



Transport Committee

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

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The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
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Dear Michael,

I hope all is well with you at this busy time in the political calendar.

My colleagues and I on the Transport Committee recently visited Heathrow Airport to look at their COVID testing capability. Whilst there, we discussed preparedness for 1 January 2021 and new rules which may apply to citizens from the EU. It would appear that two measures would assist in creating a smoother arrivals process:

1. Clear communication with passengers and businesses, including confirmation that EU citizens can continue to use eGates and that any paperwork needed should be a condition of carriage for any airline, coach, ferry or train bringing in EU citizens to UK ports, airports or on Eurostar; and/or
2. Any additional burdens, requiring more time with our Border Force officials at arrivals, should be met by a full resourcing of all Border Force desks.

Management at Heathrow, who clearly have only the interest of a smooth operation in mind, are concerned that media interest is gathering with the hope that the media can show negative pictures on the day when the UK leaves the transition period. Whilst they may not be able to film, the world of camera-phones and social media creates a platform of negativity.

We are keen to point these matters out in order for our ports, airports and rail terminals to have all of the rules and resources in place to allow for a smooth transition.

I would be grateful if the above matters can be actioned, or that alternative measures to deal with the same issue are implemented, and for an update thereafter.

Yours sincerely,

Huw Merriman MP
Chair of the Transport Committee