

Government Response: The Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (No. 2) (Wales) (Amendment) (No. 16) (Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham) Regulations 2020

This is a Government response to the draft report of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee dated 7 October 2020.

Merit Scrutiny point 1(a):

The data on 28 September showed a rising trend in rolling 7-day incidence rates of COVID-19 across local authority areas in North Wales. A summary of all confirmed cases of COVID-19 between 20 and 27 September 2020, by Local Authority, is provided below.

This table summarises cases and testing, where samples were collected during the 7 day period above.

For the 7 day period ending at 23:59 on 27-09-2020	n	% of All Wales Total	7-day incidence
Blaenau Gwent	192	8.3%	274.8
Caerphilly	93	4.0%	51.4
Monmouthshire	18	0.8%	19.0
Newport	90	3.9%	58.2
Torfaen	48	2.1%	51.1
Aneurin Bevan	441	19.1%	74.2
Conwy	54	2.3%	46.1
Denbighshire	36	1.6%	37.6
Flintshire	84	3.6%	53.8
Gwynedd	18	0.8%	14.5
Isle of Anglesey	7	0.3%	10.0
Wrexham	59	2.6%	43.4
Betsi Cadwaladr	258	11.2%	36.9
Cardiff	319	13.8%	86.9
Vale of Glamorgan	55	2.4%	41.2
Cardiff and Vale	374	16.2%	74.7
Bridgend	157	6.8%	106.8
Merthyr Tydfil	129	5.6%	213.8
Rhondda Cynon Taf	444	19.2%	184.0
Cwm Taf Morgannwg	730	31.6%	162.7
Carmarthenshire	126	5.5%	66.7
Ceredigion	17	0.7%	23.4
Pembrokeshire	11	0.5%	8.7
Hywel Dda	154	6.7%	39.8
Powys	29	1.3%	21.9
Powys	29	1.3%	21.9
Neath Port Talbot	76	3.3%	53.0
Swansea	247	10.7%	100.0
Swansea Bay	323	14.0%	82.8
Total	2309	100.0%	73.2

Our decisions are informed by local intelligence. The restrictions were introduced at the request of the Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board Incident Management Team (IMT) who, on 29 September, raised concern about the rising trend in rolling 7-day incidence rates of COVID-19 across four local authority areas in North Wales, including Conwy County Borough. The IMT recommended a proactive and preventative approach be taken. The request from the IMT was for the Welsh Government to introduce restrictions equivalent to those for Local Health Protection Areas in South Wales. Following a call with local authority leaders and public authorities, the Welsh Government accepted their recommendation to put in place Local Health Protection Areas in Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham.

At the time of writing, all of these areas have subsequently seen rises in incidence and positivity rates according to the Public Health Wales data. In Conwy the 7 day incidence rate (up to 5 October) is at 63.1 people per 100,000, an increase of nearly 20 points since the decision was made to introduce restrictions. In Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham the incidence rates now exceed 100, with some of the highest prevalence in Wales.

Merit Scrutiny point 1(b):

The trajectory of increases in cases above demonstrates and justifies the need for regulations to come into force as quickly as possible.

Merit Scrutiny point 1(c):

At the time, the data above and the Incident Management Teams in the six local authorities not under LHPAs did not support going into local lockdown as this would have been disproportionate.