

Message

From: Martin Edwards [REDACTED] **GRO** [REDACTED]
on behalf of [REDACTED] **GRO** [REDACTED]
Sent: 21/03/2013 19:04:53
To: Alice Perkins [REDACTED] **GRO** [REDACTED]
CC: Paula Vennells [REDACTED] **GRO** [REDACTED]; Susan Crichton [REDACTED] **GRO** [REDACTED]; Mark R Davies [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED] **GRO** [REDACTED]; Simon Baker [REDACTED] **GRO** [REDACTED]; Alwen Lyons [REDACTED]; Jorja Preston [REDACTED] **GRO** [REDACTED]
Draft letter for James Arbuthnot

Hi Alice

With thanks to Mark and Simon in particular for their input, please see below our suggested text for your letter to James.

Subject to any comments you have, we could courier over the final version on headed paper for you to sign (assuming you're in London tomorrow – if not we can use a digital signature).

We had a constructive follow-up meeting with Second Sight to discuss the handling of Monday's meeting. They and James are very clear on the need to keep it focussed on process and to stress the confidentiality of the discussion, although Mark and team are reviewing their reactive lines given the inevitable leak risks.

Thanks,
Martin

DRAFT LETTER:

In advance of your meeting with MPs on Monday to discuss the Second Sight investigation, I thought it might be helpful if I set out my reflections at this stage in the process, particularly given that we decided that it would not be appropriate for the Post Office to attend.

The first point to reiterate is that we remain absolutely committed to supporting the investigation, and will continue to do everything we can to help Second Sight gather the evidence they need to arrive at a robust set of conclusions. While we are not aware of any endemic problems with the Horizon system, if there are areas where we need to make improvements we will act on them as a matter of urgency.

Given the importance of this process, I am very pleased by the way in which Second Sight, the JFSA and the Post Office have developed strong working relationships as the investigation has progressed. I am very grateful to you and everyone involved for facilitating this collaborative approach.

I understand that the purpose of Monday's meeting is for Second Sight to provide an update on the process and outline how they propose to marshal the complex evidence base to arrive at a set of conclusions by summer recess. I know that you and Second Sight share my concern that it would be premature to attempt to draw conclusions from the evidence gathered to date, particularly given that the sequencing of the investigation means that we have not yet had an opportunity to submit our own evidence on the issues reported by sub-postmasters. Clearly this needs to be a facts-based investigation that allows all relevant parties to submit information on the matters under review.

Once the Second Sight team is in a position to share their preliminary findings with us we will make every effort to review the information as quickly as possible and submit the further evidence they need to arrive at their final conclusions. We would be very happy to meet with you and your colleagues closer to summer recess to discuss the resulting report.

Martin Edwards | Chief of Staff to the Chief Executive

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