

Message

From: Jane MacLeod [GRO]
on behalf of Jane MacLeod [GRO]
Sent: 22/01/2016 17:27:36
To: Tim Parker [GRO]
Subject: Chairman's review

Tim

Following our call with Jonathan Swift QC today, and ahead of your meeting with Baroness Neville Rolfe on Tuesday, I have summarised below our progress.

We discussed with Jonathan today the recommendations from his report.

How to take forward his recommendations

We discussed each of the recommendations, the extent of any prior work that POL has undertaken in these areas, and our proposed follow up actions. These are summarised on the attached table and Jonathan confirmed that the follow up actions appeared to be appropriate responses. He accepted that there was a risk that the costs of the work required to address the recommendations in items 3 & 4 (the additional IT investigations) may prove to be disproportionate, but agreed that it would be appropriate to commission a scoping piece of work to verify this. We queried whether he would consider Deloitte sufficiently independent given the assurance and other work that they currently undertake on behalf of POL, and he confirmed that his concern would be more around the integrity of the expert and he therefore believed that the appointment of Deloitte would not be inappropriate.

Briefing to the Minister

We also discussed with Jonathan whether there were any limitations from his perspective on the content of your briefing to the Minister. Jonathan confirmed that there were no limitations from his perspective, although he noted that if a physical or electronic copy were provided, this could result in the loss of legal privilege in connection with the document, recognising that, in the absence of privilege, the report could be disclosable under a FOI request.

Accordingly, our recommendation is that you provide a verbal briefing to the Minister that in response to the question 'Was there anything further that PO should do?':

- Jonathan has made a series of recommendations which have been accepted by PO.
- These recommendations will be followed up as soon as possible.
- In relation to 2 of the IT related recommendations, the scope of work required to discharge the recommendation is uncertain, and we will therefore commission work to determine whether the work is feasible.
- We will provide you with regular updates on progress of this work, and you will therefore be able to provide updates to the Minister in future briefings.

Once the work has been completed, we will need to consider whether the Minister requires anything in writing from you and whether any such document would be made available publicly.

For completeness, you should be aware that BIS officials had asked for 'pre-brief' on the progress made to date. This took place on Wednesday and they were told:

- the review is being conducted for you personally;
- Post Office has limited its involvement to the supply of information to Jonathan and providing logistical support;
- a first draft of the report was sent to you during the week commencing 11th January for you to consider;
- you have not had the opportunity to discuss the report with Jonathan;
- the report makes a limited number of recommendations;

- you have indicated that you wish all recommendations to be accepted and taken forward where possible. Precise timescales for completion will depend on how long this work takes; and
- your meeting with the Minister will be the opportunity for you to provide an update.

As ever, I am happy to provide further detail.

Kind regards,

Jane



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