

[18/05/2020, 08:16:14] Mark Sedwill: Messages and calls are end-to-end encrypted. No one outside of this chat, not even WhatsApp, can read or listen to them.

[18/05/2020, 08:16:14] Mark Sedwill: Good and v candid conversation with PM including about Dom. To cut a long story short I agreed to stay on for now subject to various conditions about behaviour and systems. I've asked the team to work up a model for Perm Sec No10 on the JJH model which preserves Martin's role and Helen's upgrade in parallel. Once you're all agreed, I'd then like you and Helen to discuss it with Dom together. He needs to understand that divide and rule isn't a runner.

[18/05/2020, 08:29:32] Simon C: Okay. Thanks. First of all, I am glad you have had a good conversation with him. Second, I have many questions about all of this, as you can imagine! Third, I care very much about Helen and Martin, so want to see them do well out of all this. I am happy to work on this today, dispassionately, but I am not willing to agree to do any job back in this version of the centre without guarantees/honest conversations with the PM about behaviours. I will work for you and the PM. I will not work from Dom. I will not support any version of No 10 that undermines any Cabinet Secretary, let alone you.

I&S

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I will always do my utmost to support a PM, but I am v v cautious about walking back into this. I will talk to John/Helen/Martin/Dom about progressing this in a way that accords with your wishes and as per your conversation with the PM, not as it accords with Dom's views (if different from yours/PM's)!

[18/05/2020, 08:59:59] Mark Sedwill: Great. I will leave you, Helen and Martin to work out the model. Reinforcing my conversation with PM about behaviours v helpful. Speak later.

[18/05/2020, 15:40:05] Mark Sedwill: Google translate from Borisonian to Markian: "Ambiguous" = "Conditional".

[18/05/2020, 15:47:45] Simon C: Honestly, Mark, I don't want to go near these people. If as part of all this there are some guarantees about behaviour, I will give it a go for a very short period.

[18/05/2020, 15:52:14] Mark Sedwill: V wise. Focus on Covid to start with. Otherwise you just replicate the problem they say they want to address of being spread too thin. For example I think you should demand that you and Dom are co located with a combined staff so he can't run interference. That will be an interesting test of his intent. I was 60:40 planning to go before last night. It's still 50:50. Same question: behaviour.

[18/05/2020, 22:25:32] Simon C: I hear from everyone that you have made the PM see sense and the only thing that is happening is creation of a COVID job? If so, I am almost more appalled that the PM has done all of this and caused all of this damage, when all he really wanted was a point person for COVID.

[18/05/2020, 22:29:46] Mark Sedwill: Exactly the point I made and hammered the game playing. Covid now - response/recovery. Lead the work idc on a PM's Dept. Fine. If it sticks. I'm not sure he saw sense. He just gave in when I made clear how angry I was at the behaviour.

[18/05/2020, 22:34:29] Simon C: There is a line in Great Gatsby, I think, about careless people smashing up things and creatures and then retreating in their vast wealth (or something like that). It rather springs to mind.

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[18/05/2020, 22:35:27] Mark Sedwill: Thank goodness none of people has an important job Oh shit! They do!

[18/05/2020, 22:38:27] Simon C: I would welcome a chat tomorrow, if you are coming in. I will ponder over night. **Personal Data** I might be willing to have a go at this (the COVID thing) for 3 months. But I still want a chance to say to the PM before accepting even that short stint that if there is any repeat of this behaviour (not to me, but to anyone else), I will simply walk out early **Personal Data**

PD

[18/05/2020, 22:41:16] Mark Sedwill: That would be helpful. We have to show they can't divide and rule. And he has to know you are a player in your own right not a cipher for Dom.

PS: Helen should probably come to the meeting with PM tomorrow: he wants a direct line to Sect so he can have it.

PPS: We will have to line up both sets of authorisers tomorrow.

[18/05/2020, 22:48:29] Simon C: Look, I simply won't do the job in any terms other than I work for you (in exactly the same way Martin does - practically, morally and organisationally). I have now had three conversations in my life with Dom, but I can see far more of what he has done. I am a civil servant - I serve the crown, via the PM and Cab Sec. **I&S**

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I won't work for Dom. I will do my best to work with whatever team the PM wants around him, to the very best of my abilities, but I won't compromise my lawful and clear chain of command.

