

7. I propose to spend the week of the 5th January informally reporting on my visit, discussing the way forward with you and selecting a suitable panel.
8. From January 12th, for 8 weeks, until 6th March, I am [REDACTED]
9. My present thoughts are to make a second visit with the panel to St Helena in early March for two to three weeks, depending on the number of witnesses the panel decides to interview. These dates will need to be agreed with the panel.
10. On the 13th April I begin [REDACTED] and will be free thereafter to reconvene the panel. During this phase I propose that the panel would investigate the UK based witnesses such as the FCO and DFID staff, perhaps the authors of the various other reports and so forth before writing up the final report.

I hope this information is helpful.

Kindest regards,

Sasha

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, August 13, 2014 11:35 AM
To: [REDACTED]; Sasha Wass
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Provisional proposals OFFICIAL

78

Dear Sasha,

Please find attached some suggested track changes to the ToR conscious that although individuals' actions/inactions will inform the inquiry about systemic issues, in fact the end result (report) should be focussed on systemic issues.

I understand that you are sitting at the Bailey this week. If there is a convenient time for me to call you to discuss any issues arising, please do let me know.

Otherwise we look forward to hearing from you with your proposals on the ToR.

With best wishes,

[REDACTED]

Room E213B, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, King Charles Street, London SW1A 2AH

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 August 2014 15:13
To: [REDACTED]

79

Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Provisional proposals OFFICIAL

Dear Sasha,

As promised yesterday, please find attached proposed draft terms of reference for the inquiry into the St Helena allegations. It is important, as we have previously discussed, that you are satisfied that these give you sufficient scope to conduct your work: I am reluctant for the FCO to appear to be unduly prescriptive. Please do therefore amend as you see fit, and I will put these to Ministers as indicated.

Once Ministers are content, we propose that they should inform Parliament as well as the St Helena Council about the terms of reference and your engagement. We will of course copy you into these factual announcements. Given Ministerial holiday plans, it would be useful if you could let me know your thoughts on the terms of reference by close of play Monday.

Once this is done, we will arrange for the necessary material – including background material as well as internal HMG documents – to be conveyed across to you, so you may begin the first stage of the inquiry.

[REDACTED] will be in touch with [REDACTED] to discuss other practical issues shortly.

I think this is all for the moment, but please do shout if you feel I have overlooked anything.

With all very best wishes,

[REDACTED] | Head, Falklands & Southern Oceans Department | Overseas Territories Directorate | Foreign and Commonwealth Office | London SW1A 2AH

Email: [REDACTED] | Tel: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] | www.fco.gov.uk [REDACTED]

Please note the new telephone number

From: [REDACTED] (FCO)
Sent: 06 August 2014 19:31
To: 'sasha.wass'
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Provisional proposals OFFICIAL

CLASSIFICATION:OFFICIAL

Thanks again for this. It looks very sensible to me.

In terms of next steps, I will resend to you tomorrow some draft terms of reference for the inquiry. If you could revise as you see fit, I will then put these to Ministers - along with a formal recommendation that they engage your services and inform Parliament accordingly.

Then we can arrange to provide you with the written material necessary to begin the first stage of the inquiry.

Hope that sounds right to you.

With all best wishes,

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 04, 2014 10:08 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Provisional proposals OFFICIAL

CLASSIFICATION:OFFICIAL

Many thanks for this.

I look forward to reading tomorrow, and will revert with views.

[REDACTED]

From: Sasha Wass [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 04, 2014 09:04 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Provisional proposals

(81)

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you so much for coming to meet me on Friday evening. I attach an outline of my preliminary views.

I look forward to hearing form you.

Kindest regards,

Sasha

<image001.gif>

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[REDACTED]

From: Sasha Wass [REDACTED] (82)
Sent: 12 February 2015 21:26
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Robert Vinson
Attachments: TOR.docx

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your positive response.

I have been told by the FCO that they would reimburse Kent police for the salary paid to Mr Vinson while he was engaged in the business of the Inquiry.

Additionally, all expenses for the trip would be paid.

