Will Quince MP – Minister for Welfare Delivery

Weekly Note - Week commencing 5th October

Dear Thérèse,

I think we are getting in good shape on the ask to HMT/No.10 regarding the Standard Allowance (SA) uplift – a combination of a £10pw uplift to the SA and a £10pw uplift to the child element meets several of our objectives in terms of helping claimants with the cost of living and poverty projections. Assuming HMT/No.10 agree with our approach, we will need to work on a proactive communications plan to combat any negativity on not simply maintaining the £20pw uplift. I am continuing to add pressure on the UC programme team to accelerate the scheduled changes to the deductions cap and advances repayment period. I think this can be a key part of our narrative on the support we are providing - we can say the £10pw uplift to the SA hand-in-hand with the changes to the deduction cap and advances repayment period means claimants ultimately have more support.

I've mentioned before my disappointment about not being able to track disadvantaged groups through the UC system – as you know, since my appointment I have been pushing for this and several of my predecessors have too. Officials have finally come up with a plan on what we can do to track care leavers which is due to go-live in January 2021. But I am keen to make better progress on other groups. I have commenced fortnightly meetings to get regular updates on this.

I'd like to also just get on your radar my frustration regarding several outstanding WPSC responses; UC and natural migration, UC two child policy and UC and survival sex. The responses were due in January 2020, September 2019 and December 2019 respectively. They were initially delayed due to the general election and then paused due to the pandemic. The responses are yet to be submitted and I'm keen we make progress. Happy to pick this up at our next 1:1.

Oh. Let's sort out what is going on. Report back to PM/Ed/Jo/Treasury next week.

NR

Next week, I'll be responding to the UBI debate, running a teach-in for colleagues on Universal Credit Alternative Payment Arrangement and hosting a tearoom surgery.

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Thanks,
Will

We have housing meeting & I think we need more on poverty.