



REA Member Briefing on the February 2020 Cabinet Reshuffle

Yesterday, the greatly anticipated post-Brexit Cabinet shuffle took place. What was expected to be a relatively modest reshuffle took a number of turns throughout the day. Most notable being Sajid Javid's resignation as Chancellor following his refusal to dismiss his advisers.

For the renewables and clean technology industry there was a number of important changes. Below is the current status of the relevant roles:

***** marks those who will be attending Cabinet***

Roles that have **changed**:

- ****Chancellor of the Exchequer:** Rishi Sunak MP, formerly held by Sajid Javid MP;
- ****Secretary of State for BEIS:** Alok Sharma MP, formerly held by Andrea Leadsom MP;
- ****Secretary of State for Defra:** George Eustice MP, formerly held by Theresa Villiers MP;
- ****President of COP 26:** Alok Sharma MP, formerly held by Claire O'Neil;
- ****Chief Secretary to the Treasury:** Stephen Barclay MP, formerly held by Rishi Sunak MP;
- **Transport Minister:** Andrew Stepheeson MP, formerly held by George Freeman;
- **Transport Minister:** Kelly Tolhurst MP, formerly held by Nusrat Ghani MP;
- **Housing Minister:** Simon Clarke MP, formerly held by Esther McVey MP;
- **BEIS Minister and Minister for London:** Paul Scully MP, formerly held by Lord Duncan of Springbank;

Roles that have remained the **same**:

- ****Secretary of State for Transport:** Grant Shapps MP;
- ****Secretary of State for the MHCLG:** Robert Jenrick MP;
- **Business, Energy and Clean Growth Minister:** Kwasi Kwarteng MP;

The new Chancellor and Secretaries of State

Below are briefings on the newly appointed:

- Chancellor of the Exchequer;
- Secretary of State for BEIS and COP26 President;
- Secretary of State for Defra;

Chancellor of the Exchequer: Rishi Sunak MP

Conservative MP for Richmond



Background

- Rishi Sunak MP has been appointed as Chancellor of the Exchequer
- Mr Sunak has experience in the banking sector having been a former Goldman Sachs investment analyst and experience in Treasury holding the role of Chief Secretary to the Treasury from July 2019 – February 2020. Despite this, Mr Sunak's appointment is considered to be a big promotion and came as a shock to political commentators
- As well as a financial background, Mr Sunak also has a background in the environment having sat on the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee between 2015 and 2017. He was also a PPS to the BEIS team between June 2017 and January 2018 before being promoted to Housing Minister.
- Despite keeping a relatively low profile on his views on energy, Mr Sunak is open about his support for farmers even citing 'standing up for farmers' as a priority of his alongside championing skills and backing local business.
- Mr Sunak has been labelled as a rising star by the media following his TV and media appearances supporting Brexit, controversial changes to terrorism sentences and generally supporting the Prime Minister's positions on policies

Voting record

- Measures to prevent climate change: has voted against measures 11 of the 11 times he has voted
- Financial incentives for low carbon emission electricity generation methods: voted in favour 0 times and against 1 time.

Secretary of State for BEIS and COP26 President: Alok Sharma MP

Conservative MP for Reading West



Background

- Alok Sharma MP has been appointed the joint role of Secretary of State for BEIS and COP 26 President taking over the roles from Andrea Leadsom MP and Claire O'Neil respectively.
- Despite keeping a relatively low profile when it comes to climate change, Mr Sharma has some international experience under his belt. Following Boris Johnson's insistence on appointing a "big hitter who can handle themselves on the international stage", this experience may be the reason why he was appointed COP26 President.
- During his role of Secretary of State for International Development (Jul 2019 – Feb 2020) he took a leading role in securing £2bn worth of "environmentally-friendly" energy deals across Africa. Although it was later revealed that 90% of these deals were for fossil fuels, Mr Sharma has stated a personal interest in securing World Bank investment for developing countries to help them tackle climate change.
- Mr Sharma also has experience working with Boris Johnson during his time as the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Although Mr Sharma voted remain in the EU referendum, he has been complimentary and supportive of Boris Johnson and his achievements throughout his parliamentary career.
- Mr Sharma has also held the role of Minister of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Jun 2017 - Jan 2018).

Voting record

- Measures to prevent climate change: has voted against measures 15 of the 19 times he has voted
- Financial incentives for low carbon emission electricity generation methods: voted in favour two times and against two times

Secretary of State for Defra: George Eustice MP

Conservative MP for Camborne and Redruth



Background

- George Eustice MP has been appointed as Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.
- Mr Eustice is a former farm worker and press secretary and has cited his policy interests as being farming, the environment, Europe and regeneration.
- Mr Eustice holds the record of being the longest serving Defra Minister having been first appointed in 2013. During this time he held the positions of under-secretary for eighteen months; Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food for four years; Minister of State for seven months.
- Mr Eustice did however resign from Defra in February 2019 in opposition to extending article 50. Boris Johnson personally expressed his admiration for Mr Eustice's 'principles' and appointed him back into Defra five months later in July.
- Mr Eustice's activity in Parliament has mainly revolved around Defra and leaving the EU. Mr Eustice has however instigated and taken part in a number of debates on wave and tidal energy. This is most likely due to the opportunities it holds for his constituency in Cornwall.
- Mr Eustice is an avid supporter of the environment having written an opinion piece in the Guardian last year stating that the UK couldn't ignore environmental standards in favour of watered-down trade deals with the US - especially on food standards and chlorinated chicken.

Voting record

- Measures to prevent climate change: has voted against measures 14 of the 16 times he has voted
- Financial incentives for low carbon emission electricity generation methods: voted in favour 1 time and against 3 times.