

Disclosable information from notes commissioning opposition costings that were posted on HM Treasury disclosure log, December 2009

20/11/2009

XXX

As discussed, Special Advisers have requested - on behalf of Ministers - for the following opposition policy to be costed.

Council tax freeze

What would be the cost of central Government providing every council with top-up funding to pay for council tax increases, provided they are kept below 2.5%? Special Advisers have requested that the assumption should be that this will start in 2010-11 and run until 2011-12. Additionally, it should be assumed that all councils increase their council tax by exactly 2.5%.

Supporting quotes

"Any council that makes savings to keep its annual council tax increase to 2.5% or below will receive additional money from central government to reduce council tax bills by a further 2.5%."

Conservative Party news release, 29 September 2008

http://www.conservatives.com/News/News_stories/2008/09/A_Two_Year_Council_Tax_Freeze.aspx?ConservativesTvTabView=Conservatives.TV

Attached is guidance on costing opposition policies, including the template for the costing, which should always be used. Please copy the final draft of the costing to XXX and I. Once XXX and I have seen the final draft and you have cleared it, the costing should be sent up to me for advisers use (as set out in para 7 of the guidance).

Please be sure to include any assumptions which you have made in producing the costing within the necessary box of the attached template, and be aware that the Treasury may be required to justify this assumption in releasing this costing more widely.

Happy to discuss any questions you or your team have on this.

Best
XXX

6/8/2009

XXX

Special Advisers have requested - on behalf of Ministers - for the following opposition policy to be costed.

Conservative Health visitors proposals

What would be the cost of implementing the health visitor proposals detailed in the attached document. In completing this costing, Special Advisers have asked that the following assumptions are used:

- 1) Officials should determine the number of health visitors required in any given year to deliver the Conservative guaranteed service set out in points 1 - 5 on page 12 of the policy document; and the increase this represents on current levels of staff (in other words, the stated Conservative assumptions should not be relied upon but bottom up calculations made to stress test their calculations)
- 2) Officials should cost the salary and benefits required for additional health visitors described in the policy - using three points on a range: the first point is the 4,200 additional staff described in the policy document; the second is the 6,000 figure stated in footnote 35 on page 13 of the document which recognises attrition and changing demographics; the third is the number of staff identified in assumption 1 above, if different
- 3) Officials should cite and cost any additional expenditure required in scaling up the number of health visitors to these new levels (at all three points in assumption 2), except for training places. For example, would increasing the workforce in this way require increased numbers of managers which has associated costs; or increased administration costs? what increases in recruitment marketing and administration would be required?
- 4) Officials should cost the increase in training places needed to reach these three staffing points (described in assumption 2), using comparable assumptions for training a health visitor as are used today
- 5) Officials should identify and cost any consequences to cancelling all Sure Start Outreach Workers as the policy proposes including associated redundancy costs, training contracts or other contractual commitments, and any backfilling Sure Start centres may need to do to maintain current levels of service excluding outreach (recognising that some outreach workers may be working in mainstream Sure Start activity now as well)

Please could this policy be costed for every year from 2010/11 to 2014/15, assuming that the full commitment in Assumption 1 is only reached in the final year; and that recruitment builds to this level at steady increments beginning in 2011/12, thereby leaving an initial year of planning

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Please be sure to include any assumptions which you have made in producing the costing within the necessary box of the attached template, and be aware that the Treasury may be required to justify this assumption in releasing this costing more widely.

Happy to discuss any questions you or your team have on this.

Please would it be possible to get an initial draft of this by Wednesday 26 August?

Best
XXX

31/7/2009

XXX

As discussed, Special Advisers have requested - on behalf of Ministers - for the following opposition policy to be costed.

Conservative policy: Reinstating Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO)

What would be the cost of fully reinstating the Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO) as a self-standing body. In completing this costing, Special Advisers have asked that the following assumptions be used:

- The cost should be for full reinstatement from 2010-11, and include costs until 2014-15;
- Start-up capital costs should be assumed to occur in the first year, except where this is unfeasible; and
- The running costs of DESO, including full staffing numbers, should be assumed to be the same peak costs as when it was abolished, accounting for inflation.

Supporting quotes

The defence industry in Scotland provides the jobs of more than 11,000 people. Thousands more jobs are indirectly supported by the defence industry in Scotland. One way to safeguard and increase these Scottish jobs is to increase Britain's overall share of world wide defence exports. To make this happen, one of the first acts of a Conservative led Government will be to reinstate the Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO) which was abolished by Labour in what can only be described as an act of industrial vandalism

Liam Fox, Speech to Scottish Conservatives Conference, 15 May 2009

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Please be sure to include any assumptions which you have made in producing the costing within the necessary box of the attached template, and be aware that the Treasury may be required to justify this assumption in releasing this costing more widely.

