

From: Thompson, Laura - UKGI[/O=HMT/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=9A426CD91CE84F889F8A5FB135BCDA49-THOMPSON, LAURA (LTH)]
Sent: Tue 23/08/2016 5:56:49 PM (UTC)
To: James MPST [GRO]; McInnes, Tim - UKGI [GRO]
Cc: Callard, Richard - UKGI [GRO]; Manson, Justin - UKGI [GRO]; Dollin, Michael - UKGI [GRO]
Subject: RE: Finance and Horizon meeting - follow-up actions

Hi James

No problem, glad the Minister found it useful. We are obviously happy to do as many sessions as needed if there are other topics she'd like to cover. As I flagged in the meeting, we'll focus on the main industrial relations issues at the meeting next Wednesday, ahead of her meeting with the union the following week.

In terms of follow-up, I spoke to the BBB sponsor team here in UKGI regarding the potential for BBB to work with POL. I understand that the idea of BBB potentially doing its own lending is in the very early stages of consideration, as it is quite different to what the BBB does at the moment. I've asked the BBB team here to keep in mind the potential to work with POL as they develop those proposals, and obviously offered to help out and/or put them in touch with POL as their thinking develops.

In terms of the offer to SMEs, we can definitely flag this with POL (and will, of course). This is something the Minister could potentially discuss with Paula Vennells next week to understand a bit more about what POL are already doing here.

On the Horizon issue, we (Govt) have not been party to either the letter of claim from the claimants or POL's response – POL's response in particular is subject to legal privilege. I recommend we maintain that distance, certainly at this stage in the proceedings. Happy to chat through of course.

Finally, on visits, yes we'd be delighted to work something out. Depending on the Minister's availability we'd recommend she see a variety of branches, including a Crown, maybe one of the larger Main branches, and a small Local (the latter two both franchises). We can do these in London, in and around the Minister's constituency (although there's no Crown in Stourbridge), or we can work it in as part of another visit if the Minister has any planned. Could you let us know who in the visits team is best to speak to, and we'll pick it up from there.

Thanks
Laura

Laura Thompson | Assistant Director
UK Government Investments
 1 Victoria Street | London | SW1H 0ET

T: [GRO]
 M: [GRO]
 E: [GRO]

From: James MPST [GRO]
Sent: 23 August 2016 18:26
To: Thompson, Laura - UKGI [GRO]; McInnes, Tim - UKGI [GRO]
Subject: RE: Finance and Horizon meeting - follow-up actions

Hi,

Apologies – I missed off the point about a visit to a post office. Please could you have a look at some potential sites and liaise with the visits team? I think it would be good to visit a Crown AND a franchise that is being seen as a success story. The franchise would be a good way to respond to the CWU's stance against the changes to POL.

Let me know what you think, no immediate rush as the diary is already quite full for the next month or two.

Thanks,
James

From: James MPST
Sent: 23 August 2016 15:43
To: 'Thompson, Laura - UKGI'; McInnes Tim (UKGI)
Subject: Finance and Horizon meeting - follow-up actions

Hi both,

Thanks for the meeting today, the Minister found it very helpful!

There were a couple of points I took from the meeting to take forward:

- To scope out potential collaboration to increase lending (as this is a high turnover area), possibly with BBB and filtering down to SMEs. By my understanding there sounds to be some exclusivity issues with Bank of Ireland to consider with this, but it is something to start thinking about. – Just to note, this is based on my very basic knowledge of what BBB do, so please feel free to shout up if you took away something different.
- Having increased POL's involvement in lending, using that and other improvements to the postal services provided as a springboard to developing business relationships with SMEs.

Please can we start with an official level discussion between the teams, then can look at putting a submission to the Minister in the near future to highlight the potential in this idea?

I also wondered if you could send me a copy of the group civil litigation letter (and our response) on Horizon? Just for further background for me.

Happy to discuss.

Thanks,
James



James Richardson
Assistant Private Secretary to Margot James MP |
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Small Business, Consumers and
Corporate Responsibility |
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy | 1 Victoria Street,
London SW1H 0ET |

GRO

| [@beisgovuk](https://twitter.com/beisgovuk) |