



Scottish Government
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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

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29 November 2021

Dear Prime Minister,

The emergence of Omicron poses a potential threat to the UK. It is clear that the strain is already here and that it appears highly transmissible. We need to work collectively – and effectively – as Four Nations to take all reasonable steps to control the ingress of the virus to the country and then to limit its spread.

We are clear that a Four Nations approach to issues such as border restrictions is the most effective approach. This requires that **a meeting of the COBRA Committee be held as soon as possible.**

We would wish to use that opportunity to see the latest evidence from UK Government health professionals on the variant and to understand the international picture along with the implications that it might have for the UK.

In particular, we believe the reinstatement of a requirement for a 'day 8' PCR test for travellers arriving into the UK – alongside the 'day 2' requirement already announced, and thereby requiring isolation for that whole period – is now necessary. Public health advice is unequivocal that this is the best and safest way to protect against the importation of this variant to the fullest extent possible.

While our public health systems work hard to minimise the spread of cases already in the UK, it is imperative that we do all we can to avoid under-cutting these efforts by permitting on-going importation.

We also wish to confirm that devolved financial business support schemes will be funded by the Treasury in the event more interventionist measures are required to respond to the public health situation. In our view, it would be better to consider this now, in advance of a potential escalation in the seriousness of the situation, to support effective planning. In particular, it is important for us to agree that if the conditions in a devolved nation were to require more

significant interventions than in England, the agreed package of financial support would be available to that nation. We do not want to be in a position again where our public health interventions are negatively impacted by a lack of financial support, but can be switched on as required for England.

Given the public interest in our working together to achieve the strongest possible response to this threat, this letter is being made public.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicola Sturgeon'.

NICOLA STURGEON

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Drakeford'.

MARK DRAKEFORD