May I suggest that you liaise directly with [REDACTED] at the FCO, whom I have copied into this e mails?

As far as longevity is concerned, I am hoping to conclude the Inquiry by the end of September of this year. I attach the terms of reference for our information.

Kindest regards,

Sasha Wass

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2015 8:55 AM
To: Sasha Wass
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Robert Vinson

Dear Ms Wass,

Thank you for this request.

Firstly, let me commend Det. Supt. Rob Vinson to you. He is a very experienced senior investigator and probably has unparalleled exposure and experience in this type of Inquiry.

The following won't surprise you (I am sure), but I do need to ask what the position is on costs: is it full cost recovery? i.e. travel and opportunity (salary) costs, just travel and subsistence or something which Kent Police is being expected to fund.

The only other issue I'd like to mention at this early stage is the question of longevity. These things have a habit of growing and we'd need to be very clear about time-scales, possible longer term expectations/implications as well as the awful subject of cost recovery.

It might be a good idea to have a phone conversation at some point prior to me speaking with the chief? Are you around later today or tomorrow?

My mobile is [REDACTED]

Kind regards.

Sent from my ipad

[REDACTED] | **Assistant Chief Constable** | Kent Police & Essex Police Serious Crime Directorate | **North Kent Police Station, Thames Way, Northfleet,**

On 11 Feb 2015, at 09:34, "Sasha Wass" [REDACTED] wrote:

33

Dear [REDACTED]

I have been asked by the Foreign Secretary to chair an inquiry into child abuse and police corruption in St Helena. I am looking for a senior police officer to accompany me to the Island between the 4th March and the 11th April.

Robert Vinson has been highly recommended to me as someone with the type of experience and expertise that I am looking for. I was hoping to meet Mr Vinson in order that we can discuss the matter. However, before I do so, it seems sensible that I seek your permission in principle to engage him in this Inquiry. I attach the terms of reference of the Inquiry for your information.

Please do not hesitate to let me know if there is any further information you need.

Your sincerely,

Sasha Wass

<image93d151.GIF>

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Terms of Reference for Wass inquiry:

Terms of Reference for the Investigation into Allegations Surrounding Child Safety Issues in St Helena and Ascension Island

1.1 These terms of reference have been determined by Ms Sasha Wass QC and agreed by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The constitutional relationship between the UK and the Overseas Territories (OTs) includes the UK's obligations under the UN Charter, "*to promote to the utmost... the well-being of the inhabitants of these territories*", including the development of self-government; political, economic, social and educational advancement; just treatment; and protection against abuses.

2.2 As the White Paper of June 2012 makes clear, the UK Government has responsibilities to the people of the Territories to ensure their good governance. Those living in the Territories have a right to expect the same standards of governance as in the UK, including in the areas of human rights, rule of law and integrity in public life.

2.3 There is a particular responsibility for Territory Governments to ensure the safeguarding of children, for which the UK provides practical assistance and support. There are substantial challenges: relatively small and isolated island societies will have limited capacity to provide a full complement of public services. Small-island communities, where people know each other and many are related, can also give rise to insular attitudes that undermine international standards such as those promoted through the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

2.4 DFID and FCO have been supporting child safeguarding initiatives in the OT's for the last nine years, most recently through the Safeguarding Children in the Overseas Territories (SCOT) programme (2013-2016), which followed on from an earlier SCOT programme (2009-2013) and a regional Child Protection Programme (CPP, 2005-2008). Although tangible progress was made in earlier programmes to raise awareness and build capacity, the new programme will focus on gaining a deeper understanding of the problem including how to detect, prevent and address child abuse. Much political will has been built across the OTs evident in the 2012 Joint Ministerial Council (JMC) Communiqué that committed OT Governments "*to improve strategies to ensure the safeguarding of children, based on a strong belief in zero tolerance to child abuse in whatever form it comes*".

2.5 The SCOT programme operated in St Helena, with some limited support provided to Ascension. The programme helped encourage revised and updated legislation to protect children, established professional protocols and procedures for those involved in child services, improved the provision of training for St Helena officials, and helped to promote local ownership of the safeguarding agenda.

