

Message

From: Paula Vennells [GRO]
Sent: 15/02/2014 17:45:13
To: Chris M Day [GRO]; Kevin Gilliland [GRO]
CC: Martin Edwards [GRO]; Neil Hayward [GRO]
Subject: Culture/Pervez incident

Chris, a note to a smaller no of people, now we've resolved the immediate problem:

Most important, is making sure Rod (and Angela) sees through some in-depth training for Chesterfield/helplines: not just explaining a process change (ie., thresholds if we introduce them) but much more importantly an understanding of tone of voice, culture, starting point - this was definitely a 'guilty till proven innocent' approach by frontline 'support' colleagues. ExCo and SLT have shifted their views but it isn't filtering down. I am sure Neil will have views about a wider comms/culture project at some stage, but this needs picking up now - had it gone wider it would have been so unhelpful in the current context.

I worry that the culture is pretty deep-set around TCs. Pam's words made me feel quite sick: "His actions seem to be honest and his error was down to capability only around what to do when things go wrong..." That is exactly the SS and JFSA point - instead of understanding and helping so that he understood, we pursued the money. (Both are important but the perspective was wrong.)

Do consult with your colleagues of course but can you then let me know what you think the best way forward?

Thanks, Paula

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Paula Vennells [GRO]
Date: 15 February 2014 18:15:46 CET
To: Kevin Gilliland [GRO]
Cc: Chris M Day [GRO]; Neil Hayward [GRO]; Mark R Davies [GRO]; Chris Aujard [GRO]; Lesley J Sewell [GRO]; Nicholas Kennett [GRO]; Martin Edwards [GRO]
Subject: Re: ATM Payment for £411.86

This is just great. I'm delighted with the responses all round: Chris for getting on the case straightaway; Rod for completely the right behaviour pledge; Nick - thanks for a good pointer re training; and Kevin, for taking the action on the ground (I will thank Pam personally).

It's good news that we have retrieved the situation and even more that Pervez leaves us feeling better about the way we have handled this.

Chris, Rod and Angela, it is now critical that we review step by step how it happened, what a better process would be, that we consider a threshold /different approach for low level TCs/disputes, as per my original mail. This should come to ExCo - either standalone or as part of Angela's programme. (It should certainly be captured as a quick win for Business Support, and if it can be implemented quickly, is it another example for the Board paper?).

Thanks again and for those starting half-term holidays, enjoy them! And for everyone else, I hope you have a great weekend.
Paula

Sent from my iPad

On 15 Feb 2014, at 14:25, "Kevin Gilliland" GRO wrote:

Hi all,

Please see Pam's note of her visit earlier today. I think this is really helpful and also looks as if this will help to keep the NFSP on side.

As you can see pervez is taking a considered and sensible approach to NT - selling his branch because he doesn't have the retail space and buying into a mains. I have had dealings with him in the past and would back up what Pam found.

On the face of it I would recommend that we make a goodwill payment bearing in mind, the background to this, his attitude and long term commitment to the business.

I'm grateful to Pam for how she has responded so quickly and professionally. Her email follows:

'I have just returned from what was a lovely visit with the sub postmaster. Pervez appears to be quite a gentleman, I have met him once before when I was RSM for the North West. The letter he sent to Paula I believe haven spoken to him was sent out of frustrations and not intent on doing anything but cause some noise so he could be heard. He spoke highly of Paula and has a lot of respect for her, in fact he was delighted that she had just replied to him earlier today. He was extremely grateful for the visit and would love additional support if it was available. I did commit to David Atkins RSM for the area to send one of his team for a few hours to help him win back some mails customers and secure some drop and go customers, I know he isn't account managed but he left an impression so wanted to try and help where I could. He spoke positively of our speed of response when he took a call off Bhavna whilst I was there. I also spoke to her and she thanked us for the support.

His actions seem to be honest and his error was down to capability only around what to do when things go wrong with an ATM balance, he now knows exactly how to do this since Clare Bell visited his office and I am confident it wont happen again.

He had a steady flow of customers whilst I was there (hour and half) and he has great rapport with all of them and offers a very professional and friendly service to all.

He has done the survey and his intent is to leave his current business as it is a small retail offering which does not fit in with an ideal 'Local' branch, but he is keen to re-invest in a Mains branch in the future.

