
Joint administrators' ninth progress
report from 7 August 2018 to
6 February 2019

Phosphorus Holdco Plc
(in administration)

28 February 2019

High Court of Justice, Chancery Division,
Companies Court

Case no. 7184 of 2014

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Abbreviations and definitions

The following table shows the abbreviations and insolvency terms that may be used in this report:

Abbreviation or definition	Meaning
“Administrators” or “we”	David James Kelly and Ian David Green
“Brown Rudnick”	Brown Rudnick LLP
”HMRC”	HM Revenue & Customs
“IR16”	Insolvency (England and Wales) Rules 2016
“IA86”	Insolvency Act 1986
“PIK Notes”	£208m aggregate principal amount of Senior PIK Toggle Notes due 2019
“PIK Noteholders”	Holders of the above Notes
“preferential creditors”	Claims for unpaid wages earned in the four months before the insolvency up to £800, holiday pay and unpaid pension contributions in certain circumstances
“Proposals”	The Administrators’ statement of proposals for achieving the purpose of the administration
“Sch.B1 IA86”	Schedule B1 to Insolvency Act 1986
“secured creditors”	Creditors with security in respect of their debt, in accordance with Section 248 IA86
“the Company”	Phosphorus Holdco Plc
“the Group” or “Phones 4U”	The Company together with Phones 4u Limited, Phone 4U Group Limited, Phones4U Finance Plc, MobileServ Limited, Phosphorus Acquisition Limited, 4U Limited, 4U Wi-Fi Limited, Jump 4U Limited, Life Mobile Limited and Policy Administration Services Limited (see www.pwc.co.uk/phones4u for details of insolvency procedures affecting these companies).
“unsecured creditors”	Creditors who are neither secured nor preferential

Key messages

Introduction

We previously wrote to all known creditors to give notice that we were appointed joint administrators of certain companies in the Phones 4U group, as summarised below:

Company	Date of appointment
Phones 4U Limited*	15 September 2014
Phones 4 U Group Limited*	15 September 2014
Phones4U Finance Plc*	15 September 2014
MobileServ Limited*	15 September 2014
Phosphorus Acquisition Limited*	15 September 2014
4U Limited	15 September 2014
4U Wi-Fi Limited	15 September 2014
Jump 4U Limited	15 September 2014
Life Mobile Limited	15 September 2014
Policy Administration Services Limited*	16 September 2014
Phosphorus Holdco Plc	8 October 2014

This progress report covers only Phosphorus Holdco Plc. On 13 February 2019, a separate report was issued to the creditors of the six companies contained within a common security structure (all indicated by * above). On 24 October 2018, a separate progress report was issued to the creditors of 4U Wi-Fi Limited, Jump 4U Limited, Life Mobile Limited (all now in liquidation). The administration of 4U Limited ended on 10 September 2015 and the company has since been dissolved.

We refer you to our Proposals for an explanation of why the various companies were put into administration and how the purpose of each administration is expected to be achieved. Our earlier reports explained the progress in this case to 6 August 2018 and continue to be available on our website at: www.pwc.co.uk/phones4u, the content of which is not repeated here unless considered beneficial or necessary for the purposes of this update.

Why we've sent you this report

We are writing to update you on the progress of the administration of the Company in the six months since our last report dated 31 August 2018 (which covered the six month period from 7 February 2018 to 6 August 2018). Due to our ongoing investigations into the Company, on 7 October 2015 we notified creditors that the period of the administration had been extended to 15 March 2019 by consent of the Court.

We have recently made an application to Court in order to extend the administration term by a further 12 months in order to deal with the outstanding matters in the case. These matters include:

- Continuing to assess and pursue claims against third parties;
- Resolution of issues in the administration of the other Phones 4U Group entities that may affect the Company;
- Any potential tax matters that may arise across the Phones 4U Group; and
- To ensure the most cost efficient method of exiting the administration.

