

Press release

Number 10 Press Briefing - Morning From 4 November 2010

From the Prime Minister's spokesperson on: high tech industry, Sky, Northern Rock and Government waste.

From:

[Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street](#)

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High Tech Industry

Asked about the new Entrepreneur visa being set up, the Prime Minister's Spokesman (PMS) told the assembled press that the aim of this would be to increase the number of entrepreneurs coming into the country. There was an existing Entrepreneur visa scheme, but that would be looked at again and there would be new criteria. The PMS said that at the moment there were very few people taking it up.

Asked what the current criteria was, the PMS advised people to speak to the Home Office on the detail.

Put that these visas would be for people who were self-employed, the PMS replied that the idea was to attract people with good ideas and serious investment behind them to the UK.

Asked what kind of numbers the Government was looking for to take the scheme, the PMS replied that we hadn't set a target, but we obviously wanted to increase the number of people taking up the visa.

The Prime Minister would be talking about high-tech industry later today and encouraging other investors to come to the country.

Asked if there was a cap on the number of people taking up the visa, the PMS replied that more details would be released in the coming weeks.

When asked if the Prime Minister would accept that there was some confusion over the Government's immigration policy, the PMS said that we had had a consultation period on immigration and that was now closed.

We would announce details in due course, but the Prime Minister had been very clear that he wanted Britain to be a place that attracted the brightest and the best.

Asked when the Prime Minister thought the East End of London would rival Silicon Valley, the PMS replied that the signals made today by a number of high-profile companies in committing themselves to the East End were very positive.

Asked what the official line was on intra-company transfers, the PMS said that the Prime Minister had made a statement on that during PMQs, and it was one of the areas being looked at as part of the review into the immigration system.

We had an interim cap at the moment, but there was a clear ambition from this Government that we wanted to attract the brightest and the best to this country. Alongside that, we needed to control uncontrolled immigration.

Sky

Asked whether the Business Secretary had the whole-hearted support of the Prime Minister when making his decision on Sky, the PMS replied that the Prime Minister had already said on the record that this was a matter for the Business Secretary. He had made his decision and it was now a matter for Ofcom.

On whether the Prime Minister and the Business Secretary had discussed the matter before now and in what forum the matter was discussed in, the PMS said she was not aware of the details of any discussions, but the Prime Minister was well aware of the decision that had been made.

Asked if the Prime Minister and Business Secretary discussed the matter on Wednesday afternoon, the PMS replied that she would not be able to confirm that.

Asked if the Prime Minister always stayed out of these decisions or was there a particular reason why he had on this occasion, the PMS said that it was a decision for the Business Secretary.

Asked if Business Secretary had discussed it with the Chancellor, the PMS advised people to speak to the Treasury.

When asked if the Prime Minister had received any representations on this issue, the PMS replied that she was not aware of any.

Put that it had been reported that James Murdoch had had a meeting with the Prime Minister in recent months and why had that meeting not been divulged, the PMS said the Government had published a list of meetings the Prime Minister had had and that included a meeting with Rupert Murdoch. The PMS said she would check on any meeting with James Murdoch.

Asked what the difference was between a 'private visit' and an 'official function', the PMS said that there would be occasions when the Prime Minister would want to meet guests privately, but she did not have a specific definition for it.

Put that it was up to the Prime Minister which meetings went on the list, the PMS reminded people that the Prime Minister also lived in Downing Street and would want to meet people privately from time to time.

Asked if the Prime Minister had taken any advice from the Cabinet Secretary as to who should appear on the list of meetings, the PMS said she had made the difference between a business meeting and a private meeting very clear.

Asked if it was the case that if the Prime Minister was to see someone in the offices of Downing Street it was classed as an official meeting, whereas if he was to meet someone in the flat, it would be classed as a private meeting, the PMS replied that the Prime Minister had official business throughout the day, but occasionally he would want to meet private guests.

Put that the type of meeting was either characterised by what was discussed or where it took place, the PMS said that we were committed to setting out those meetings the Prime Minister had on an official basis.

Northern Rock

Asked for a comment on the Chief Executive of Northern Rock who had left for the private sector but would still receive six months of salary, the PMS replied that the banks that the Government was a shareholder in was being managed by UK Financial Investments Ltd.

Government Waste

Asked whether the reality was that the Government would achieve considerably less than it had originally set out to do in the Spending Review, the PMS replied that the comments made by Francis Maude this morning re-iterated the commitment of the Government to be ruthless in finding efficiency savings in the waste of bureaucracy. We were fully confident that we could find the savings that we had set out.