

To: Batten Peter (ShEx) [REDACTED] **GRO** [REDACTED]; Gibson Will (ShEx) [REDACTED] **GRO** [REDACTED];
From: Whitehead Mike (ShEx) [/O=DTI/OU=DTIHQ/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=MJWHITEH]
Sent: Fri 05/07/2013 2:12:26 PM (UTC)
Subject: RE: SS - report highlights

Next steps

Though POL see the Second Sight (SS) **interim** report as being unsatisfactory in many respects, their current thinking is to welcome the report and to commit to work with SS, JFSA, James Arbuthnot (JA) and other MPs in implementing changes and improvements (where not already done) in the Horizon training and support provided to spms and establishing a 'User Group Forum' as a channel to monitor and respond to spm concerns about Horizon operating procedures.

SS are understood to be refining draft of report over the weekend.

Discussions between Paula Vennells and Alan Bates of JFSA (Justice for Subpostmasters Alliance) indicate that he is agreeable to signing up to a joint statement with POL (and ideally JA) welcoming the report, acknowledging that there is no evidence of systemic problems with Horizon and moving forward to establish a 'User Forum' to identify scope for improvements and continue with case investigation.

Paula Vennells (PV) is having further discussions with JA on Fri afternoon to and seek to persuade him to sign up (and minimise handling issues) to the joint statement approach for the Monday SS meeting to report to MPs and JFSA. (Not seen as a certainty and so contact with him by Tessa Munt and/or Oliver Letwin may be helpful - POL can provide a pre-brief if required)

Also helpful if Tessa Munt (and Oliver Letwin) could attend the SS Report meeting at HoC on 8 July (both have ex-spm constituents whose cases have been submitted for SS investigation) to moderate MP response (e.g. proposal for Urgent Question/Ministerial Statement on 9 July). Therefore helpful if you have an opportunity to flag to Tessa over the weekend.

POL has commissioned external lawyers to review all cases where legal action against an spm has been initiated by POL since separation or may be pending) in the light of the interim report findings.

POL giving consideration to JFSA proposal for establishing an independent 'Adjudicator' to consider spm appeals in financial irregularity cases that are not resolved bilaterally between POL and spm. (issues around cost/funding to work through)

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From: Batten Peter (ShEx)
Sent: 05 July 2013 14:15
To: Gibson Will (ShEx); Whitehead Mike (ShEx)
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Only three bits that we'd want to draw on publicly as quotes:

(1.11) "the vast majority of subpostmasters and branches are at least reasonably happy with the Horizon system."

(7.1) "the Horizon system appears to achieve its intended purpose almost all of the time and operates smoothly for most subpostmasters and their staff"

(12.3) "We have so far found no evidence of system wide (systemic) problems with the Horizon software"