

IN THE BIRMINGHAM EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL

BETWEEN

Tyson & Others

Claimant

AND

MAG (UK) Ltd

Respondent

I, PETER WALKER, WILL SAY as follows:

1. That I was perfectly polite and reasonable in my dealings with Mr Brown, Mr Tyson and Ms Smith in all the contacts I had with them.
2. The MAG UK Board of directors from around 2009 had been lazy and had left the staff to their own devices with no monitoring of performance or effectiveness. A 'carry on sergeant' attitude between the Board and Nich Brown had developed.
3. In 2010 / 2011 I heard complaints from the Yorkshire regional rep and other Yorkshire members including the vice chair Jol Lawson, that the efficiency of the office was well below expectation for a modern functioning office and that replies and responses were taking a long time to come out of the office.
4. In August / September 2011 Neil Stevenson decided not to reapply for the MAG UK products managers' position that was awarded annually to supply MAG's promotional clothing and merchandise, he being extremely unhappy at how he felt he was being undermined by Nich and Paddy.
5. I and Ian Mutch (MAG President and editor of *The Road* magazine) met with Neil Stevenson at his home to discuss the matter and to persuade him to change his mind, at the request of Paul Turner, MAG National Chairman and Alistair Preston MAP MD.
6. We listened to Neil Stevenson's complaints. He felt he was being undermined and ignored by the office staff on his requests for information regarding MAG stands at shows and also products. He explained how the staff had undermined him in the arrangements for a Scottish bike show. Neil Stevenson had arranged for a particularly attractive customised motorcycle to be loaned to him to form the centrepiece for the MAG stand. Without asking him Nich or Paddy had contacted the owner to tell him his bike would not be required. They arranged for a plastic manhole cover to be delivered to the show instead. Whilst being relevant to the *Get-a-Grip* campaign that Paddy was especially keen on promoting this was not exactly visually impressive or appealing.

7. The constant pushing of these manhole covers was also causing concern amongst the ranks with members asking questions along the lines of **"Is somebody getting a backhander from this company?"** That was obviously a concern as it brought into question MAG's integrity as an organisation. While there was general agreement that **Get-a-Grip** was useful and valid MAG always has to be careful not to be in the pocket - or to be thought to be in the pocket - of any particular commercial entity, but rather to be actually and visibly independent. All of these arrangements were made with no reference to Neil Stevenson whatsoever. The first he knew about it was when the bike wasn't there but the manhole cover was. The effect of the stand was destroyed and his time pretty much wasted.
8. Neil Stevenson also complained about the fact that, without any consultation, the staff had approached and struck a deal with a promotional company, Coniston Corporates. Coniston supplies one off garments to order online. The staff had designed a new range of MAG apparel without consulting with the MAG UK products manager. Whilst this was annoying on the products side it also caused concern among those officers who were waiting for the long-delayed database project to be brought to fruition and the time the staff were spending on other peoples responsibilities without being invited to, did nothing to appease these concerns. It was as though the staff wanted to be involved in everything apart from the things they were actually supposed to be focused on. On the products side of the argument though, Neil Stevenson's major cause for unhappiness was that the quality of the garments supplied was substandard to the official product range. He was receiving complaints from Members and demands for refunds even though he had not supplied the merchandise in question in the first place. This was annoying because even though MAG is a relatively small concern, we have always insisted on buying top quality merchandise such as Fruit of the Loom shirts etc. The quality of what we sell is apparent at any MAG event where Members can be seen wearing merchandise that is ten or fifteen years old and still in near perfect condition. Owing to the sudden move to below par products all that hard-won reputation was at risk. Neil was extremely unhappy and felt completely undermined and by the staff. We persuaded Neil Stevenson to take the contract back on. I was sad to hear that far from welcoming Neil Stevenson's reinstatement, Paddy Tyson was furious with Ian Mutch for him persuading Neil Stevenson to stay. That tells me that their agenda was about more than products and rather was about getting rid of people they saw as 'the old guard' in MAG. They could not directly get rid of the likes of Neil Stevenson, having no cause; they sought instead to demoralise him and others to the point where they would walk away.
9. I was invited to the MAG UK Board meeting on the Friday night before the AGC in 2012 at High Wycombe I was introduced to fellow Board of director candidate Jono Broad and other directors of MAG UK. Upon leaving the meeting after walking round seeing old friends I was stopped by Tracy and Doug Smith who apologised for the activities of the Devon County Representative Jenny Cook. They told me that she had been bad mouthing and belittling Neil Liversidge and I around their region (Southwest). Neil Liversidge I know had received similar reports from the neighbouring region, Western. Ms Cook is a good friend of Nich and Paddy. She is a contributor to their **Overland** Magazine and I understand she also helps out on their promotional stand at events.
10. On arrival at the conference venue the next morning, Saturday, I was immediately taken aside by both Den Powell (National Chair Elect) and Paul Turner (MAG's then-current outgoing National Chairman). They informed me that Paddy Tyson had been seen and overheard walking Jono Broad (Directorship candidate) around the pre-conference party the night before at the pre AGC party. Den told me that the politicking had been so blatant and obvious she had had to ask him to stop and had taken the opportunity to have a firm word about his lack of impartiality in MAG's democratic process.

