

Commissioner Briefing Note – for decision

Briefing agenda title: **External Communications for Commissioner**
Jan – Feb 2022

1. Objective

To agree the proposed external communications activity for your first two months in post.

2. Recommendations

Following on from the day one press release and your opening statement, the Communications Team recommends you -

In January

- **Issue a foreword in your name in the next ICO newsletter.**

This will go out on Thursday 13 January to more than 200,000 subscribers mainly in the data protection community (DPOs, practitioners, law firms, civil society etc). A draft of the foreword is included in your box for sign off.

- **Give your first print media interview to the Financial Times (Madhu Murghia, tech correspondent)**

This would be an exclusive interview to land on or just before Data Protection Day on Friday 28 January. We recommend the FT is the best outlet for our first interview because it reaches a business audience who we think your emerging narrative will resonate well with. It is also highly regarded by government.

The interview will focus on your priorities and goals as UK Information Commissioner. The FT would run this as an in-depth profile that also looks at your experience to date and we will try negotiate the set-piece interview slot.

We will also use this to announce the series of listening engagements you will hold with different stakeholder groups in the run up to the DPPC in July.

We will work with you to develop your narrative with key messages and news lines to land in this interview. We will also prepare briefing on tricky issues that you may be asked about.

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We will come back to you with the interview and pre-briefing dates – our aim is to do this as close to the expected print date as possible.

- **Do your first broadcast interview on BBC Radio 4 Today Programme**

The Today programme has a substantial breakfast audience – circa 6.5 million – and is widely listened to by the public sector.

We recommend you do this after the print interview coverage lands so that it gives the interviewer material to base their discussion with you on. We will try and sequence this so that your radio interview falls on the morning of DP day. This would be a live interview – either from BBC Media City Manchester down the line or in-person in the studio in London.

- **Follow up through an interview with Big Issue North**

The Big Issue North is an independent street paper sold by homeless and vulnerably housed vendors. It is a spin-off from the London-based Big Issue and originally started off in Manchester, before expanding across the North. It is a weekly magazine that contains news, features, comment and high-profile interviews written by professional journalists.

Your opening message as Commissioner that privacy is a right not a privilege would resonate well with this outlet and provide a more public facing channel to talk about the work you are spearheading. It also gives you the opportunity to strike a very different tone externally – and with staff – about your media engagements.

- **Film a short video for social media**

This will distil your narrative/key external message in 40 seconds and will be used across all of our corporate social media channels/website on DP day. We can assist with a script and filming.

Do you agree with the proposed activity for January?

Looking ahead to February

Story 1:



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This is a strong news story about the ICO's work. It also provides a hook for you to speak to more consumer facing media about your vision and objectives around protecting people, especially vulnerable parts of our society.

Comms Handling: A full comms plan is in development. Our recommended ideas for your involvement include:

- a slot on the BBC's You and Yours radio programme
- a short interview/extended media statement for the Sun

Story 2: **Section 31** we recommend doing something on good cyber security. We can publish **our data security incident trends** and use this to land the message that poor cyber security risks holding back UK businesses.

This is an opportunity for you to set out practical advice to organisation while also showing how better cyber security protects people (e.g. - 'big data is made of little data - the real victims here are the people who see their data accessed by unseen criminals, who in some cases see their bank balances then accessed by these crooks').

Comms Handling: We would look for a quote from you in a press release and media interviews with 1-2 media outlets, e.g. Tom Knowles, Times; Charles Hymas Telegraph; and/or Alexander Martin at Sky News. Looking ahead there is the option to add a further public angle around National Password Day (May 6).

Story 3: Safer Internet Day (8 February)

The theme this year is '*All Fun and Games? Exploring respect and relationships online*'. We are brainstorming creative ideas and will come back to you with our proposed activity.

Event: First of the Listening Engagements – Business

February (likely the latter half) will also mark the first of your listening engagements. We propose kicking off with one of the business groups. Further information on the proposal for the listening series and our external comms around these will come to you later this month.

Are you content for us to work up the plans for February as above?

We will continue to look for other proactive/reactive opportunities that may be suitable for you to set out your vision.

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