

10:20



Chris >

been wondering what value there is in setting out the path beyond. Comms people in favour - it gives you the line "we have a plan and we are sticking to it". But it is a faff to produce (even though I imagine we are talking about something that is relatively short - ie 2 or 3 pages). What's your view?

I'm In favour of publishing short things (so 2, 3 pages sounds good) as long as they are written at the end of the policy making process rather than beginning. The problem with the roadmap was it filled up with last minute untested ideas/dates to fill out the announcement. So if there is a proper policy making process of agreeing what the govts position is, I'd be in favour of then publishing a short clear 'this is what we are going to do next' statement that's more like a WMS than a white paper.

1 Jul 2020 at 13:00



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Chris >



4 Sep 2020 at 18:40

**Irrelevant & Sensitive**

6 Sep 2020 at 13:02

I typed a reply and failed to press send! Thanks again for sorting, good result. I will sort from here with Susan.

Think you've heard CMOs rather grimmer reading of the infection numbers? Difficult.

Had a call with Dido earlier. Starting to look tricky. What's your sense? People obviously very nervous and jumpy - we clearly don't want to over or under-shoot here!

CMO and I discussed and got to (1) no jumping to decisions - considered advice next week (2) gut feeling on what that advice might be: (a) double down on existing policies - so marginal



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Chris >



might be: (a) double down on existing policies - so marginal decisions on local lockdowns etc should err towards safety (b) step up Messaging and enforcement of existing social distancing rules (c) prepare public opinion for maybe having to introduce new national rules in 3 to 4 weeks time - esp if people flout existing rules and (d) the trickiest one - dialling back on the 'back to normal' rhetoric esp around Xmas and return to workplaces. They Cld both look own goals in a few weeks. But all for discussion/judgement.

7 Sep 2020 at 07:51

If you happen to be free at 0800, I am going to do a Zoom call with Dido, Chris etc on these latest numbers. Will get my office to send yours the details

I can be - see you in 5

7 Sep 2020 at 09:39



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Chris >

20 Sep 2020 at 14:30

**Irrelevant & Sensitive**

**Irrelevant & Sensitive**

6 Oct 2020 at 14:33

Latest numbers from north east and north west v grim indeed. Govt will need to decide it's strategic response in the next 48 hours. Think it will need a pm/chx/health sec trilateral post JBC gold tomorrow.

Okay - thanks



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Chris >



6 Oct 2020 at 21:31

Were you calling?

Have just finished a couple of hours with PM on what next. Can update you on his thinking

Free when you are!

7 Oct 2020 at 20:12

Rishi pushing back hard on everything tonight. Patience needed

And a deep breath

No surprises there then.

They have a serious job to do with their back benches too to land this.

Rishi's view is that they won't land it.

He may well be right in the short



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Chris >



term. Eventually the pressure of the numbers will win out, but possibly too late for our measures to be effective. In which case national lockdown will be the only place left to go.

That's almost precisely what I've just said to the PM. Perfectly legitimate choice not to act now, but you have to own and acknowledge risk that you have to do an awful lot more later

8 Oct 2020 at 11:49

How's it going today? This mornings press all deeply unhelpful.

9 Oct 2020 at 11:09

Sorry for radio silence. Last 48hrs has been horrendous negotiation with everyone in No 10/11. I think we have planes coming into land today, though. Rishi opening cheque-book. LA engagement begins on what they want tier 3 action to look



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Chris >



they want tier 3 action to look like in their area.

9 Oct 2020 at 12:36

We've just been through the current package. Obs much better to be here than where we were, but I don't think anyone thinks the default T3 package is going to turn Manchester, Liverpool etc around. And I'd guess it's unlikely local discussions are going to agree going beyond the default. So I think we are going to be back where we are now in a couple of weeks time on what the next set of measures looks like.

If Matt could bring his colleagues in Cabinet and party round, this would all be much easier!

Indeed! And it may well be that a step in the right direction is all that's practically possible right now. But important therefore it doesn't get oversold when



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Chris >

now. But important therefore it doesn't get oversold when announced.

