

READOUT | Prime Minister and First Ministers - 7 May

The Prime Minister had a phone call this afternoon with Nicola Sturgeon, Mark Drakeford, Arlene Foster and Michelle O'Neill.

On this call he reiterated that, despite the media coverage, the UKG was not planning to relax measures significantly any time soon and that we are waiting for more data to drive future decisions on what relaxations could take place. He said he intends to convene a COBR meeting on Sunday to discuss our roadmap. He stated that he hoped the DAs would be supportive of this approach so as to do it too but recognised that where the data and science tells us we need to be prepared to have the flexibility to take different decisions on relaxing the lockdown measures. He recognised that the R rate is different in different parts of the country and we need to be prepared to take national, regional and local steps.

The FMs all expressed frustration that the media coverage had caused confusion and raised expectations across the UK and welcomed the PM's assurances that he understood the value in having an aligned messaging where possible and that the UKG was not looking to take any drastic steps. He also reassured that we are not going to stop saying 'stay at home' but that we need to reiterate what we said in March – that people who cannot work at home should be able to go to work so that industries like manufacturing and construction can get moving again.

Sturgeon pointed out that Scotland had taken a different approach to that messaging from the start and they currently do not want to encourage more people to leave their homes than are doing so already. She said that while she wants to move as one she would not criticise any part of the UK for divergence where the science makes sense. Drakeford repeated that they were very concerned about people coming to Wales for leisure pursuits.

All of the DAs requested more information ASAP on what the PM is considering (if the evidence supports it) announcing on Sunday as they cannot sign up to something without prior knowledge and advice.

The PM concluded that the second spike is a genuine and disastrous prospect so we need to maintain the lockdown but balance it with giving the public hope so that they can keep this up for longer.

After the call the PM requested that CDL follow up with the FMs to explain *confidentially* the measures we are considering for Sunday so that the DAs have more time to prepare and hopefully sign up to them on Sunday – though he recognises they will not sign up to them all.