

Early Day Motion 335, December 2004

<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=26858&SESSION=873>

'deeply regrets the professional endorsement of processed food for domestic dogs, cats and ferrets by some members of the veterinary profession' and calls upon the RCVS to 'make a definitive statement on the active endorsement and promotion of processed pet foods by vets'.

The RCVS prefers to 'sit tight' and not make any public statement. However they prepare and keep a statement in reserve — a statement that makes matters much worse. The RCVS add their superior weight to the false and misleading 'active endorsement and promotion of processed pet foods by vets'.

EDM

That this House deeply regrets the professional endorsement of processed food for domestic dogs, cats and ferrets by some members of the veterinary profession; is concerned at the level of incidence of malodorous gum disease and associated diseases of the kidneys, liver and other organs amongst the domestic pet population; recognises that their health and welfare is best served by foods, such as raw meaty bones, that reflect the full range of nutritional need; applauds and recommends the work of veterinary surgeon Tom Lonsdale and others in this field; recognises also that vets in the UK are trusted and independent advisers on the health of our pets; is therefore concerned by the nature of the relationship between some vets and producers of foods that cause illnesses in pets; and calls upon the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons to make a definitive statement on the active endorsement and promotion of processed pet foods by vets.

JCH comments

Then say - we are aware of different views within the profession; we don't represent vet views; so far as we can tell Tom L is in a minority (ref to the fact that he comes at the bottom or close to the bottom of the Council election poll in the 6 years or so that he has stood); we have encouraged him to submit papers for peer review publication; the Guide counsels against product endorsements but there can be nothing wrong with a vet recommending a particular diet for a particular animal or giving general nutritional advice.

RMB EDM – Statement

The RCVS is aware of different views within the veterinary profession concerning the feeding of processed pet foods to companion animals, not least those of Tom Lonsdale. However, as the regulatory body for the veterinary profession, the RCVS does not exist to represent the views of veterinary surgeons and is not in a position to provide authoritative scientific comment on the nutritional benefits of pet foods.

Veterinary surgeons are not expected to endorse products without due justification or if they might compromise the clinical care of animals. The RCVS does, however, expect veterinary surgeons to make clinical decisions according to their professional judgement and based on the best available evidence at the time.

We understand that there is currently an abundance of scientific evidence available to support the use of processed pet foods for everyday feeding of companion animals, together with medicated or "science" diets to provide advanced nutrition for animals that may be unwell, nutritionally deficient or at a certain stage in life.

Mr Lonsdale has stood in the RCVS Council Elections for the past eight years in order to promote his concerns. Each time he has secured the least number of votes, which would imply there is little support for his views within the veterinary profession, of whom there are currently over 21,000 registered RCVS members.

We have discussed Mr Lonsdale's concerns with him on a number of occasions and have urged him to submit scientific evidence to support his claims and to publish this material in peer-reviewed (veterinary) scientific journals. We understand that Mr Lonsdale has not yet accomplished this but we would encourage him to do so.

RCVS POSITION

December 2004

EARLY DAY MOTION – PROCESSED PET FOODS AND VETS

The RCVS is aware of different views within the veterinary profession concerning the feeding of processed pet foods to companion animals, not least those of Tom Lonsdale. However, as the regulatory body for the veterinary profession, the RCVS does not exist to represent the views of veterinary surgeons and is not in a position to provide authoritative scientific comment on the nutritional benefits of pet foods.

Veterinary surgeons are not expected to endorse products without due justification or if they might compromise the clinical care of animals. The RCVS does, however, expect veterinary surgeons to make clinical decisions according to their professional judgement and based on the best available evidence at the time.

We understand that there is currently an abundance of scientific evidence available to support the use of processed pet foods for everyday feeding of companion animals, together with medicated or "science" diets to provide advanced nutrition for animals that may be unwell, nutritionally deficient or at a certain stage in life.

Mr Lonsdale has stood in the RCVS Council Elections for the past eight years in order to promote his concerns. Each time he has secured the least number of votes, which would imply there is little support for his views within the veterinary profession, of whom there are currently over 21,000 registered RCVS members.

