

From: Callard Richard (ShEx)/[O=DTI/OU=DTIHQ/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=RCALLARD]
Sent: Thur 20/02/2014 8:56:11 AM (UTC)
To: Batten Peter (ShEx); [GRO]
Cc: Baugh James (ShEx); [GRO]; McInnes Tim (ShEx); [GRO]; Lidbetter Katrina (ShEx); [GRO]
Subject: Sparrow update

Peter

Quick update following the meeting that James and I went to on Sparrow on Monday. In brief (and you probably know at lot of this but for the benefit of others):

- 130 cases going to mediation (more than anticipated)
- Range of complaints and value of complaints (one up to £80k)
- Timescale was for these to be sorted by March 14 - they are now thinking more like June / July 14 (although subsequent discussions on the level of resourcing and scope of work noted below means that seems unlikely to me)
- No faults have been found with the system. POL however are accepting that they could have done certain things better (e.g. better and swifter training in some cases)

Issues:

- Resources - POL has 22 people on the case, Second Sight 2 (and in the process of recruiting a third). So very slow going on that front
- Scope - SS have not yet agreed the terms or scope of their engagement with POL. They want it to be as wide ranging as possible, rather than targeted and focussed (or at the very least limited). My suspicion is that they've hit the motherload and are milking this cash cow to the fullest extent possible.
- Chair - seems to be going native but all is not lost (see below).

Next Steps:

- Report Feb 27th: SS are planning to issue their first report on the 27th. POL are hoping (and expecting) that this will not report any specific issues with the system, but more importantly will not be of a very good quality. We agreed at the meeting that this offered an opportunity for the Chair to re-consider SS's position given his expectations of quality and the need to do a good job. The politics of the situation make it difficult for POL to seek the removal of SS from the panel, but it would be a different matter for the chair to do so
- Actions: we agreed that there would be no specific actions with regard to the working group at the moment - we would wait for the report to come out to see what it said and the quality thereof. However, we did say we would consider a sub for Jenny to warm her up on the situation, so that when the report started get traction (probably in early March once it is seen beyond POL), she would be more prepared. There is a MPs meeting set up by our friend Mr Arbuthnot set for the 24th March, which we will want to be ready for (although not suggesting that Jenny goes).
- **Can you and/or James please start to pull a sub together for say the weekend box next week - this would give some background and also give an early indication of the first cut of the report.**

I am not sure how POL managed to get themselves in to this situation! Anyway, depending on our feelings about the report, I mentioned to POL that we would be prepared to consider Jenny becoming involved to the extent of trying to encouraging the chair to bring forward the report and speed the process to bring closure to POL and to SPMs involved in the mediation - this would necessitate a ramping up of resources and most likely the ditching of Second Sight. POL seemed happy with that, but we just need to deploy it at the right time.

Cheers

R

P.S. Belinda doesn't use the codename Sparrow - sort of sums this all up really.

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