11. I then informed Den Powell and Paul Turner about the information I received regarding Ms Cook. Den had Ms Cook brought over to me. I confronted her about her activities, asking her why she felt she should say bad things about me when I had never met nor spoken to her. Ms Cook was obviously embarrassed at being asked to justify herself.
12. In my Board elections vote I appeared to narrowly lose the count to Jono Broad. I was happy to accept the numbers reported but to be fair I wasn't counting. There was an obvious unrest in the hall as to the accuracy of the count and Neil Liversidge asked for a recount, with the margin only being a few percentage points. I should mention that for many years Neil Liversidge chaired the AGC personally and was never known to call the result of a vote incorrectly. When a result looked close and somebody asked for a formal count the result was invariably the same as that Neil estimated when he called it. He is a 'numbers' person and I have never known him to be far out on his estimates which are accurate. The conference broke for lunch. During the lunch break Andy 'Rocky' Pyatt approached me and asked if I would still consider going on the Board of MAG UK if he spoke to Paul Turner and asked if he would step aside for me to be co-opted on to the Board. I said I would consider it but it must go to the floor after lunch and any attending member should be able to stand against me. Mr Pyatt organised everything and stood after the conference lunch and asked the membership not to stand against me and vote unanimously for me to be co-opted by the directors to the Board of MAG UK. This became a reality. It also, avoided a recount which, many felt, would have revealed the inaccuracy of the original 'result' and would have been a considerable embarrassment for Nich and Paddy given that one of the tellers was Russell Cort, a personal friend and supporter of theirs.
13. In July 2012 I received an activist email from Paddy Tyson. Part of it asked members to contact the website to buy MAG merchandise. This website button, which connected to Coniston Corporates, was to have been removed after the Board and National Committee had made the decision that MAG UK should sever its ties with Coniston. This decision was recorded in the NC minutes from the meeting in October 2011 as follows:

***MAG on-line shop £50 commission in six months on 23 garments, quality suspect on some products. Link on site takes you to supplier [Coniston]. Some confusion - people think they are MAG products. Board recommending that we sever links with Coniston Corporates. Link needs to be redirected to MAG UK central office for MAG products.***

Ringling Paul Turner he informed me that the staff had been told of the decision but had ignored it.

14. In November 2012 I was asked to attend a meeting of the Advanced Riders Bikers (ARB) by the Yorkshire Regional Rep Wayne Rooney. Other MAG members from the area in and around Hull also attended. The reason for this was that Wayne had been told by another biker friend who was not involved in MAG that a MAG 'big wig' was to give a talk on MAG to his club, and would he like to come along?. This was some surprise to him. The long-standing convention - at least 25 years - has been that any 'national' speaker for MAG, i.e. one from outside the region representing MAG nationally, should always let the Regional Rep know if he or she planned to speak to any group in their region. There are good and obvious reasons for this. It makes a Regional Rep look pretty stupid if a meeting is going on involving the national team and he knows nothing about it. All our Regional Reps are unpaid volunteers, like the vast majority of MAG workers, so obviously we don't want to upset them. Good volunteers are hard to find as the role when done properly can be challenging to say the least. Nobody had seen fit to inform Wayne and he found out by accident. The speaker turned out to be Paddy Tyson.

