



PRIME MINISTER

Prime Minister ②

The map not ready until Autumn 1984. Work on CDA Bill to proceed. When drafted a decision to be taken on whether to wait for RDG provisions if nearly ready, or to proceed without them.

AT 21/10

You will have seen Cecil Parkinson's letter of 10 October to John Biffen and his reply of 17 October agreeing to the drafting of legislation to introduce changes to the RDG scheme. Because of doubts over when a revised Assisted Area map might be available, E(A) agreed that the date of the introduction of legislation should not be decided until the map options had been considered. We have now considered the options and it might be helpful if I set out the position on the timing of the map as we now see it.

2 The conclusion we have come to, for the reasons set out later in this note, is that we can not have a new Assisted Area map until Autumn 1984. The exact timing depends on how quickly we can get an agreed map. At present this is based on out-of-date Travel-to-Work-Areas (TTWAs). Information from the 1981 censuses of population and employment is expected to bring important changes in TTWA boundaries when they are revised next year, as they are bound to be, but all the necessary information will not be available until next July, and realistically that means that we shall not have an agreed new Assisted Area map based on the revised TTWAs until the Autumn.

3 I have considered all the options for bringing forward completion of the new map from Autumn next year. The least unattractive option was to drop TTWAs and instead use local



authority boundaries as the basis of the map. But I am convinced that this, like all the other options, would result in a map so unsatisfactory and so hard for us to defend that they should be discarded.

4 If we have legislation this Session we will be in a position to introduce the new scheme as soon as the map is available. We do not need to decide now the questions of rates of grant and number of tiers. Options for these will of course be covered in the White Paper and one of the advantages of the proposed timetable is that there will be time to consult on them and the map.

5 As to timing of the legislation, we are content to go along with John Biffen's proposal that we consider this further when the CDA Bill is ready. At that time, we will consider the options taking account of the views expressed in response to this letter.

6 I am copying this letter to all Members of E(A) and Sir Robert Armstrong.

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21st October 1983

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