



Rt Hon Michael Gove MP  
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Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP  
First Minister of Scotland

Our reference: MC2021/11701

Rt Hon Mark Drakeford MS  
First Minister of Wales

26 May 2021

Dear Nicola, Mark,

Thank you for your letter to the Prime Minister of 25 May, and for making the time this morning to discuss together how we should proceed.

As the Prime Minister set out in his letters to you of 8 May, the challenge of our recovery from COVID is a priority we all share, and a challenge to which people across the UK expect us to rise together. Cooperation during the acute phase of the pandemic has been central to our response, in particular to the success of the vaccine rollout throughout the country. We all agreed we must now show that same spirit as we devote ourselves to getting people's everyday lives back to normal, the economy back on track, and our public services firing again on all cylinders.

The COVID Recovery meeting will therefore serve as an important moment as we begin working together on recovery in earnest. While we will not agree on everything, and in some areas our collaboration will be closer than in others, sharing experiences and insights will, I think, benefit the citizens we serve, as will better coordinating where we act together. The Prime Minister has been clear that this meeting must not be an end in itself but rather an opportunity to ensure that across a range of different key policy areas on COVID recovery ministers and officials are working together intensively on an ongoing basis to address our shared challenges.

Having listened carefully to your views this morning about the additional preparations you would like to undertake, I have recommended to the Prime Minister that we delay the meeting to allow extra work to take place. He has agreed but remains keen to meet as soon as practicable.

I am grateful for the work that your officials have undertaken with ours over the past fortnight, and I know that our teams will now engage with great intensity over the coming days. I remain available to speak again in advance if that would be helpful, including via our regular weekly calls.

I am copying this letter to the First and deputy First Ministers of Northern Ireland.

**With every good wish,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Gove'.

**Rt Hon Michael Gove MP  
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster  
and Minister for the Cabinet Office**