15. Paddy's MAG presentation consisted of projecting a static image of the MAG logo onto a screen from a laptop and inviting a question and answer session. He said very little about what MAG is, its history and what it does. After a break Paddy then promoted his books and magazines with a lively performance backed up with spectacular photographs and images of his worldwide exploits. After the show Paddy sold books and magazines to the individual club members. Unfortunately next to no effort or enthusiasm was put into the 'MAG side' of the presentation, quite the opposite was true of the part where he publicised Overland. The overall impression conveyed was that he was unenthusiastic about MAG and going through the motions to justify the fact that MAG would be picking up the bill for travel costs and giving him TOIL for what was in reality a promotion for his own **Overland** magazine and **Overland Explore** business ventures.
16. On Thursday the 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2012 I rang Andy Pyatt of Warwickshire Region asking if he could help with an event venue for a proposed rally in Warwickshire. I had been asked to organise this to support an event being put on by **Back Street Heroes** magazine (BSH). BSH had asked me and MAG to organise the camping and entertainment for its customers. We have a good relationship with BSH who support our events. Not knowing the Warwickshire area, I had hoped that Mr Pyatt could help. I found a despondent Mr Pyatt who informed me that he was going to wash his hands of MAG and not renew his membership when it ran out. I asked why and he said Central Office was a "joke" with the "only constants [being] Julie and Carol" as the other staff members "were very rarely in twice in a row if you visited or rang". He stated they were "too busy with their **Overland** magazine and letting their MAG work slide". I asked him to meet me the next day as I was in Warwickshire for a Board and NC meeting. He agreed.
17. I met Andy Pyatt in the Falcon Pub close to the Hatton offices of MAG UK. At the meeting was Pete ( Veece) Davison and Wayne Rooney. Mr Pyatt went over all the things he thought was wrong with MAG and whilst some things were due to misinformation he also had some good ideas. However he had a deep mistrust of the Board and did not like NC meetings. He asked if I would stand for the Chairmanship of MAG UK, I was taken aback and said I would think about it if he became my vice chair so he could sit at Board meeting and that should help and ease his and his region's misgivings about the Board. I felt that by experiencing meetings first hand he could disseminate reassuring information to the southern MAG regions and help bridge what some see as a north-south divide in MAG. We agreed to talk when I got home from Holiday at the end of December.
18. At the December Board meeting the unanimous decision was made by the Board to stand Den Powell down as a director of MAG UK Ltd. The reason for this was her serious illness (mouth cancer) and the lack of communication between her and the other directors, and also between her and the office. Before the vote I asked Nich what his relationship and contact was with Den was like. Nich said "next to non-existent" and the he only got Facebook updates of progress and no MAG UK input. Likewise the Board was finding things out from her Facebook posting which she should have been telling to the Board first and direct. The NC unanimously ratified the Board vote to stand Den down at its meeting the next day (Saturday).
19. I submitted my manifesto on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 2012 for the position of National Chairman of The Motorcycle Action Group and also my manifesto for Director of MAG (UK) Ltd. After getting back from holiday I attempted to ring Mr Pyatt several times but to no avail. When I finally spoke to him in the new year he claimed he had left his phone in the garage.

20. Selina Lavender was appointed HR Director for MAG staff and in my opinion brought to the role great skill, warmth, good will and a maturity beyond her years. She tried to gain the staff's confidence by furthering her friendship with them, but by being firm and honest with them at the same time. She wanted to ease the Board's wishes upon them and coax them into the Board's way of thinking.
21. The staff did not, unfortunately, return her efforts. I received a call from Selina in February 2013 she was very upset and almost tearful asking if she was wasting her time on the Board and if she was being laughed at by people. Bemused at her thoughts I reassured her that we all had the utmost respect for her and believed she was the person who could bridge the gap between the directors and staff.
22. Things for Selina did not improve. On Monday March the 11<sup>th</sup> 2013 I received a call from Selina, again upset and angry. She had received an excessive number of calls at work from the staff and her MAG work was interfering with her relationship with her employers, She felt that she was being played by the staff and getting what Neil Liversidge always called the 'Sir Humphrey treatment' from Nich Brown, that is that every question she asked Nich would typically only result in him asking her questions in return. In other words he was giving her the run-around.
23. She asked if I would take over HR with Neil Liversidge as she believed the problem with the staff would not go away until all the cards were on the table. The only way to do that was direct face to face with the staff and Neil and I. I asked her to put it to the other directors, if they voted yes we would take it on. The directors voted that we should.
24. On Tuesday the 12<sup>th</sup> of March Neil emailed Nich that he and I had been appointed HR contacts for the staff and that he should deal with us and not contact Selina whatsoever. Nich immediately ignored the instruction and contacted Selina. Neil's email informed the staff that on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March we would visit the office for a staff meeting. The aim was to get a clear view of roles and responsibilities, clear up boundaries of job roles and to hear any points the staff would like to make. In short we wanted to know what was going on and who was doing what and we wanted the staff to tell us directly and in person. We also wanted to hear each person's own view of their role, how they saw things and what they thought should be done in the future. We didn't just want what we'd had so far, which was the version according to Nich Brown that we got at Board meetings. According to that version none of the staff trusted us, which seemed to us ridiculous as they did not know us and had hardly had anything to do with us. Our intention at that point was to start afresh with the staff from Monday the 18<sup>th</sup> and as a starting point we wanted to get to know them properly and for them to get to know us properly. We also wanted to clear some long-standing blockages in the supply of information.
25. There then followed a week in which the staff - Nich Paddy and Louisa - totally resisted our attempts to reassure them of our intentions, and threw any and all obstacles in our way.
26. First Nich contacted Den Powell who took up their 'cause'. Her lack of understanding of the Data Protection Act became immediately obvious as she bandied around barrack room lawyer style legal advice and warnings to anyone who would listen. She also contacted the NC members asking them to revolt against the duly elected Board and remove us. All of this just because we'd asked for a normal staff meeting!
27. After the staff point blank refused to attend the planned meetings I rang ACAS. I explained the situation truthfully, that the meeting was not a disciplinary and had never been intended as one. I also explained that Louisa and Paddy had said they did not wish to meet with me and Neil, but would instead send a third party to meet with us. They informed me that Den Powell was to be there chosen third party.

