

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 November 2020 14:08  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Mail Online tweet [OFFICIAL]

Thanks [REDACTED], that consolidated line looks fine (and was cleared by [REDACTED] here). Our [REDACTED] are going to pick up direct with yours as they have asked that you don't issue a new tweet.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 November 2020 13:35  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Mail Online tweet [OFFICIAL]

Thanks [REDACTED], happy with those changes.

Clean version below which [REDACTED] have cleared. [REDACTED] asked me to check whether [REDACTED] have cleared this too?

I've deleted the tweet. [REDACTED] also asked me to check again whether we should issue a new tweet based on the second line? As [REDACTED] said, I think it will only fan the flames further.

**A Government spokesperson said:**

"It is inaccurate to suggest any data has been deliberately misrepresented. During the presentation of data, it was clearly explained what the slides did and did not show.

"The projections cited were based on what would happen if no further restrictions were put in place and did not take into account the robust action the Government has taken to save lives since then.

"It's vital people follow the rules and stay at home while the national restrictions are in place so we can bring the transmission rates back down and get back to normality as soon as possible."

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 November 2020 13:19  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Mail Online tweet [OFFICIAL]

Thanks [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] have said they've agreed direct that it's fine to delete the tweet.

On the statement – a couple of comments from my side below:



DHSC were not approached for a comment to the original story. We responded with a statement and published a rebuttal tweet yesterday. The Mail on Sunday published an article accusing the Government of censoring the media for scrutinising lockdown decisions.

The Daily Mail is following up on the story for tomorrow's paper and will be making similar claims about censorship.

They have asked for a comment explaining why their original article was incorrect and who signed off the rebuttal tweet.

### **Media handling**

We recommend the statement below.

### **Lines to clear**

#### **A Government spokesperson said:**

"It is categorically inaccurate to suggest any data has been deliberately twisted. It was clearly explained what the slides did and did not show.

"The projections cited were based on what would happen if no further restrictions were put in place and did not take into account the robust action the Government has taken to save lives since then.

"It's vital people follow the rules and stay at home over the coming weeks so we can bring the transmission rates back down and get back to normality as soon as possible."

### **Background**

1. The full slides from the latest coronavirus press conference can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/slide-to-accompany-coronavirus-press-conference-20-november-2020>
2. Those from the 31 October conference can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/slides-to-accompany-coronavirus-press-conference-31-october-2020>

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 22 November 2020 12:53

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Cc:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** RE: Mail Online tweet [OFFICIAL]

Thanks [REDACTED] – and apologies, just catching up - what was the original argument for the Mail article being misleading, was it because the figures cited didn't account for July measures?

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 November 2020 12:47  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Mail Online tweet [OFFICIAL]

Thanks [REDACTED]

Does this work? <https://twitter.com/DHSCgovuk/status/1330216324258275329?s=20>

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 November 2020 12:45  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Mail Online tweet [OFFICIAL]

Hi [REDACTED], picking this up now. Afraid that link to the tweet doesn't work when I click on it – do you mind sending another?

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 November 2020 12:32  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Mail Online tweet [OFFICIAL]

Thank you.

The Mail will be doing another story in tomorrow's paper accusing DHSC of censoring journalists. We're working on a response and I'll share it with you soon.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 November 2020 12:30  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Mail Online tweet [OFFICIAL]

Copying [REDACTED], who will circulate here

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 November 2020 12:06  
**To:** [REDACTED]

**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Mail Online tweet [OFFICIAL]

Ta. Let me get a view from a few others here.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 November 2020 12:00  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Mail Online tweet [OFFICIAL]

Agreed. Are you happy for us to just delete the tweet?

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 November 2020 11:49  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Mail Online tweet [OFFICIAL]

But you can't replace a tweet? You can only delete and then go back on the original article with a new comment, so you're rebutting twice, only the second time around admitting that you went too hard first time? Which just creates another story. Isn't it better to just leave it?

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 November 2020 11:45  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Mail Online tweet [OFFICIAL]

It could potentially reignite it, yes.

But the Mail Online did not approach us for a comment and their headline is very misleading so [REDACTED] feel we should rebut with less confrontational language.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 November 2020 11:39  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Mail Online tweet [OFFICIAL]

I'll check at this end, but isn't doing that just going to reignite?

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 November 2020 11:37  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Mail Online tweet

Hi [REDACTED]

I understand [REDACTED] have been speaking to the Mail Online about this rebuttal tweet:  
<https://twitter.com/DHSCgovuk/status/1330216324258275329?s=20>

[REDACTED] wants us to delete the tweet for relationship management purposes and replace with the below:

*"The measures introduced by the government to keep people safe have saved lives. The July projection cited in the article did not account for possible measures to stop the spread of the virus."*

Can I check you're happy with this?

Thanks,

[REDACTED]



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

[REDACTED]

Newsdesk: E: [pressofficenewsdesk@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:pressofficenewsdesk@dhsc.gov.uk) or T: 0207 972 3272  
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For emergency out of hours queries, call 0333 3201654  
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