[18/05/2020, 22:49:31] Mark Sedwill: One day that text will be in the textbooks!

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[18/05/2020, 22:53:17] Mark Sedwill: And on that note 🙄

[18/05/2020, 22:54:52] Mark Sedwill: PS: this CabSec will back you! See you tomorrow.

[18/05/2020, 22:58:36] Simon C: Good. I won't stay on this without you. We need you. Because you have stood up to the PM over this, I think the rules will be very clear. **I&S**

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[22/05/2020, 23:42:14] Simon C: Away from more Dom drama, we had a good meeting earlier with PM. He and Rishi readily agreed a package, quite quickly. Your call about not including Patrick and Chris was genius - it removed that dynamic. Package is: primary schools as planned, Yr 10/12 limited; open up outdoor economy from 1 June; all non-essential retail (with social distancing) from 15 June; relax outdoor gatherings (so long as socially distances etc) and a few other bits and bobs. Patrick V happy with it - feels phasing if schools and retail is a big help.

[22/05/2020, 23:43:44] Mark Sedwill: Good. Well done. You've made a real difference in a few days. The real genius move was not including myself!

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[24/05/2020, 13:47:51] Simon C: FYI - PM now doing press conference at 1600. Obvs to deal with Dom issues. But he will also confirm schools opening (as per road map, so no collective agreement issues triggered)

[24/05/2020, 13:55:58] Mark Sedwill: Ok. Thx.

[26/05/2020, 18:52:15] Mark Sedwill: Just emailed you about Hancock. Don't care who grips it but we are about to lose the entire legal framework through the idiocy of Braverman and Hancock in response to the Cummings Affair. I'm ready to read the riot act as required.

[26/05/2020, 19:08:37] Simon C: Blimey - hadn't seen what he said. Totally bizarre.

[26/05/2020, 19:11:04] Mark Sedwill: Totally incompetent. They don't even understand the regs they authorise. Anyway, let's get on top of it fast. Do you want me to call Wormald?

[26/05/2020, 19:13:12] Simon C: Please do. Chris needs to grip Matt in the first place. I think, personally, fixing this should be overseen by Helen with Jonathan Jones. I will support them, fully. But I don't think we should run anything to do with the consequences of the DC affair from No 10. It would be a propriety nightmare for us, I fear. Does that make sense?

[26/05/2020, 19:14:29] Mark Sedwill: Good point on No10. I will call Chris. Then let's see where we go next.

[26/05/2020, 19:34:19] Simon C: Just been told that Matt misheard the question. He went to apologise to Lee afterwards (he thought the question was about parking fines). He is supposed to be issuing a correction

[26/05/2020, 19:35:01] Mark Sedwill: That won't quite cut it. And if you watch the clip is about as plausible an explanation as Barnard Castle.

[26/05/2020, 19:35:13] Mark Sedwill: I've just spoken to Chris.

[26/05/2020, 19:36:35] Mark Sedwill: And apologising to Lee demonstrates how these guys have their priorities wrong. It isn't a comms problem. It's a real problem.

[26/05/2020, 20:09:20] Simon C: Quite. The priorities are so strange.

[26/05/2020, 20:10:05] Mark Sedwill: Anyway, now knocking it into shape. What a waste of time.

[26/05/2020, 20:10:52] Mark Sedwill: Missed voice call

[26/05/2020, 20:26:03] Mark Sedwill: Sweeney now on it. Objective: maintain (restore?) integrity of legal framework. Sole objective!

[26/05/2020, 20:28:01] Simon C: Great!

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[27/05/2020, 10:13:04] Mark Sedwill: Thx. Are you coming to HoDs at 10:30?

[27/05/2020, 10:13:21] Simon C: Yes

[27/05/2020, 10:14:10] Mark Sedwill: I will get you to brief on Covid and the countdown.

[27/05/2020, 10:36:45] Simon C: I'm stuck with Pm and Dido. Will be there ASAP. Simon R can brief in my absence

[27/05/2020, 10:40:18] Mark Sedwill: Ok

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[30/05/2020, 14:51:41] Mark Sedwill: Clare has agreed to take it on. Dido v happy.

