

ccJR



2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434

AGENDA

My ref:

Your ref:

17 September 1984

Dear Andrew

LOCAL GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Thank you for your letter of 11 September

My Secretary of State would indeed welcome a meeting before the Party Conference to discuss the many controversial and outstanding matters on local government policies.

He is broadly content with the substance of the agenda, but would like to include two new items - the possibility of a Ministerially-led review of local government finance, and of an external inquiry into abuses in local government, with a view to such a review and inquiry resulting in specific, well-developed proposals before the next General Election. He therefore suggests that the agenda - following further discussions which have taken place between this Department and the No10 Policy Unit - might run as follows:

FINANCE

- (A) contingency planning against the possibility that rate capped councils may adopt policies of confrontation;
- (B) proposed Ministerially-led review of Local Government Finance (local taxation and grant);
- (C) the elimination of targets from the Rate Support Grant system.;
- (D) an improvement of the link between voting and rate payment in the short term with special reference to the operation of housing benefit;

ABUSES

- (E) proposed external inquiry into abuses in local government (eg suppression of minority group rights, politically appointed officers, rate financed party political propaganda);

ABOLITION

- (F) the strategy for securing the passage of the Abolition

Bill and how to deal with non-cooperation from the GLC and MCC's during the abolition process.

OTHER

(G) how to improve local authority efficiency in the use of their resources, eg by contracting out, disposal of surplus land, and through the implementation of Audit Commission suggestions.

This covers all of the points in the provisional draft agenda (your items (v) and (vi) will be subsumed under item (c) above). The Secretary of State intends to circulate the draft papers on the proposed review and inquiry well before the meeting which is, I believe to take place on 27 September.

This is of course a very heavy agenda. Consequently my Secretary of State proposes to circulate in advance not only papers on the proposed review and inquiry (items (b) and (e) above) but a short note of key points and possible conclusions on all the other agenda items except (d), on which we assume DHSS will take the lead.

I am copying this letter to Janet Lewis-Jones (Lord President's Office), David Peretz (Chancellor's Office), Hugh Taylor (Home Office), Elizabeth Hodgkinson (Department of Education and Science), Steve Godber (DHSS), David Morris (Lord Privy Seal's Office), John Gieve (Chief Secretary's Office), Paul Thomas (Lord Gowrie's Office), John Graham (Scottish Office), Colin Jones (Welsh Office), Mike Bailey (Kenneth Baker's Office, DOE), and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely

John Ballard

JOHN BALLARD
Private Secretary

17 SEP 1984

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COMPACTOR

11



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Copy No: 1 of 16

→ cc JJK

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434

My ref:

Your ref:

21 September 1984

Dear Andrew

LOCAL GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Further to the penultimate paragraph of my letter of 17 September 1984 I am enclosing two papers by my Secretary of State which address themselves to the topics at items (b) and (e) of the suggested agenda - the proposed Ministerially-led review of local government finance, and the proposed external inquiry into local government practices and procedures. (The material on abuses of such procedures which Sir George Young has recently circulated* to those Ministers attending the meeting provides timely evidence of the need for action on this front.)

My Secretary of State has also asked to circulate the attached scenario on "Local Government Policy Three Years from Now" which he considers to be useful background material for the meeting on 27 September.

The outstanding note on all the other agenda items falling to this Department will be circulated shortly.

I am copying this letter to Janet Lewis-Jones (Lord President's Office), David Peretz (Chancellor's Office), Hugh Taylor (Home Office), Elizabeth Hodgkinson (Department of Education and Science), Steve Godber (DHSS), David Morris (Lord Privy Seal's Office), John Gieve (Chief Secretary's Office), Paul Thomas (Lord Gowrie's Office), John Graham (Scottish Office), Colin Jones (Welsh Office), Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office), Mike Bailey (Kenneth Baker's Office, DOE), and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely

* To be circulated early next week.

John Ballard

JOHN BALLARD
Private Secretary

Andrew Turnbull Esq



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CY 10
COPY 1 OF 18

→ cc JR

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434

My ref:

Your ref:

24 September 1984

Dear Andrew

LOCAL GOVERNMENT POLICIES

In my first letter of 21^{with AT} September I referred to a paper "Local Government Policy Three Years from Now" as useful background material for the meeting on 27 September. A copy should have been enclosed but was unfortunately omitted, for which I apologise. A copy is now enclosed.

I am copying this letter to Janet Lewis-Jones (Lord President's Office), David Peretz (Chancellor's Office), Hugh Taylor (Home Office), Elizabeth Hodgkinson (Department of Education and Science), Steve Godber (DHSS), David Morris (Lord Privy Seal's Office), John Gieve (Chief Secretary's Office), Paul Thomas (Lord Gowrie's Office), John Graham (Scottish Office), Colin Jones (Welsh Office), Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office), Mike Bailey (Kenneth Baker's Office, DOE) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

John Ballard

John Ballard
JOHN BALLARD
Private Secretary

Andrew Turnbull Esq



PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE
WHITEHALL, LONDON SW1A 2AT

21 September 1984

Dear Andrew,

LOCAL GOVERNMENT POLICIES

The Lord Privy Seal has seen John Ballard's letter of 17 September and the Chief Secretary's comments contained in John Gieve's letter of 19 September.

