

Message

From: Melanie Corfield [GRO]
on behalf of Melanie Corfield [GRO] [GRO]
Sent: 31/12/2014 15:20:07
To: Parsons, Andrew [GRO]; Angela Van-Den-Bogerd [GRO]
 [GRO]; Tom Wechsler [GRO]; Belinda Crowe
 [GRO]; Jane Hill [GRO]; Patrick Bourke
CC: Georgia Barker [GRO]; Mark Underwood1 [GRO]; Jessica
 Barker [GRO]; Lorraine Lynch [GRO]; Rodric Williams
 [GRO]
Subject: RE: Post Office response to case related MP queries from Westminster Hall Debate [BD-4A.FID20472253]

I agree that the parameters for any meetings must be very clearly set upfront so that this cannot be viewed in any way as a potential negotiation. Some of these MPs are misinformed but others are, as we know, intransigent even when in possession of the facts. We should I think consider providing with the letter a short synopsis of our own timeline, key actions to date with factual narrative on PO's role, what has been discovered plus clarity on the position re criminal cases/ overturning convictions. This fits with the "dossier" for the Minister – and any individual MP meetings can be in the context of discussing and explaining the investigations & the scheme (and how these apply to their constituency cases).

On the criminal cases the main message to land now that PO investigations are completed is our view that there is nothing that undermines the safety of convictions (but legal routes have of course never been closed to people). This will be unpalatable in the extreme to some and any meetings will certainly be made public, so we need to be in a position where we can release supporting, non-case specific documentation to counter inevitable allegations as much as possible.

The timing on some of our proposed comms activity needs to be pretty simultaneous to draw as much of a line as we can re the "miscarriages of justice" story. I've been working on the potential comms scenarios against current timeline today so will circulate later in the week for comments.

Mel

From: Parsons, Andrew [GRO]
Sent: 31 December 2014 12:26
To: Angela Van-Den-Bogerd; Tom Wechsler; Belinda Crowe; Melanie Corfield; Jane Hill; Patrick Bourke
Cc: Georgia Barker; Mark Underwood1; Jessica Barker; Lorraine Lynch; Rodric Williams
Subject: RE: Post Office response to case related MP queries from Westminster Hall Debate [BD-4A.FID20472253]

A few thoughts from me.

Confidentiality / Without prejudice – It will be difficult to class the meetings as "without prejudice" as we are not making any attempt to settle at the meetings. Also, as the meetings with MPs are arguably outside the scope of the Scheme, we would need the Applicant to sign a Confidentiality Agreement in order to be sure that the meeting was bound in confidence – there will of course be an allegation of gagging if we do this. In any event, the MPs may be able to circumvent the confidentiality obligations by asserting Parliamentary privilege. In short, I think we need to assume that these meetings will be open and public.

I agree with Angela that some form of engagement with MPs is needed to correct the misinformation. However, their level of understanding is very basic and most of the accusations levied at POL are not case specific. I wonder whether a more general meeting to discuss some basics of how Horizon works and what amounts to false accounting would help bring some clarity?

This would also avoid the need to discuss specific criminal cases which brings with it the risk of upsetting a conviction. I see no difference between a meeting with an MP and a meeting / mediation with an Applicant in this regard. If we were to proceed down this route, we may want to seek advice from CK / Brian Altman on how the meetings should be managed (eg. attendees, note taking, rules of engagement, etc.).

Kind regards
 Andy

Andrew Parsons
Managing Associate

Bond Dickinson

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From: Angela Van-Den-Bogerd **GRO**
Sent: 31 December 2014 09:14
To: Tom Wechsler; Belinda Crowe; Melanie Corfield; Jane Hill; Patrick Bourke
Cc: Georgia Barker; Mark Underwood1; Jessica Barker; Lorraine Lynch; Parsons, Andrew; Rodric Williams
Subject: RE: Post Office response to case related MP queries from Westminster Hall Debate

Tom,

A couple of tracked changes from me.

Belinda - on a more general point I believe that offering the MPs a meeting is the only way we can start to address the apparent misinformation that the MPs state as fact. However there are a number of criminal cases in the mix so what is our approach to the discussion with the MP and their constituent/the Applicant? I presume confidential and without prejudice although there is always the risk that what is said in the room doesn't stay in the room.

Thanks,
Angela

Angela Van Den Bogerd | Head of Partnerships

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From: Tom Wechsler
Sent: 30 December 2014 17:21
To: Belinda Crowe; Angela Van-Den-Bogerd; Melanie Corfield; Jane Hill; Patrick Bourke
Cc: Georgia Barker; Mark Underwood1; Jessica Barker; Lorraine Lynch; [andrew.parsons@](#)**GRO**; Rodric Williams
Subject: Post Office response to case related MP queries from Westminster Hall Debate

All

Please find attached generic letters to send to MPs who spoke in the Westminster Hall Debate, separated into categories.

They'll need a bit of personal tailoring (and some is covered within) but views on this approach plus any drafting issues very welcome.

Thanks

Tom

Tom Wechsler
Complaint Review and Mediation Scheme
148 Old Street, LONDON, EC1V 9HQ

GRO

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