

## Message

**From:** Robert Swannell [GRO]  
**Sent:** 07/09/2019 07:32:06  
**To:** Russell, Mark - UKGI [GRO]; Razzell, Robert - UKGI [GRO]  
**Subject:** Alex Chisholm BEIS

Dear Mark and Robert,

I saw Alex for 30 mins on Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> September. He was predictably quite pressed for time so it was a bit of a speed meeting!

In summary he thinks we do a great job and is a big supporter but he had a few issues too. We discussed the following:

- [IRRELEVANT] d
- On Post Office he instanced that the Rem discussion had, in his judgement, reflected a lack of judgement/political instincts in believing that there should be no discount in the bonus to reflect the potentially huge damages in the litigation. He accepted that Tom had brought some very clear commercial nous to the POL Board and that his instincts on the CEO succession had been correct. He said relations with Kelly Tolhurst were still a bit fragile.
- He praised David Long as a very thoughtful man worth listening to
- He also praised Maddy for her work on Cobham and getting ahead of the politics by discussions with Advent that had pleasantly surprised the SofS.
- On the relationship with UKGI I said there was a concern in agreeing the MOU with BEIS ( which was proving more difficult than any other department) that BEIS officials were trying to replicate UKGI roles rather than treating us as part of a single HMG team. Alex said this wasn't intended but they were trying to get a genuine partnership with clear allocation of roles. He acknowledged that they had been inconsistent in their approach, for example too hands off on POL and, [IRRELEVANT] He said that he thought this was resolvable but that Mark might need to connect with Sarah Harrison. He also said that the presence of Jo Shand should help.
- We discussed the CEO succession – he was disappointed by the JM news and offered some observations on other potential candidates.

For all the issues discussed he went out of his way to be positive about our work.

With best wishes

Robert