

## Message

**From:** Martin Edwards [GRO]  
**on behalf of** Martin Edwards [GRO]  
**Sent:** 16/07/2014 11:21:43  
**To:** Paula Vennells [GRO]; Belinda Crowe [GRO]; Sophie Bialaszewski [GRO]; Mark R Davies [GRO]; David Oliver [GRO]; Chris Aujard [GRO]; Melanie Corfield [GRO]; Sarah Paddison [GRO]; Avene O'Farrell [GRO]  
**Subject:** FW: Draft email from James Arbuthnot to MPs

See below – a concession from James although he kept in the “harrowing” point. But overall the email is in far better shape than the first draft a week ago. It has now been issued.

Avene/Sarah – please could you note in Paula’s diary the arrangements for the call which are set out below?

Thanks,  
Martin

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**From:** WALKER, Janet [GRO]  
**Sent:** 16 July 2014 11:28  
**To:** Martin Edwards  
**Subject:** RE: Draft email from James Arbuthnot to MPs

Dear Martin

James has changed the wording from ‘hundreds of individuals’ to ‘so many individuals’, and has asked me to send this email out.

He looks forward to talking to Paula tomorrow. I’d be grateful if she would call my number [GRO] and I will put her through to James. Many thanks.

Kind regards,  
Janet

Janet Walker  
Office of the Rt Hon James Arbuthnot  
MP for North East Hampshire  
House of Commons  
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**From:** Martin Edwards [GRO]  
**Sent:** 15 July 2014 16:36  
**To:** WALKER, Janet  
**Subject:** RE: Draft email from James Arbuthnot to MPs

Dear Janet

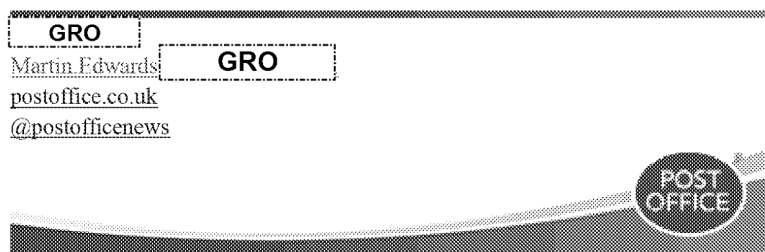
Thank you very much for the call just now and apologies again that Paula wasn't available today to speak with James directly. We will get back to you as soon as possible about Thursday afternoon.

In the meantime, I have made our proposed amendment to the wording of the note to MPs in your email below. As explained, our concern was that the language exaggerated the number of cases which have come through. While it is certainly a significant number and we are taking those cases seriously, it is important that the number is put in perspective to avoid unfairly undermining the confidence of sub-postmasters and customers in the system. We were also concerned about the impression created by the wording at the end of this sentence – while it is certainly true that some of the stories from subpostmasters are “harrowing”, these are complex cases with multiple factors at play, whereas the language at the end of the sentence rather leads the reader to assume that the difficulties faced by these individuals must be the direct result of the actions of the Post Office. The point of the Scheme is to consider these cases objectively on a case by case basis.

Many thanks again for the opportunity to discuss the note, and please feel free to call me back if you have any further questions or comments.

Kind regards,  
Martin

Martin Edwards | Chief of Staff to the Chief Executive



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**From:** ARBUTHNOT, James | GRO  
**Sent:** 15 July 2014 11:59  
**To:** Sarah Paddison  
**Cc:** WALKER, Janet  
**Subject:** Draft email from James Arbuthnot to MPs

Dear Sarah

Thank you for the brief chat just now. I can confirm that James would like to talk to Paula this afternoon, and will call her mobile at 3.45pm.

One of the matters he wants to touch on is the email he is sending out to MPs, a draft of which is below. Paula saw an earlier draft and commented upon it. The email will go with the Annex Paula sent last week. C

Could you please pass this on to her for her thoughts?

Many thanks  
Janet

[Draft email to MPs]  
Dear Colleague

I had hoped that we might schedule a meeting before summer during which the Post Office might offer us an update on how the mediation scheme is progressing. To this end I have been in correspondence with Paula Vennells, the Chief Executive, to see what might be arranged.

It appears that not a great deal can be added to what was said in our last meeting. The mediation scheme is progressing, but at a slower pace than any of us would have liked. Rather than hold a meeting just before Recess that will not reveal more than we already know, I would rather wait until autumn, but I do want to get a date in the diary for a meeting then.

I attach a note that Paula has sent which sets out the progress made since our last meeting. She has reiterated to me that the integrity of the mediation scheme requires that confidentiality of cases be respected. In her letter to me she has also said that individual case details may not be shared with us at any point, including at the end of the Scheme.

I would like to believe that at the end of the Scheme we will be presented with a report which shows why and how we got to the stage where a significant number of individuals have come forward with concerns. I do believe that the mediation scheme has a good chance of righting things, but we shall all need clarity as to what happened and why, and how it is being put right.

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