2.6 On Ascension Island, where there is no permanent population, the provision of such services is less advanced. Nevertheless there is a Child Safeguarding Board comprised of the Administrator and representatives that deal with health, education and the police. There are a few professionals on island with some distance support provided by St Helena.

2.7 Through the recent and current SCOT programmes, support has been provided to St Helena through a Lucy Faithfull Foundation review (2013) and technical expertise to take forward a robust child safeguarding action plan arising from review recommendations.

Recent History

2.8 In November 2012, the FCO received anonymous allegations in relation to St Helena and Ascension that sexual offenses against children were not being properly investigated or prosecuted and that the Saint Helena Police Service (SHPS) in particular was failing in its duty to children and vulnerable adults. A number of separate investigations were undertaken, including in response to further allegations. On the basis of recommendations made by the investigations, the St. Helena authorities responded with action plans to address the deficiencies identified. Relations between St Helena's Social Services and the SHPS remained difficult however, leading to a breakdown in the professional relationship between the two organisations.

2.9 In March 2014, St Helena's Chief Justice expressed concern about the conduct of St Helena Government (SHG) officials during an adoption case in Ascension and recommended an independent barrister-led review into whether any wrong-doing had been committed. A number of officials were subsequently suspended pending a police investigation.

2.10 In July, the FCO received a letter of resignation from the suspended Senior Social Work Manager alleging detriment for whistle-blowing. In a separate document prepared for an Employment Tribunal, the former employee made a substantial number of separate allegations relating to specific child safety incidents on St Helena and Ascension, the response of the local government authorities, and the role of the FCO and DFID. A separate but similar document from another former employee of Social Services echoed these allegations.

2.11 In response, the then Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs agreed to establish an independent panel of experts to investigate these allegations and any related matters which the panel thought pertinent.

3. PURPOSE

3.1 Given the serious nature of these allegations FCO and DFID Ministers have commissioned an independent expert inquiry to undertake a multi-disciplinary investigation into the allegations raised and to provide an assessment of their veracity in order to assess the existence of any systemic failings that require addressing. The panel is invited to examine any other issues that may emerge as part of their investigation, and to make recommendations on actions to be taken in response to their assessment.

4. SCOPE OF WORK

4.1 The Investigation Panel will be headed by Ms. Sasha Wass QC, who will be supported by a multi-disciplinary team of experts.

4.2 The scope of the Panel's work will be conditioned by their assessment of the allegations made and by any other such related issues as come to the Panel's attention. This will include, though will not be restricted to:

a) a review of SHG and the St Helena authorities' response to the recommendations of the independent police reports, the Lucy Faithfull Foundation report, and others, relating to allegations following the letter of November 2012;

b) an assessment of the role of the FCO and DFID in responding to these emerging concerns;

c) an appraisal of the response of the St Helena authorities, including the Department of Health and Social Welfare and SHPS, to the specific child safety incidents detailed in the allegations, and whether further investigation, including criminal investigation, is required;

d) a review of the historic and current relationship between Social Services and the SHPS, and the implications for child safety;

e) an assessment of the treatment of, and support given to, employees and others who bring child safety concerns to the authorities' attention ("whistle-blowers");

f) an assessment of how SHG and its authorities handles child and vulnerable adult sexual abuse cases in general;

g) a review and assessment of other matters not envisaged at the initial stages of the inquiry but which, during the course of the inquiry, it appears prudent to include in scope.

4.3 The Panel will have access to all relevant papers from the FCO, DFID and SHG and its authorities. It will also be able to request the opportunity to interview current and former officials, and other relevant persons, and to take oral and written submissions as evidence. The Panel will be expected to visit St Helena as part of this process.

4.4 The Panel will be cognisant of the potential for criminal proceedings arising from these or related matters. They will be conscious of the importance not to cut across existing criminal investigations and employment tribunal cases, but will also make recommendations where they believe further criminal enquiries should be made.

