

TBA 11th July 2019

1. Diary Questions – Faiemaa
2. Postal Policy – Jess
3. Competition and State Aid - Jess
4. Honours Nominations 2020 – Sam
5. Opps and Shocks – Jess
6. Product Safety – Rosie
7. Small Business – Rosie
8. Pubs Code – Rosie
9. Business Frameworks - Jess

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*Your feedback...*

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**2. Postal Policy**  
**a. Solihull Post Office - Jess**

When you met with Julian Knight MP on the 1st July you agreed that we should request that POL provide updated information on the status of Solihull Post Office and seek further background on the consultation that took place. You also asked that we seek all of the correspondence between Julian and POL throughout the process.

Please see attached at **Annex 2a** this additional information which POL have now provided; this also includes pictures of the newly opened Post Office in Solihull.

I would be grateful for your steers on how you would like to approach Julian next, whether it be a meeting or write a letter including this additional information.

*Your feedback...*

**b. Post Office Banking Framework - Jess**

As you will be aware, Barclays have informed POL that they intend to withdraw from one element of the Banking Framework, which will stop Barclays customers being able to withdraw cash from Post Office branches. Barclays are the **only** High Street bank not to sign up in full to the new Banking Framework. The decision is likely to save them around IRRELEVANT per year. Their customers in some rural locations will face a longer journey to withdraw cash. The move may also cause confusion for both customers and postmasters.

Barclays intend to announce the decision to customers in September. In the meantime, Post Office have begun to inform stakeholders.

Officials recommend that you speak to the Economic Secretary for the Treasury, the minister responsible for retail financial services, to discuss shared concerns. They understand that Treasury officials have advised him not to get involved in the detail of a commercial negotiations, and that he may be speaking to Barclays to better understand their decision and the consequences for customers.

**Would you like to meet with the Economic Secretary for the Treasury to encourage him to discuss your shared concerns? If not, would you prefer to write?**

*Your feedback...*

**c. Litigation – Jess**

Following your feedback on the submission updating you on the POL Litigation, officials have provided the following updates on the points requested.

POL agreed at your last meeting with them that they would commission a project on how to structure and operate a settlement. Officials have said that this will be discussed at the 18th July meeting and an action plan will follow shortly afterwards.

POL agreed to provide an action plan for their litigation strategy, Tom Cooper and Richard Watson (UKGI) are meeting POL's lawyers on 18th July to discuss and we expect a finalised action plan shortly afterwards.

It has been agreed in principle that Richard Watson (UKGI) will now sit on/observe the POL Litigation subcommittee. Richard is awaiting details of dates for future meetings and has asked to be included in the copy list for papers. Officials expect him to attend the group's next meeting once it is scheduled and plan to confirm at the meeting on 18th July.

Tom Cooper and Richard Watson are briefing Nigel Boardman on 14th August and we are trying to agree a date soon after that when he can meet POL and their lawyers. The action plan under and strategy above will likely form the basis of Nigel's consideration of POL's strategy.

On the Information Sharing Framework Agreement officials have accelerated work with POL to agree the overall text of the Shareholder Framework Agreement, which will include strong information-sharing provisions. They intend to share a draft with you before Recess, and prior to POL's Board in July. The final document will require approvals in BEIS, HMT and POL before it can be signed.

*Your feedback...*

#### **d. CEO Recruitment Update – Jess**

Alex Chisholm spoke to Tim Parker over the phone on Wednesday after we received confirmation that The Secretary of State was content with your decision to appoint Nick Read as the permanent CEO for Post Office Limited. Please see below a summary of the call provided by Alex's office:

- *AC explained decision, expressed gratitude for Tim's presentation of the decision as a genuine choice, both top candidates were 'appointable' in Tim's own words.*
- *Alex explained the process and next steps, though AC thought Tim was still digesting the news at this point.*
- *TP asked if the minister was firm in her view. Alex said she was.*
- *TP expressed disappointment, noting how unusual it was for a Chair to be overruled on a CEO appointment, though also appreciating the arguments in favour of the winning candidate.*
- *TP is currently in the US but will be back in the office on Thursday or Friday, and so won't be able to sit down with these people before then. He wants time to reflect on the news as well, so isn't in a hurry to make calls to the candidates from abroad. Alex raised our desire to initiate comms early next week, and so Tim having conversations with Nick and Al this week would be ideal.*
- *AC's Office have followed up with an email to Tim's office emphasising this point and offering another phone call with Alex later this week if need be.*

The ball is now rolling and officials at UKGI are working to get the relevant paperwork together to move forward with the appointment. BEIS communications officials are working with No10 to agree a date to announce the appointment. BEIS officials will be working with POL communications team to help agree products which will be published. I will keep you updated on the formal process and any communications going out from the department.

*Your feedback...*

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**5. Opportunities and Shocks**  
**a. Weekly Briefing – Jess**

Please see attached at **Annex 6** this week's opportunities and shocks briefing that the department is monitoring. Highlights include Deutsche Bank who announced 18,000 global job cuts this week. Additionally, William Hill who are planning to close 700 of their betting shops. Finally, ASOS who are consulting on a further 100 redundancies at its London head office.

You also asked to see the full spreadsheet of companies we are monitoring – please see attached.

*Your feedback...*

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large costs of four measures introduced this year which are delivering manifesto commitments through direct Government interventions in some businesses and markets to protect consumers, mostly through direct financial transfers. These measures include energy price caps and the Energy Company Obligation (ECO).

At the Industry meeting on 12 June, the SoS decided to amend the scope of the BIT to exclude these measures and asked for further advice on how this might be achieved. Following discussion with officials on Thursday 4 July the SoS agreed two new exclusions to the BIT. These changes to the BIT scope require collective agreement and so a write-round was issued on Friday 5 July with a reduced response period to allow clearance to be obtained by the statutory deadline. Once clearance is obtained a WMS will need to be laid by a Commons Minister (as Lord Henley is the Better Regulation policy lead) on Thursday 18 July.

The WR letter and associated WMS are attached at **Annex 7a**. **Please advise if you are content for the WMS to be laid in your name.**

*Your feedback...*

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