The administration will be brought to an end once its purpose has been achieved, our work has been completed and statutory obligations fulfilled. In the event that a dividend becomes available, we would most likely move the Company into creditors' voluntary liquidation at the appropriate time in order for claims to be agreed and funds distributed to creditors.

How much creditors may receive

The following table summarises the possible outcome for creditors*, based on what we currently know.

Class of creditor	Current estimate (p in £)	Previous estimate (p in £)
Secured creditors	n/a	n/a
Preferential creditors	n/a	n/a
Unsecured creditors	unknown	unknown

**Please note this guidance on dividends is only an indication and should not be used as the main basis of any bad debt provision or debt trading.*

As previously reported, there are no secured or preferential creditors in the administration and amounts will become available for unsecured creditors only if there are sufficient funds remaining after the expenses of the administration have been discharged.

Any dividend is highly dependent on the outcome of recoveries arising from our investigatory work, therefore it is too early to say whether a dividend will be available, however it is prudent to assume any prospect of a distribution is remote.

The level of any dividend will be affected by the total level of unsecured claims against the Company. As per the directors' statement of affairs, the total unsecured liabilities of the Company could be up to £284.3m, made up of the PIK Note debt of £208m, a £106.6m unsecured claim for a VAT liability arising due to the Company being a member of the Phones 4u VAT group and £1m of other direct liabilities.

Progress reports to the creditors of Phones 4U Limited, which can be found at www.pwc.co.uk/phones4u, provide further explanation and details on the VAT liability with HMRC.

Please note that guidance on any potential dividend is only an indication and should not be used as the main basis of bad debt provision.

What you need to do

If you haven't already done so, please send your claim to us so that we can agree it in principle. A claim form can be downloaded from our website at www.pwc.co.uk/phones4u or you can request one from May Mehdi by telephoning 0113 289 4742.

Overview of what we done to date

As explained in our earlier reports, the only material asset in the administration relates to the potential claims against third parties. In order to pursue these claims, we have sought and secured litigation funding from the market. To date, these funds have contributed towards formulating the claims, seeking advice from counsel, and issuing pre-action correspondence to the potential defendants.

Other work has principally comprised of liaising with certain of the PIK Noteholders by way of calls, meetings and notices.

We have also fulfilled our statutory obligations including preparing and issuing the eighth progress report for creditors, and making an application to court for the extension of the administration by one year to 15 March 2020.

We remain in office to progress our investigations into the potential claims against various third parties for the purpose of generating value for creditors.

Please see the subsequent section for the work performed during the period.

Progress since we last reported

Investigations

As part of our duty to investigate what assets are available to the Company, we consider what potential claims against third parties exist. We appointed the law firm Brown Rudnick to assist us in our investigations in this area, which remain ongoing.

Funding within the administration is limited and in order to proceed with any formal legal strategy, we required additional funding which was received prior to this report. Accordingly, we've continued to actively progress the potential claims. The nature of these third party claims is commercially sensitive and confidential, as such we do not think it would be appropriate to disclose any further information at this stage.

Given the inherent uncertainty of such investigations and the outcome of any potential subsequent causes of action that may or may not result, we are not yet able to estimate the value of any potential recoveries and, indeed, there may be no recoveries ultimately made.

Statutory and compliance work

In addition to our investigation work, there are a number of other matters to address when winding-down a company's affairs during an insolvency process including, but not limited to:

- Preparing and circulating progress reports as required by insolvency legislation;
- Updates to creditors;
- Dealing with tax and VAT matters; and in this recent period; and
- Applying for an extension to the administration for one year to 15 March 2020.

Our receipts and payments account

We set out in Appendix A an account of our receipts and payments in the administration from 7 August 2018 to 6 February 2019.

Our expenses

We set out in Appendix B a statement of the expenses we've incurred to the date covered by this report.

Our fees

We set out in Appendix C an update on our remuneration which covers our fees, disbursements and other related matters in this case.