Amen to that!

9 Oct 2020 at 13:58

Matt going a little crazy over the package. Am not surprised.

Not surprised either and tbh probably a good thing. We can't leave anyone in any doubt what the package does and doesn't do. If they then do it anyway with their eyes open then fine.

Agree. Have just spoken to Matt. I said similar

10 Oct 2020 at 11:17

Negotiations with local areas hard going and expensive! We are going to have to give them cash for local contact tracing and enforcement



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Chris >



and enforcement

In return for that, they might do further restrictions!

How very kind of them.

But an unsurprising product of setting the default far too low I'm afraid. CHX will have cost himself a lot of money by holding out against a proper package in the first place.

Eddie Lister seems to be in his element - wheeler-dealing with LAs! They have been complaining like crazy about the poor engagement from T&T/Contain. They are really angry (at Matt and gov't too)

Eddie is great.

Not surprised they are angry either. The various press briefings are a case study in how not to negotiate.



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Chris >



Plus being seen to be angry = more cash!!!!

The briefing is insane. The accusations flying between PM, Matt and Rishi for who is responsible for that is quite something to behold!

Irrelevant & Sensitive

**Irrelevant & Sensitive**

**Irrelevant & Sensitive**

**Irrelevant & Sensitive** Given how widely all this was discussed in Gold, SAGE etc, I suspect every journalist will have been overwhelmed with sources!!!

11 Oct 2020 at 13:46

I'm sure you know already but Covido going to be difficult later. Our and CMOs view is neither the current substance nor the geographic coverage of tier 3 is enough to meet the govts objective of turning the virus round in the North.



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Chris >



round in the North.

I don't anyone does think it is enough. But equally, none of us can answer the question put the other way - why do we think imposing tougher restrictions on an unwilling area, in the face of local opposition, will work either? It would seem if we go ahead we could face widespread disobedience and non-enforcement. Then what?

Yes, indeed- we are where we are. What we need to be now is firm on is how what we are doing is described on Monday. It'll have to be 'important first steps but local areas will have to go further' rather than 'this will solve the problem'.

All the mayors will of course say 'we would have gone further if the money was right' and will dump it back in our court.

I completely agree about



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Chris >



dump it back in our court.

I completely agree about Monday - Liverpool's position will end up being the first rung on the tier 3 ladder. They will have to go further soon enough, I would have thought. How we now regret the over-generosity of the first furlough scheme!

12 Oct 2020 at 09:44

Morale in JBC, test, trace and contain has hit absolute bottom following a weekend of (what they see) as being trashed in public by the Taskforce. I'm not in a position to judge the rights and wrongs of this but we do have a serious problem, even with some of their most positive people. Name Redacted is talking to Kate J this morning to seek to find a way forward and a better process, but anything you can do from your end to assist, much appreciated. C



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Chris >



Yes - that sounds right on process. I'm sure we can do plenty of the Covid O bits out of committee!

Hopefully yes!!

Matt content with all this

Thank you

29 Oct 2020 at 21:25

Just FYI, PM is getting advice from Taskforce and his political team tonight recommending a national-scale, French-style lockdown.

Thanks - That is the advice he should be getting. As various people have been saying, the current T3 package has not been quick enough or tough enough to do the job.

I think Rishi is reasonably resigned to it too



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Chris >

The numbers (and the European numbers) speak for themselves unfortunately. He doesn't really have anyone to blame but himself. The way to avoid national action was to go much harder, much earlier locally, which he opposed. So we are where we are.

31 Oct 2020 at 08:15

We probably ought to talk WMCs through what is happening - do you agree? Annc't being brought fwd to today because of this leak. No 10 crew have Matt in their sights over the leak, by the way. It was certainly one of a very small number of people!

31 Oct 2020 at 09:25

Only issue with a WMCs is chris whitty and Patrick will feel they need to be there - and they have a lot to do. Maybe a Ridley/DG level meeting focused on what we need depts to do (guidance updating, sector support etc)



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