28. When I checked with ACAS the adviser confirmed our right to manage and expressed dismay at Nich Brown's role of ringleader when he as the manager should have been presenting the meetings positively so as to ensure the staff's constructive participation. As for the third party meeting with us on Paddy and Louisa's behalf, this was simply not on, he said he had never heard anything like it. As this was just a staff meeting it was up to us the directors to decide if an observer was to be permitted, but the employee must be in attendance and could not opt out.
29. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of March I received 'notices of intended grievance' via email from both Paddy and Louisa. Both alleged bullying and harassment but gave no specific instances. This was the first time I had heard these accusations either verbally or in writing, on or off the record. As they had come on the last working day of a week of resistance in which the three had done their utmost to get out of the meetings with us. I considered them to be spurious and a last ditch attempt to stop the meetings. It was clear to me that they were refusing to be managed by us, the appointed HR Directors.
30. The NC had asked for an observer to be in attendance and had agreed that MAG's President Ian Mutch should sit in on the staff meetings and represent the National Committee. Apart from being the editor of our magazine The Road Ian holds the title of President, being one of MAG's original founders from 1973. He is not a Director.
31. Neil and I arrived in Warwickshire on Sunday night, spending the night in a hotel which we had pre-booked. In the morning we arrived at the MAG UK offices just before 9am. The first meeting was a full staff meeting and in attendance was Nich Brown, Louisa Smith, Julie Sperling and Carol Ferrari, Den Powell, Neil Liversidge Ian Mutch and myself. Den Powell had no business being there as she is neither an employee nor a Director and the meeting was between the staff and their managers. However, as it was clear that she didn't intend to leave and as Nich clearly wanted her there, we decided to tolerate her continued presence.
32. Paddy Tyson sat at his desk using his computer; staring at the screen and completely ignoring the meeting or the fact two of his directors and four of his colleagues were sat waiting for him to join the group so we could start. Neil asked him to join us at least twice before he stood without speaking and came over and sat down.
33. Neil started his written presentation and was immediately interrupted by Louisa who asked that everyone sit down. I and Ian Mutch sat, but Neil said he would stand to deliver his presentation. The content of Neil's address to the staff is documented and recorded in other evidence so I will not go into its detail. It has to be said that myself, Neil Liversidge nor Ian Mutch was aware that these meetings were going to be or were taped at this point. Den Powell who later was caught taping the meetings never at any point informed me, Neil or Ian Mutch of the fact. Neil informed the meeting that he was not taking questions or entering into arguments during his presentation and any questions could be asked in the next set of individual meetings that would take place after the full staff meeting here.
34. Neil explained that Den Powell, who was chairman of the Motorcycle Action Group - the political entity - had no influence over staff matters having been stood down as a Director, Den took this opportunity to interrupt the meeting asking for an explanation repeatedly. It was obvious to me that Den's goal that day was to disrupt and act in a manner that was both rude and childish. Ironically it was her own covert recording of the meeting, without our knowledge or permission that shows up just how unprofessional her behaviour was throughout the meeting.

