

## COVID: NEXT STEPS FOR ALERT LEVELS

### WHERE ARE WE NOW

- **We have a clear plan.** 89 LAs now in Level 2 and 34 in Level 3 since you announced Local Covid Alert Levels on 12 October. 17.2m people live in Level 2 areas (33% of England and 41% of the English economy). Just over 10m people live in Level 3 areas (19% of England and 15% of the English economy).
- **We are moving more areas into Level 3.** Warrington will move on Tuesday. We are discussing Level 3 moves with Nottingham and NE (Tyneside and Teeside). More will follow.

### THERE ARE CHOICES IN THE COMING WEEKS

- **There is considerable uncertainty but cases continue to rise.** The picture is deteriorating everywhere. We do not yet know how effective Level 2 and 3 will be. More data will come through in the next 2-4 weeks. Current approach is highly unlikely to drive R below 1 nationwide.
- **We need to consider where we want to be at Christmas and Spring:** Christmas day is less than 9 weeks away - more confidence that we can loosen likely to require further action now and/or afterwards to get to March.

### WE SHOULD CLARIFY AND STRENGTHEN OUR CURRENT APPROACH

#### Improve the basics

- **Self isolation:** review 14 day period and drive up compliance
- **Protect the most vulnerable** including care homes
- **Compliance and enforcement:** need to change behaviours

#### Move areas through levels more quickly

- Precedent and trajectory, suggest all regions would be in Level 2 by late Nov and in Level 3 by 9 Dec.
- We could set lower thresholds and **move regions into Levels 2 / 3 faster.**

### AND THERE ARE OPTIONS TO GO FURTHER

- We may want or need to go further to allow loosening at Christmas, if rates rise faster or if the current Levels 2/3 do not drive down transmission.
- Going further would mean considering more expansive closures, revisiting the approach on schools, universities or tougher travel restrictions.
- Stronger restrictions could be expressed as a tougher Level 3.

### NEXT STEPS

1. You will get detailed advice at the end of the week on (a) options on further action (b) Christmas
2. You should discuss with Chancellor and at a COVID S over the next week