



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

Personal Minute

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Thank you for accepting the post of Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. I am writing to set out the challenges ahead for Government and in particular for your Department.

As a Government the key overarching domestic challenges for us are: to build on our unprecedented record of economic achievement ensuring our country can compete and win in the global knowledge economy, to take key decisions in the coming period to ensure the long term security and prosperity of our country and its people, to sustain the momentum of public service modernisation showing how investment and the programme of reform is delivering real improvements for ordinary hard working families, and to underline our Government's commitment to social justice through policies to expand opportunity and tackle the most deep seated causes and symptoms of social exclusion.

Given this context, I am therefore asking all Secretaries of State to identify the key challenges for their Departments and how they propose to deliver against these.

For the Department for Culture, Media and Sport my priorities are as follows.

First, you, of course, have a large and vital task in overseeing the 2012 Olympics. It is important that we continue the work of preparing the Olympic site, pressing down on costs and ensuring that the benefits of hosting the Olympic Games extend to every region of the country. I want to see better sports facilities for young people across the UK as part of the legacy of our victory in Singapore.

Second, to see through the process of renewing the BBC's Charter and to agree, within the necessary timetable, the level of the BBC licence fee. As, of course, you know, this is comprised of a number of elements and the negotiations over the funding of conversion to digital and the package of help for vulnerable groups will be complex. But I am sure a settlement can be arrived at which both secures the future of the BBC for the next period of the charter and which is a fair price to pay for licence fee payers.

Third, I am very concerned to ensure the success of digital switchover. To that end, I have appointed a Minister, Shaun Woodward, with specific responsibility to ensure effective switchover. I know that the excellent co-operation between the DTI and your Department will continue and that Shaun will work closely with Margaret Hodge at DTI. We need to ensure that the Digital UK timetable for switchover is strictly adhered to, that vulnerable groups are adequately compensated and that the numbers of people without digital capacity by the appointed dates is minimal.

Fourth, working with DTI, I want you to continue to give a high priority to the creative economy. You will need to look at the regulatory environment within which the industries operate and whether there are incentives that could increase

productivity. You will also want to plan to ensure that the industries have access to the right skills.

Fifth, as part of her work at the Department of Health, I have asked Caroline Flint to work with the DCLG and your Department on developing a new and ambitious strategy to maximise sporting participation and fitness. This is especially important in the context of our plans for extended schools. Sport and fitness have benefits that cross Departments and that is why Caroline will report jointly to you and to Patricia Hewitt at Health.

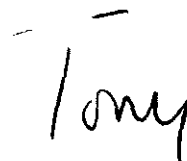
Sixth, I want you to continue your vigorous stewardship of the culture sector in this country, so that our museums, galleries, theatres and artists can continue to be the best in the world and contribute to the quality of life of our citizens, our attractiveness as a visitor destination, and continue to be at the heart of a thriving cultural and creative economy. In particular I would like you to continue to champion the role culture can play in national identity and our image of ourselves at home and abroad, and to maximise the part culture can play in a successful London Olympics in 2012. I would like you to continue to work closely with the Home Office, FCO, DCLG and others to ensure that next year's bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade in the former British Empire is commemorated in the most appropriate way.

Seventh, and finally, you should also continue in your important role as Minister responsible for supporting the victims of terrorist attacks and major emergencies, in particular ensuring that the Government continues to do all it can to support those affected by the tragic events of 7 July.

By the end of June, I would welcome your preliminary assessment of key challenges across your Department, including the key milestones and risks in each area, and the main actions you propose to meet these challenges. As a first step, I would be grateful if you come back to me by the end of May on how you have allocated responsibility for key issues and objectives among your Ministerial team. I am keen that we make the very best use of our excellent team in Government.

Your plans will, of course, need to be set against the background of lower growth in funding than in recent years. This means the Zero Based and Efficiency Reviews currently underway, combined with Departmental Capability Reviews, will be a critical input, and I would like you to give these your personal attention to ensure that the Department's spending is effective and fit for purpose as we move forward.

Thank you for the work you have done in post so far. I look forward to discussing the future challenges with you further.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the first letter.

May 2006