

Minister Scully and Tim Parker
Monday 15th November
09:45 – 10:00
MS Teams

Attendees

Minister Scully
Tim Parker
Cora Sweet, Private Secretary to Minister Scully

Readout

Minister Scully:

There's a few things to chat about - Nick's incentive scheme, and SR.

I really appreciate all the work you've done.

On the incentive scheme, there's not a lot we can do due to political context. There will be no additional uplift above what is already in place.

It would be really difficult e.g. context of inquiry and compensation, as well as scrutiny on public bodies in general.

I know this is difficult, Nick's doing a really good job, and I support him. However for now, I think this is all we'll be able to do.

Tim Parker:

It is what it is, I'll explain this to him. In the short term he's committed to finishing the job. I don't think it'll provoke him to move.

Minister Scully:

Appreciate that, let me know if you'd like me to him directly following your conversation with him.

Turning to SR – it's been disappointing to be honest, I know the challenges that this settlement throws up for POL.

What we'll need to do is make sure we continue to work together to see what this means for the network.

Nick met with Perm Sec on Thursday, I'm meeting Nick later on today.

It would be good to see what the full range of options are.

In terms of horizon replacement, I'll keep on pushing HMT, the political ramifications of not this are not lost on me.

I can't promise anything, but I'll continue to go back to treasury to see what we can do.

Tim Parker:

I've got an uncomfortable Board at the moment.

Politically I would say it would be very difficult to reduce the size of the network, especially with the context of the inquiry.

As far as I can see, it is a BEIS discussion about what the art of the possible is.

We'll articulate as best we can the consequences of living with the existing settlement.

Difficult not to replace horizon – there would be public outcry.

Anything that looks like reduction of the network is a no-win proposition. We could try and change the definitional aspects of POL, but that involves a substantial consultative process.

In an ideal situation we'd love to say we're going to draw a line under it all, and we can't do that until we replace the system.

Minister Scully:

Sir Wyn is due to publish his report next year – we'll aim to speak to BEIS and Treasury by then.
Let's not get our hopes up, but I'll continue to champion this with HMT
It would be good to see where we go in the next few weeks – you're right about the network, it worries MPs.

Tim Parker:

We're in danger of losing some pretty key people at POL.

We've managed to attract one or two quite talented people, if they get the message that the money's not going to be there, I can't see that they want to stay.

We need to work through the ramifications of this.