[30/05/2020, 14:52:43] Simon C: Great news. Thanks for making this happen.

[30/05/2020, 14:52:57] Mark Sedwill: 👍

[30/05/2020, 15:08:55] Simon C: Just FYI, I have upset hardliners in Cabinet today (eg Gove) by saying today that we can't open up churches for private prayer. Too risky alongside everything else we want to do - it is indoors, hard surfaces, largely older people involved etc. Patrick, Chris and I all agreed that we can't take this risk.

[30/05/2020, 15:09:45] Simon C: PM has reluctantly taken our advice, so I have cover

[30/05/2020, 15:10:26] Mark Sedwill: Well done. Steady as she goes.

[30/05/2020, 15:11:42] Simon C: Said no to opening zoos too - which will not make me popular at home either!!!

[30/05/2020, 15:37:09] Mark Sedwill: Simon Grinch!

[02/06/2020, 20:49:57] Simon C: Was PM okay when you saw him at lunch? He and I had a fairly big bust up this morning - I totally lost my rag with him over his flip-flopping. It is impossible to manage and I'm afraid I told him so very directly!

[02/06/2020, 22:02:18] Mark Sedwill: Good for you. He was in pretty good form at lunchtime. Didn't raise any concern about you. Your job requires you to do this. Well done.

[03/06/2020, 11:01:02] Mark Sedwill: Extraordinary intervention from Chris. DHSC's laissez faire attitude to programmes for which they are responsible has been arguably our (my) biggest failure.

[03/06/2020, 11:02:40] Simon C: It is bizarre. I know some is about his style, but he is hardly convincing senior ranks of gov't that the health system is "on it".

[03/06/2020, 11:08:45] Mark Sedwill: Quite! It's been a pattern. Matt overpromising/underdelivering and Chris on the touch line. I had hoped we'd corrected it. Keep an eye on it as JBC reverts from OSCT to DHSC.

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[05/06/2020, 15:09:12] Simon C: It is like taming wild animals. Nothing in my past experience has prepared me for this madness. The PM and the people he chooses to surround himself with are basically feral

[05/06/2020, 15:09:40] Mark Sedwill: I have the bite marks

[05/06/2020, 15:10:23] Mark Sedwill: After we've finished this boys toys stuff I'd like to ask a question about community relations.

[05/06/2020, 15:10:30] Simon C: Get a rabies shot!

[10/06/2020, 09:16:38] Mark Sedwill: You intervened on WFH prejudice just ahead of me. I would probably have been less temperate.

[10/06/2020, 09:17:02] Simon C: It is just tedious

[10/06/2020, 09:17:28] Simon C: And tells you more about the person that holds the prejudice than the people wfh!!!

[10/06/2020, 09:21:37] Mark Sedwill: Quite!

[10/06/2020, 09:23:37] Mark Sedwill: The hospitalisations number is the key to this. Serious incidence is falling faster than general incidence.

[10/06/2020, 09:24:02] Simon C: That is a crucial point

[10/06/2020, 09:25:55] Mark Sedwill: That and TTIC are more important to the 1m thing than general incidence. One newspaper points out today that children are likelier to die from a lightning strike. Not sure if that's right but it is a telling comparison. Young men are much likelier to be killed by a car or knife, or to top themselves.

[11/06/2020, 14:48:26] Simon C: How did you find the PM today? The decision over 15 June package seemed to take a real toll on him over a few days. Because I don't know him, though, I struggle to tell what is real and what is performance

[11/06/2020, 15:30:15] Mark Sedwill: Fine 1-1. But he's exhausted. FCO/DFID also stressful.

[11/06/2020, 15:42:38] Simon C: Is there a reason we have to rush to get FCO/DfID done? Couldn't picture in my head what the burning platform is here (given everything else we are trying to manage at the moment)

[11/06/2020, 16:53:12] Mark Sedwill: There isn't. Just worried about leaks and then being on the back foot. Trying to apply the brakes ...

[11/06/2020, 16:54:49] Simon C: Ah, politics. I'd forgotten the joy of trying to get Sunday newspapers to talk about anything other than our short-comings!!!

[19/06/2020, 15:20:45] Mark Sedwill: Having fun!