We have discussed Mr Lonsdale's concerns with him on a number of occasions and have urged him to submit scientific evidence to support his claims and to publish this material in peer-reviewed (veterinary) scientific journals. We understand that Mr Lonsdale has not yet accomplished this but we would encourage him to do so.

ENDS

For further information please contact:

Ian Holloway
RCVS External Affairs Officer
T: 020 7202 0727
F: 020 7202 0740
E: i.holloway@rcvs.org.uk

The following is a sample of the email exchanges between the BVA, PFMA and RCVS, following the Early Day Motion in December 2004.

13th December 2004

Email from BVA to RCVS:

>quote> “Guess you’ve seen this” >end quote>

13th December 2004

Reply to BVA from RCVS:

>quote> “Yes we have thanks – proposing to do very little about it for the time being until we get any press interest (we’ve had an enquiry from Our Cats to which we’ll respond). Have you had any enquiries?”>end quote<

13th December 2004

Internal email RCVS

>quote< “The PFMA Comms Department called this morning to ask what stance we were taking on the raw meaty bones EDM. I explained our position along the lines you suggested (i.e. sitting tight for now) and asked them to let me have sight of their position statement when they have drafted it”>end quote<

16th December 2005

Email from PFMA to RCVS

>quote< “Further to our conversation earlier this week, I attach the PFMA information document regarding raw meaty bones discussions.

Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions” >end quote<

ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS

**JOINT OFFICERS MEETING BETWEEN RCVS AND BSAVA ON TUESDAY, 25 JANUARY 2005
AT 5:00 PM AT THE ROYAL OCEAN RACING CLUB, 20 ST JAMES' PLACE, LONDON, SW1A
1NN**

PRESENT:

RCVS	Professor R E W Halliwell	Senior Vice President
	Miss J C Hern	Registrar
	Mrs L V Hill	Junior Vice President
	Mr R P Moore	Treasurer
	Mr J Parker	President

BSAVA	Dr R Dixon	Treasurer
	Dr M A Holmes	Honorary Secretary
	Mr M K Jessop	Junior Vice President
	Dr I S Mason	President
	Dr F M Scott-Park	Senior Vice President

MANUFACTURED PET FOODS

10. The RCVS stance in response to the Early Day Motion was noted. BSAVA reported that it had also received correspondence from 'Raw Meaty Bones UK', as had many other veterinary bodies.

Jch
Jan 05

Extracts of EA/PA Committee minutes for Gordon:**February 2005****ITEM 9: EARLY DAY MOTION ON PET FOODS**

- 13) The Committee noted the paper.

October 2005**ITEM 7: POSITION STATEMENTS**

10. The Head of Communications introduced the paper. She noted that a position paper would not necessarily commit RCVS to having a view on a particular issue. The College was, however, regularly asked to comment on various questions, such as MRSA, and if they were not matters for RCVS a position paper could usefully explain this and refer enquirers to other sources of advice. It would be important not to replicate information available elsewhere.
11. In discussion attention was drawn to the need for consistency between different statements issued by the College from time to time. Slight inconsistencies in guidance had become an issue in a recent disciplinary case. It was stressed that position statements would not constitute advice to the profession. It was also suggested that RCVS ought not to put opinions forward on matters outside its regulatory responsibilities. As a Royal College it could properly deal with wider matters, but ought to confine itself to providing factual information. There was concern that that if RCVS were to set itself up as a body offering scientific advice this could be very expensive. An alternative approach might be for RCVS to promote and facilitate appropriate discussions rather than taking the lead itself in matters outside its regulatory role. On the other hand it was argued that RCVS was asked to comment on a wide range of questions, some (such as raw meaty bones) being marginal to the College's interests, others (such as mutilations, in the context of the Animal Welfare Bill) being mainstream. Some issues could arise out of the College's own business: thus attitudes to the use of animals in research were relevant to the use of the RCVS premises for a meeting sponsored by the Coalition for Medical Progress and to a proposed subject for a Fellowship thesis. The Chairman suggested that, at the next meeting, time be set aside to discuss and debate emerging topics and their prioritisation. She also suggested that existing position statements should be reviewed and updated.
12. It was noted in conclusion that any statements issued by the College needed to be dated and kept under regular review.

