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**From:** Alasdair Marnoch [REDACTED] **GRO**  
**Sent:** Tue 20/08/2013 10:47:59 AM (UTC)  
**To:** Paula Vennells [REDACTED] **GRO**  
**Cc:** Alice Perkins [REDACTED] **GRO**  
**Subject:** RE: IN CONFIDENCE: FOLLOW UP TO OUR MEETING

Thanks Paula - that makes good sense. I'll drop Richard a note updating him and advising that your office will be in touch.

Let's regroup after your meeting.

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From: paula.vennells [REDACTED] **GRO**  
To: alasdairmarnoch [REDACTED]  
CC: aliceperkins [REDACTED] **GRO**  
Subject: Re: IN CONFIDENCE: FOLLOW UP TO OUR MEETING  
Date: Tue, 20 Aug 2013 10:33:51 +0000

Alasdair, thank you. A reply on the hoof, so apologies for the brevity.

Before we do anything further, if I am going to sponsor this (and as we discussed, I don't think there is anyone else who could/should), then I would like to meet Richard asap.

Unless you or Alice get back to me to say otherwise, I shall ask my office to make contact with Richard tomorrow. Happy to progress with a review of his brief in parallel.

Thanks again for your input,

Paula

Sent from my iPad

On 20 Aug 2013, at 11:15, "Alasdair Marnoch" <[REDACTED] **GRO** [REDACTED]> wrote:

Alice/Paula

I wanted to follow up on the discussions yesterday we had separately about the Second Sight report review.

For Alice's benefit, Paula and I had a good (if brief!) discussion on the work I had done since

Paula had **GRO** and about the benefits of bringing someone in from outside to undertake a focused review. I'm sure Paula would like the opportunity to draw breath and get comfortable with the review (given all the other work going on) but assuming Paula is ok then I think we are in broad alignment with the approach.

On reflection (and having had 3 meetings in Aug on the SS work with S/A) I think this piece of work should be viewed as part of our wider response to SS report and needs to slot in with the other workstreams (avoiding any overlap). There are two main parts to the review

1. Lessons learnt from the way the PO handled Horizon questions from the point of JA's involvement (essentially a process review)
2. Understanding any deeper (culture/HR etc) issues around how we handled the overall questions of dealing with the concerns - ie reluctance for an independent enquiry

Paula and I also discussed who should lead this work. I am increasingly of the view that it should be Paula firstly as it needs to fit in with the work Susan and Angela are doing and, more importantly, that the SS experience is an ideal opportunity to make further change for the better and the lessons learned will form part of Paula's change programme for the PO. But with one eye on independence I am happy to support/co-sponsor.

On the scope/approach I have had one meeting with Richard and I gave him an outline scope. He responded with TOR and scope both of which were broader than we intended (however for him to address the second point he will need to get a good understanding of the history/approach). I've reviewed and marked up both documents - could you please also review and refine further. (Richard's original note is below).

Richard also raises a good question about talking to external parties which under normal circumstances would be helpful (to get their view of how we have handled it). But given the situation we should not do that as it is likely to exacerbate the current situation and will raise questions about making the report public. So, like Alice, I think we should ask him not to do this (although Alice did suggest he talks to Donald B if D is agreeable).

For next steps can I suggest Paula has a first go at the scope and then passes to Alice for final sign off. I will then make contact with Richard and suggest another meeting to close out the scope and agree next steps. With a fair wind Richard will be done by early Oct and his report + the output from the other workstreams would form a good update for the Oct Board on SS.

Finally I've been reassured with my meetings with Susan and Angela that we seem to be doing all the right things and making good progress with the different stakeholders. Much to do but confident we are learning the lessons and will be better as a result.

I hope this makes sense but happy to discuss.

Alasdair

PS The Post Office in South Warnborough (Jo Hamilton) is one of my local POs and I've just made the connection!