[19/06/2020, 15:21:22] Mark Sedwill: Irrelevant & Sensitive

[19/06/2020, 15:21:42] Simon C: So mad

[19/06/2020, 15:28:42] Mark Sedwill: 😡

[19/06/2020, 15:31:28] Simon C: Turns out we could just say we want stuff to happen and it will just happen. The virus is all the fault of the unions and parents...

[19/06/2020, 15:31:59] Simon C: It is not government, but it is amusing to watch...

[19/06/2020, 15:32:38] Mark Sedwill: Irrelevant & Sensitive

[19/06/2020, 15:34:26] Mark Sedwill: Bloody pesky that the public obeyed the histrionic "instructions" from the head prefect and haven't quite caught up with the latest gyrations? And now we are having another go at our old job ... with faux humility to add to the nause!

[19/06/2020, 15:37:38] Mark Sedwill: I have to go in a minute. Good luck with recording the conclusions!

[19/06/2020, 15:38:43] Simon C: "The Committee agreed that everything they wanted was just going to happen, because they really, really wanted it."

[22/06/2020, 17:52:53] Simon C: PM has turned up and has gone straight into mtg! Join when you can!

[23/06/2020, 07:11:12] Simon C: Rather than produce something different for Cabinet, do you think we should just send them the CS paper from yesterday?

[23/06/2020, 07:12:00] Mark Sedwill: I'd have thought so presumably slightly updated for campsite loos!

[23/06/2020, 07:12:17] Simon C: Ah yes!

[23/06/2020, 07:12:21] Mark Sedwill: Good piece of work btw.

[23/06/2020, 07:19:35] Simon C: It was largely the work of two very good people - Ollie Illott and **Name Redacted** (later did the 2m review work).

[23/06/2020, 07:19:47] Simon C: Ollie is just finalised the Cabinet paper now

[23/06/2020, 07:23:01] Mark Sedwill: 👍

[28/06/2020, 17:49:12] Simon C: Well, the one thing they cannot take away from you is the long track-record of loyal and courageous service. Crown service of the likes many of political colleagues will never understand

[28/06/2020, 20:13:34] Mark Sedwill: Thx. See you tomorrow for some more!

[29/06/2020, 10:13:35] Simon C: Do you think we should ask the PM to do a session with all Perm Secs on issues/priorities? I was telling him last night that, in my view, he needs a massive reset with officialdom. He's allowed other people to spoil his relationships with the people he needs to help him deliver his agenda. Amongst other things, doing a session with WMCs might be a positive gesture. Equally, it might all feel a bit too hollow at the moment. What do you think?

[29/06/2020, 13:04:42] Mark Sedwill: He and I had planned an Awayday with Cabinet and HoDs, but Covid binned it. A new term thing with my successor?

[29/06/2020, 18:56:05] Simon C: Do you know about capability/sophistication of Leicester constabulary?

[29/06/2020, 18:56:15] Simon C: Hell of a policing challenge here

[29/06/2020, 18:57:12] Mark Sedwill: Pretty good as I recall. They were one of the first to use proper crime harm index with data visualisation to determine police deployment. So should be ok. Don't know the current PCC.

[29/06/2020, 19:07:08] Simon C: We can change this SI at any point. Why wait until Friday?

[29/06/2020, 19:26:21] Mark Sedwill: Hancock drowning in bullshit. Not for the first time.

[29/06/2020, 19:43:55] Mark Sedwill: This meeting terribly underprepared. Hancock all over the place. Should have rehearsed with Dido **I&S** V hard for PM. Will have to be another meeting to review this in a few days which will need to be prepped better.

[29/06/2020, 19:45:07] Simon C: Yes. Up until a few hours ago, we were being told that no national action was required. Then mid afternoon, Matt and co suddenly say that we need to lock down. No data etc

[29/06/2020, 19:45:08] Mark Sedwill: Should have been a COBR

[29/06/2020, 20:01:51] Simon C: The paperwork on this will tell a terrible tale. For last fortnight, JBC advising that local action is adequate. We have gone from that to shutting the whole thing down. PM just saying that this is total deja vu

[29/06/2020, 20:02:38] Mark Sedwill: Absolutely. Welcome to February!

