
From: Permanent Secretary [GRO]
Sent: Wed 24/10/2018 3:03:28 PM (UTC)
To: Honours [GRO]
Cc: Gregory, Ian (Policy Delivery & Private Office) [GRO]; Russell, Mark - UKGI [GRO]; Permanent Secretary [GRO]
Subject: RE: Official Sensitive: Post Office

Hi Beryl,

I put this to Alex last night and he has said:

1. He is content for the information in Mark's email below to be passed to the Cabinet Office for the PM's Brief- however he would please like us to point out that the **litigation relates to Post Office Limited contracts and systems going back to 1999 and that Paula Vennels has been CEO since 2011.**
2. He still agrees Paula should be nominated.

Kind regards,
Rosie.

Rosemary Ash

Private Secretary to Alex Chisholm, Permanent Secretary | Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
E: [GRO] T: [GRO]

From: Honours
Sent: 23 October 2018 10:43
To: Permanent Secretary [GRO]
Cc: Gregory, Ian (Policy Delivery & Private Office) [GRO]; Mark Russell [GRO]; Honours [GRO]
Subject: FW: Official Sensitive: Post Office
Importance: High

Rosie / Grace

To see response below from Mark Russell about Paula Vennels (see attached citation). At the moment, she has been selected at CBE for the New Year 2019 List.

Is Alex content that this information being passed on to Cabinet Office for the PM's brief?

The CO deadline COP tomorrow (Wednesday 24 October)

Grateful for your help.

Beryl



Beryl Hitch
Honours Secretariat
Tel: [GRO]
[GRO]
1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET
www.gov.uk/beis | <https://twitter.com/beisgovuk>

Usual working pattern: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

From: Russell, Mark - UKGI [GRO]
Sent: 23 October 2018 09:57
To: Honours [GRO]
Cc: Okubo, Daniel - UKGI [GRO]; Permanent Secretary [GRO];
Diment, Kevin (DG Market Frameworks Office) [GRO]
Subject: RE: Official Sensitive: Post Office

Beryl

There is some (longstanding) litigation ongoing between the company and some of the postmasters.

There's a court case in November which is the first of three major hearings over the next 12 months. The November hearing is about implied terms in the postmasters contracts so it's a very dry topic but the litigation is high profile and it will inevitably attract some press given the history of this case. There was a briefing for the Minister and Perm Sec last week attended by senior management of the company. The judgement should be out in January but might be later – that's under the control of the judge.

Our view is that this shouldn't stop Paula's nomination. But you might want to bounce it off Alex C.

Mark

From: Honours [GRO]
Sent: 22 October 2018 14:06
To: Russell, Mark - UKGI [GRO]
Cc: Okubo, Daniel - UKGI [GRO]; Diment, Kevin (DG Market Frameworks Office) [GRO]; Permanent Secretary [GRO]; Honours [GRO]
Subject: FW: Official Sensitive: Post Office
Importance: High

Mark

Are you able to answer the query (in red below) raised by Honours Secretariat at Cabinet Office? Also copying in Market Frameworks – in case they have a view.
You will see that the deadline is COP Wednesday 24 October.

Grateful for your help.

Many thanks

Beryl



Beryl Hitch
Honours Secretariat
Tel: [GRO]
[GRO]
1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET
www.gov.uk/beis | <https://twitter.com/beisgovuk>

Usual working pattern: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Helen Ewen** <helen.ewen@GRO>
Date: Mon, 22 Oct 2018 at 13:43
Subject: Official Sensitive: Post Office
To: Pullen Mark (Comms, Partnerships & Governance) @GRO, <Stewart.Gott@GRO>
Cc: Permanent Secretary @GRO, Nicki Daniels @GRO,
Marc Aldridge @GRO

Mark, Stewart,

Main Committee met last week. They agreed the nomination for Paula Vennells but have asked that it doesn't progress until we've had the opportunity to check with you **that there are no known issues likely to emerge around the Post Office in December or January?**

You'll have seen from the Network Rail issue last time that its particularly difficult for us where issues arise once an individual has been sounded, and formal approval has been given by HM Queen. As such, we are keen to ensure that full thought has been given to whether there are any policy or other announcements on the horizon that could impact on how an honour lands.

Clearly we just looking for known/planned issues - we realise its impossible to predict all potential controversies!

Copying to your Perm Sec's office as we will be separately asking all Perm Secs to confirm no known issues with the proposed selected candidates.

Grateful for a response by close Wednesday if at all possible (as this will need to be reflected in the informal approval submission going to the PM later this week).

Helen

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Helen Ewen
Head of Honours Secretariat
Cabinet Office

@GRO
helen.ewen@GRO

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