

From: Paula Vennells [GRO]
Sent: Fri 05/07/2013 5:33:49 PM (UTC)
To: Alwen Lyons [GRO]
Cc: Paula Vennells [GRO]; Susan Crichton [GRO]; Mark R Davies [GRO]; Martin Edwards [GRO]; Simon Baker [GRO]; Rodric Williams [GRO]; Lesley J Sewell [GRO]; Alwen Lyons [GRO]
Subject: Re: Notes of the meeting with JA 5th July

Great thx. I have also debriefed Martin, who will liaise re actions (I hope not many) over the weekend. The main points will be getting our statement of welcome and intent for the front of the report; plus reviews of the report. (If there exists a marked up copy, I would like it pls - will avoid me repeating work already done.

Thx and good weekend everyone!

Paula

Sent from my iPhone

On 5 Jul 2013, at 18:19, "Alwen Lyons" [GRO] wrote:

- > Her are my notes of the meeting
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- > PV explained the calls with AB.
- > JA has also had a call with him today in which he was very positive. He is a good man, not being paid to do this.
- > PV his main concern is training and support he is worried about the way spur are treated he didn't expect this to go ballistic on Monday
- > JA extremely promising, he wanted the issue to get sorted.
- > PV the report was out of balance with some inaccuracies if we can get it back in balance it could be constructive using a joint approach to solve the issues. The branch users forum
- > J this sound as if this solution is what both sides want
- > P work together over the summer with AB then update the MPs not sure if AB has seen the report
- > J I have not
- > J joint approach would be good but AB has always wanted an independent 3rd party
- > JA and AB have discussed two models
- > Banks when they introduce software pay for it to be 99.999% accurate and then write off the 0.001% of errors the bank takes the downside
- > PO when introducing software and the supporting systems the SPMR takes the downside and they do not make the commercial decision
- > Need an independent person not focused on asset recovery
- > P second thing said to AB that she accepts there should be somewhere to go if they cannot get the support they want from the PO. Before the final button on is pushed a safety net. Adjudicator
- > P spoke to AB about working together over the summer a branch user forum to make sure check steps at in place coming out of the report. Also work up the terms of reference for the adjudicator ombudsman. Can not be too. Expensive to run or regulated
- > J the other thing which AB keeps coming back to is that SPMRs have suffered greatly
- > P Offered to meet subpostmasters with AB to hear their stories, bring legal counsel to listen and hear AB wants to know what we will do with history cases, he feels 2 or 3 have been wrongly prosecuted.
- > Get external lawyers to review cases pol have run. But they have pleaded guilty.
- > J they may have pleaded guilty to the lesser charge of false accoutring to stop a charge of theft or fraud. Need an independent reconsideration of these cases, provided a SPMR appeals within a certain time (NOT REALLY RESOLVED)
- > P we will sit down with MPs and subpostmasters to look at cases that might be the process it would be inappropriate for P to say they should be reopened.
- > AL we mustn't forget that the report is saying that there is no systemic problem with the software but in these cases money has gone missing somewhere
- > P I hear the pain people have gone though and would listen with AB
- > J AB is not a lawyer JA is and he is concerned about old cases.
- > P there would have to be a filter she would worry about making wide agreement to reopen cases.
- > (NOT REALLT RESOLVED)
- > J provided there is a genuine perception and feeling. Of independence for the review.
- > P AB thinks there are only a small number of cases, do not want to ramp up the cost but need to show independence

- > J raised again the distinction between false accounting and fraud. Was three real dishonestly or carelessness with money leading to a fair prosecution.
- > J may not be necessary to bring in a ministerial statement after Monday if we can prove it isn't going to be forgotten.
- > P ,you have my word
- > J AP and PV have always been constructive, but also strong in defending PO and Horizon software. We must make sure the little people are not lost in the PO wake
- > P we will defend the software but we have some SPMRs who give great community service. But are not the best business people we are trying to change this
- > P the report is half way through the revisions on the report. We are hoping to get to a place where we can welcome it and its broad recommendations, but we need to be comfortable it portrays the facts clearly.
- > J can you send me your proposal on how you will take things forward after Monday.
- > Like to be able to see that on Monday at the same time as the report before speaking to the minister on Monday morning.
- > Reference that you have discussed with AB JFSA
- > Might be useful to have a joint press release.
- > J Invited P to the meeting on Monday
- > P put that on hold for now she would think about it
- > J. Paula's presence might change it to a triumph
- > P if I attend there is little room for escalation
- > J if keep it at the right high level it would be fine.
- > Need a process to ensure their cases have somewhere to go.
- > P we are both going to do statements. Could we do it together.
- > Possibly one coming from JA? With quotes from PV and AB
- > Could be a triumph
- > J is having a conversation with JS on Monday
- > J JS wants it to go away without it coming anywhere near her.
- >
- > meeting ended
- >
- > So we need the proposal to say
- > 1 how we will work with AB over the summer to review individual cases
- > 2PV to meet 2 or 3 subpostmasters with AB to understand how they feel they have been treated
- > 3 work with AB (and the NFSP??? My addition?) to look at TOR for setting up the branch user forum
- > 4 TOR for an independent adjudicator and set up by?
- > 5 decisions on what we can offer for old conviction cases
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- > Thanks
- > Alwen
- >
- > Alwen Lyons
- > Company Secretary
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GRO
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