[29/06/2020, 20:03:16] Simon C: We are on way to see Matt now. This is just bizarre

[29/06/2020, 20:07:23] Simon C: BTW - Rishi totally outrageous. Reason we don't have powers to enforce fully is because he and Alok blocked them at the COVID Ops cttee!

[29/06/2020, 20:08:03] Mark Sedwill: I didn't know that. V bad.

[29/06/2020, 21:13:53] Simon C: Have told Matt he needs to start chairing daily mtgs on Leicester, with Chief Constable, local leaders etc. Have also said that we need to start the work now on action with the next 9 most concerning towns/cities. They are all ones with huge BAME communities...

[29/06/2020, 21:24:26] Simon C: And also much more interesting back story locally. Up until today, local leaders were refusing to accept legitimacy of PHE data. Chris Whitty has to argue with Mayor and others earlier today about the data. The legitimacy of the gov't to be accepted has been so dangerously eroded it seems (for fairly obvious reasons)

[29/06/2020, 22:01:35] Simon C: And local mayor has just gone on TV again to reject the stats...

[29/06/2020, 22:02:27] Mark Sedwill: Mayor actually a class act. Hancock trying to scapegoat him. Who do you believe?

[29/06/2020, 22:06:08] Simon C: Have just been talking to Chris and Patrick about what happened over the weekend - how we have gone from 0 to 60 so quickly. They are not sure which bits of our system we can trust - we are so dependent on local processes that we can't have a handle on. Jenrick's demands that we can't ask LAs to tell us anything over last few months are ringing in my ears...

[29/06/2020, 22:17:15] Mark Sedwill: Be careful of trusting CW's judgement on this. You need to trust local process most of the time but you also need a Plan B. The big problem is Hancock.

[29/06/2020, 22:18:50] Simon C: What do you make of Dido's judgement? She seems to have been talking Leicester down as an issue for last fortnight.

[29/06/2020, 22:21:02] Mark Sedwill: Talk Talk when it goes wrong!

[29/06/2020, 22:21:53] Mark Sedwill: But I mostly blame Hancock. Déjà vu. That was how we spent the early Spring?

[29/06/2020, 22:46:02] Simon C: I have only just realised that we have no senior DHSC officials anywhere near this. Where was Matt's Perm Sec or lead DG? We are engaging with PHE, the Clinicians etc. But there is no-one around driving the policy side of operational lockdown on Matt's behalf. Weird absence

[29/06/2020, 22:47:37] Mark Sedwill: Welcome to the last six months. Let's talk tomorrow morning

[30/06/2020, 13:11:59] Simon C: I think you are now on? I have done reflections. Simon just doing committees. Steffan had IT issues, so we skipped him, but he is now ready and can do dashboard!

[30/06/2020, 13:23:57] Mark Sedwill: Do you want to intervene on action in Leicester?

[30/06/2020, 13:24:29] Simon C: Am happy to

[30/06/2020, 13:24:53] Simon C: But let others come in first if they want - they hear enough from me!

[30/06/2020, 13:26:23] Simon C: The excellent Clare has actually covered it well! Prob don't need to come in now!

[01/07/2020, 09:58:24] Simon C: Are on this dashboard call? Is it right to round on Soulsby?

[01/07/2020, 21:13:48] Mark Sedwill: Sorry. In Brussels. Almost certainly not!

[02/07/2020, 19:54:28] Mark Sedwill: Were you social distancing while whispering to James Forsyth? 🙄

[02/07/2020, 19:57:31] Simon C: It is fucking extraordinary! I exploded at Dom over this (as did Lee). I will not work in an environment where Dom is constantly briefing out his plans and screwing up the rest of us in the process

[02/07/2020, 19:57:58] Mark Sedwill: But Dom never talks to the press. He told me!

[02/07/2020, 19:59:33] Simon C: It is just awful. The PM has now (multiple times) outright told Dom to stop talking to the media in my presence. And then this stuff happens. This place is just insane. Zero discipline.

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[02/07/2020, 20:00:39] Simon C: I have asked Slacky to talk to James Forsyth and say that next time he wants to mention me in a column, we expect to be called to offer comment/steer away etc.

