

COVID-19 (M)(17)

CABINET OFFICE BRIEFING ROOMS

COVID-19 (M) (17)

Held via teleconference, and
Chaired from the Cabinet Room, 10 Downing Street
On Sunday 10th May 2020 at 1245 (began 1300)

Record Of Attendees

PRESENT

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson
Prime Minister
In the CHAIR

Officials present

Sir Mark Sedwill
Cabinet Secretary

NR

No10

Emma Payne
Cabinet Office

Alex Aiken
Cabinet Office

Martin Reynolds
No10

Stuart Glassborow
No10

Alastair Whitehead
Civil Contingencies Secretariat
Director

NR

Civil Contingencies Secretariat
Taker of Minutes

Zonia Cavanagh
Civil Contingencies Secretariat
Recorder of Actions

NR

Civil Contingencies Secretariat
COBR Liaison Officer & CCS Ops

Attendance via Video Teleconference

The Rt Hon Dominic Raab First Secretary of State	Secretary of State for Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
The Rt Hon Anne Marie-Trevelyan Secretary of State for International Development	The Rt Hon Gavin Williamson Secretary of State for the Department for Education
The Rt Hon Robert Buckland Secretary of State for Justice	The Rt Hon Therese Coffey Secretary of State for the Department of Work and Pensions
The Rt Hon Michael Gove Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office	The Rt Hon Matt Hancock Secretary of State for the Department of Health and Social Care
The Rt Hon Simon Hart Secretary of State for Wales	The Rt Hon George Eustice Secretary of State for the Department for Food, Rural and Agriculture
The Rt Hon Grant Shapps Secretary of State for the Department for Transport	The Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss Secretary of State for International Trade
The Rt Hon Priti Patel Secretary of State for the Home Office	The Rt Hon Robert Jenrick Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
The Rt Hon Ben Wallace Secretary of State for Defence	Nicola Sturgeon MSP First Minister, Scotland
The Rt Hon Alister Jack Minister of State for Scotland Office	Arlene Foster MLA First Minister, Northern Ireland
The Rt Hon Oliver Dowden Secretary of State for the Department for Culture Media and Sports	Michelle O’Neil MLA Northern Ireland Executive
The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Her Majesty’s Treasury	John Swinney MSP Deputy First Minister, Scottish Government
The Rt Hon Brandon Lewis Secretary of State for Northern Ireland	Robin Swann MLA Northern Ireland Executive
The Rt Hon Suella Braverman Attorney General	Mark Drakeford AM First Minister, Wales
The Rt Hon Alok Sharma	Sadiq Khan

Mayor of London

OFFICIALS - Attendance via Video Teleconference

Jonathan Black
Cabinet Office

Imran Shafi
No 10

Ed Lister
No 10

Paul McCloghrie
GO Science

Chris Whitty
Chief Medical Officer

Lucy Smith
Cabinet Office

Lee Cain
No 10

Gillian McGregor
Scotland Office

Sir Patrick Vallance
GO Science

Kitty Hilton
Department of Health and Social Care

Mark Sweeney
EDS

Jamie Njoku-Goodwin,
Special Advisor, Department of Health and
Social Care

NR

Private Office for the Chancellor of the Duchy
of Lancaster

Luke Graham,
Special Advisor, No10

James Slack
No 10

Anthony Harbinson
NI Executive

NR

No 10

Shan Morgan
PS to the Welsh Government

The Cabinet Office circulated the following papers to inform the Committee's discussion:

- *SAGE Update*
- *Approach to social distancing measures.*

COVID-19

Item 1: SAGE Update

1. The CHAIR invited the Government Chief Medical Officer (CMO) to set out the current position of the COVID-19 epidemic in the UK. The CMO said that the direction of travel was consistently going the right way with hospitalisation and death numbers going down and that the UK was past the peak. CMO noted that any changes to lockdown measures needed to be cautious as there were still a significant number of people in the UK that had the virus, and that the UK was not able to use Test, Track and Trace. There was some scope to lift local lockdown measures but if this was done too fast there would be an increase in R, too slowly and there was a risk of entering winter months. CMO noted that other countries that had lessened lockdown restrictions had seen an increase in the R number.
2. The CHAIR invited the Government Chief Scientific Advisor (GCSA) comment. The GCSA said that stage 1 changes presented a low risk of pushing R above 1 so supported the move to phase 2. The GCSA said that there was a need to make more 'head room' during Phase 2 before a decision was taken to move into Phase 3.

Item 2: Approach to social distancing measures

3. The CHAIR invited the Secretary of State for the Department of Health and Social Care to present the paper on social distancing measures. The SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE said that the stay at home message remained central. Nuanced changes to the measures centered around outdoor activity where evidence suggested that the risk of transmission was low. The outdoor activity messaging would make clear people could be outside for recreational purposes, not just exercise, within their household. Additionally, changes of messaging would encourage people to return to work if they could not work from home.
4. Continuing, the SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE said that proposed changes in June and July included a return of year one and year six pupils to schools with the introduction of smaller classes sizes, a phased re-opening of non-essential retail and (in July) phased opening of hospitality, with social distancing measures in place. All decisions were contingent on epidemiology. Guidance on facemasks on public transport and in shops would be communicated.
5. The CHAIR invited the Director of Government Communications to outline the communications approach. The DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS said that communications were based on a plan, on the science and were transparent. The messaging was not contradictory to the stay at home messaging but moved with maximum caution to enable outdoor activity and reinforce the behaviours of staying alert through handwashing and staying at home.
6. In discussion the following points were made:
 - The Joint Biosecurity Centre had been discussed between the Four Nation CMOs. It was proposed that public health information and other sources will come together for a more granular view locally of flare-ups and the centre will provide response support

to local authorities in their response to flare-ups. A five point alert scale was proposed, allowing the public to understand the risk.

- There was agreed commitment of the Four Nations approach and the importance of a predictable and reliable sharing of information.
 - Recognition that it may be appropriate for difference in approach/speed depending on the scientific evidence but messaging was crucial and should not undermine the Four Nations approach or stay at home messaging.
 - There was broad support for the Joint Biosecurity Centre with all four nations indicating a willingness to be involved.
 - There had been a large number of people in outdoor spaces, particularly in London's parks the previous day.
 - The importance of staggered journeys remained to ensure the transport networks could implement social distancing measures.
 - The Department for Work and Pensions should remain a key part of the changing workplace measures.
7. In summing up the CHAIR confirmed the core messaging remained to stay at home with nuanced messaging where it was appropriate, based on the science, such as outdoor activities and certain sectors being able to continue to work when they cannot work from home.

Item 3: The Border

8. The CHAIR highlighted the on-going work on UK border measures, contained within the paper. The work would develop in the coming days and would be continually reviewed.

ANNEX 1 - ACTIONS

COBR COVID-19 (M)(20)(17)

CABINET OFFICE BRIEFING ROOMS

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COVID-19 (M)
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HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE

and chaired from

THE CABINET ROOM, No 10 DOWNING STREET
on SUNDAY 10 MAY 2020 at 12:45
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ACTIONS

1. The **FOUR NATIONS** to work together to explore how the Joint Biosecurity Centre can operate most effectively across the UK.

DECISIONS

1. Agreed the importance of continuing a UK-wide four nations approach to controlling the spread of the virus, based on scientific advice and acknowledging the spread of the disease may mean differentiations in approach.
2. Agreed to further work together on the implementation of the package of measures for the UK borders.

CABINET OFFICE
10 MAY 2020