

Policy Paper for discussion between the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and the devolved administrations First Ministers and Deputy First Minister

09 December 2020

PRINCIPLES ON INTRA-UK TRAVEL

Issue

1. To support our collective efforts to contain the virus, the UK government and the devolved administrations want to work together to help ensure our guidance and restrictions are clear and coherent, so citizens are clear on what is expected of them, and any restrictions that may apply, when travelling across the UK - for example, for work, going to university or seeing family and friends.
2. The following principles have been developed jointly by officials in the UK government and devolved administrations. They set out common areas of agreement that can underpin policy-making and inform the way we communicate to citizens and businesses with our shared objective of reducing the spread of the virus while allowing essential activity, such as education, to continue.

Decisions

3. Do you agree that:
 - a. the core principles - as set out in paragraph 5 - should form the basis upon which any cross-UK public communications campaigns should be devised?
 - b. any jointly agreed core principles should be published at an agreed date between the UK government and devolved administrations' communications teams, after the festive period to avoid any confusion in messaging?

Essential Travel

4. Annex A is a non-exhaustive list of the main reasons for which travel is currently permitted by regulations and guidance across the UK Government and the devolved administrations. There is a high degree of commonality in the broad approaches but some detailed differences.

Core Principles of Intra-UK travel

5. The following core principles represent the basis upon which all citizens should conduct themselves when considering travel within the UK:
 - a. Individuals should not travel into or out of areas where there are restrictions or guidance advising against travel, other than where necessary and permitted, such as for work, education or medical need. This is to help manage the risk of spread of the virus from areas of high prevalence to low.

- b. Even if an exemption applies, people should not travel if they have symptoms of coronavirus, live in the same household as someone who has symptoms, or are required to self-isolate.
- c. Individuals should not travel to other areas within the UK in order to circumvent local restrictions, and should be conscious that when travelling between areas they may still need to abide by the restrictions of the area from which they started their journey (for example, they may still be bound by the social contact restrictions that apply in the area that they live in). These restrictions have been introduced for good reason, to prevent the spread of the virus.
- d. Individuals should know the rules before they travel - and follow the rules both where they live and where they are going. Each administration will provide clear signposting to facilitate this, including a list of reasons for when travel is permitted.
- e. While travelling, individuals should adhere to the safer travel guidance of the area that they are travelling from and where they are travelling to. This includes guidance on social distancing, car sharing, and complying with the law on the wearing of face coverings.
- f. The UK government and the devolved administrations will continue to work together, on the basis of the agreed principles above, to ensure that communications, guidance, and regulations relating to travel within the UK are clear, consistent and coherent. In addition, where necessary, they will ensure that police forces are able to support compliance with these requirements across the UK, building on the well-established relationships and systems in place between forces to facilitate cooperation and coordination in approach.

Next Steps

- 6. Subject to agreement between UKG and the devolved administrations we propose:
 - a. These high level principles are used to inform cooperation on communications, to ensure citizens receive a consistent message on how to approach intra-UK travel. UKG and devolved administrations communications teams will work together on this. As detailed rules and guidance vary between regions, this should include clear signposting to guidance and regulations in place in the different parts of the UK.
 - b. Officials will also take forward work to support compliance with guidance and regulations and will ensure that police forces have the powers necessary to enforce these restrictions in all parts of the UK. Forces have well established relationships and systems in place to liaise with and cooperate with other police forces throughout the UK should this be necessary.

ANNEX A - High-Level Exemptions to travel restrictions

Below is a non-exhaustive list of the main reasons for which travel is currently permitted by regulations and guidance across UKG and the devolved administrations. This list will be maintained as a shared resource for reference. There is a high degree of commonality in the broad approaches, but some detailed differences both in what is permitted and what is not, so communications will need to point the public to the specific rules or guidance that apply to travel to, from and within different parts of the UK.

- Travelling to work where that is necessary as work or for providing voluntary or charitable services, where that cannot be done from home;
- Travelling to access education, childcare or youth services;
- Travelling to facilitate access contact between parents and children or between siblings where they do not live in the same household - e.g. where parents are separated or a family member is in care;
- Travelling where necessary to support caring responsibilities, to provide emergency assistance to someone or to visit someone in a hospital or hospice;
- Where travel is necessary to attend hospital, GP and other medical appointments or visits where you have had an accident or are concerned about your health;
- To avoid illness, injury or harm - to the individual travelling or another person;
- Local travel to buy goods or services from premises that are open, including essential retail, where travel over a reasonable, short distance is necessary;
- To spend time or exercise outdoors, which should be done locally wherever possible, but people may travel a reasonable, short distance to do so if necessary (for example, to access an open space);
- Attending the care and local exercise of a pet, or veterinary services;
- To attend a funeral or linked commemorative event of a friend or family member or to visit a friend or family member believed to be dying;
- To visit a member of a household who is part of a support bubble or extended household;
- Subject to specific restrictions that may be in place, to attend a place of worship where travel is necessary over a reasonable, short distance;
- To fulfil a legal obligation or to participate in legal proceedings, where that requires travel;
- Where travel is necessary to access critical public services including social services, services provided by the DWP or asylum and immigration services; and
- Travelling to visit a close family member or friend in prison or other criminal justice accommodation.