



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

5 November 2020

Dear constituent,

As you know, last Saturday the Prime Minister addressed the nation to highlight concerns over the escalating increase in covid infections, and set out the need for national measures to bring the rate of infection under control. Since the start of this pandemic the Government and I have been clear that our priority must be to protect NHS capacity, and we were presented evidence from our Chief Medical and Scientific Officers that the rising rates pose a serious risk to this capacity. Without intervention now we could be left not only unable to treat those with covid but also those in need of other NHS treatment, diagnostics or support.

We must protect the NHS and I supported these time limited restrictions because there is simply no other option available at this time. Even so, it was not an easy decision. I am fully aware of the pain and damage caused by lockdowns, from the viable businesses being pushed to the wall, the damage to livelihoods, the long-term health impacts and the heartbreak of not being able to see and support our loved ones.

This is why during this lockdown we must work on a Plan B to prevent it being part of an unending cycle of lockdowns. We cannot simply wait in the hope of a vaccine but must act to find a way to move forward whether or not a vaccine will emerge. And rather than promises of future innovation, this must be based on existing methods and technology that we know can be delivered now.

You cannot, of course, find a solution without first fully understanding the challenges you face. For this reason it is essential that we have full access and ability to scrutinise the data and modelling on which current decisions are based. The Government have been leading the world in research and development, and we should of course be guided by the science, but scientists, like all of us, interpret information in different ways. There is no single scientific view or agreed way forward. To ensure all options can be explored, the full data should be made available including assessments of the economic impact and resultant health harms. This would inform the debate, allow greater understanding of the risks and challenges and ensure solutions can be targeted in the most effective way, to benefit the largest number of people.

While I voted in favour of a temporary national lockdown to protect our health service, I am committed to pushing for better access to the data, scientific modelling, and scientists themselves, and an exit strategy to the current cycle of restrictions and infection rate rises. I have set out this position in a series of articles and speeches, and I will continue to work to deliver this for the benefit of Runnymede and Weybridge constituents, and the UK as a whole.

Further information on the restrictions and enhanced support available is available at <https://www.drben Spencer.org.uk/coronavirus-advice>.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ben Spencer'.

**Dr Ben Spencer MP**  
**Runnymede and Weybridge**