

Message

From: Minister for Welfare DELIVERY [/O=EXCHANGE/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=101541001M-MINISTER FOR WELFARE DELIVERY023]
Sent: 08/06/2020 3:25:24 PM
To: Minister for Welfare DELIVERY [redacted]@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
Subject: RE: Draft - readout for fraud strategy meeting

Hi – Will's likely to pick up the UC capital point with [redacted] and [redacted] tomorrow at their catch-up so if you just flag that in your readout, that'll be great.

[redacted]
Private Secretary to Will Quince MP, Minister for Welfare Delivery
Department for Work and Pensions | Ministers, Governance & Strategy Directorate
Caxton House, 6-12 Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NA
Tel: [redacted] | Internal: [redacted]

From: Minister for Welfare DELIVERY
Sent: 08 June 2020 13:07
To: Minister for Welfare DELIVERY [redacted]@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
Subject: Draft - readout for fraud strategy meeting

Hello,

Just on the Fraud Strategy meeting last week, I know we'd discussed speaking to [redacted] about involving UC Policy in discussions around capital limits during the meeting. Just wanted to check we'd not had any conversations about this with UC policy colleagues already. I know this overlaps with wider work on capital limits with HMT which I think you, [redacted] have picked up. If not I'll leave this as an AP for [redacted] and copy UC policy into the readout (see below).

Thanks!

[redacted]
Name Redacted

Attendees

[redacted]
Name Redacted

[redacted]
Karen Gosden

[redacted]
Name Redacted

[redacted]
Name Redacted

[redacted]
NR

[redacted]
Name Redacted

Readout

- [redacted] explained officials connected across the department to link up Fraud and Error strategy and that any learnings on Fraud cases are fed back into the system and taken into account in the build. The short term aim is to recover money lost through fraud and error while the longer term piece is to prevent fraud and error.
- [redacted] ran through the weekly update, highlighting some of the interventions that had been put in as a result of identifying certain types of fraud.

Irrelevant & Sensitive

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- MfWD raised the sensitivity of comms around fraud and the balance between showing we are taking action against it without revealing vulnerabilities within the system. NR confirmed the Dept is limited to the information it can give about how fraud is investigated and No 10 have previously been strict on this too, although there may be scope to do more around this now.
- MfWD explained he wanted to treat comms around fraud more proactively and explore engaging the public, enlisting their help to report fraud.
- NR and NR discussed the timing of such a campaign, saying this would not be appropriate given the current UC measures around conditionality and easements drawing attention to increased levels of fraud.
- NR said that from Press Office's perspective, there were already media stories around the increased level of fraud as a result of the conditionality/easement measures taken in UC due to covid therefore it may be beneficial to get some more positive stories around the action the Dept is taking to tackle this out there. NR agreed to take these considerations away and review. **AP1**.
- MfWD also stressed that a positive comms plan around what is being done to tackle fraud would reassure HMT.
- NR discussed the ongoing work to minimise fraud around the current easements, especially around identification. She explained this was difficult as it was likely that face to face contact in job centres would take a while to resume.
- NR also raised that decisions would need to be made around handling the claims that had been made with less rigorous identity checks e.g. revisiting all of these to verify identity or focusing on those that appeared to be more risky.
- NR told MfWD that a submission setting out options for reducing capital fraud had been sent up. MfWD had not read this before the meeting therefore NR summarised this. MfWD was interested in how much is lost through capital fraud under UC and referenced the wider conversations with HMT around making capital limits more generous. NR stressed that as there was no capital limit for claimants on tax credits, this had resulted in an increase in fraud levels for UC as this had not previously been measured or detected. NR explained that changing this was a UC Policy issue and that they should be brought into the conversation. **AP2**

Action points

AP1: NR to further consider approach to comms around fraud, in particular suggestion around a more proactive approach

AP2: NR to pick up with UC policy colleagues and explore options around changing capital fraud limit.

Many thanks,

Name Redacted

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