35. After the full staff meeting, Nich Brown wanted us to use the glass walled end office. We had decided not to use any room he suggested, expecting he may record proceedings. We weren't concerned about being recorded, as we had no intention of saying anything out of order, but the act is pretty underhand. Neil and I instead we use the office along the corridor. We saw Julie first so she could get herself off home as she was not feeling her best due to a recent operation. This day was her first day back at work after an operation. Whilst waiting for Julie to arrive in the office, Nich Brown burst in and said "I suggest that you three gentlemen leave the premises right now." Neil told him that we were the Directors and we weren't going anywhere. Nich then shut the door and presumably returned to the main office.
36. Julie and Carol's meeting came and went quickly as we had no issues with them, and Julie left for home. Both were accompanied by Den Powell who, it now transpires, was recording the meeting without the permission of anyone in the room including Julie or Carol. Both have confirmed that they were unaware that their meetings were being recorded and neither had given permission.
37. Louisa Smith's first meeting was next. The recording has been submitted in evidence. This is where I became suspicious of Den Powell's turn of phrase when interrupting the meeting as she seemed to be trying to lead us into saying what she wanted. The only analogy I can make is she was like the Phil Silvers character Sgt Bilko playing a lawyer in a court room drama. Den is a law student who carries on like she is a high court barrister. Her manner led me to ask if she was broadcasting the meeting or knew of it being broadcast. She said "no", paused, and then said "I am recording these meetings for my own use only". She then produced a digital voice recorder device from under her bra strap.
38. Louisa left the meeting and was attended to by Den Powell and I. She claimed to be having a panic attack. As can be heard on the tape she had been argumentative and unco-operative throughout her meeting, no doubt encouraged by Den Powell's conduct.
39. After a while she returned the office for the second half of her meeting, where the tape machine was placed on the desk. We had a second brief meeting with Louisa Smith in which, as I recall, Neil reminded her of their only previous meeting at the Farmyard Party when she had ignored him after he introduced himself. Den Powell was present and recording that meeting as she had recorded the first meeting. After she and Den left Neil, Ian and I had a brief discussion concerning Louisa's future role, and confirmed that she should be re-titled Senior Administrator but with no changes to her pay or conditions.
40. Ian Mutch went to ask Paddy to attend his meeting, but came back saying Paddy had refused to meet with us as he had lodged a grievance against Neil and I. We asked Ian again to ask him saying it would start the grievance procedure off if he refused to be managed. Ian returned and said Paddy would still not come because his grievance had not been dealt with.
41. I and Ian Mutch went to Paddy's work station. I sat alongside his desk while Ian remained standing in front of the desk. I asked Paddy to please join us in Julie's office because if he refused again the grievance procedure would be used and it could be gross misconduct. Paddy replied that I should not be even speaking to him, saying, "**as I have a grievance lodged against you and you should leave me alone**". I said that as far as I was concerned his grievance was spurious as I did not think I had done anything wrong. The grievance lodged did not state any specific instances and as it came at the end of a week in which him, Nich and Louisa tried to dodge the staff meeting at all costs. I said that if I was wrong and if I had given cause to have a grievance lodged against me, then I would be judged on that on another day, in another place, but this meeting was not a disciplinary, but would turn into one if he continued refusing to be managed.