Happy to discuss any questions you or your team have on this.

Please would it be possible to get an initial draft of this by cop, Thursday 20 August ?

Best
XXX

31/7/2009

XXX

Special Advisers have requested - on behalf of Ministers - for the following opposition policy to be costed.

Conservative policy: Quadruple aid to Burma

What would be the cost of quadrupling aid to Burma by 2013/14, and the further cost of maintaining this until 2014/15. Special Advisers have asked that in completing this costing, the following assumptions should be used:

Aid should be quadrupled from 2009-10 figures, in real terms; and
The cost should be stated as the cost over and above any pre-existing commitments the Government has made to increase aid to Burma

Supporting quotes

I am particularly surprised that the Government have yet to accept in full the powerfully argued recommendation of the International Development Committee that aid to Burma should be quadrupled by 2013. The Conservatives have been making that argument now for nearly two years. As I said in the debate on Burma on Monday 29 October, we will honour the recommendation in full as soon as we have the opportunity in government.

Andrew Mitchell, Hansard, column 884, 15 November 2007

In that context, I am surprised and rather disappointed that the Government have not accepted in full the recommendations of the Select Committee on International Development's excellent report. Indeed, they have rejected the most important ones. The Committee called for the current aid budget for Burma of £8.8 million to be quadrupled by 2013. Conservative Members have been calling for that since at least May 2006...

We agree completely with the Committee's recommendation. If we are in government after the next election, we will implement that proposal in full and immediately.

Andrew Mitchell, Hansard, House of Commons column 607, 29 October 2007

Attached is guidance on costing opposition policies, including the template for the costing, which should always be used. Please copy the final draft of the costing to XXX and I. Once XXX and I have seen the final draft and you have cleared it, the costing should be sent up to me for advisers use (as set out in para 7 of the guidance).

Please be sure to include any assumptions which you have made in producing the costing within the necessary box of the attached template, and be aware that the Treasury may be required to justify this assumption in releasing this costing more widely.

Happy to discuss any questions you or your team have on this.

Please would it be possible to get an initial draft of this by cop, Thursday 20 August?

Best
XXX

6/11/2007

XXX

Special Advisers have asked, on behalf of Ministers, for the following Opposition policy costings to be made as soon as possible. MoJ officials have been working on the assumptions underpinning these new policies and a note containing the relevant quotes and summarising MoJ officials' thoughts is attached. The relevant MoJ official to contact is Peter Brook - Head of Finance.

SpAds would be grateful if you could set this costing out over a five year period.

In addition to the information note from the MoJ, please also find attached guidance on costing opposition policies and a template to use for the costing itself. Please be sure to include any assumptions which you have made in producing the costing within the necessary box of the attached template, and be aware that the Treasury may be required to justify this assumption in releasing this costing more widely.

Would it be possible to get these by Thursday please? Happy to discuss this.

Best
XXX

The policies for costing are:

- True honesty in sentencing
- An end to End of Custody Licence (ECL) alone
- An end to all early release schemes: ECL, parole, Home Detention Curfew and the Early Release Scheme (ERS) for foreign prisoners
- 'Bracketed' sentences with a minimum and maximum tariff

Please can you cost the number of prison places needed if this policy was to be introduced within the next parliament. Can the cost be based on capital costs for building any new prisons and then recurring costs per prisoner on a yearly basis?

- Increasing residential drug rehabilitation provision

Based on the attached quotes how much would it cost for a provision of 10,000 and 25,000 places?

22/10/2007

XXX

Special Advisers have requested a costing of abandoning the phased increase in the small companies' rate of CT announced at Budget 2007 and reducing the SCR to 19% from April 2008.

The Shadow Chancellor has most recently announced an intention to reverse the 'small business tax rise announced at the last Budget' in an article for the Yorkshire Post (<http://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/opinion/George-OsborneWe-are->

the-party.3399348.jp). Due to this, I have attached the guidance on costing opposition policies and the template that you should complete to submit your costing. Please be sure to include any assumptions which you have made in producing the costing within the necessary box of the attached template, and be aware that the Treasury may be required to justify this assumption if required to release this costing more widely.

Emily anticipates that business groups may begin to lobby on this point over the next week, so we would be grateful for a costing and, separately, your lines to take on this suggestion as soon as possible - latest by Wednesday please.

Happy to discuss.

