



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

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

30th November 2020

Dear Prime Minister,

In response to the announcement that South Holland and South Kesteven are to be included in 'Tier Three' Covid restrictions, we are writing to you on behalf of those we represent to convey our profound disappointment.

We recognise that throughout this unprecedented crisis, the Government has been forced to make difficult decisions in extraordinary circumstances. In seeking to safeguard the livelihoods, wellbeing and the health of our people - so protecting lives, particularly those of the elderly and clinically vulnerable, we appreciate your decency, dedication and determination.

From the outset you have, rightly, repeated that the actions of the Secretary of State for Health are guided by the science, reassuring MPs that the current national lockdown would make a meaningful, positive difference in the fight against Covid-19. As such, we have supported you in the House of Commons and across our county in the towns and villages we represent.

As the case rates in South Holland and South Kesteven are lower than scores of other areas soon to be within 'Tier Two' – including places that border them, we have serious concerns, on behalf of our constituents, about the methodology for arriving at this determination. Citizens of these two districts entered the latest national lockdown, sacrificing much of the fraternity and fulfilment that brings solace and solidarity at difficult times, having been in Tier One. They will emerge, and apparently remain for the foreseeable future, in Tier Three. This blow will not only damage confidence and resolve, but risks reducing adherence to restrictions.

Owing to the size of our county and the distribution of its population, most of those living in rural South Lincolnshire have very limited contact with distant East Lindsey or Lincoln and little with Boston. Indeed, if they travel at all, our residents frequent neighbouring

Peterborough, Norfolk or Rutland, all of which are in Tier Two. Therefore, an arbitrary county focus does not take account of the actual patterns of travel and consequent interactions of our residents.

This considered, we urge you to reconsider the present arrangements for tiers in Lincolnshire. For the purpose of effectiveness, introducing restrictions based on either:

1. District's boundaries rather than the county as a whole, or
2. Boundaries that accurately reflect real patterns of routine journeys and communal engagement, so categorising the combined districts of South Holland and South Kesteven in the same tier as Peterborough, Norfolk and Rutland

Such a tailored, targeted approach to tackling the virus is sure to be welcomed by those who currently feel so aggrieved in the places we represent.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Sir John Hayes CBE MP
South Holland and The Deepings

Gareth Davies MP
Grantham and Stamford

Cllr Martin Hill OBE
Leader of Lincolnshire County Council

The Lord Porter of Spalding CBE
Leader of South Holland District Council

Cllr Kelham Cooke
Leader of South Kesteven District Council

cc. Rt Hon. Matt Hancock MP
Rt Hon. Michael Gove MP
Rt Hon. Mark Spencer MP, Chief Whip