42. Paddy asked what I wanted him to do; I said "please come to Julie's office and talk to us". He stood and went to the office with the tape recorder. Paddy's meeting is taped by him and submitted in evidence.
43. Nich Brown was next meeting. He insisted on recording the meeting and this has been submitted in evidence. Nich's attitude towards us was that of a stropky child, slouching in the chair, showing little or no interest, looking at the wall or the ceiling, sighing, looking at his watch and rolling his eyes upward. His whole manner was designed to deliberately try and wind Neil up. Neil kept his cool but did tell Nich to stop being so ignorant. I was surprised at Nich's behaviour because he is an educated person. I have worked in factories with some rough lads but I have never seen anyone treat their managers with that amount of arrogance and rudeness and if they had their feet would not have touched the ground before they were down the job centre.
44. We had a short break after this and discussed how to proceed. At one point Neil phoned ACAS for advice. Somebody, I think Paddy, listened in on the extension and then cut off the call as soon as the hold music finished and the ACAS representative answered. Neil phoned back on his mobile.
45. Finally Nich was asked to come back into the office. As Nich was Louisa's line manager we wished to instruct him as to our decision on her job title. Nick put the tape recorder on the corner of the desk was sat to one side of the desk next to the door. Neil began with the statement that he and Nich had known each other for 25 or 26 years - I can't remember which - and was there any chance that all this animosity could be put aside and they just have an off the record chat and sort all this out and start afresh from here. Nich waited a few seconds and simply said "no". I couldn't believe his attitude. We were offering him the hand of friendship and it was like he was determined to have a fight. Then again that is what it had been like for all the previous year. All we wanted was for us to help him do his job and for him to help us do ours - co-operation in other words. No chance! After that Neil began to instruct Nich with the Board's wishes for Louisa. Then Nich asked if he could chat off the record about the best approach to handle Louisa. Neil told him that opportunity had passed with his refusal for an informal chat. Both Ian and I encouraged Neil to rewind the offer to Nich, so Neil repeated the offer to start again from today. Nich considered for a few seconds and then said "No" again. Neil therefore instructed Nich to convey the Board's decision to Louisa. We left the offices around midday.
46. The staff grievances were to be heard by a member of the MAG UK Ltd Board, but this was rejected by the 3 members of staff concerned.
47. Pat van Aalst, the Finance Director, then sourced Qdos and contracted them to hear the staff's grievances. Neil contracted Jordans Solicitors of Castleford to advise us on a disciplinary procedure for Nich and, possibly, the other two, depending on how events developed. .
48. Of the four grievances lodged against me by each member of staff only one was upheld. The grievance of bullying and harassment. I was dismayed at this because as the tapes prove I was not guilty of either. I find it difficult to understand how the grievances were lodged on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2013 before the meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March 2013 where the alleged bullying and harassment was to have supposed to taken place. The Board rejected the Qdos findings, four directors to one, the one being Pat van Aalst. It has subsequently come to light that Pat van Aalst instructed how the proceedings should go against us. He has admitted as much and has been censured by the Board, unanimously, and has accepted the censure motion. Qdos even admitted in writing that they had given him what he wanted!



49. Louisa Smith lodged an appeal against the Qdos findings stating that she still believed that Neil and I were guilty of all four charges outlined in her grievance. Mr Richard Binch heard Louisa's appeal and again found that he could not find Neil and I guilty of any of the grievances, but did not have the power to overturn the upheld grievance of bullying and harassment. Mr Binch was appointed by an independent HR firm who in turn were sourced by Jordans solicitors. Neil and I were interviewed at length by Mr Binch by phone but never met him. Whilst saddened that Mr Binch could not overturn the upheld charge I had comfort in knowing that he had to my mind vindicated me of being a bully and shown Qdos for the incompetents that they are.
50. Subsequent to the meetings we found our names being blackened by supporters of Nich Brown and friends throughout the motorcycling community via social media such as Facebook. In due course Tyson released his resignation statement on the Internet. It was also clear that stories were being put about giving a false impression as to what had been said and done in the office on March 18<sup>th</sup>. We knew that the recordings would clear us, as they now have, so we asked for copies. We had to wait six months to get them. In the time we waited for the copies there was a non-stop attempt by their supporters to destroy the NC's confidence in us. All of this I feel was aimed at putting in place directors more inclined to appease Brown, Tyson and Smith, and to either offer them re-employment or a payoff.
51. As more and more of the truth has come out we have found that people who were originally very critical of us such as Phil McFadden, Jon Wilmer and Rory Wilson have actually become our strongest supporters. We have emails from all of them apologising for their earlier statements.
52. Finally in relation to the office staff, we have an excellent relationship with Julie and Carol. Immediately after Nich & Co's departure we had a number of emails all alleging that they could not get anyone to answer a phone at the office or return emails. This was untrue as we were making calls ourselves and having emails sent by third parties unknown to Julie, Carol and Paul Turner who was acting General Secretary. The service from the office, in administration terms, never missed a beat. It is clear to us that the 'complaints' received - were nothing but spiteful troublemaking. Julie is now running the office for us and is finding new efficiencies all the time. She is also finding mistakes that were made that previously cost us money, including thousands of Pounds in misdirected commission cheques that Nich and Louisa somehow never missed. They have also chased up and renewed corporate Members, something else Nich and Louisa found too much trouble. We did offer Julie a third member of staff to replace Louisa if she felt it necessary. She has told us that a third administrator is not needed. We are getting on with the job.

I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signed: .....

  
**PETER WALKER**

Dated: .....

2/10/2013