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[02/07/2020, 20:02:28] Simon C: At this rate, I will struggle to last six months. These people are so mad. Not poisonous towards me (yet), but they are just madly self-defeating

[02/07/2020, 20:02:29] Mark Sedwill: Ok. I will fix.

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[02/07/2020, 20:03:38] Mark Sedwill: Yup! You're ok so far because you've been around for the good news phase. Wait until there are more Leicesters and then the fur will fly. Watch yourself.

[02/07/2020, 20:04:17] Mark Sedwill: As I pointed out to Eddie, it's hard to ask people to match to the sound of gunfire if they're shot in the back.

[02/07/2020, 20:06:16] Simon C: I've never seen a bunch of people less well-equipped to run a country. PM asked me today about who will replace Shinner when he goes (he'd heard he only has two weeks left). I was quite direct in telling him that lots of the top-drawer people I had asked had refused to come because of the toxic reputation of his operation.

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[02/07/2020, 20:11:23] Mark Sedwill: I told PM to sack Hancock (to save lives and protect the NHS) and replace him with Gove.

[02/07/2020, 20:11:46] Simon C: I think that's a great move

[02/07/2020, 20:13:42] Mark Sedwill: He could "rest" Hancock now (that total bullshit performance over Leicester was chilling and where was Chris) and promise him a new job at the full reshuffle after the summer.

[02/07/2020, 20:16:17] Mark Sedwill: 🍷 Monday?

[02/07/2020, 20:17:55] Simon C: Leicester is a horrifying case. I was genuinely shaken by it. Made me realise how much nonsense we've been fed by Matt, Dido and others. We were told for a fortnight that all was under control (by JBC). And then we suddenly get told it isn't fine and we have a couple of hours to decide to lock-down a whole city. The previous data was junk. The current data we have isn't much better. There is no proper leadership around Dido's operation etc. Really appalling

[02/07/2020, 20:18:10] Simon C: Suits me v well

[02/07/2020, 20:18:57] Mark Sedwill: And I'm told they are a hundred staff short. Needs a new CEO for the new UK CDC Irrelevant & Sensitive

[02/07/2020, 20:20:27] Simon C: PM agreed that approach this afternoon. New search underway

[02/07/2020, 20:21:04] Mark Sedwill: Profile? LtGen Dr McCoy?

[02/07/2020, 20:21:29] Simon C: Yes - ideally with Far Eastern experience!!!!

[02/07/2020, 20:22:00] Mark Sedwill: German?

[02/07/2020, 20:22:57] Mark Sedwill: Who's handling PHE etc?

[02/07/2020, 20:22:59] Simon C: I think any international experience would work. I told PM that I thought it was unlikely you would get someone from overseas against our timescale, but we should try.

[02/07/2020, 20:23:49] Simon C: Do you think we should ask Chris to take control of PHE future? Or is he just a busted flush now

[02/07/2020, 20:24:33] Mark Sedwill: COSSAC parallel?

[02/07/2020, 20:25:38] Mark Sedwill: They've done the policy work (or are doing it). Either him or David Williams. He's there so we should make use of him.

[02/07/2020, 20:26:03] Mark Sedwill: Does DHSC know that the CDC is a decision?

[02/07/2020, 20:59:40] Simon C: After a discussion about all this with PM, I actually asked for a letter to go out from the Private Secretary recording the PM's instruction that he wanted a CDC and a proper search process for a leader. I will make sure that gets tasked to Chris

[02/07/2020, 21:01:23] Mark Sedwill: Thx. It should be a formal ALB of DHSC presumably. If it needs legislation there are all sorts of rules about what you can do before 2nd reading so I'd try to avoid that and use existing powers for now if you can.

[16/07/2020, 16:15:55] Simon C: Well, at least that was a proper discussion. Actual Cabinet discussion. I thought PM handled that v well. What do you think about this November point - would you drop it?

[16/07/2020, 16:24:28] Mark Sedwill: Indeed. Well done for orchestrating. He probably talked too much himself but it was a proper ministerial wrestle with the key issues (notwithstanding Gove's slightly weird search for the long grass). PP's interjection a reminder that we need more of the female perspective.

