

**Subject:** Fwd: Lambeth Palace staffing concerns  
**From:** Mark Chapman <mark@sargil.co.uk>  
**Date:** 24/04/2017, 08:35  
**To:** Archbishop Justin Welby <justin.welby@lambethpalace.org.uk>  
**CC:** "Archbishop Justin Welby (PA)" <pa.archbishop@lambethpalace.org.uk>, David Porter <david.porter@lambethpalace.org.uk>, William Nye <william.nye@churchofengland.org>  
**BCC:** Rebecca Chapman <rebecca.chapman@lambethpalace.org.uk>

Dear Archbishop,

Please forgive me writing to you directly - but as the head of the Lambeth Palace household and staff I thought that it was important for you to be aware of issues which have been, and I believe still are, occurring in your name at Lambeth.

As someone who is a member of the Lambeth Partnership, a long-term member of the Church of England and who has personally been significantly impacted by these issues over the last year or so I felt moved to try and act in order to effect change so that others do not have to suffer in the same manner and ideally such that there are no further such occurrences.

In summary, I have grave concerns about the manner in which staff are managed at Lambeth, and in particular the management of Maternity leave and the corresponding return to work. I believe that those exercising management authority give the appearance of either having no knowledge of, or care for, Maternity and Employment legislation. Perhaps more distressingly, I have had personal (albeit second-hand) experience of them acting in a manner which is not treating employees in a Christian caring manner, or even a legally acceptable one and - were it to become public knowledge - has the potential to be a significant negative news story impacting directly on your ministry.

Specifically; You may well be aware that my wife has recently returned to work in your household, following the birth of our 3rd child, and is now working in the Communications team. What I am sure you are not aware of is the fact that the day before she was due to return to work she had no clear prospective job, had engaged an employment lawyer and was seriously analyzing what the options for Employment Tribunals and Unfair Dismissal claims would be. Naturally this meant that in the months and weeks leading up to that point she was increasingly stressed about the situation, and the combined effect of the stress and uncertainty was having a noticeably detrimental effect on our children, and our middle son particularly (who has recently been diagnosed as Autistic and finds anxiety and uncertainty unhelpful).

Whilst I fully acknowledge that I am biased in favour of Bex, the treatment that she received from Lambeth was substantially below that I would expect in a commercial organisation such as the one I am a Partner in, and furthermore there appears to be no recognition or even awareness that the treatment was in any way inappropriate. Looking at it from an outsiders

perspective it seems that those who exercise management responsibility (primarily Stephen Knott and David Porter, but presumably guided by the HR team at Church House) are doing so whilst seemingly being worryingly ignorant (or worse uncaring) of any legal obligations and responsibilities, and are unaware of the impact of the decisions that they are making on others. I am also aware that whilst I know Bex's story particularly closely, it is by no means an isolated incident but just a particularly striking example. I am both shocked and saddened that someone such as Stephen who has been given increasing responsibility for staff and staff welfare at Lambeth, is doing so with what seems to be negligible legal or HR training and is so unaware of the issues that his actions have caused and the potential impact this could have on the whole of your ministry. From an outsiders perspective there is the appearance of him having been 'promoted to his level of incompetence' - being an efficient administrator is not the same thing as being a good manager. I would humbly suggest that serious consideration is given to further training or potential staff re-organisation.

As a way of trying to encourage effective change on this front as well as to ensure that other members of staff feel supported in the way in which Bex wasn't:

- I have asked a respected Employment solicitor to write a report of the failings and issues that Bex has had over the course of this most recent pregnancy and maternity leave. This was written at my cost, and is attached to this letter with the intention of highlighting failings and pointing to specific places where improvement is required to prevent this culture persisting.

- I have also received from the same respected Employment solicitor an estimate of the amount that it would have cost had Bex felt forced to move to a tribunal situation. This amount (£20,000) I have segregated (having not needed it) and will keep 'on ice' for the next 5 years.

- As a way of ensuring that staff at Lambeth feel supported and aware of their Employment rights I will (at my sole discretion) use this money to enable them to access legal employment advice and guidance if needed, particularly if Lambeth continue to act in the manner in which they did with Bex and attempt to ride roughshod over Maternity and Employment legislation.

- As a way of encouraging the culture at Lambeth to change, any money which remains from this pot at the end of the 5 year period I will donate to a registered charity of the Archbishop's choosing. I would propose and expect this to be the Lambeth Partnership but would be willing to discuss or consider alternatives to this if it was appropriate at the time.

I hope and pray that this is seen as intended as a genuine and active incentive to effective change and to support staff. Naturally I am happy to discuss this with anyone that you deem appropriate if that is considered to be helpful. I have also copied this letter and attachment to David Porter as Chief of Staff and thus ultimately responsible for Lambeth Palace Staffing, as well as William Nye as ultimately responsible for HR at Church House as I

fully expect that it will most likely be them that will act (or not) on this on your instruction and direction.

With prayers, and every blessing for your continued ministry,

Mark Chapman

—Attachments: —

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Note on ML and employment issues at LP.pdf

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