Creditors' rights

Creditors have the right to ask for more information within 21 days of the delivery of this report as set out in Rule 18.9 IR16. Any request must be in writing. Creditors can also challenge fees and expenses within eight weeks of receiving this report as set out in Rule 18.34. This information can also be found in the guide to fees at:

<http://www.icaew.com/~media/Files/Technical/Insolvency/creditors-guides/creditors-guide-administrators-fees-final.pdf>

You can request a copy free of charge by telephoning May Mehdi on 0113 289 4742.

What we still need to do

We continue to progress the claims against third parties to realise the Company's material asset.

Given the inherent uncertainty around the investigations, it is not yet clear as to the level of further work required after a conclusion has been reached.

Next steps

The administration period currently runs until 15 March 2019, however we have applied to Court to extend the administration for a further 12 months, as a result of our ongoing investigation work.

We expect to send our next report to creditors at the end of the administration or in about six months, whichever is the sooner.

If you have any questions, please contact May Mehdi on 0113 289 4742.

Yours faithfully
For and on behalf of the Company



David Kelly
Joint administrator

David James Kelly and Ian David Green have been appointed as joint administrators of Phosphorus Holdco plc to manage its affairs, business and property as its agents without personal liability. Both are licensed in the United Kingdom to act as an Insolvency Practitioners by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

The joint administrators are bound by the Insolvency Code of Ethics which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/insolvency-practitioner-code-of-ethics>.

The joint administrators may act as controllers of personal data as defined by UK data protection law depending upon the specific processing activities undertaken. PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP may act as a processor on the instructions of the joint administrators. Personal data will be kept secure and processed only for matters relating to the joint administrators' appointment. Further details are available in the privacy statement on the PwC.co.uk website or by contacting the joint administrators.

Appendix A: Receipts and payments

Phosphorous Holdco PLC

Receipts and payments account for the period 8 October 2014 to 6 February 2019

Directors' statement of affairs £	8 October 2014 to 6 August 2018 £	7 August 2018 to 6 February 2019 £	Total to 6 February 2019 £
Receipts			
14,424 Cash in hand	14,423.24	-	14,423.24
2,894 Intercompany debtors	-	-	-
Funding from 3rd parties	362,400.00	-	362,400.00
Legal fees & Expenses	6,236.83	-	6,236.83
Bank interest gross	539.70	439.61	979.31
17,318 Total receipts	383,599.77	439.61	384,039.38
Payments			
Bank charges	15.00	-	15.00
Legal Fees & Expenses	197,597.33	-	197,597.33
Professional Fees	-	3,780.00	3,780.00
Total payments	197,612.33	3,780.00	201,392.33
Net receipts & payments	185,987.44	(3,340.39)	182,647.05
VAT control account	-	(35,552.10)	(35,552.10)
Balance held in interest bearing current account	185,987.44	(38,892.49)	147,094.95
Represented by			£
Held in Barclays a/c			147,094.95

Note

All transactions are shown net of VAT unless otherwise stated.

Appendix B: Expenses

The following table provides details of our expenses. Expenses are amounts properly payable by us as administrators from the estate and include our fees, but exclude distributions to creditors. The table also excludes any potential tax liabilities that we may need to pay as an administration expense because amounts becoming due will depend on the position at the end of the tax accounting period.

The table should be read in conjunction with the receipts and payments account at Appendix A, which shows expenses actually paid during the period and the total paid to date.

