
From: Thompson Laura (Shareholder Executive)[/O=BIS PRODUCTION/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=73D8709345C441479F0D7E2ADCE207C9-LATHOMPS]
Sent: Fri 18/09/2015 1:34:39 PM (UTC)
To: Neville-Rolfe MPST [GRO]
Cc: Callard Richard (ShEx) [GRO]
Subject: RE: Actions from BNR meeting with James Arbuthnot
Attachment: Programme transcript.doc

Andrew, Harriet

James Arbuthnot recommended that the Minister watch the Panorama programme herself. If she would like to do so she can access it on the link below – it is a 30 minute programme.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0675m1j>

I have also attached the programme transcript, which the Minister could read instead if she does not have time to watch the programme.

Thanks
Laura

Laura Thompson | Assistant Director | Shareholder Executive
[GRO]

From: Thompson Laura (Shareholder Executive)
Sent: 17 September 2015 18:57
To: Neville-Rolfe MPST
Cc: Callard Richard (ShEx); SpAd Javid MPST; Javid MPST
Subject: RE: Actions from BNR meeting with James Arbuthnot

Andrew, Harriet

Further to my email below, I said I would suggest revised wording for the reply to Bridgen. See below.

I suggest you run this past the Minister to make sure she is happy with the small revisions. If she is content, suggest you send as a courtesy to OL's office a short note updating him on the meeting along the lines of the following.

Note to Oliver Letwin's office:

When Baroness Neville-Rolfe spoke to Oliver Letwin on Monday she agreed to update him on her meeting with James Arbuthnot, which took place on Thursday afternoon.

It was a helpful meeting, where Mr Arbuthnot explained a number of his concerns about Post Office. The Minister informed Mr Arbuthnot that she had asked Post Office Chair-elect Tim Parker to review this matter when he takes up his role on 1 October, which Oliver Letwin had thought a sensible idea. Mr Arbuthnot noted the Minister's arguments, but was concerned that Mr Parker might not be sufficiently objective to provide truly independent scrutiny. He made some suggestions as to alternatives, which the Minister will consider.

Nevertheless, the Minister has asked Mr Parker to consider this and will look forward to hearing his views in the first instance. She will consider further the other suggestions made by Mr Arbuthnot in the meeting.

The Minister will reply to Mr Bridgen with the following response [attached].

The Minister would like to thank Oliver Letwin for the helpful phone conversation on Monday and to invite him to stay in touch if he has any further concerns.

Reply to AB:

Dear Andrew / Kevan / Oliver

Thank you for your email of 24 August regarding the Post Office Horizon system.

You'll know from our previous correspondence that the Government has given this matter serious consideration and understands the concerns of individuals who feel they have a grievance. Several cases have been resolved to date through mediation, and there are additional independently-assured processes in place to enable individuals to resolve their differences with Post Office Limited or seek redress. Individuals with Court judgements against them can apply to either the Court of Appeal or the Criminal Cases Review Commission – and in the case of the latter, I am aware some individuals have already done so. The Government cannot intervene in that independent legal process.

Your email mentions two specific concerns, regarding the suggestion of remote access to transactions on Horizon, and the reports by Second Sight. These issues have been raised both during the BBC Panorama programme and also prior to its broadcast. The Government has received assurances from Post Office that it takes very seriously the concerns raised on Panorama and elsewhere, and investigates every allegation that is made.

Following your latest letter I have now written formally to Tim Parker, the new Chair of Post Office Limited, asking him to ensure he gives this matter his earliest attention when he takes up his role next month. You made a couple of suggestions, but Mr Parker has a strong background working in a range of complex organisations, both as a senior executive and as a Chair. I am sure that he is the right person to look in this matter fully with a fresh pair of eyes.

Following your suggestion, I had already arranged to meet James Arbuthnot and that meeting took place this week. It was a useful meeting, touching on a number of the issues that you highlighted, and I will consider carefully the points that have been raised.

I look forward to discussing progress with you in due course.

Regards etc.

Laura Thompson | Assistant Director | Shareholder Executive

GRO

From: Thompson Laura (Shareholder Executive)

Sent: 17 September 2015 16:41

To: Neville-Rolfe MPST
Cc: Callard Richard (ShEx); SpAd Javid MPST; Javid MPST
Subject: Actions from BNR meeting with James Arbuthnot

Andrew

I think we have the following actions from the Minister's meeting with James Arbuthnot earlier today – please let me know if there is anything else:

- Letter to Andrew Bridgen: I will update, placing the Arbuthnot meeting in the past and making it more of a “holding reply”, and send you a revised version tonight. Letter will be copied to Tim Parker
- I will provide some suggested wording for your office to send to Letwin's office as an update
- We will provide advice to BNR for her return from travel on:
 - Whether she should meet Second Sight
 - Whether she should contact Sir Anthony Hooper
 - Whether there are other options such as use of advisors
 - This advice will be cleared with legal etc.
- James Arbuthnot indicated he would make his maiden speech on this so we will keep an eye out for that after he is introduced on 20 October. BNR may be able to secure advance notice and/or early sight of his speech.
- We will see if POL have a copy of the Panorama programme, and I will provide a transcript, as soon as possible.

Could you let me know when BNR will take her next box for that advice in the third bullet?

Thanks
Laura

Laura Thompson | Assistant Director, Post Office Network Team | Shareholder Executive

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