February 2006**ITEM 6: RCVS POSITION STATEMENTS**

- 24) It was recommended that, in the raw meaty bones statement, the example of ingredients in a lifestyle diet should be changed from low potassium to low phosphorous.
- 25) There was some concern that the College's stance seemed to be against raw meaty bones and that the direct reference to Mr Tom Lonsdale was too personal and should be removed. It was pointed out that the College was not against raw meaty bones and had encouraged Mr Lonsdale to provide scientific evidence to support his assertions. Members were informed that this statement was a direct response to an Early Day Motion that made specific reference to the RCVS and to Mr Lonsdale and

so it was necessary to address these issues. It was then suggested that the word "peer" should be removed from the last paragraph and that Tom Lonsdale should be referred to as Mr Tom Lonsdale.

May 2006

ITEM 5: RCVS POSITION STATEMENTS

- 12) It was noted that Advisory Committee had considered the position statements that had been approved by EA Committee at its February meeting (on MRSA, the use of animals in research, the inclusion on the Register of homoeopaths and Raw Meaty Bones) and had suggested amendments. It was agreed that final sign-off rested with EA Committee who would consider the statements further in the light of comments from Advisory Committee.

4

ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE – 16 FEBRUARY 2005

EARLY DAY MOTION – PROCESSED PET FOODS AND VETS

SUMMARY

- 1. This paper is intended to inform the Committee about the recent Early Day Motion submitted by David Taylor MP, provide an update on associated correspondence and press coverage and describe the RCVS position and action to date.

KEY ISSUES

On 7 December 2004, David Taylor MP (Lab, NW Leics) tabled the following Early Day Motion (EDM 335) in the House of Commons, which was supported by Bob Russell MP (Lib Dem, Chester):

"This House deeply regrets the professional endorsement of processed food for domestic dogs, cats and ferrets by some members of the veterinary profession; is concerned at the level of incidence of malodorous gum disease and associated diseases of the kidneys, liver and other organs amongst the domestic pet population; recognises that their health and welfare is best served by foods, such as raw meaty bones, that reflect the full range of nutritional need; applauds and recommends the work of veterinary surgeon Tom Lonsdale and others in this field; recognises also that vets in the UK are trusted and independent advisers on the health of our pets; is therefore concerned by the nature of the relationship between some vets and producers of foods that cause illnesses in pets; and calls upon the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons to make a definitive statement on the active endorsement and promotion of processed pet foods by vets."

EDMs are widely acknowledged to be the parliamentary equivalent of "Letters to the Editor" and, as such, attract little attention and often warrant similar levels of response (see footnote¹). Hence, members decided that an RCVS comment should be prepared in readiness for any press enquiries, but that a formal position statement need not be published. This comment is at Annex A. An article did appear in *Veterinary Times* (Annex B), although the RCVS comment was not included. The reasons for this omission remain unclear, however there has been little further comment in the veterinary press and none has come to light in the national media.

- 4. The Pet Food Manufacturer's Association (PFMA) has reacted more overtly to the wording of the EDM and has asked the RCVS to do likewise. The PFMA's position statement is supplied at Annex C, together with the recent correspondence between it and the RCVS.
- 5. It is understood that this EDM was submitted as a result of lobbying by the action group UKRMB (UK Raw Meaty Bones) – a UK branch of Australian veterinary surgeon Tom Lonsdale's campaign

¹ Early Day Motion is a colloquial term for a notice of motion given by an MP for which no date has been fixed for debate. EDMs exist to allow MPs to put on record their opinion on a subject and canvass support for it from fellow MPs. In effect, the primary function of an EDM is to form a kind of petition that MPs can sign and there is very little prospect of these motions being debated on the floor of the House.

to highlight his claim of a link between processed pet foods and certain animal diseases, and to launch an inquiry to investigate the alleged relationship between veterinary surgeons and pet food manufacturers. UKRMB appears to be well organised with a number of supporters, adequate resources and an effective website (www.ukrmb.co.uk).

