

New Cost of Living Business Tsar appointed

David Buttress, former chief executive of Just Eat, has been appointed as the Government's new Cost of Living Business Tsar by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Mr Buttress will work in partnership with the private sector to identify, develop and promote new and existing business-led initiatives that support people with rising costs of living – from discounted prices or product offers to the expansion of business-run programmes.

This work will build on the schemes, offers and targeted help that some businesses and organisations are already providing and help raise awareness of the private sector offer to the public, which is in addition to extensive government-funded support. Successful examples include price locking campaigns seen in retailers Asda, Sainsbury's and Boots, and energy supplier Octopus's decision to double its hardship support fund, which has helped more than 36,000 people so far.

The Holiday Activities and Food Programme provides one such opportunity for local level partnerships between sports clubs and supermarkets, backing projects that boost access to free activities and food during the holidays for disadvantaged children, including those in receipt of free school meals.

Mr Buttress will join today (Tuesday 14 June) a roundtable with supermarkets and sports organisations hosted by the Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi, where they will discuss the role that the private sector can play in helping low-income families, including through the Government's Holiday Activities and Food Programme.

Representatives from organisations such as Co-op, John Lewis Partnership/Waitrose, Swim England, Sport England, and English Football League are due to attend.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Steve Barclay said:

"Businesses and organisations across the country have stepped up time and time again when the nation needs it most. The financial pressures people are facing as a result of current global challenges will be no different.

"I am delighted to have David Buttress on board, bringing with him a wealth of experience along with the vigour and ingenuity of business to go even further in efforts to support British families throughout this difficult time."

David Buttress has a wealth of experience in entrepreneurship and investment – leading Just Eat in the UK from a start-up to becoming Europe's largest technology IPO in a decade. He is currently Chairman of Dragons Rugby club in Newport and a Venture Partner at 83North Venture Capital.

David Buttress, Cost of Living Business Tsar, said:

“The rising cost of living that we are all facing, both in the UK and globally, provides business and industry with a unique challenge and opportunity to do our bit.

“I am looking forward to working closely with my private sector colleagues, to help support our communities and customers with practical and real cost of living saving initiatives.”

The new role of Cost of Living Business Tsar is the latest strand of Government action to support people with challenging financial pressures.

Last month, the Government announced that eight million of the most vulnerable households (around a third of all UK households) will receive £1,200 this year and all families will receive £400 – this is on top of changes to Universal Credit, National Living Wage and National Insurance thresholds, so that people keep more of what they earn.

This takes total government cost of living support to over £37 billion – higher than other major economies around the world.

The Government has recently launched a new website which brings government support on offer together in one place so the public can see what support they could be eligible for: www.gov.uk/costoflivingsupport

Notes to editors:

- David Buttress will work in this role until the end of the year and is a voluntary (unpaid) role.
- He will report to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and PM’s Chief of Staff Steve Barclay.