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Subject: Cab Sec Daily - 26/03/20

Date: Thu, 26 Mar 2020 19:07:06 +0000

Another day, another Cab Sec Zoom. This one brightened by Perm Secs chatting in the margins about how much school work their kids are getting, then a surreal moment when our leader dropped out momentarily only to return with a booming voice that (his words not mine) made him sound like the Evil Emperor in Star Wars...(it has been a long day...)

Key points from this evening's meeting (please treat with usual sensitivity)

Cab Sec: PM remains totally focussed on building up NHS capacity and resilience. Very concerned to ensure that the whole health system - in all 4 nations - has the capacity it needs.

MIG updates:

Simon Ridley has now pulled together the 4 nation shielding comparator and reported that although the DA are a little later in getting their letters out to vulnerable individuals and have different delivery approaches, otherwise the shielding offers are broadly aligned.

NR

s MIG had looked at death today. The headline was that our plans are adequate IF we're on a controlled trajectory. Not if we're not.

She reported a sensible conversation with the Mayor of London at the Ministerial today over provision of transport in London.

Tomorrow (as already noted by our team) the focus will be on job redirection for those made unemployed by the situation, with a focus on getting them working in areas where there is greatest need - like agriculture.

Name Redacted asked for the DAs to be included in these discussions.

This job redirection is in addition to the work already referenced by Cab Sec yesterday to get unemployed involved in skills uplift. Two sep pieces of work - running in parallel.

Jonathan Black: reported the CHX announcement on the next tranche of fiscal support - including the package for the self employed. Comment: while we were on the call, DWP reported in that they were seeing an immediate spike in Google searches on the term 'Universal Credit', given the CHX's comment that the help for self employed won't be available until June so they should apply for UC before then....DWP now bracing for another massive spike in applications....

Upcoming PM agenda:

- update on ventilator supply
- work on vaccinations
- prioritisation for wider public services

The latter was subject of a deep dive led by Jess (see paper that went round earlier today). She asked for comments and challenge on her thinking and for people to email her direct with ideas. The presentation was a bit confused, so worth us taking a look at this paper and seeing if we have any thoughts to contribute.

Good observation on this from DWP, who commented that it's feeling at the moment like the Wallace and Grommit sketch in which Grommit is rapidly laying the train tracks as they hurtle forward on the train. But we need someone looking ahead now, spotting the ravine and building a bridge to help us over. In other words (for those of you unfamiliar with W&G) we need to start properly thinking now about the challenges 2-3 months out. eg when the demand for services like passports issue that is paused for now, suddenly comes flooding back.

Vaccine strategy: DHSC stressed that there is no treatment or vaccine yet. But on treatments, there are 2 front runner candidates (and HIV drug and an anti malarial) which are undergoing clinical trials. They may not prove effective in the end, but on a no regrets basis, we are acquiring significant quantities of them now to be well placed in the event they do work. On vaccines: again, there isn't one yet. But all international and academic efforts are focussed on finding one. We now have a Vaccine Task Force, led by Alexandra Jones (BEIS) to coordinate all the efforts.

DIT: said that (no pressure on our health colleagues) to recover from this the UK is going to need to attract investment - and for that will need to identify areas where we have an advantage. If we come through covid well (science led approach) then science - for which we are already respected - is the obvious candidate area. The converse is also true.

Comms: **NR** reported that there has been a 7% overall drop in people regarding themselves at personal risk - with a 17% drop in that figure in the 17-24 age group. The campaign now needs to focus on getting the message through to this group.

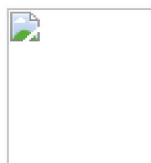
Finally: Cab Sec referenced the video clip he has done for the Civil Service - don't think we've seen that yet have we?

Not sure whether David Sterling made it onto the call. I got as WhatsApp from him 5 mins before the end when my phone burst into life again, saying he was having issues logging on....

Thanks again for all the hard work again today - see you tomorrow!

Madeleine

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