	Expenses incurred brought forward	Expenses incurred in this period	Total expenses incurred to 6 February 2019	Total expenses paid to 6 February 2019	Estimated future expenses	Outstanding total expenses to 6 February 2019
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Administrators' remuneration	947,484.75	139,442.00	1,086,926.75	-	-	1,086,926.75
Administrators' expenses – Category 1	10,800.37	6,568.00	17,368.37	-	-	17,368.37
Administrators' expenses – Category 2	100.14	-	100.14	-	-	100.14
Legal fees- Allen & Overy LLP	12,468.26	-	12,468.26	(6,236.83)	-	6,231.43
Legal fees – Brown Rudnick LLP	1,220,035.00	137,909.00	1,357,944.00	(102,160.50)	-	1,255,783.50
Legal expenses – Brown Rudnick LLP	126,508.62	4,023.38	130,532.00	(89,200.00)	-	41,332.00
Professional fees	-	3,780.00	3,780.00	(3,780.00)	-	0.00
Total	2,317,397.14	291,722.38	2,609,119.52	(201,377.33)	-	2,407,742.19

We have not disclosed the estimated future expenses in relation to the investigation work as to do so would be to disclose potentially commercially sensitive information and may prejudice the value of the realisations in the administration.

Appendix C: Remuneration update

Creditors approved our fees on a time costs basis on 11 September 2017, specifically for our time incurred in relation to the investigatory work (not unrelated matters arising in the administration). Further details were set out in our request to creditors dated 22 August 2017, including the possibility of seeking further approval to draw a percentage of recoveries (if any) arising from any claims brought against third parties.

To date we have not drawn any fees. The time cost charges incurred in the period covered by this report are £139.4k as shown in the table below. The total time costs incurred to date are £1.1m. This amount does not necessarily reflect how much we will eventually draw as fees.

We set out later in this Appendix details of our work to date, anticipated future work, disbursements, subcontracted work and payments to associates.

Our hours and average rate

Analysis of time costs for the period

From: 07 August 2018
To: 06 February 2019

Aspect of assignment	Partner	Director	Senior Manager	Manager	Senior Associate	Associate	Support	Total hours	Time cost £	Average hourly rate £	Cumulative time cost £
Investigations	15.40	74.90	4.50	26.00	53.00	-	-	173.80	139,442.00	802.31	1,081,497.75
Total	15.40	74.90	4.50	26.00	53.00	-	-	173.80	139,442.00	802.31	1,081,497.75

Our time charging policy and hourly rates

The time charged to the administration is by reference to the time properly given by the Administrators and various grades of their staff in attending to matters arising.

It is our policy to delegate tasks in the administration to appropriate members of staff considering their level of experience and any requisite specialist knowledge, supervised accordingly, so as to maximise the cost-effectiveness of the work performed. Matters of particular complexity or significance requiring more exceptional responsibility are dealt with by senior staff or the Administrators themselves.

Set out below are the relevant charge-out rates per hour worked for the grades of staff actually or likely to be involved on this assignment. Time is charged by reference to actual work carried out on these assignments. There has been no allocation of any general overhead costs. The rates for the Administrators and their staff are our normal rates for complex assignments.

Specialist departments within our firm such as tax, VAT, property and pensions may charge time to these assignments if and when we require their expert advice. Such specialists' rates vary but the figures below provide an indication of the maximum rate per hour.

All staff who work on this assignment (including cashiers, support and secretarial staff) charge time directly to this assignment and are included within any analysis of time charged. Each grade of staff is allocated an hourly charge out rate which is reviewed from time to time. Work undertaken by cashiers, support and secretarial staff is charged for separately and is not included in the hourly rates charged by partners or other members of staff. Time is charged by reference to actual work carried out on these assignments in six minute units. The minimum time chargeable is three minutes (i.e. 0.5 units).

In common with all professional firms, the scale rates used may periodically rise (for example to cover annual inflationary cost increases) over the period of the administration. The following tables show the applicable rates for the period from 1 July 2018.

Grade (with effect from 1 July 2018)	Administrators' and their staff Rate per hour (£)	Specialist staff Maximum rate per hour (£)
Partner	890	1,445
Director	780	1,210
Senior manager	590	1,230
Manager	510	735
Senior associate – qualified	425	545
Senior associate – unqualified	315	-
Associate	265	270
Support staff	135	160

Hourly rates exclusive of VAT

Our work in the period

Earlier in this section we included an analysis of the time spent by the various grades of staff in dealing with the investigatory work covered by the period of this report.