6. UKRMB has contacted the RCVS independently via correspondence to the President from its coordinator Mrs Jackie Marriott. This, together with the President's replies, is attached for the Committee's reference at Annex D. Mrs Marriott also wrote to each Council member last autumn.
7. UKRMB has also written to the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) – copy attached at Annex E. The RCVS recently assisted the Department with its response by providing the RCVS comment and a reminder of the College's actual role and responsibilities.
8. The Committee is reminded that Tom Lonsdale has stood for election to Council every year for the past eight years. His manifestos have been based predominantly, if not entirely, on his campaign against the pet food industries and for the promotion of a raw meaty bones diet for domestic pets. Despite this, Mr Lonsdale has secured the least number of votes in each election, which may or may not be a reflection of the profession's opinion of his views. The then President, Richard Halliwell, held a meeting with Mr Lonsdale in 2004, at which he urged Mr Lonsdale to provide scientific evidence for his views and have this published in peer-reviewed veterinary journals. Professor Halliwell expressed his opinion that Mr Lonsdale might have difficulty finding someone to review his book.
9. In addition, there has been some confusion over whether butchers are actually allowed, under EU Animal By-Products Regulations, to supply bones to animal owners for consumption by their pets. This confusion has since been attributed to mis-reporting in the press and, according to the European Commission (DG Press and Communication), "...butchers [may supply] bones to individual dog owners for their pet's consumption, provided the bone has not already been thrown away."
10. This campaign shows little sign of abating but its relevance to the RCVS remains questionable. Indeed, many of the claims made by UKRMB demonstrate a fundamental misunderstanding of the College's role and responsibilities. Members are invited to note the current situation and consider whether the College should be seeking to undertake a more proactive role in this debate, or leave it to those organisations with remits more closely aligned to the issues at stake [sic].

Annex A: RCVS comment on pets and processed pet foods

Annex B: Veterinary Times article on EDM

Annex C: DEFRA statement and correspondence with RCVS

Annex D: Correspondence between UKRMB and RCVS President

Annex E: UKMB correspondence to DEFRA

Ian Holloway
External Affairs Officer
January 2005

Pet Food Manufacturers' Association Ltd



20 Bedford Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9HP
Tel: 020 7379 9009 Fax: 020 7379 8008 email: info@pfma.org.uk website: www.pfma.com

Mr John Parker
RCVS President
Belgravia House
52 - 64 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 2AF

10 January 2005

Dear Mr Parker,

Early Day Motion - Processed Pet Foods and Vets

I am writing to you on behalf of the Pet Food Manufacturer's Association (PFMA) to express concern over Early Day Motion (335) on Processed Pet Foods and Vets. We view the motion as misleading and damaging, and therefore the allegations must be refuted.

Members of the Pet Food Manufacturers' Association take great pride in being part of a strictly regulated and actively responsible industry. Their fundamental aim is to produce nutritionally balanced products of the highest standard, thus improving the health and well being of the pet population. The implication that pet foods are causing illness is wholly unsubstantiated.

Our member companies have spent decades examining dietary requirements in order to create products that deliver optimum nutrition. Bolstered by the invaluable expertise of the veterinary profession, knowledge in this field has advanced to such an extent, that it is widely recognised that pets are living longer and healthier lives.

Both the veterinary profession and the member companies of the PFMA share a genuine goal to enhance the lives of pet animals. To suggest that the relationship represents commercial collusion is manifestly wrong.

The PFMA has written to all signatories of the motion as well as other interested MP's voicing our opposition. I enclose our position document for further information. We would strongly encourage the RCVS to also actively reject the false allegations put forward in this EDM.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Bellingham
PFMA Chief Executive

Copy to [redacted] / [redacted]

11 JAN 2005

[redacted]

of the [redacted]

We've [redacted] JCA, 11.1.05.

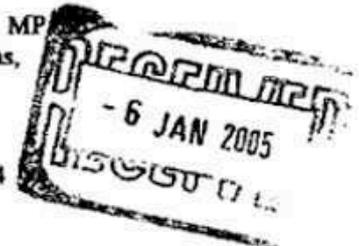
True Meaty Bones



Pet Food Manufacturers' Association Ltd

20 Bedford Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 9HP
Tel: 020 7379 9009 Fax: 020 7379 8008 email: info@pfma.org.uk website: www.pfma.com

House of Commons,
London,
SW1A 0AA.



22 December 2004

Ref: L4404

Dear

Early Day Motion – Processed Pet Foods and Vets

I am writing to you on behalf of the Pet Food Manufacturers Association. We represent over 50 UK manufacturers, directly employing around 8,000 people. We are very concerned about the nature of the Early Day Motion (335) on Processed Pet Foods and Vets. In particular there are some disturbing inaccuracies within the EDM, which need to be countered.

