

Annex F: Extracts of email correspondence about Simon Blagden Query

Message 1:

From: Richard Piggin [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 3:28 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]; Grant, Calum (DSIT) [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Simon Blagden query

Just spoke to Simon by chance - he told me he's never met Post Office officials, so no idea where the journo has got that from.

Richard

Message 2:

On Fri, 19 Jan 2024 at 15:13, [REDACTED] wrote:

Thanks very much Richard. That is what we suspected but just wanted to confirm with you - the journalist saying he has "been told" that Simon met with Post Office officials is something we haven't seen before. We will stick to our lines and not comment any further.

Hope you have a great weekend.

[REDACTED]

Message 3:

From: Richard Piggin [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 3:08 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Grant, Calum (DSIT) [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Simon Blagden query

Hi [REDACTED]

No, no knowledge of that.

You've got that document from 2022 that disclosed the discussions and statements made at the time. And what he was asked, and what he confirmed. I've attached that again here.

You can see Simon has confirmed "The Post Office Horizon IT system was managed by a separate company, Fujitsu Services Ltd of which I was neither an officer or director and as such I did not attend their board meetings. I never attended any internal meeting at Fujitsu where the Post Office Horizon IT project was discussed."

But we don't need to add that or get drawn into details.

It's clear and in the public domain which Fujitsu company he was involved with, and which he wasn't. And it's also clear what was done as part of the appointment process.

He was on the CSR Board at the Fujitsu - there is a list of members available for that too - but its focus was on CSR initiatives - not on services like the provision of software to the Post Office. It's a real stretch for the journalist to be suggesting that that Board had a role in it and to insinuate that there was insufficient due diligence.

Thanks,

Richard

Message 4:

On Fri, 19 Jan 2024 at 13:32, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi Richard,

I hope you're well. You may have seen that a journalist from Private Eye approached us this morning with a query on Simon's involvement in Fujitsu, and we issued some of our previously cleared lines. The journalist has since come back with this:

As you say this was an appalling episode, so questions concerning Simon Blagden's involvement are critical and I hope you'll agree it's important to answer them.

I asked how you established he had no involvement in the Post Office scandal. You merely say "it was established" what his board positions were. This is a long way from proving he had no involvement. Fujitsu's own material shows that he was part of Fujitsu's wider UK leadership beyond the telecommunications role. (See here <https://www.fujitsu.com/ie/Images/CSR-board-members-2013.pdf>).

Did you ask Mr Blagden, for example, whether he had ever met Post Office officials? I have been told that he did.

I hope you understand why I need to come back on this and would be grateful for a fuller response to the points above.

We think the lines we've issued are enough and this is not something we want to go into any further, but wanted to check if you have any knowledge of the meetings with Post Office officials?

Many thanks,



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