by videoconference with the First Ministers of Scotland and Wales and the First and deputy First Ministers of Northern Ireland.

**Lines to take – January 2021 approach**

- The Executive continues to review our approach post-Christmas and into the New Year based on the most-up-to-date scientific data and advice.
- The introduction of Christmas Bubbling arrangements and its impact on the transmission of the virus will be closely monitored.