Firstly, there is simply no evidence that processed pet food causes a higher incidence of dental problems. In fact studies have shown that dogs fed "natural" diets have the same incidence of periodontal problems that are found in pets fed commercial diets. Rather, it is the feeding of bones that can result in chipped or broken teeth, therefore preventing the dog from adequately chewing its food to aid digestion. A 1997 study of foxhounds fed animal carcass showed that older dogs had an average of 50% fractured teeth.

Secondly, it is quite wrong to claim that a diet of raw meaty bones "reflect the full range of nutritional need". Quite the reverse, as such a diet runs a high risk of nutritional imbalance as eating only the meat and bone of a carcass does not represent a balanced diet. There are many examples of pathological fractures resulting from poor bone mineralisation and nutritional hyperparathyroidism where animals have been fed diets containing meat with inadequate calcium supplementation. Vitamins, trace minerals, potassium and essential fatty acids must be added to the diet before the diet will contain the minimum concentrations of known essential nutrients.

Finally, to imply that pet food manufacturers produce food that "causes illness in pets" is false, and to suggest that a number of veterinary surgeons are party to this is wrong. Our members take the responsibility of feeding the nation's pets very seriously. They have spent decades understanding the nutritional requirements of pets to develop products that provide optimum nutrition and promote the health and well being of the UK pet population. Industry has done this work often in concert with a number of dedicated veterinarians. Their expertise on the physiology of pet animals ensures we are providing the optimum nutrition for the pets needs. As a result, knowledge has advanced beyond recognition, and it is now widely recognised by veterinarians that pets are leading longer and healthier lives.

I attach some further background. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you require any additional information.

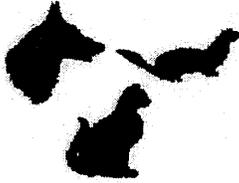
Yours sincerely,
Michael Bellingham
PFMA Chief Executive

FAA 020 7904 6962

ANIMAL WELFARE D

TRU -

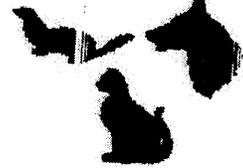
Pe 401
advise to
reply 12/10/04



ukrmb

(United Kingdom Raw Meaty Bones)

Support & Action Group



115 West Way, Lancing, West Sussex, BN15 8NB

email: info@ukrmb.co.uk

Telephone: 01903 751629

website: www.ukrmb.co.uk

BEN BRADSHAW

23 DEC 2004

13th December 2004

RECEIVED

Dear

Open debate on health benefits of raw food for carnivores

In a recent letter from the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons it was suggested, regarding the debate about raw feeding, that scientific scrutiny and discussion be encouraged in the veterinary community.

Such a suggestion seems at odds with well known, and often complained about, suppression of the veterinary journals.

The *Veterinary Record*, journal of the British Veterinary Association, and the *Journal of Small Animal Practice*, journal of the British Small Animal Veterinary Association, rather than encourage the debate have, for many years, stymied it. Both journals refuse even to review, and bring to the attention of British veterinary surgeons, the 2001 book *Raw Meaty Bones* - the book leading veterinary educationalists say should be read by 'every veterinarian'.

*Please advise your opinion regarding the suppression and censorship of dietary and dental information in the veterinary press.

*Please advise whether, in your opinion, the RCVS has a responsibility to ensure information vital for the welfare of British pets and their owners, is not deliberately suppressed by elements of the British veterinary establishment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Marriott (Mrs)
UKRMB

cc DEFRA and other interested parties

RCVS POSITION

December 2004

EARLY DAY MOTION – PROCESSED PET FOODS AND VETS

The RCVS is aware of different views within the veterinary profession concerning the feeding of processed pet foods to companion animals, not least those of Tom Lonsdale. However, as the regulatory body for the veterinary profession, the RCVS does not exist to represent the views of veterinary surgeons and is not in a position to provide authoritative scientific comment on the nutritional benefits of pet foods.

Veterinary surgeons are not expected to endorse products without due justification or if they might compromise the clinical care of animals. The RCVS does, however, expect veterinary surgeons to make clinical decisions according to their professional judgement and based on the best available evidence at the time.

