NFSP00001465

From: Rohini Shah[/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=975909C59A0343538128B38009AA5DFF-ROHINI SHAH]
Sent: Wed 05/06/2024 4:17:54 PM (UTC)
To: Catriona Watt GRO
Subject: RE: Email

From: Ruth Buckley-Salmon GRO
Sent: Friday, May 24, 2024 2:21 PM
To: Catriona Watt GRO
Subject: RE: Email

From: George Thomson GRO

Sent on: Tuesday, June 9, 2015 1:32:15 PM

To: Mervyn Jones GRO

Subject: Re: Yesterday's Branch Meeting

Hi Merv
A very nice -uck off reply.commendable restraint.
VB
George

Sent from my iPad
On 9 Jun 2015, at 14:29, Mervyn Jones GRO wrote:

My response FYI
Sent from my iPad
Begin forwarded message:

From: Mervyn Jones GRO
Date: 9 June 2015 14:02:20 GMT+01:00
To: Calum Greenhow GRO
Cc: ian carruthers GRO
Subject: Re: Yesterday's Branch Meeting

Hi Calum,
You had ample opportunity to make these points at both the regional roadshow and at the meeting in Moffat. I would suggest that the branch clearly determined its position on Sunday.
While I accept some members may have concerns these will be aired at the conference next week.
It was, as always a pleasure to visit The South of Scotland branch and I would ask you to convey my thanks to the members for the lovely lunch.

NFSP00001465

Best regards
Mervyn

Sent from my iPad
On 8 Jun 2015, at 11:16, "Calum Greenhow" <GRO> wrote:

Hi Mervyn,

Just to say thank you for yesterday as the decision we are being asked to make has so many far reaching aspects that it is vitally important we have the opportunity to find out as much as possible to enable us to make the right choice.

Having read through the three options the MOU draws me most, however I still have my reservations. Indeed, yesterday you made mention on numerous occasions how untrustworthy POL are and how quickly they will take an advantage to our members detriment. I well remember my first Conference in 2010, when you advised me to never trust them as they will suck you in, make you think they are your friend and then turn on you when it's not to their advantage. Grant funding comes with clawbacks and conditions so I hope we are strong enough to ensure that that POL doesn't use the MOU to take away the voice of the UK's Post Office operators.

Sadly, for me, the MOU is not for the majority of the current membership as NT2 will remove most of them as we discussed at length yesterday. Sitting around the room yesterday, only Ian has a future in the network, the rest of us don't. As much as I will be disappointed if I am forced to go, there will be huge relief in not having to work for POL any longer.

I have always said that I represent the members first and Ian will now, quite rightly, point out that those members present yesterday want the MOU so I must vote for it at the SC.

I have always gone by the adage – once is one of those things, twice is a coincidence but three times is a pattern starting to happen. To ensure that the information I have to hand is either correct or incorrect, you're the best person to answer the reservations I have.

One point you did raise was that people are making mischief against the MOU. To a point I can agree with you as there are some who simply want George out for their own ends etc. However there is a significant group of people who have grave concerns over transparency in relation to the MOU, who are Federation people at heart and loyal to its ethos. They feel that what we were led to believe by George in connection to NT at Conference 2011, could and would be delivered, which it hasn't. They feel that the MOU and NT2 are intrinsically linked in that one leads to the other. They feel misled at the SC in 2013 as at the time the EC were encouraging members to accept NT2, the NFSP had been for some time in negotiations with POL over the MOU. They are also concerned that EC minutes from January 2014 shaded in pink suggest that "that due to the massive amount of time, money and resources the Federation had invested in supporting NT2 a payment of £500,000 was secured from POL to offset these costs. Payment was made on 27 December and would show in the accounts. Payment was also to support activity over the coming months." Toby Clegg asked David Milner at Conference last year, why this sum did not appear to be included in the accounts but was refused an answer due to his question not being in writing in time as per the rules. Many members are still concerned where this sum has gone and if this questions our independence as an organisation already, never mind once the MOU is agreed.
I asked about the setting up of the limited company which you replied will only take a day once the MOU has been agreed. A simple check on Companies House indicates that NFSP Ltd was set up by Guy Butterworth in January, 2014. George indicated on Friday that the MOU has been part of his life for the last 3 years suggesting that it has been part of NFSP strategy since 2012 or the same year that NT began. For some this raises questions as to the length of time that the SLT of the NFSP have known that the Government would not come good on it's assurances over FOoG in relation to NT and therefore the impact this has on the entire project. Many members have made the decision to convert to either a Mains or a Local in that time and are now stuck without an exit strategy as this business goes in

NFSP00001465

one direction.

We were also led to believe at Conference in 2011 that NT would be a three year project, yet EC minutes from January 2011, again shaded in pink indicate that the EC were informed "that NT and spending would go on for 6-7 years." It also indicates that Government funding of POL in the financial year 2016-2017 would be £500m, so things must have changed as we are continually being told that funding is dropping and would reach between £50-£60m from 2018 onwards.

They are also concerned that the NFSP didn't put up a fight against the Certification Officer decision as being a trade union would prevent the auto enrolment aspect of the MOU, something that had been worked on for nearly two year by the time the Union status was withdrawn. If the Certification Officer ruled to keep our status the MOU would be dead and buried and two years of work, time and expense would have been a waste. Again this was reported to the EC in the January 2014 meeting.

There is a strong feeling that the AoA don't go far enough particularly around the appointment or removal of the CEO. When I asked George about this on Friday, it was uncomfortable to listen to him threaten legal action against the Fed if he was removed as he has a contract till 2017. The position is correct but I wasn't asking about him specifically, I was asking about rules in relation to the appointment of a GS/CEO given he had indicated that in essence the AoA is a straight lift from the current rules. Again the requirement of AoA was discussed in January 2014 so there has been plenty of time to get this right.

If the framework agreement affects postmasters in a beneficial way, why not laud it from the rooftops rather than hold it back in case there are legal challenges from Mark Baker etc. The MOU does indicate that it would be published.

You were quite right to point out that Second Sight indicate that there is no systemic fault with Horizon, however there is enough in their report for the NFSP to jumping all over POL to ensure that they are dealing with members in a right and proper manner. The fact that during the week of the 20th of April the BBC etc ran the story, yet the NFSP remains silent, which is concerning particularly when it transpires that on Friday the 24th of April the MOU was agreed. Again, it calls in to question our independence going forward. The MOU is so, so important to the existence of the NFSP, my concern is that once adopted the likelihood of the Fed sustaining a challenge to POL is questionable in case the grant funding is withdrawn.

Let me finish by repeating that I am drawn to the MOU but am very concerned about how we have got here. At a time when there could well be celebration over the MOU being agreed, thousands of our members will be losing their Post Offices, businesses and livelihoods. You could be right to suggest that some are mischief making but for me and many other loyal Federation activists we see membership declining and those who led the organisation over this period being rewarded.

I would much prefer to be on board and onside but the above causes me concern. Hopefully, your answers will provide the reassurance I seek.

Please feel free to call, reply via email or I would be more than happy to meet up to discuss prior to the SC so that I can vote with confidence on behalf of all the members of the SoS not just those who turned up to the Branch meeting yesterday.

Yours,

Calum

West Linton Post Office

West Linton GRO
Mobile GRO

NFSP00001465

Email - GRO