



Science and Technology Committee

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From Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Chair

Sir Patrick Vallance
Government Chief Scientific Adviser
Government Office for Science
(By e-mail)

30 September 2020

Dear Patrick,

Science advice behind COVID-19 measures

I write to you in my capacity as Chair of the Science and Technology Committee and in relation to the Committee's inquiry into the COVID-19 pandemic.¹

As you know, my Committee has sought throughout the pandemic to illuminate and understand the evidence and advice underlying key Government decisions. The importance of maintaining clarity, transparency and confidence in the evidence-base informing decision-making has become increasingly apparent in recent weeks as the UK has reached a critical juncture ahead of winter and further measures have been introduced by the Government to manage the spread of the virus.

With this in mind, I would be grateful if you could set out the evidence and advice given by the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) and its sub-groups to the Government ahead of the measures announced on 21 September and further detailed on 22 September.^{2,3}

I would also be grateful if, in your response, you could provide answers to the following:

- On which of the measures announced on 22 September did SAGE give advice, and what was that advice?
- What evidence and advice did SAGE give around the potential duration of measures?
- Did the Government seek any advice from SAGE on the potential impact on virus transmission of closing businesses selling food or drink between the hours of 10pm and 5am and, if so, what evidence and advice was supplied by SAGE and related groups including SPI-M and SPI-B?

I am also writing to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care in similar terms. I would be grateful to receive your response by Tuesday 13 October at the latest. I will publish this letter and your response on the Committee's website in due course.

With best wishes,

Rt Hon Greg Clark MP
Chair

¹ <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/91/uk-science-research-and-technology-capability-and-influence-in-global-disease-outbreaks/>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/new-measures-in-response-to-the-acceleration-of-coronavirus>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-covid-19-what-has-changed-22-september>