We understand that there is currently an abundance of scientific evidence available to support the use of processed pet foods for everyday feeding of companion animals, together with medicated or "science" diets to provide advanced nutrition for animals that may be unwell, nutritionally deficient or at a certain stage in life.

Mr Lonsdale has stood in the RCVS Council Elections for the past eight years in order to promote his concerns. Each time he has secured the least number of votes, which would imply there is little support for his views within the veterinary profession, of whom there are currently over 21,000 registered RCVS members.

We have discussed Mr Lonsdale's concerns with him on a number of occasions and have urged him to submit scientific evidence to support his claims and to publish this material in peer-reviewed (veterinary) scientific journals. We understand that Mr Lonsdale has not yet accomplished this but we would encourage him to do so.

ENDS

For further information please contact:

Ian Holloway
RCVS External Affairs Officer
T: 020 7202 0727
F: 020 7202 0740
E: i.holloway@rcvs.org.uk

EXTRACT FROM COMMITTEE MINUTES 22nd JAN 05

0-

35: **Raw Meaty Bones.** The College's statement should be sent to DEFRA. A peer-reviewed scientific paper should be produced and it should be clarified that the College would not seek to suppress or promote any particular view.

Ian Holloway

From: Ian Holloway
Sent: 01 September 2005 14:33
To: 'ukrmb@yahoo.com'
Subject: RE: EDM335 - Processed Pet Food and Vets

Dear

Thank you for email of 24 June 2005. Again, please accept my apologies for not responding to you sooner, however I am aware of the correspondence that you have had in the meantime with the Registrar and the President. I hope the following responses to your queries below are helpful.

Following the EDM last year, we produced a position statement, in December, in readiness for any press enquiries that we might subsequently receive. We did not issue this statement proactively. If memory serves, we received enquiries from the Veterinary Times, Dog World and Our Cat Magazine and so sent each publication a copy. I cannot recall whether or not these publications chose to publish anything as a result, however I would suggest you contact them to check.

The first RCVS comment to which you refer was based on the same scientific papers and evidence which were documented by the Pet Food Manufacturers' Association in its press release dated 17 December 2004.

With regard to the second comment, Mr Lonsdale was invited to the RCVS in 2003 to discuss his views on processed pet foods with the then President, Richard Halliwell and Mr Gordon Hockey, (Asst Registrar). In addition, Mr Lonsdale has also had a number of communications with the Registrar (mostly by email) to discuss these same views, generally in relation to his manifestos when he has repeatedly stood for election to RCVS Council. He has also had correspondence with the Registrar about reviews of his book "Raw Meaty Bones" in scientific journals and the veterinary press.

Yours sincerely

Ian Holloway
External Affairs Officer

External Affairs Department
Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons
Belgravia House
62-64 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 2AF

Tel: 020 7202 0727
Fax: 020 7202 0740
www.rcvs.org.uk

Sign up for RCVS e-News at www.rcvs.org.uk/enews

-----Original Message-----

From: Info at ukrmb@yahoo.com [mailto:ukrmb@yahoo.com]
Sent: 24 June 2005 12:06
To: Ian Holloway
Subject: EDM335 - Processed Pet Food and Vets

BY EMAIL 24 June 2005

Mr Ian Holloway
RCVS External Affairs Officer

Dear Mr Holloway,

We have recently been supplied with a copy of the December 2004, RCVS Position

re: ding the Early Day Motion — Processed Pet Foods and Vets.

Please advise who the intended recipients of the position paper were and where the paper was published.

Please provide your sources and evidence for the assertion: 'We understand that there is currently an abundance of scientific evidence available to support the use of processed pet foods for everyday feeding of companion animals, together with medicated or 'science' diets to provide advanced nutrition for animals that may be unwell, nutritionally deficient or at a certain stage in life'.

We note your statement: 'We have discussed Mr Lonsdale's concerns with him on a number of occasions.' Mr Lonsdale tells us he has no recollection of discussions taking place on a 'number of occasions'. Please advise.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

UKRMB

Do You Yahoo!?

Tired of spam? Yahoo! Mail has the best spam protection around <http://mail.yahoo.com>