In summary, Pervez appears to be an honest and trustworthy individual who wants support and watching him with all his customers, complying 100% with dangerous goods requirements, I believe he strives at all times to do things right.

I promised that I would call back in this week if we had any news on his complaint.'

Regards,

Kevin

Sent from my iPhone

On 15 Feb 2014, at 09:25, "Chris M Day" [GRO] wrote:

Thanks Kevin

From: Kevin Gilliland
Sent: Saturday, February 15, 2014 09:14 AM
To: Paula Vennells
Cc: Chris M Day; Neil Hayward; Mark R Davies; Chris Aujard; Lesley J Sewell; Nicholas Kennett; Martin Edwards
Subject: Re: ATM Payment for £411.86

Hi Paula/Chris,

He is a non asm supported branch. However Pam heaps only lives 10 minutes away from him and can drop in today to assure him f2f that we are taking this seriously.

As you know, Pam is v good at this type of thing and I think this will help.

Regards,

K

Sent from my iPhone

On 15 Feb 2014, at 06:21, "Paula Vennells" [GRO] wrote:

Hi, I have reread my note below and as it is always so difficult to strike the right tone in mails, I wanted to ask for your help and support in sorting this out. I'm concerned that in the rush of writing it last

night, It may seem too strongly worded. But I do know that if it became mixed up in Sparrow/SS and if Alice had been copied we would find the Board Sparrow discussion more difficult.

When you read the attachment you will see it is a similar to the kind of issue that we are dealing with as part of Sparrow. This is about us being considerate of Spmrs and treating their queries with respect, rather than being seen to impose an impersonal and rigid process.

As you read his letter, it will help if you put yourself in Pervez' shoes: he has tried to resolve something and not found anyone listening. I can't see from his letter but it isn't obvious that he had any escalation option.

Chris, I hope you don't mind taking the lead; it needs dealing with sensitively and seriously, the ExCo Sparrow discussion is a good context for why. Rod had been briefed and is part of Angela's wider group, so perhaps this is a one-off; but even so as you'll see from my note below, we should review the process.

Thanks,
Paula

Sent from my iPhone

On 14 Feb 2014, at 22:03, "Paula Vennells"

GRO

wrote:

Apologies for the tone, if my frustration comes through - it is only because I care deeply about changing our culture; and it is letters like this that sometimes make me despair. To fix the wider issue, this does needs your joint commitment please.

I would like Chris D to look into it asap as I think it is Chesterfield generated. Other ExCo directors are copied because your staff are, or should be involved. Neil, there is a culture challenge and possibly NFSP handling. (Nick copied FYI - ATM; Lesley FYI - BPM.)

. Pervez is a long-standing, trusted SPMR, no issues as far as I know and known to us - so for £400 he is someone I would take a risk with and trust. He has given long and loyal service to both the PO and the NFSP. He is sometimes a challenging individual - but here's one explanation why that might be.

. it has cost us £000s more than £400 in chasing up this payment. Even if he wasn't long-serving and trusted, £400 should go into what retailers call shrinkage - lost or too difficult/costly to recoup. Just as Angela has introduced thresholds for suspension, where we have disputed TCs over small sums - let's balance the costs and have a write-off threshold.

. we have turned off an influential SPMR who will now (rightly if he only 'owes' £400) speak against us at every possible turn

. how does this square with the principles we are supposing to be adopting in relation to SPMRs? It is bureaucracy and process gone utterly mad! I completely agree with every word he writes. I will be writing back to say as much.

. Imagine SS or JFSA reading this, or Sir Tony Hooper - it may be an example of why SS want to write their report.

So...

How quickly can we turn this round? How soon can we have a threshold and new guidelines? How could internal comms help and use this as a catalyst to change the culture? If it is Chesterfield, then let's set up a team to go in and help? Ideally every individual who touched this process should be coached about it.

The only possible good outcome is that this incident becomes the one that causes the change we need! 'Use your failures to drive success'.

Chris, bring in your colleagues to help; I'd like to know what happens when I get back.

Paula

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Pervez Nakvi

GRO

Date: 14 February
2014 20:31:17 GMT
Cc: "(POL CEO)
Paula Vennells"

GRO

"(NFSP-HQ Gen.
Sec.) George
Thomson"

GRO

GRO

"(POL)
Clare Bell"

GRO

Subject: ATM
Payment for £411.86

Thanks

Pervez Nakvi

<POL Letter.doc>