Best
XXX

5/10/2007

XXX

Special Advisers have requested, on behalf of Ministers, costings of the policy announcements over a five-year period made by the Opposition set out below. The Permanent Secretary's Office have cleared this request.

In addition to the Exchequer impact, Advisers would be grateful if you could provide some sense of the distributional impact of the policies where appropriate, as far as is possible within the time available.

We are very mindful of other work pressures in HMT and would urge you to send us previous costings of similar requests, revised only if necessary, where work has been done on this area previously. Where the request is new, please set this against other priorities in your teams and advise us when it might be possible to complete the costing or what it might be possible to send through to us this week. For costings that have been made previously, we would be grateful for responses ASAP.

Attached is guidance on costing opposition policies and a template to use for the costing itself. Some of these policies below are vague, so please be sure to include any assumptions which you have made in producing the costing within the necessary box of the attached template, and be aware that the Treasury may be required to justify this assumption in releasing this costing more widely.

Happy to discuss.

Best
XXX

4/2/2008

XXX

Special Advisers have requested, on behalf of Ministers, for the following opposition policy to be costed. Advisers have asked that this be done ASAP. Would it be possible to get something back today?

A Conservative government would aim to provide a dedicated maternity nurse for every new mother in their home for up to six hours a day in the first week after the baby's birth under radical plans to transform UK maternity care.

Observer, 3/2/08

"...that's why David Cameron has been particularly attracted by the idea of finding some way of securing additional support for parents at that particular time just after they've left hospital during those vital first few days, early weeks and months.

"I think it's important if we're looking at a scheme like this and we're thinking about rolling it out in the future..."

"One of the things about the Kraamzorgs scheme is that it essentially mobilises those people who have experienced, how have been mothers themselves or who know a great deal about childcare in order to help that they can help mothers who are at that point in the sort of cycle when they need most support, so I'm confident that we can learn from Holland and see how it can be applied here." Michael Gove, BBC News24

"What we've said is that we are going to look carefully at the Dutch scheme.

"I am looking at for example at how we can increase the number of midwives and how we can extend midwifery support into the community. Likewise in the community I am looking at how we can ensure that we have a more universal health visitor service." Lansley, C4 News

In addition to the Exchequer impact, advisers would be grateful if you could provide some sense of the distributional impact of the policies where appropriate, as far as is possible within the time available.

We are very mindful of other work pressures in HMT and would urge you to send us previous costings of similar requests, revised only if necessary, where work has been done on this area previously.

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Happy to discuss.

Best
XXX

8/11/2007

XXX

Special Advisers have requested from your team, on behalf of Ministers, costings of the following Opposition policies:

- **Establish a new regulator of independent health providers**

There should also be an independent regulator for the healthcare sector, which would license all providers and ensure quality and safety.

Andrew Lansley, Conservative Party News Release, 30 June 2006

Can we calculate the cost of what a regulatory body costs to set up and then its year by year costs?

- **New health watchdog**

Bring in "Health Watch": a powerful, independent watchdog, accountable to the public, not the NHS, to be a voice for patients.

Andrew Lansley, Speech to Conservative Party conference, 2 October 2005

Cost of setting up a watch dog - based on most recent costings for a comparable watchdog available.

SpAds would be grateful if you could set this costing out over a five year period. Please find attached guidance on costing opposition policies and a template to use for the costing itself. Please be sure to include any assumptions which you have made in producing the costing within the necessary box of the attached template, and be aware that the Treasury may be required to justify this assumption in releasing this costing more widely.

Would it be possible to get these from your team over the course of next week please? Happy to discuss.

Best

XXX

XXX

Special Advisers have requested, on behalf of Ministers, costings of the policy announcements over a five-year period made by the Opposition set out below. The Permanent Secretary's Office have cleared this request.

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Attached is guidance on costing opposition policies and a template to use for the costing itself. Some of these policies below are vague, so please be sure to include any assumptions which you have made in producing the costing within the necessary box of the attached template, and be aware that the Treasury may be required to justify this assumption in releasing this costing more widely.

Happy to discuss.

Best
XXX

Requested costings:

1. Cost of restoring earnings link to pensions with immediate affect?
2. Cost of 100% compensation on PPS levels for those that have lost their pension?

3/10/2007

XXX

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Requested costings:

- Cost of every school having a school nurse
- Cost of funding school IT training and school fruit from central government funding rather than lottery funding
- National School Leaver Programme. Is there any residential school leavers scheme currently in existence on a voluntary basis? If so what would be the cost of extending to 650,000 school leavers?

Happy to discuss.

