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Summary of meeting

Response to Guardian Article re phone tapping

Monday 13th July 2009 at 3.30pm

Room 556 (ACSO Office) – Victoria block, NSY

Attendees:

AC John Yates - Chair (JY)
DCS Phil Williams (PW)
Simon Clemence (SC - CPS)
Asker Hussain (AH - CPS)
D/Supt Dean Haydon - minutes (DH)

Extra-ordinary meeting convened as Andy Coulson (David Camerons Communications aid) was identified as being one of the 'victims' of the original Glen Mulcaire and Clive Goodman case. PW stated that Coulson's phone had been accessed on 8 separate occasions but there was no evidence to support it had been intercepted. This had been identified when his team had reviewed the list.

Discussion as to whether to inform Coulson himself. JY in his initial press statement committed to reviewing if the MPS had been diligent enough in informing people so informing him and others would be an appropriate course of action to now take. PW and KS tasked with reviewing remainder of list to establish if there were any others that should be informed.

Coulson was becoming under increasing pressure from both media and Labour party and should he be forced to resign, then the MPS now hold material that goes to his credit. JY decided he must be informed immediately but all facts to be checked first so he can be given full picture re activity on his phone should he ask. PW tasked with preparing this.

SC stated this could potentially generate mass media interest so she will prepare further press lines re the MPS reviewing the list and now starting to inform others. This would go out prior to Coulson being informed.

Discussion as to who should inform him. Following considered ; If JY, then this could raise questions and be used in political spin / media that JY is doing this due to Coulsons position, could be perceived that the MPS is doing the Conservative party a favour and then he could get embroiled in a political battle, JY would then be placed in position to inform others on the list, JY should remain independent. It was noted that he had already informed John Prescott personally but this was in different circumstances due to his press release and naming him in this. Decision PW to inform Coulson and others.

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JY then spoke with the Commissioner and Dick Fedorcio to inform them regarding this matter and the position the MPS is taking.

JY committed to and then informed Sir David Normington and Catherine Crawford by telephone with his strong advice not to inform others, or their principles, due to the political issues involved.

Discussion the regarding writing a letter to the Guardian encouraging them to share any new information (Action from previous minutes). Following DPA advice, JY decided not to write a letter as the Guardian to date had not produced any fresh information or evidence in their articles. Their articles were based on historical cases. If he did, the Guardian could use spin and claim that he has made a U-turn, had done this under mounting pressure, why was this not done before etc. Press reporting to be monitored in event fresh information comes to light to justify writing a letter. Decision - no letter to be sent to Guardian at this stage.