

Message

From: Tom Wechsler [GRO]
on behalf of Tom Wechsler [GRO] [GRO]
Sent: 30/08/2016 23:54:11
To: Paula Vennells [GRO]
CC: Avene Regan [GRO]; Mike Granville [GRO]; Alisdair Cameron [GRO]
Subject: Briefing for meeting with Margot James
Attachments: Post Office Strategy Overview_August 2016_v2.pptx; Margot James MP 4.docx; PO key facts.docx; Briefing for meeting with Postal Affairs Minister 3008.docx

Hi Paula

Ahead of your meeting with Margot James, please find attached:

- 1) A short slidepack covering POL strategy
- 2) A note of briefing on current live issues
- 3) A note of key PO facts
- 4) A background note on the Minister herself

Since the base material was pulled together we have had some additional feedback from UKGI, including this evening.

Their advice was:

- The Minister is bright and engaging (“chatty” was a word used) with a genuine interest in Post Office issues
- However, she has very limited prior knowledge so the meeting should be pitched at a high level and focussed on building a relationship rather than detail at this stage
- The department’s emerging early agenda appears to have a string focus on SMEs
- The Minister has been briefed on Sparrow but is content that this is best left to the Courts – no need cover the issue in the meeting
- She is keen to visit branches etc outside her constituency and we are pulling together some ideas

Subsequently we have heard that the Minister would value:

- Our views on the relationship with the trade unions – especially the CWU given she is meeting them next week
- And to understand whether there are any particularly good examples of where PO has changed/adapted its approach or proposals as a result of consultation. This was in the context of a discussion on the consultations on pensions, supply chain and on individual Crown branches but we need not be limited to that.

With all of this in mind:

- Mike and I will pull together an additional note on consultation responses asap
- The pack may be too detailed for the discussion UKGI suggest we pursue – especially on funding. Nonetheless, better to have the information if we go into that space
- I have considered whether slide 4 on funding is too much at this stage but on balance think we should plant a few seeds
- I will also ensure we have the latest position on POCA and Visa – although UKGI advise not raising these it may appear disingenuous at a later date not to do so; especially on POCA

Please let me know if you have any feedback at this stage. Mike and I will meet you prior to the meeting and I will attend with you.

Thanks

Tom