

Message

From: Jane MacLeod [GRO]
on behalf of [GRO]
Sent: 15/04/2016 16:36:22
To: Patrick Bourke [GRO]; Rodric Williams [GRO]; Mark Underwood1 [GRO]
Subject: FW: Post Office - Chairman's enquiry and related matters

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From: Jane MacLeod
Sent: 15 April 2016 17:36
To: Tim Parker
Subject: Post Office - Chairman's enquiry and related matters

Tim

Its Friday so here is my fortnightly update:

Chairman's review

- Deloitte are continuing to work with Fujitsu on the IT and accounting issues. A workshop was facilitated yesterday, at Fujitsu's offices in Bracknell, so that Deloitte could put their remaining questions to Fujitsu's SMEs, before reporting on what more could now reasonably be done to address the complaints that had been raised, in respect of the IT system.
- Brian Altman QC has advised that it could be an abuse of process to charge theft without evidence only to secure a conviction for false accounting. If sufficiently serious, such an abuse could undermine the safety of the false accounting conviction. To see whether there is any evidence of such a practice, we are instructing Brian to review the 19 cases in the Scheme where applicants pleaded guilty to false accounting only, having originally been charged also with theft.
- Bond Dickinson (the external law firm investigating allegations that our Helpline may have provided incorrect advice to applicants to the Scheme resulting in a loss to accounts) have prepared their draft report and the outstanding queries have now been answered. The report is therefore being finalised with a final version expected next week. We understand that no evidence to support the allegation was identified.

Sparrow

On Wednesday afternoon we received a letter from Freeths solicitors advising that they have lodged a claim in the High Court on behalf of some 91 claimants. They have not as yet served the claim on us and we therefore remain unsighted on the grounds of the claim, who it is brought on behalf of, or the remedy they are seeking. We have reactive communications in place and have advised key stakeholders – including BIS. Pending receipt of the actual claim it is difficult to take things much further at this stage. I will update you if/when we have greater information, although we anticipate that we will receive the actual claim within the next 2 weeks.

Meeting with the Minister

In light of the threatened litigation (and on which we would expect Lord Arbuthnot to have been briefed by the JFSA) we need to be very careful about what is said by the Minister to Lord Arbuthnot - whether in a 1:1 or in any other forum. We are discussing this with BIS officials and will revert. To that end we will carefully consider the positioning of your meeting with her on 27 April.

As ever, please let me know if you have any questions.

Kind regards,

Jane



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