In view of the many issues for discussion at the meeting on 27 September, the Prime Minister may like to know that the Lord Privy Seal and the Lord President, together with the two Chief Whips, are meeting Mr Jenkin and his Ministers on 4 October to discuss in detail the Parliamentary handling of the Abolition Bill. In these circumstances, it may be convenient to leave this item on one side for discussion at that meeting.

I am sending copies of this letter to John Ballard (DoE), Janet Lewis-Jones (Lord President's Office), David Peretz (Chancellor's Office), Hugh Taylor (Home Office), Elizabeth Hodgkinson (DES), Steve Godber (DHSS), John Gieve (Chief Secretary's Office), Paul Thomas (Lord Gowrie's Office), John Graham (Scottish Office), Colin Jones (Welsh Office), Mike Bailey (Kenneth Baker's Office, DoE), Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

*Yours sincerely,
David Morris*

D R MORRIS
Private Secretary

A Turnbull Esq
Private Secretary to the
Prime Minister

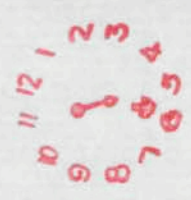
*Note.
Spoke to David Morris.
Agreed Abolition should be on
agenda, but with Parliamentary
handling left for the meeting
above*

AT 25/9

LOCAL
SMT.
Rt. 22



21 SEP 1984



1 of 16

2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 3434

My ref:
Your ref:

21 September 1984



Dear Andrew

Please refer to my letters of 17 September and today's date.

/ I now enclose, as promised, notes on key points arising on items (A), (C), (F) (two notes) and (G) (two notes) of the agenda.

I am copying this letter to Janet Lewis-Jones (Lord President's Office), David Peretz (Chancellor's Office), Hugh Taylor (Home Office), Elizabeth Hodgkinson (Department of Education and Science), Steve Godber (DHSS), David Morris (Lord Privy Seal's Office), John Gieve (Chief Secretary's Office), Paul Thomas (Lord Gowrie's Office), John Graham (Scottish Office), Colin Jones (Welsh Office), Murdo MacLean (Chief Whips Office), Mike Bailey (Kenneth Baker's Office, DOE) and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely
John Ballard
JOHN BALLARD
Private Secretary

Andrew Turnbull Esq

CMO



Meeting Folder

CCJR

Zpply

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

Andrew Turnbull Esq
10 Downing Street
London SW1

19 September 1984

Dear Andrew

LOCAL GOVERNMENT POLICIES

The Chief Secretary has seen John Ballard's letter of 17 September proposing an agenda for the Prime Minister's meeting next week.

2 He hopes that not too much time will be spent on the tactics of rate capping and abolition. He notes that the problems on that front have been examined frequently in MISC 95 and other meetings and can become highly technical.

3 He suggests that the meeting should concentrate on the long-term issues including the future control and financing of local authority expenditure. While he welcomes an opportunity of discussing these questions he doubts whether now is the time to launch a Ministerially-led review. He feels sure that this would become public knowledge and that could only cast doubt on the Government's present legislative proposals which will have to stand, and be made to work, in the next few years.

CMO

CMO

4 I am sending copies of this letter to John Ballard (DOE), Janet Lewis-Jones (Lord President's Office), David Peretz (Chancellor's Office), Hugh Taylor (Home Office), Elizabeth Hodgkinson (DES), Steve Godber (DHSS), David Morris (Lord Privy Seal's Office), Paul Thomas (Lord Gowrie's Office), John Graham (Scottish Office), Colin Jones (Welsh Office), Mike Bailey (Kenneth Baker's Office, DOE), and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely

Jst. Gieve

JOHN GIEVE

CMO

Local Gov: Relations: R 22

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20 SEP 1984

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FILE JCAAFV

cc Scottish Office
 Welsh Office

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

11 September 1984

Dear John,

Local Government Policies

The Prime Minister considers it would be useful to hold a meeting during the Recess to discuss a number of issues relating to local government. I understand your Secretary of State would welcome such a meeting before the Party Conference as it would help him in the preparation of his speech.

The issues might be selected from the following:

- (i) The strategy for securing passage of the Abolition Bill.
- (ii) How to deal with non co-operation from the GLC and MCCs during the abolition process.
- (iii) Contingency planning against the possibility that rate capped councils may adopt policies of confrontation.
- (iv) Tackling local authority abuses, in particular excessive publicity at ratepayers' expense.
- (v) Simplification of the complex system for controlling local authority expenditure.
- (vi) How to secure a fairer deal for low spending authorities.
- (vii) What can be done to improve the structure of rates and move away from a situation in which those who pay most rates have no votes and many who vote don't pay.
- (viii) How to improve local authority efficiency in the use of their resources, e.g. by contracting out, disposal of surplus land, and through the implementation of Audit Commission suggestions.

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- 2 -

Could I ask your Department, in conjunction with the Treasury and the No.10 Policy Unit, to agree on the issues to be discussed, and to make arrangements for an annotated agenda note to be prepared. I will be in touch about the timing of such a meeting.

I am copying this letter to Janet Lewis-Jones (Lord President's Office), David Peretz (HM Treasury), Hugh Taylor (Home Office), Elizabeth Hodgkinson (Department of Education and Science), Steve Godber (DHSS), David Morris (Lord Privy Seal's Office), John Gieve (Chief Secretary's Office), Paul Thomas (Lord Gowrie's Office), Mike Bailey (Kenneth Baker's Office, DOE), and Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

*Yours sincerely
Andrew Turnbull*

Andrew Turnbull

John Ballard, Esq.,
Department of the Environment.

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