

Message

From: Paula Vennells <[REDACTED]@GRO>
on behalf of Paula Vennells <[REDACTED]@GRO>
Sent: 10/09/2014 07:32:39
To: Mark R Davies <[REDACTED]@GRO>
Subject: Re: Yesterday's coverage

Thanks! I did expect it and it was exactly what I think and said to my friends.

I was (as I said) simply wanting to make sure we understand the impact even as we manage it as best we can. Not one of our colleagues flagged the reputational impact - we just congratulated you (well deserved) on a job well done.

It is my job to ask the hard questions even as I admire my execs for how they do their jobs!

No need to come back or cut short Mark.
Thanks, Paula

Sent from my iPhone

> On 10 Sep 2014, at 08:23, "Mark R Davies" <[REDACTED]@GRO> wrote:
>
> Hi Paula
>
> I'm afraid I'm off site this morning with my coach - I can curtail it if you'd like me to come back to the office or chat on the telephone?
>
> I would say - and you'd expect this - that I think in media terms and in line with the overarching strategy we've done exactly the right thing in handling terms. We have a simple line to take - we would not comment on a leaked report as it is confidential and not in interests of applicants to break that - but that we have confidence in Horizon. We needed this latter line because of the inaccuracies in the coverage.
>
> It would have been very dangerous to get into a tit for tat argument on the substance of the report because we would undermine our position of not commenting on a leak. Essentially this episode gives us opportunity to express our significant concern at the leak at the working group.
>
> The story is now out of the news cycle - no coverage I can see this morning. We don't seem to have a risk of parliamentary activity. The potential for significant brand damage is therefore averted at this stage.
>
> To your point regarding your fellow commuters there is this I think: the media reports were skewed to present the picture the journalists wish to present - that of the corporate beast trampling on the downtrodden Subpostmaster. This kind of campaigning journalism is always likely to capture sympathy and its why they do it that way. For the reasons set out above it wouldn't be in our interests to get into a detailed debate on the report.
>
> The problem we have is that journalists with an agenda are always going to believe Second Sight ahead of us.
>
> Where the journalist strays into inaccuracy and unfairness we have several options open to us, the first of which is to make representations to the journalists themselves - this we did and the coverage is now at least balanced if not to our liking.
>
> I will send you the coverage and our statement.
>
> Let me know if you'd like me to head over.
>
> Mark
>
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
>> On 10 Sep 2014, at 07:38, "Paula Vennells" <[REDACTED]@GRO> wrote:
>>
>> Mark, thx for asking for a transcript - I'd like to see a copy of the statement we issued as well.
>> Before you read on, any comments below are no reflection btw of judgement; as colleagues have said, and as I thanked you last night, you did a good job in containing it so well. It was expected.
>>
>> This is a case not so much of the man on the Clapham omnibus but of several on the 7.08 to St P....
>> :)

>> Significant comments this am from friends who heard the coverage and were taken in. We need to be careful we are not becoming too close to the issues, learning to cope with the internal stress and not seeing the wider impact. Familiarity etc etc

>> Not sure if that means we would do anything differently in our response but we should think about it. My commuting friends were surprised when I explained our side and felt the BBC had not covered it well at all; and, felt aggrieved on our behalf. I was challenged as to what we do about the poor journalism. (Alice may want to take a view, if it is poor.)

>>

>> I'd like to see both the transcript and the statement we issued together - if you're around at 10am, it would be good to grab 5 mins?

>>

>> Thx Paula

>>

>> Sent from my iPad