Overall, a tough call but the right one because it now forces us to figure out how to make it possible. The only answer I can see beyond the existing mitigations (other than the fantasy app) is Stalinist segmentation. The virus kills the old and sick. The lockdown hits the young and healthy. We have to confront that brutal truth and organise for it, notwithstanding CW's scepticism about the practicalities.

[16/07/2020, 16:35:30] Simon C: I think that has to be the way through. And I agree on PP - although on her specific point, she is actually wrong (we opened up the beauty sector in last move, we have just held back on some specific treatments). With Tom's departure (and a few below) my team on this is now largely female (complete volt face from before!), but we still don't have women in the discussion in No 10/with Ministers.

[16/07/2020, 16:37:22] Mark Sedwill: Quite! As we saw this morning with macho posturing over Grayling/Lewis 🤔 with only Cleo inserting some sanity.

[20/07/2020, 17:36:21] Mark Sedwill: Anything else you want to get across today?

[20/07/2020, 17:36:39] Simon C: No - all good!

[20/07/2020, 17:37:34] Mark Sedwill: 👍

[22/07/2020, 09:59:19] Mark Sedwill: Are we now doing this afternoon's CS?

[22/07/2020, 09:59:53] Simon C: Yes - have just written that on piece of paper!

[22/07/2020, 10:07:38] Simon C: Wobbling shopping trolley on full display this morning!

[22/07/2020, 10:11:19] Simon C: I despair - I simply don't know how you support someone who does not retain the tiniest shred of information. So bloody frustrating and depressing

[22/07/2020, 10:13:45] Mark Sedwill: I suspect he is still feeling the after effects of the illness including his memory for detail. He needs a proper rest over the summer to recover properly. I've told him that.

[30/07/2020, 10:53:59] Simon C: Numbers starting to look bad again. I think the choppy waters are coming fast. Now looks likely that we have growth again in London and not just NW. Teams trying to put together best assessment of who/where virus is and how it is growing

[30/07/2020, 11:13:16] Mark Sedwill: How can I help?

[30/07/2020, 11:15:12] Simon C: Body armour and gin seem most useful right now!!! We are gathering in person/virtually with PM, CX, Matt later this evening to discuss. Can you join?

[30/07/2020, 11:15:44] Simon C: If not, don't worry. I can call before/after and discuss where we are

[30/07/2020, 11:17:14] Mark Sedwill: What time?

[30/07/2020, 11:18:00] Simon C: 1730 or 1800 kick off. Slightly depends on whether PM's visit today (in Yorkshire) stays on time

[30/07/2020, 11:19:18] Mark Sedwill: Let me see if I can clear some time. I'm due to do some COVAX calls but those can be moved.

[30/07/2020, 11:21:59] Mark Sedwill: I had a good session with the data people while in Oxford. There might be a cunning route into segmentation if you want to discuss.

[30/07/2020, 11:24:31] Simon C: Would be very interested in segmentation. We agreed with PM and CX yesterday to set up a little cell in the taskforce to draw up a plan for segmentation. We talked them through the key challenges yesterday (esp political and delivery ones), but they said they were up for it, so we should crack on with some black box planning. Perhaps we should connect the team to the Oxford folk?

[30/07/2020, 11:29:32] Mark Sedwill: It's the group (forget the names but can find out) working on personal risk profiles. Typically quite complicated but could enable us to dodge straight age-based segmentation and use a personalised RAG rating instead. Maybe even an app! Then greens do what they like with greens, reds go into seclusion, ambers carry on carefully. I don't but the SAGE argument that it's all too difficult.

[30/07/2020, 11:32:06] Simon C: Neither PM nor CX buy SAGE argument either. And I am just not sure this is a SAGE issue. This is about political will and implementation of policy (and then personal behaviour) not science. In extremist, if HMG wanted to make it illegal for a person under 75 to meet someone over 75 without a hazmat suit on, then that's a political/delivery call, not one for scientists!

[30/07/2020, 11:38:51] Mark Sedwill: Exactly.

[30/07/2020, 14:00:42] Mark Sedwill: Understand COVID-O is 6:30 so I can't make it as I have an early dinner engagement.

[30/07/2020, 14:07:49] Simon C: You know more than me! Are you working tomorrow? Can I give you a ring to go through where we are?