5. OUTPUT

5.1 Ms Wass will produce an initial assessment of the allegations, with a proposal to structure the process of the inquiry, including recommendations for the composition of the Panel. This outline of process and a timeline for completion will be submitted to Ministers by March 2015 with a final report by summer 2015.

5.2 The Panel will periodically update Ministers on their progress, as required.

5.3 The Panel will produce a public report of its findings, a draft of which will be shared with the principal parties for fact checking before publication. In the event of recommendations for further criminal investigation, these will be contained in a confidential annex for the St Helena authorities and HMG.

[REDACTED]

From: Sasha Wass
Sent: 15 October 2014 15:57
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: St Helena

(84)

understood.

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2014 3:52 PM
To: Sasha Wass
Subject: RE: St Helena

Dear Sasha

We have to tell Parliament first, but as soon as that has happened they can do it on the same day. I will give you advance notice of at least a couple of days.
Best wishes

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Deputy Head of the Falklands and Southern Oceans Dept
Room 2/133 OAB

From: Sasha Wass [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 October 2014 15:51
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: St Helena

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for the reassurance. My chambers want to know if I can put my appointment on the website and in the Legal 500 entry? Can you let me know asap?

Kindest regards,

Sasha

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2014 3:48 PM
To: Sasha Wass
Subject: RE: St Helena

Dear Sasha

It will absolutely be paid for, I guarantee. This is more a bureaucratic discussion about which pot it comes out of. All very dull.

Thanks

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Deputy Head of the Falklands and Southern Oceans Dept
Room 2/133 OAB
[REDACTED]

From: Sasha Wass [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 October 2014 15:42
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: St Helena

Dear Su,

Thank you for letting me know what is causing the delay. I have told [REDACTED] that I will be doing 50 hours of work in October and the same in November. As I have said, I am well underway with my October schedule. If there is any problem, please let me know immediately.

Kindest regards,

Sasha

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2014 3:36 PM

To: Sasha Wass
Subject: RE: St Helena

Hi Sasha

I am and I did, thank you very much!

Before I left we had anticipated we would be making the announcement this week, but there are currently discussions about payment for the inquiry going on at a very senior level and I am hopeful we will have the go-ahead next week. As soon as I hear I will let you know before I do anything else.

Best wishes

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Deputy Head of the Falklands and Southern Oceans Dept
Room 2/133 OAB

[Redacted]

From: Sasha Wass [Redacted]
Sent: 15 October 2014 15:34
To: [Redacted]
Subject: [Redacted]

Dear

I hope you are well and had a good holiday.

I am now immersed in the material which you have provided me. I was wondering when my appointment was likely to be announced?

Kindest regards,

Sasha

6KBW
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[REDACTED]

From: Sasha Wass [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 November 2014 20:21
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: St Helena OFFICIAL

(85)

Dear [REDACTED]

I have had a few direct contacts from the press. At the moment, I do not feel able to make any comment other than to rely to them and acknowledge their interest.

I do not operate a limited company. [REDACTED] All my fees will have to be billed through chambers. Let me know if you need any more information.

Kindest regards,

Sasha

The Chambers of David Fisher QC and David Perry QC, 6KBW College Hill

21 College Hill, EC4R 2RP, DX
135185 Cheapside

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, November 20, 2014 6:58 PM
To: Sasha Wass
Subject: Re: St Helena OFFICIAL

CLASSIFICATION:OFFICIAL

Hi Sasha

Today went well with factual reporting from the BBC and Daily Mail. No interview bids yet.

I am working on the contract issue. May I ask: do you personally operate a limited company? Or can we go through your chambers as a company? There are irritating and costly rules about procuring individuals so that we are not liable for tax etc. It's all doable I was just wondering if you have a company we can contract as an entity.

Best wishes

[REDACTED]

Deputy Head of the Falklands and Southern Oceans Dept

[REDACTED]

UN

----- Original Message -----

From: Sasha Wass [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2014 10:57 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: St Helena

Hi

I ought to have asked what the remuneration arrangements will be for other panel members? They are likely to ask.

Would you be kind enough to give me 48 hours notice before the announcement do that I can prepare any press response?

Many thanks.

Sasha

Sent from my iPad

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