

Name Redacted

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**From:** Campbell, Maura  
**Sent:** 21 September 2020 13:58  
**To:** DOJ Minister  
**Cc:** DoJ SpAd; May, Peter; Harrison, Julie; Boal, Lisa; DOJ Assembly Section; DOJ Minister's Office  
**Subject:** DRAFT LETTER ON URGENT RESTRICTIONS IN ADDITIONAL AREAS  
**Attachments:** URGENT RESTRICTION - DRAFT LETTER.DOCX

Minister,

Draft letter attached responding to the Minister of Health's Executive paper on the need for urgent restrictions in additional areas, for your consideration.

In light of Peter's readout of his conversation with the Chief Constable, I've emphasised again the limits on what PSNI can be expected to do in terms of ensuring compliance.

Maura





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Our ref: E (20) XXX (C)  
Your ref:

**FROM: NAOMI LONG MLA  
MINISTER OF JUSTICE**

**DATE: 21 SEPTEMBER 2020**

**TO: ROBIN SWANN MLA  
MINISTER OF HEALTH**

#### **NEED FOR URGENT RESTRICTIONS IN ADDITIONAL AREAS**

Thank you for your memorandum dated 21 September inviting Executive colleagues' views on options for extending local restrictions in response to the substantial increases in COVID cases we have seen in a number of areas.

Given how widespread these increases have been and the numbers of areas affected, I would favour the option of applying the current local restrictions NI-wide. However, I would reiterate the point I made previously about us needing to be realistic about how well they can be enforced in practice. Other than where a breach is reported to them or is very visible, the PSNI will be limited in what they can do to ensure compliance with restrictions on gatherings at private dwellings, particularly when they are increasingly being called upon to investigate alleged breaches in public places.

While I am aware the introduction of local restrictions was only announced on 10 September and the regulations made on 16 September, I am concerned that those restrictions do not as yet appear to be having the desired impact in the areas where they have already been applied. As we consider the potential extension of restrictions, it



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will be important to have a proper understanding of whether this is due to the restrictions themselves being inherently ineffective in nature or the result of poor compliance by the people living in those areas.

Although the local restrictions focus on private dwellings, I think we also need to consider as an Executive what more can be done to reinforce the need for social distancing and good hand hygiene to continue in retail and hospitality settings, given there appears to have been a more relaxed approach taken by the public and, in some instances, owners of premises to these since we mandated the use of face coverings in certain indoor settings. Face coverings were never intended to be a replacement for such precautions but are often being interpreted as such. Few premises still operate proper social distancing, limited numbers within the store, one way systems and additional hand and trolley sanitising measures, all of which provide far more effective protection than face coverings. I propose there should, therefore, be proactive engagement with representatives of the retail and hospitality sectors with a view to pressing them to ensure reinstate these measures are reinstated wherever their use has declined.

I am grateful to you for having moved swiftly to convene today's meeting, which I agree is necessary given the number of areas which have seen rapid increases in the incidence of COVID cases.

I am copying this memo to Executive Secretariat, the Attorney General, the Departmental Solicitor and First Legislative Counsel.

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



Department of  
**Justice**  
[www.justice-ni.gov.uk](http://www.justice-ni.gov.uk)

Best regards,

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**NAOMI LONG MLA**  
Minister of Justice