Best
XXX

3/10/2007

XXX

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In addition to the Exchequer impact, Advisers would be grateful if you could provide some sense of the distributional impact of the policies where appropriate, as far as is possible within the time available.

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Happy to discuss.

Best
XXX

Requested costings:

- Transferable personal tax allowances from wife to husband, giving the family a £20 per week / £1000 per month boost
 - Getting rid of the 'couples' penalty' by giving 1.8 million families £32 per week - can we have this over a five-year period please?
 - Tax credits for grandparents who look after children. Are there any Govt estimate of the number of grandparents who care for grandchildren? If so what would be the cost of extending entitlement to CTC to grandparents on basic pension plus pension credit as income?
-

3/10/2007

XXX

Special Advisers have requested, on behalf of Ministers, costings of the policy announcements over a five-year period made by the Opposition set out below. The Permanent Secretary's Office have cleared this request.

In addition to the Exchequer impact, Advisers would be grateful if you could provide some sense of the distributional impact of the policies where appropriate, as far as is possible within the time available.

We are very mindful of other work pressures in HMT and would urge you to send us previous costings of similar requests, revised only if necessary, where work has been done on this area previously. Where the request is new, please set this against other priorities in your teams and advise us when it might be possible to complete the costing or what it might be possible to send through to us this week. For costings that have been made previously, we would be grateful for responses ASAP.

Attached is guidance on costing opposition policies and a template to use for the costing itself. Some of these policies below are vague, so please be sure to include any assumptions which you have made in producing the costing within the necessary box of the attached template, and be aware that the Treasury may be required to justify this assumption in releasing this costing more widely.

Happy to discuss.

Best
XXX

Requested costings:

- An annual audit on disability in the public sector. Can we get the cost of an annual audit on practice towards disabled people based on comparable Government audit costs?
- No conditionality on disability benefits. Could we cost what a single benefit would be as outlined below, based on a consolidation (perhaps use a median) of other disability benefits?
- Instead of the half-dozen different benefits a disabled person can receive - each with its different conditions and its own application form... ..we should be moving towards a single assessment process, and perhaps even a single benefit. If it was not conditional on whether you work or not - it would not act as a disincentive to finding a job. It would be simple, easy to administer and easy to understand.

David Cameron, Speech to Capability Scotland, 16 October 2006

10/9/2007

XXX,

Sam has asked for quick guidance / statement of position on the following proposal(s):

1. abolishing the RDAs

It would be useful if we could get quick guidance / statement on these proposal ASAP - latest by tomorrow at 9.30am - and preferably in the following format.

1. 1-3 sentences on what we're already doing on this (e.g. have we done it already or committed to do it?)
2. What are the issues involved in doing this? (e.g. is it incompatible with EU single market, are there practical problems we'd have to overcome etc.)
3. If possible, any assessment of scale of costs or social distribution impact you can make based on the limited information?

You may be aware from the press that these are trailed potential initiatives from the Quality of Life group of the Conservative Party's policy review. Attached is guidance on costing opposition policies and a template you should use if appropriate.

Happy to discuss.

Best
XXX

10/7/2007

XXX

Special Advisers have requested, on behalf of ministers, costings of the following opposition policies. In addition to the Exchequer impact, Advisers would be grateful if you could provide some sense of the distributional impact of the policies, as far as is possible within the time available. With many apologies for the short notice, would it be possible to get something by ASAP please?

The policies are taken from the report *Breakthrough Britain: Ending the costs of social breakdown*, which the Conservative Party launched this morning. The report is available here <http://povertydebate.typepad.com/>, with sections and page numbers on specific requests given below.

The policies to be costed are:

In the Family Breakdown section (Jonathan Athow/WIPA to coordinate)

p5: costs of enhancing the couple element in working tax credit so that all couples receive the same amount as lone parents. Is the £3bn right? What would be the distributive impacts? NB this for all married couples, not just those with children.

In the Economic dependency and worklessness section (Alison Cotterell/LMP to coordinate)

p4: what are the upfront costs of the proposals to highlight the conditionality around the receipt of benefits for those who can work. What would the start up costs be, e.g. of personal advisers, management programmes etc

In the Education Failure section (Jo-Anne Daniels/ETC to coordinate)

p6 - cost of full-time home/school support champion to disadvantaged schools. They say at £31k a school. How many schools would count as disadvantaged?

p6 - educational credits of £500pa for disadvantaged children - how much would this cost?

p6 - what sort of sized fund would you need for a primary school personnel fund to be effective?

Attached is guidance on costing opposition policies and a template you can use if you wish.

Thanks and happy to discuss.

XXX
