
From: Minister HOLLINRAKE (DBT) [GRO]
Sent: Tue 23/01/2024 10:51:39 AM (UTC)
To: Minister HOLLINRAKE (DBT) [GRO]
Subject: nick read 23/01

NR: discussion around select committee appearance and what POL will respond to the committee with. Issue here on factual vs speculation.

KH: get it is your job to look forward.

NR: Clear it is simply not my position to opine and pass judgement on predecessors

KH: think there are things you could've pointed to but I take your point.

KH: suppose you could've gone down the current security of fujitsu systems within POL.

NR: don't want to go out there celebrating what we've done in the past 4 years, doesn't feel right.

Don't want to pontificate from pulpit on what we've done.

KH: key thing we've got to do is legislate for the convictions. Not straight forward for various different reasons. One commitment I've made to various colleagues, is where the money went.

CFO: KPMG had a look and that info has been passed to the inquiry. Some other analysis has been done as well. Need to work through how the differences arose in the first place. Do we wish to refine our review internally, or do we want external support to pick up where the prior review left off.

Irrespective we need to be comfortable with the current process with this type of difference with the current system. I get the urgency.

CFO: PWC are our current auditors. KPMG brought in for that particular review.

KH: want to get something in the public domain, within a month?

NR: we do have to.

CFO: we do.

NR: we've got 8 days before end of phase 4 of the inquiry. We will have to have a position before phase 5. Need our position on a few things (remote access etc) before April. We won't be able to get a particular figure in that time. We can probably work out the process and mechanics of what happened.

LG: Probably need to understand the order of magnitude.

CFO: need to if we can quantify,

KH: how much, where it went, how it got there - how it was defined.

NR: clearly the business employed wilmsington(?) and second sight to do some work on this previous, may be some merit in speaking to them.

KH: real opportunity to draw a line under this more quickly. we've been asking for things from other parts of government for some time. Anything we can do to accelerate payments we would like to do. do still hear from AB that lawyers are arguing about a few hundred quick here and there. I do not want lawyers on either side slowing it down. We are under pressure to bring it back into DBT, we want you to deliver on them. Give benefit of the doubt to postmasters.

SR: on pecuniary claims, get them to submit the claims.

KH: why don't we have SLA on HSS?

CC: should look at GLO equivalent SLA is appropriate for HSS.

SR: On OC it's a two-way mediation process, which can slow things down from both sides

KH: think it was a big mistake to keep HSF involved in the scheme.

SR: we are proactively phasing them out.

KH: anything else on compensation?

SR: standard legal practice to put without prejudice, the lawyers have been referred to the SRA about this. legal advice is a that its standard practice.

CC: i have spoken to simon about this, and it is not completely necessary to do that. To align the policy

LG: there's a slight difference in an ex-gratia or a full and final settlement

SR: we have advised the advisory board that we will speak to the postmasters' lawyers about it. Then

hopefully they position with us and we can go from there

KH: Inquiry?

NR: Robert Daly today, post office investigator. Biggest question for me is we need some autonomy in dealing with people, rather than us coming back to you or HMT, we need a warchest effectively.

LG: for those who appear publicly you might have bringing the business into disrepute defence, but not with those that don't appear publicly.

NR: there's reputational damage that could be done here and we want to be able signpost this to stakeholders that we won't sit on the fence on these issues.

KH: I'm not a big fan of paying people off. Ideally we would go through a process.

CFO: what we are grappling with is create a bit of distance from the people who are implicated somehow and those that are still in the business and that is tainting it.

KH: I don't mind if we end up in an employment tribunal.

KH: we want people to understand the business is different now.

NR: we cannot adopt the practices of the past with our existing community.

LG: maybe a middle ground, a sum based on your usual redundancy.

KH: Central costs. on the NFSP meeting martin referred to a 10% decrease in central costs. NFSP said it was about 42p in the pound

NR: it's 52.

KH: could we write to Calum on remuneration to clarify the figures. multi-carrier options, horizon, NBIT roll out

Action:

Write to Neil Hudgell on pecuniary claims.

SLA on HSS.

Could we write to Calum on remuneration

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