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From: [hatfields12@GRO.GOV.UK](mailto:hatfields12@GRO.GOV.UK)  
To: [alasdairmarnoch@GRO.GOV.UK](mailto:alasdairmarnoch@GRO.GOV.UK)  
Subject: IN CONFIDENCE: FOLLOW UP TO OUR MEETING  
Date: Wed, 14 Aug 2013 17:05:56 +0100

Alasdair,

Following our very useful discussion, I have now read the Second Sight interim report and some other background on the web in order to work up my proposals for the conduct of the Review.

My proposal consists of the attached draft of fully fledged TOR developed from the initial sketch you sent me, our discussion last week and my preliminary assessment of the ground that I think the Review would need to cover.

The draft TOR are, I hope, generally self explanatory. I would welcome any comments or suggestions but I have, however, made explicit a number of key assumptions/suggestions about the status and methodology which I would like confirmed or corrected. In particular:

- The Review is about Lessons Learned by the Post Office from the whole episode – i.e. it is not an investigation of individual cases or of the performance of Horizon.
- For this reason, the Review will be commissioned as private report to the Board (or the chair? or you?). While I think this is the right starting point, I suggest the Board (and I) will want to keep in mind the possibility of releasing the findings in some form after the PO has had an opportunity to consider, both as a response to external interest and to assist with follow up action.
- The Review should not single out the Second Sight investigation, although the Second Sight work is clearly an important aspect to be covered.
- You and I will keep in contact throughout the Review, so there should be no surprises.

The second document expands the TOR but outlining the ground which I would want cover and some of the key questions which, even at this early stage, I believe need to be addressed (particularly in the light of my reading of the Second Sight report). Of course, other issues may well emerge as the Review progresses but please let me know if I am barking up any wrong trees or if I have missed something that you would like covered.

One point my initial reading has brought home to me is the need to be careful about ensuring

that events and decisions are considered in their proper context. I suspect that this means spending more time than I had thought on initial preparation to ensure that I understand the chronology and organisational background before embarking on the main interview programme. I hope, however, this can be done while the holiday season is still upon us, so that it need delay the start of interviews. One thing I will undoubtedly need help with is identifying and arranging interviews with key players. I am not clear whether you envisaged that I would talk to anybody outside the PO. I guess I might need to talk to one or two people who were involved before the PO split off (Alice's predecessor?) and if I am to do this thoroughly, especially in looking at possible wider implications, I probably ought to talk to James Arbuthnot and, conceivably, the JFSA. I would welcome your thoughts on this. One of the reasons for spending more time on preparation is to try to ensure that I cover the relevant ground with each interviewee as thoroughly as possible, not least to avoid imposing unduly on busy people. Nevertheless, it is likely that I will need to talk to some people a second time to clarify specific points or to address something which has come up in later interviews.

In the light of the above, I think that the estimate of 20 days work in total remains reasonable, if quite tight, but I am confident that there is no risk of a significant overrun. Nevertheless, I would like to give myself a little more flexibility about the exact end date and have proposed a deadline of the end of October. There are three reasons for this. First, fitting in all the interviews could turn out to be more problematic than we expect. Second, I would like to leave myself a little room for reflection both during the interviewing process and, particularly, after the main evidence gathering and analysis. Third, it might be helpful to discuss my emerging conclusions with you and/or Alice before finalising the report. I would also, of course, be very happy to discuss the final version with both of you and, indeed, with the Board, if you so wished.

If you are comfortable with my proposals for TOR and coverage, including outputs and timings, I suggest we agree a fixed fee of £10,000 for completion of the Review and submission of the Report, broadly equivalent to £500 a day. Please let me know whether this would be acceptable. If you are happy to proceed on this basis I would welcome an early chat about when and how I can get on with some preparatory work.

Happy to discuss.

Richard

PS. On a point of detail, who or what is "Shex", referred to among the stakeholders?  
<Post Office LLR - TOR AM.docx>

<LLR scope - AM.docx>

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