

From: Belinda Crowe

CC: Chris Aujard
Angela Van Den Bogerd
David Oliver
Mark Davies

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To: Paula Vennells,
Chief Executive

Issue

1. Briefing for your meetings with Second Sight and Sir Anthony Hooper on Monday 24 February.

Timing

2. You are due to meet Second Sight at 1300 - 1400 in your office and Tony Hooper at 1430 - 1530 in Chris Aujard's office.

Summary

3. Both the meetings with Tony and Second Sight have been arranged as you requested to provide you with the opportunity to have some exploratory discussions around the scope of Second Sight's work and the Terms of Reference for the Working Group.
4. I suggest you use the meeting with Second Sight to explore three key areas:
 - **Second Sight's plans** where they have suggested that they may brief MPs on the contents of the their generic report either at, or ahead of the James Arbuthnot meeting on 24 March
 - **The Scope of Second Sight's engagement** where they have said that they still see themselves engaged in "two jobs" their work for MPs and their work in the Scheme (although they acknowledge an overlap).
 - **Second Sight's capacity to deliver their role in the Scheme** where a clear commitment from Second Sight around the number of cases they can process in a week will help ensure the cases are through the Scheme within a reasonable timescale. This should form part of the terms of their engagement going forward and will be important to establish should you later wish to support them with additional resource.
5. It also gives you an opportunity, where you feel it is sensible, to set out Post Office's Position:
 - **The generic report is being produced for the Working Group** and the need to avoid any publication that will skew the mediation process while it is in progress

- **Scope of the Working Group is narrow** and designed to oversee the mediation Scheme and not other issues.
 - **MPs cases and any consequential investigation is now subsumed in the Scheme** – as you confirmed with James Arbuthnot the work for MPs is now subsumed within the Scheme and Second Sight should be focussed on that.
 - **A final report** that you are happy for a final report to be produced but at the end of the scheme and do not want a running commentary during the scheme.
6. The meeting with Tony Hooper will provide an opportunity to open a trusted channel with Tony Hooper and also to cover off a number of specific issues:
- **The Terms of Reference for the Working Group** and specifically how narrow (or wide) its role is
 - **General Reflections on progress with the Scheme** including how he feels Second Sight are delivering and how the Post Office team have been doing.
 - **Second Sight's Capacity** where, dependant on the meeting with Second Sight, you may wish to raise this as an issue and the potential need to provide some resource to bolster that part of the process (the 'independent review') for which Second Sight are responsible.
 - **Cost of the Scheme and the Role of Professional Advisors** it will be worth discussing ensuring value for public money in light of the challenges we are facing from advisors (who are seeking more money and time) and the current run rate for Second Sight (£50,000 pcm).
 - **The Final Report** where you can explain to Tony that you are happy to have a final report (if you feel it appropriate to do so) at the close of the Scheme but do not wish to see a series of interim reports, as you agreed with James Arbuthnot
 - **Tony's Contract** where it would be a nice touch if you asked Tony if he is willing to continue to Chair the Scheme for its duration.
7. Detailed briefing on each of these issues is attached and we have an hour/hour and a half set aside on Monday to run through the detail with you.

Belinda Crowe