In the following table we provide details on the key areas of work relating to the ongoing investigations only. The work has all been necessary and part of our strategy to enhance asset realisations for the benefit of creditors.

Work excluded from the table relates to the process of an administration (including statutory and compliance matters) and ongoing management of the Company's affairs (for example, VAT and tax matters). As previously stated, we have not sought approval to draw fees in respect of the excluded work.

Area of work	Brief description	Cost (£)
Investigations	- Concluded investigation and finalised claims against third parties. - Liaising with counsel and legal advisors regarding claims following pre-action correspondence. - Strategy decisions made by appointment takers.	139,442

Our future work

We still need to perform the following work in order to achieve the purpose of the administration.

Area of work	Brief description	Cost £
Investigations	- Pursuit of potential claims against third parties. - Ongoing monitoring and review of strategy including budgeting and cost analysis.	See note below*

*We have not disclosed the estimated future costs relating to the investigation as to do so would be to disclose commercially sensitive information and may prejudice the value of the realisations in the administration.

Disbursements

Our expenses policy allows for all properly incurred expenses to be recharged to the case. Expenses are defined in SIP9 as amounts payable by the office holder from the estate which do not constitute the office holders' remuneration or a distribution to creditors. Disbursements incurred from 7 August 2018 to 6 February 2019 are shown in the table below.

SIP9 defines 'Category 2' expenses as those that are "*directly referable to the appointment in question but not to a payment to an independent third party. They may include shared or allocated costs that may be incurred by the office holder and their firm, and that can be allocated to appointment on a proper and reasonable basis*".

All other disbursements are 'Category 1' disbursements which are reimbursed at cost. SIP9 defines 'Category 1' disbursements as "*payments to independent third parties where there is specific expenditure directly referable to the appointment in question*".

The following disbursements arose in the period of this report:

Category	Policy	Costs incurred £
2	Photocopying - at 5 pence per sheet copied, only charged for circulars to creditors and other bulk copying.	-
2	Mileage - At a maximum of 71 pence per mile (up to 2,000cc) or 93 pence per mile (over 2,000cc)	-
1	Travel expenses reimbursed at cost	6,568.00
	Total	6,568.00

Our relationships

We have no business or personal relationships with the parties who approve our fees or who provide services to the administration where the relationship could give rise to a conflict of interest.

Legal and other professional firms

We have instructed the following professionals on this case:

Service provided	Name of firm / organisation	Reason selected	Basis of fees
Legal advice (general)	Allen & Overy LLP	• Lawyers instructed in respect of the wider Phones4U Group with knowledge which would add value to the administration.	• Time and expenses
Legal advice (investigations)	Brown Rudnick LLP	• To assist the investigation of potential claims the Company may have.	• Time and expenses

Appendix D: Other information

Court details for the administration:	High Court of Justice, Chancery Division, Companies Court 7184 of 2014
Company's registered name:	Phosphorus Holdco Plc
Registered number:	07479181
Registered address:	Central Square, 8 th Floor, 29 Wellington Street, Leeds, LS1 4DL
Date of the joint administrators' appointment:	8 October 2014
Joint administrators' names, addresses and contact details:	David James Kelly of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, 7 More London, Riverside, London, SE1 2RT Ian David Green of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, 7 More London, Riverside, London, SE1 2RT
Extension(s) to the initial period of appointment:	Extension granted by the Court to 15 March 2019
Objective being pursued:	Objective (b) achieving a better result for the Company's creditors as a whole than would be likely if the Company was wound up (without first being in administration).
Appointor's / applicant's name and address:	Court order following an application by the directors of the Company, based at Osprey House, Ore Close, Lymedale Business Park, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 9QD
Split of the joint administrators' responsibilities	In relation to Paragraph 100(2) Sch.B1 IA86, during the period for which the administration order is in force any act required or authorised under any enactment to be done by either or all of the Administrators may be done by any one or more of the persons for the time being holding that office.
