



As I am sure you are all aware there is a new variant of Coronavirus that has recently been detected. This new variant is known as Omicron.

On Wednesday evening the Prime Minister announced the implementation of "Plan B" rules and guidelines to help manage the spread of this new variant. These requirements include the wearing of facemasks in all indoor public places and Covid passports for large events.

The Government is also advising, once again, that people should work from home if possible.

Throughout the Covid Pandemic we have tried to follow all Government guidelines and recommendations regarding our personal safety and of course the safety of those around us, especially at work. All the changes and precautions that we have adopted over the past 18 months to provide protection against the virus in our offices and on site remain effective. Our Group income is derived from our site-based activities, and, like all similar organisations, it is simply not possible for the majority of our employees to "Work from home".

As we learn more about Omicron some of you may be required to work from home for a short while. If this is the case then in accordance with Board requirements you must discuss and agree any change with your Regional manager or Director.

As we approach the Christmas break, regional gatherings have been arranged for our teams. As I write this the Government has not made any ruling regarding "Christmas Parties". However, the rules regarding Omicron are clear.

Anyone who has been in contact with a confirmed or suspected case of Omicron must;

1. Stay at home and self-isolate even if they are fully vaccinated

and

2. Continue to self-isolate for the full 10 days even if they test negative during this period.

Whilst I am sure that you all enjoy a Christmas Party with your colleagues and workmates, there is a higher risk that any gathering could lead to contact with Omicron. This of course may then result in your personal Christmas arrangements being severely disrupted.

Consequently, and for the well-being of all our staff the only sensible option is to postpone all company Christmas functions.

I am sorry that we need to take this action, but I do hope that we will be able to rearrange our lunches or dinners as soon as we are able in 2022.

Please continue to follow all the rules regarding masks, hand washing and social distancing. I do hope that you are all able to stay safe and enjoy your Christmas break with family and loved ones.

Tony Rimoldi
Group Chief Executive