

From: Dan York-Smith

Sent: 15 April 2026 13:38

To: Antonia Romeo <[email address]>; Catherine Little <[email address]>

Cc: [JCS] <[email address]>; Vidhya Alakeson <[email address]>; PM Private Office Support Team - Internal <[email address]>; Symes, Elkie - CO (OFF-SEN) <[email address]>

Subject: LIMDIS Readout of PM meeting on vetting

Antonia, Cat

Thanks for coming to see the PM (joined by Vidhya and me) on Tuesday evening to update him on the Humble Address and security vetting.

Cat set out that the vetting process involved UKSV in the Cabinet Office producing a vetting file which included a recommendation on whether DV should be granted, which was then passed to the sponsor department, in this case FCDO. As part of the Humble Address process, that file had been shared with Cat. On reviewing the file she had therefore learned that the recommendation from the vetting officer had been that DV should not be granted to Peter Mandelson. There is some discretion for departments to proceed with clearance and the FCDO had exercised it in this case, granting Mandelson vetting clearance. Cat had not seen the audit trail for this decision so we did not yet know on what basis the decision had been taken, contrary to the recommendation.

The PM was not aware of any of this before the meeting, including that it was even possible to grant clearance against the advice of UKSV. There is no evidence that the decision to grant DV despite the UKSV advice had been disclosed to anyone outside FCDO and UKSV before the document was shared with CO to comply with the Humble Address.

We said that we had wanted to make him aware of the situation at the earliest opportunity. Our advice to the PM was that further fact finding was required, to understand the FCDO decision making process and reasons for granting clearance and to determine whether ministers, having been provided (incorrectly) with assurances about the process, had inadvertently misled Parliament when commenting on the process which had been followed. The terms of review into the vetting system that has already been announced would also need considering in light of the new information on the circumstances around Mandelson's clearance.

The PM agreed with this advice and asked for the facts to be established urgently and advice on how to proceed from there including in terms of informing Parliament.

Dan