

1 NEA to see  
2 DG McC  
3 AB  
T/er

cc Mr Hicks  
Mr Ingham  
Folder.

Mr Munn



cc Min Hort.  
Can we have a word  
about pves 12-15 pl  
memo 12

**CABINET OFFICE**

70 Whitehall London SW1A 2AS

01-270 0101

cc - Mr Wilson  
Mr Sorensen  
N 9/2

From the Secretary of the Cabinet and Head of the Home Civil Service

Sir Robin Butler KCB CVO

Ref. A088/446

8 February 1988

Dear Brian,

Inner Cities: Co-ordination

As you know, the Prime Minister announced on 18 December that the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster would take responsibility, under her, for the co-ordination of Government action on inner cities and for its presentation. It has been decided that he should be supported in this new role by the Urban Policy Co-ordinating Unit in the Cabinet Office.

I mentioned at the Permanent Secretaries' meeting on 20 January that a note was being prepared which sets out guidelines about how the new arrangements are to work. I now enclose the note as it has been agreed with the Departments principally concerned and would be grateful if you would make sure that it is seen by those of your staff who deal with inner city matters. We shall keep a watch on how the arrangements are working in practice and review them as necessary; but for the time being I think we should see how things go.

I am copying this letter to those who attend our regular Wednesday morning meetings with the request that they too should make sure that the guidelines are seen and followed by those who deal with inner city matters.

Yours ever,

Robin

Sir Brian Hayes GCB

URBAN POLICY CO-ORDINATING UNIT  
SUPPORT TO THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER

1. Following the announcement on 18 December 1987, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster has responsibilities for the inner cities under two distinct headings.
2. First, there are his present departmental responsibilities. These remain unchanged. The Chancellor of the Duchy will continue to look to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) for support on them in the same way as he has done hitherto.
3. Second, there is his new role, which is to take responsibility, under the Prime Minister, for the co-ordination of Government action on inner cities and for its presentation. In carrying out this new responsibility he will need to look to all Government Departments with inner city responsibilities for support and will be assisted by the Urban Policy Co-ordinating Unit in the Cabinet Office in doing this.

CO-ORDINATION OF POLICY

4. There has been no change in the Departmental responsibilities of Ministers with programmes which are involved in inner city regeneration. These programmes will continue to be the responsibility of the Secretaries of State concerned and administered by Departments. Proposals for any new policy initiatives or changes in policy will be a matter for discussion in the appropriate Ministerial forum in the normal way. Departments anticipating changes in policy which affect inner cities should let the Urban Policy Co-ordinating Unit know about this at an early stage and keep them in touch with progress.



## CO-ORDINATION OF PRESENTATION

5. To assist with the co-ordination of presentation and publicity the head of the Urban Policy Co-ordinating Unit will chair a group of information officers from departments responsible for Government action on inner cities which will meet regularly to review forthcoming engagements including visits, conferences and speeches. In addition a member of the Government Information Service will be appointed to support the head of the Unit on timing and presentation of announcements and other day-to-day matters, and to chair a working-level group of information officers as necessary.
6. As part of its role the Urban Policy Co-ordinating Unit will be responsible for compiling and updating a central record of forthcoming Ministerial engagements in so far as they concern inner cities and will circulate it regularly to the private offices of Ministers with inner cities responsibilities for information and consideration. They will also advise the Chancellor of the Duchy on all invitations which he receives in his new capacity, in consultation with other Departments as necessary.
7. Private Offices of Ministers with inner cities responsibilities should as a matter of routine provide the Urban Policy Co-ordinating Unit with details of forthcoming engagements in, or relating to, inner cities and should consult the Unit if they need help or advice on any particular invitation. The Unit will aim to build up its information about particular areas and inner cities, and to assist Departments in putting together factual briefs for Ministerial visits.
8. The Urban Policy Co-ordinating Unit will assist and advise the Chancellor of the Duchy in the preparation of his own speeches, including their clearance with other Departments as necessary. Private offices of other Ministers with inner cities responsibilities should keep the Unit in touch with the details of

any forthcoming speeches touching on inner city matters which their Ministers expect to make and should let the Unit have advance copies of the speeches where possible.

#### CO-ORDINATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

##### Letters

9. Where the Chancellor of the Duchy receives correspondence relating solely to DTI business he will continue to be advised by the DTI exactly as before.

10. Where correspondence touches on the responsibilities of other Ministers the following guidelines will be followed:

(a) if a letter falls fairly and squarely within the responsibilities of another Minister, without raising any issue of co-ordination, the normal course will be for the Chancellor of the Duchy's private office to transfer the letter to the private office of the responsible Minister who will then send the reply. A copy of that reply should be sent to the Chancellor of the Duchy's private office for information;

(b) if, exceptionally, in his role of supporting the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Duchy needs to send his own reply to a letter which falls within another Minister's responsibilities his private office should look to the other Minister's private office to supply a suitable draft reply. The reply should make it clear that the other Minister is formally responsible, probably inviting the correspondent to pursue any further points directly with the Minister; and a copy of the letter should be sent to the Minister's private office. If there is any disagreement about the draft or any proposal to alter it significantly, the matter should be discussed between the private offices who may look to the Urban Policy Co-ordinating Unit to help sort out any difficulties if they arise;



(c) where a letter touches on the responsibilities of several departments, Mr Clarke's private office will ask the Urban Policy Co-ordinating Unit in the Cabinet Office to co-ordinate the reply.

11. All correspondence on inner city matters addressed to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster should be copied to the Unit as a matter of routine to keep them in touch with what is going on. The private offices of other Ministers with inner city responsibilities should similarly ensure that the Unit receives copies of any correspondence relevant to the co-ordination and presentation of Government action on the inner cities.

#### Parliamentary Questions

12. Parliamentary Questions which fall within DTI responsibilities for inner cities will continue to be dealt with by the DTI in the normal way.

13. Parliamentary Questions which fall within the departmental responsibilities of another Minister should be transferred to that other Minister, again in the normal way.

14. Parliamentary Questions which affect the Chancellor of the Duchy's responsibility for co-ordinating action and presentation in support of the Prime Minister will be handled by the Urban Policy Co-ordinating Unit, which will submit a co-ordinated reply which has been cleared with the departments concerned in the normal way. In the case of oral questions it may often be difficult to anticipate with any confidence what Supplementary Questions will be asked. The Unit will therefore as a matter of routine provide the Chancellor of the Duchy with a standard brief, updated monthly, which covers all the issues across Government which might come up, drawing on contributions provided by the relevant Departments.

15. To assist the Urban Policy Co-ordinating Unit all Departments with inner city responsibilities should ensure that their Parliamentary Branches supply the Unit with copies of Parliamentary Questions on inner city matters, and the Answers given, as they arise and as a matter of routine.

February 1988