

Rt Hon. Robert Jenrick
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government
Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

15 July 2021

Dear Secretary of State,

Following the final meeting of the Transition Board today, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the importance of the work it has done over the last year, but also on what must come next as we move to further unlock.

This morning I hosted 25 of London's Chairs and CEOs to discuss how we can harness the opportunities offered by reaching step four. It was evident that for all of them that clarity, as I said at today's meeting, is the biggest issue in being able to progress with their plans for the future and to enable them to operate at full capacity in the months ahead.

There are a number of specific points they would ask the Government to take early action on. First and foremost is the need to make a consistent, positive case for the reopening of offices, cultural venues, hospitality, and the night-time economy, as there are wider benefits beyond the economic, not least for mental health. Alongside this, they need greater clarity on how to implement the new guidance, particularly in the context of health and safety rules, employment law and liability issues.

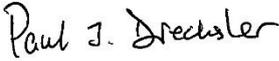
Secondly, as people start to return in greater numbers to their workplaces, there is a strong view that making masks mandatory for public transport in the short-term would be beneficial, as there is a clear benefit to a common approach across the UK. In addition, to make that return more attractive, there remains a benefit to adopting a short-term "first journeys" rail discount approach like the one put forward by London First in its report with Bain & Company, which I have enclosed.

Thirdly, it is now critical to bring forward the date for the end of self-isolation for the double-vaccinated to 19th July and, in the context of restarting safe international travel at a larger scale, to extend the quarantine changes for UK passengers to the EU, US and beyond. It must be clear that vaccinations remain the route out of the worst of the pandemic, and clarity is now needed to land that message.



Businesses are ready to do what it takes to get the economy firing on all cylinders, to support their workers in a safe return and to support the recovery effort in the round. Clarity will go a long way to helping them to deliver that in practice and at pace.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Drechsler
Chair of London First

cc. Paul Scully MP, Minister for London
cc. Rajesh Agrawal, Deputy Mayor of London for Business

Encl. [Central Government's role in helping London drive recovery](#)