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Subject: Cab Sec daily meeting readout

Date: Tue, 24 Mar 2020 19:32:11 +0000

Just off the Cab Sec's meeting. We did it by zoom, which is now the medium of choice it seems across government. I just have to learn how to put my hand up...that'll be my L&D for tomorrow. Following is a raw version of the discussion - as ever please protect.

Cab Sec intro: emphasised that now we've got shielding up and running the focus is moving to how we increase capacity. He acknowledged that the focus to date has been on NHS England but recognised this needed to be 4-nation wide and he wanted to give the DAs chance to comment on their plans (but then failed to bring them in, so all DAs silent throughout the call).

Cab Sec putting another message out to CS later today stressing need to follow the guidance, to lead others in the community to follow the guidance and that essential services must continue. This sparked a bit of a debate about the clarity (or lack thereof) of public messaging. Cab Sec said the PM had stressed at Cabinet today that he had NOT said don't go to work. He's said wfh if you can, and go to work if you can't. He wasn't intending only key workers to go to work. For those who did go into work, they needed to follow PHE guidance. The PM wanted the economy to keep functioning as far as possible apart from those areas which had been specifically closed (bars restaurants, non-essential retail etc). There was some questioning of how this sat with the text message to 60m phones - as a result of this and other messaging, staff were now staying away. Inevitably because the messaging had been so strong yesterday and today, people were unsure what 'essential' work was, confusing this with key workers, and staying away. DfE upset that (again) they hadn't had notice of what was coming. There was a noticeable impact on schools today. Cab Sec acknowledged this and said it was inevitable that with people working at pace things would be a bit ragged.

Delivery report: The new style delivery report was broadly welcomed. It aims to bring together CCS data with the critical projects highlighted by departments, to help the PM on a daily basis understand how well we're doing eg on increasing the number of ventilators. It will be updated twice daily.

CCS made a great point about the data underlying this being predominantly from England and that it was vital to get more data streams in from the DAs to ensure that decisions were properly evidence based. Lots of nodding and endorsement of this point from Cab Sec, and HOCS was on the line, so we should keep on at this one.

MIG reports: Nothing new to report from these in addition to what we are getting ourselves. The comedy moment was one strand lead reporting that they hadn't stayed for the whole meeting so couldn't really say what had been decided.....

More interesting: Jonathan Black reported that the CHX now wants to start focussing on construction and infrastructure (eg using the opportunity to fix roads). And he's also focussed on getting the comms to business right (and gathering back all the intelligence we can from business).

Cab Sec intends to bring together the DG strand leads later this week to start forward looking over several weeks so we can plan further ahead.

Upcoming PM decisions: focus now shifting to the supply side elements (testing etc). PM also due to take an international item on Thursday (though there is also a G20 on Thursday so this might fall away). Additional hospitals on the agenda for tomorrow. I asked that this be looked at on a 4 nation basis.

Philip Barton - now redrafted into the Cabinet Office, led on the new strategic framework. This is seeking to look across all the strands and to provide a forward perspective towards recovery and what we can do to create opportunity. Philip envisages a small core team that can see the overview and make sure that we're

integrating data to enable sound modelling of health, economic, wider impacts as we move towards recovery phase. A suggestion that the CO strategic framework team under **Name Redacted** should pivot to support Philip in developing this further. Lots of stress from Cab Sec on PM's desire to focus on opportunity coming out of this - with suggestions such as using the opportunity while people are at home to raise digital skills, to expand the digital economy and the low carbon economy. Cab Sec also asked our innovative thinkers to start working out what we can do to generate advantage for the UK as we move into the recovery phase and beyond.

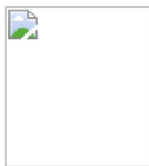
Comms: In the last 24 hours lots of firsts: the SMS to 60 m people, and initiatives with Google and You Tube had had significant impact in getting the government message through. Two PM letters to issue by the end of the week:

- one to those in the most vulnerable group, the other to other members of the public with a leaflet attached providing advice. Plus a hard hitting 'stay at home' campaign launches tonight on TV if any of you are watching Midsommer Murders or Great British Bake Off.....

Apologies for the length of this - and thanks to everyone for all your work today.

Madeleine

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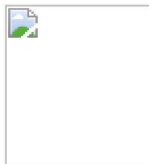


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