

*Bond Dickinson*

# Personal attendance

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Client: Post Office Limited

Matter: Horizon Challenges General

Matter no: 364065.531

Attending: Susan Crichton and Hugh Flemington

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Name: Simon Richardson

Location:

Date: 10 July 2013

Start time:

Units:

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I had some time with HF before SC joined us. He told me that the Cartwright King connection came via Rob Wilson of RMG Criminal Law Team. In fact it appears that Cartwright King conducts the prosecutions for POL and that has been outsourced to them rather than through the CPS.

One of the challenges for them is that next week RW is away as is their criminal lawyer and of course Hugh. SC is looking for support which is why we had a discussion around AP's availability and that is now being separately resolved. They see Ben Thorp as covering for RW in all other matters and indeed he may go back with a bag of work.

There was then something of a general discussion around how they were going to manage the additional complaints and resourcing. Essentially where we got to on what was quite a lengthy brain storming session was that:

1. If new cases came in they may well be investigated but they would have to take their turn.
2. We would look at other pools of resource for them. We talked about Control Risks and Kroll as well as the accountants; that presented the problem that they would be more expensive than Second Sight.
3. The board want to sack SS and of course are now not coping well with the fact that they are independent. SC is going to arrange to meet SS and she asked if she could use our offices next Tuesday. I said I could sort out a room for her.
4. She thought it would also be essential to have a session looking at the strategic options and perhaps involving a QC but she did not want to go back to the one they had used before. She had found him patronising and irritating.
5. There might significant discovery issues that we all need to address and again that might require some paralegal resource.
6. The real worry was around the Fujitsu expert who appeared to have known of some of the problems but not referred to them in his report or statement even though they could be dismissed. There are non-disclosure issues here. They are looking at replacing that expert with somebody else.
7. There was generally an overall defensive air and the board are also feeling bruised. There are tensions between people and that includes Alice Perkins (the Chair), Paula Vennells (CEO) and SC. I said I thought the Minister had dealt with the questions extremely well and looked in control of the brief. Evidently she had POL in to tear them off a strip for not putting someone up

earlier in the day for interviews on Radio and TV. I said my view was it was a good thing no one was there. It was a no win given the nature of the complaints and some are sub-postmasters who were generally reporting rather wild stories of what had gone on. However, I understood the political imperative of somebody being put up. SC said she would pass on my comments to the Comms Director.

However, I told them that my view was that they need to be much more on the offensive about this, this was a new management team who had put in a place a new independent report and were dealing with the problems. The Chair seems to have been taken by surprise by the reaction and the noise generated. PV may be sensitive around some of these issues happening on her watch as the Network Director. I said that I still thought there were positive message to deliver and people just need to get into a different mind-set. She said that PV had asked about what I knew and she might pass on my comments to her. I said I was happy to talk to PV since we knew each other from another difficult project in the days when they were a subsidiary of RMG. In the meantime I would go back and update both GRM and AP so they were ready for the meeting the following day.