

Message

From: Mark R Davies [GRO]
on behalf of [GRO]
Sent: 20/11/2014 16:46:16
To: Paula Vennells [GRO]
CC: Alwen Lyons [GRO]; Gavin Lambert [GRO]; Neil Hayward
[GRO]
Subject: Re: Sparrow sub-ctte

Paula

We had a good session this morning at Exco.

Belinda and Angela joined the meeting. I outlined the MP meeting and the specific request. Exco had a good debate across the range of issues, and on Angela's paper, which we all felt was strong and a key part of our story once we are ready to tell our story.

We had a frank and detailed discussion. Our view as a team was that we should resist the suggestion from the MPs on the grounds that it would effectively render the working group meaningless, and put us in a very difficult position legally in relation to cases which have been through the courts.

The view was that the MP meeting was the result of the strategy we embarked on during the summer and that we should as a result hold our nerve. We believe we have a strong story to tell, and I outlined the ways in which we propose to ensure our story is out there (and also to tackle media inaccuracy).

We came to the view that in terms of the Board, it would make sense for you to refer to the meeting with MPs as you present your CEO report, and to report the nature of the MPs' proposal, but to say that having consulted with Exco and relevant colleagues you do not intend to change course.

Assuming this is not challenged by the Board, we then recommend a letter to the MPs which sets out our position and which stays true to the confidentiality of the Scheme but which also sets out our overarching position - that having set up the inquiry and the Scheme - and paid for both - we are determined to see it through. We will further say that as the MPs made much of the media requests they had received, we would be content for them to release the letter to the media. This allows us a vehicle to get our position out there, strongly.

In the meantime, we will separately contact Oliver Letwin via two constituency cases.

We will also send a holding note to the MPs. Belinda and team are drafting this at present.

Happy to discuss this. Belinda and Angela did a terrific job this morning.

Mark

Mark Davies
Communications and Corporate Affairs Director
Mobile: [GRO]

Sent from my iPad

On 20 Nov 2014, at 09:06, "Paula Vennells" [GRO] wrote:

> Not sure - presumably we need to go back to James et al with a decision that the Board wants to continue the approach we have. Ie., not adopt Oliver's proposition of a general undertaking that (with a few exceptions), we would mediate if SS recommended it. So we do need a discussion. That could be off the back of my paper.

>
> Mark, what's your view? And next steps? Pls brief Gavin if we need to add in.
> Thx Paula

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>
> Paula Vennells
> Chief Executive
> Post Office Ltd

>
> T: [GRO]
> Paula.vennells@ [GRO]
>

> Sent from my iPad

>
>> On 19 Nov 2014, at 18:45, Alwen Lyons [GRO] wrote:
>>
>> Mark did explain that he would like to focus on Oliver Letwin to try and get him to understand everything we have done and why we believe we should continue as we are doing.
>>
>> I am sure they will want to be updated, could it part of your report.
>>
>> Thanks
>> Alwen
>>
>> Alwen Lyons
>> Company Secretary
>> [GRO]
>>

>>> On 19 Nov 2014, at 18:15, Paula Vennells [GRO] wrote:
>>>
>>> Thanks Alwen.
>>> I hadn't anticipated we would change our approach. But presumably Mark explained seeing Oliver Letwin to share why we can't answer his question. The discussion needs to centre on what we think the next steps/fall-out will be and how we manage it. I imagine the Board will still want to be updated even if there is no sub-Ctte.
>>> Paula
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>>> Paula Vennells
>>> Chief Executive
>>> Post Office Ltd
>>>
>>> T: [GRO]
>>> [GRO]
>>>

>>> Sent from my iPad

>>>> On 19 Nov 2014, at 14:26, Alwen Lyons [GRO] wrote:
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>>>> Paula
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>>>> I hope you are feeling better
>>>>
>>>> I'm not sure if you have been in touch with Alice and if so whether you mentioned this to her.
>>>>
>>>> Mark, Belinda and I met Alice this morning to discuss Sparrow.
>>>>
>>>> She was very sorry that the meeting had been so difficult and appalled by the behaviour. However she did not want to call a Sparrow Sub Committee next week as she thinks the process is working and we should continue as is.
>>>>
>>>> We have Sparrow on the exco agenda tomorrow so should be have that debate and then consider how we take it forward.
>>>>
>>>> Thanks
>>>> Alwen
>>>>
>>>> Alwen Lyons
>>>> Company Secretary
>>>> [GRO]
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>>>>> On 18 Nov 2014, at 18:20, Paula Vennells [GRO] wrote:
>>>>>
>>>>> Hi this is just to confirm what I said last night - that I want a board sub-ctte to debate next steps. I am about to flag that to Alice.
>>>>>
>>>>> Alwen, therefore to be aware. I don't have next week's Board agenda with me but that would be the obvious time. (And I imagine it will be a topic of discussion over dinner the night before, so I want to be prepared!) However, It's important so mustn't be 'squeezed in' and mustn't be discussed when people are tired. Also the team need to be sure they are ready to discuss; and, ideally we take Alice through it first.
>>>>>
>>>>> Lastly,
>>>>> 1) as I don't trust the meeting last night, Mark - do we have up to date media contingencies?
>>>>> 2) in case I'm not in tomorrow (I do intend to recover properly), Alice might appreciate Mark and Chris to update on the meeting. By all means discuss thoughts and get Alice's input but make sure you give us the time and freedom to look at all options. The Exco need to debate it as well in Thursday.
>>>>>
>>>>> Thanks, Paula

>>>>
>>>> Paula Vennells
>>>> Chief Executive
>>>> Post Office Ltd
>>>>
>>>> T: [GRO]
>>>> [GRO]
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>>>> Sent from my iPad