

Message

From: [redacted]@no10.gov.uk
Sent: 10/11/2020 22:37:33
To: [redacted]@dwp.gsi.gov.uk]; Prestidge Jess DWP SPECIAL ADVISER [jess.prestidge@dwp.gsi.gov.uk]; cabinet.secretary [cabinet.secretary@cabinetoffice.gov.uk]; Henry Cook [HCook@no10.gov.uk]; Stuart Glassborow [SGlassborow@no10.gov.uk]; Munira Mirza [MMirza@no10.gov.uk]; Lee Cain [LCain@no10.gov.uk]; [redacted] NR [redacted]@no10.gov.uk]; [redacted] NR [redacted]@no10.gov.uk]; Jack Doyle [JDoyle@no10.gov.uk]; Alexandra Burns [ABurns@no10.gov.uk]
CC: PM Private Office Support Team - Internal [pmpost.int@no10.gov.uk]
Subject: Read-out: PM-DWP SoS meeting [OFFICIAL]

Hi all,

SoS DWP met with the PM yesterday to discuss UC, poverty and the plan for jobs.

SoS explained that she was required to undertake a benefits uprating exercise, the outcome of which would need to be announced to Parliament no later than 26th November. Uprating by inflation only meant that some benefits would only be increased by a matter of pence; work on this was ongoing. There was a separate decision to be made around the temporary increase to UC and tax credits that is due to come to an end in March. SoS outlined her preferred option to increase the UC standard allowance and child element by £10 each. This is more targeted, and less expensive, than rolling over the £20 uplift for all claimants. She clarified that though this proposal would lift more children out of poverty, 3.8 million people would lose out, including those on tax credits. The PM expressed concern that this would create too many losers and that, politically, the proposal was complex to explain. The PM noted that a decision is needed shortly and further discussions will be needed, including with the CX.

On poverty, SoS outlined her focus on basic needs (prioritising 'home, heat, and eat'). She favoured an approach to measuring poverty based on material deprivation; while this would be unpopular with some stakeholders who are attached to absolute and relative income measures, the British Social Attitudes Survey indicated the majority of the population already understand poverty in this way. The PM invited SoS to outline her proposals in writing. More generally, the PM feels that more work is needed on poverty and that Government needs a clear narrative and offer. He thanked SoS for leading on the winter support package and asked her to continue to lead this work across Government, ensuring all relevant departments are contributing sufficiently and escalating if this is not the case. Engaging and winning round stakeholders is a critical part of this; the PM asked SoS to continue to engage Marcus Rashford on these issues, as well as other stakeholders such as Philippa Stroud, and to seek their buy-in.

Finally, SoS updated on the progress made to deliver the Plan for Jobs, including on Kickstart and work coach recruitment. DWP have approved over 18,000 Kickstart vacancies but there are some issues to be worked through, including speeding up the approvals process.

Actions:

- SoS PO to follow up with Munira Mirza and No10 Policy Unit setting out proposals for Government's overall narrative on poverty and for poverty measures, clarifying stakeholder views and the handling plan for each.
- SoS to continue to engage key stakeholders closely including Marcus Rashford and Philippa Stroud.

Thanks,

[redacted] NR

Diary: NR @no10.gov.uk

-----Original Appointment-----

From: Prime Minister

Sent: 04 November 2020 15:09

To: Prime Minister; NR; Secretary of State'; cabinet.secretary; Dominic Cummings; Edward Lister; Henry Cook; Stuart Glassborow; Munira Mirza; Lee Cain; NR; Jack Doyle

Subject: Bilateral with Therese Coffey (DWP SoS) - UC

When: 09 November 2020 14:00-14:30 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London.

Where: Cabinet Room, DS

Cast list:

PM

SoS DWP

Jess Prestidge, Special Adviser

NR Principal Private Secretary

Cabinet Secretary

Name Redacted

Stuart Glassborow

Munira Mirza

Lee Cain OR Jack Doyle

NR

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