

Message

From: Perelman, Elizabeth - HMT [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=FB436D0686D54923A0C5CDA1F9F8F28B-ELIZABETH.P]
Sent: 18/12/2021 19:54:32
To: **Name Redacted** @hmtreasury.gov.uk]; Joseph, Kate - HMT [kate.joseph@hmtreasury.gov.uk]
Subject: DRAFT READOUT OF PM MEETING

RT – here is readout of PM meeting but copying Kate who may have other points to add.

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PM Meeting

Summary – PM concluding remarks:

- PM wants to consider overnight
- Likely to be a press conf Sunday or Monday
- Irrespective of restrictions, will need to say something to country in the context of all public info on Omicron.
- Will need to speak to Cabinet to get their view.

Taskforce provided update on the data and set out rationale for step 2. Also noted that if recall Parliament, can't do before Wed/Thurs so ends up being brought in post Christmas.

The PM seemed genuinely undecided and raised a number of points on each sides of the arguments:

- Message to date has been that boosters are the answer and so keen not to undercut this message and potentially undermine this programme.
- Case to be made that behaviours should be having impact and lengthening doubling time / suppress R
- Data seems to be sufficiently compelling that other countries are shutting
- While job of govt to protect people, also important that people understand that these steps have downside.
- Given SAGE data in public domain, important that Govt explains what is going on. But question on what say.
- Need to avoid setting out position in next 24-48hrs that then is reversed in a weeks time

He also particularly wanted to understand more on SA. Although CMO updated on SA situation and explained why we should be cautious about applying this to UK.

The Cx said that ultimately this is a decision for the PM but remains unconvinced that there is a compelling case for significant restrictions. Points he made were:

- Only relying on one model (noting that last time we had range of models to consider)
- However even if accept this model – this implies if we wait one week there is no impact on peak. So we have time to interrogate data given this is such a significant decision
- As a result of behaviour that we are seeing, seems reasonable to assume that doubling is >2 days now
- Not seen a good explanation of exit plan
- Step 2 is significant and last time caused 3% contraction in economy
- If we don't think boosters are the answer and that we will continue to need to use NPIs to control this over the next few years then we should be honest with the public and we ought to redo the SR and understand implications of this (ie can't deliver all the priorities that we committed to).
- There are also no regrets things that we ought to be doing interms of maximising resilience of NHS (capacity, workforce, discharge).

Worth also flagging that Henry Cook made the point that even if no further restrictions, hospitality is suffering and so may need some form of economic support.

Elizabeth Perelman | Principal Private Secretary to the Chancellor
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