



John Woodcock MP
Labour and Co-operative Party Member of Parliament for Barrow and Furness
Email: john.woodcock.mp [GRO]

House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA
Tel: [GRO]

James Arbuthnot MP
House of Commons
Westminster
London
SW1A 0AA

23 November 2012

Dear James

Re: Mrs Isabella Wall, [GRO]
[GRO]

I enclose a copy of a letter I have sent to Jo Swinson MP as parliamentary under secretary of state (employment relations and consumer affairs).

As you will see this is with regard to a response I received from Post Office Limited concerning my above constituent (copy enclosed). Their response suggests that where constituent sub-postmasters or sub-postmistresses wish to have forensic accountants examine their case when they feel the Horizon system has been at fault that they should be sent to you for vetting.

As my note to the minister suggests I cannot imagine that is a role you would welcome and I hope this is a simple misunderstanding. In fact your office rightly re-directed my constituent to me when they first approached you and I am grateful for that.

I can assure you I and other members do recognise and appreciate your excellent work on these matters. I hope it may be helpful for you to be aware of this.

Yours ever,

JOHN

*One of stranger's
suggestions I have
had for a while!
Hope you're not inundated...*



20 NOV 2012

1st Floor, Bunhill Row Wing
148 Old Street
LONDON
EC1V 9HQTO: GRO
FROM: GRO

John Woodcock MP
Member of Parliament for Barrow and Furness
House of Commons
LONDON
SW1A 0AA

Your ref: TMC5/WALL01011/01120601
Our ref: PV1551

12 November 2012

Dear Mr Woodcock

Re: Mrs Isabella Wall, [REDACTED] GRO former
subpostmistress of Bowness Road Post Office.

Thank you for your letter of 8 November addressed to Paula Vennells Chief Executive Post Office Ltd, sent on behalf of your above named constituent. I have been asked to reply on Mrs Vennell's behalf.

The Post Office takes very seriously any perception that there is an issue with the accuracy of the Horizon system. Over the past ten years, many millions of branch reconciliations have been carried out by 25,000 subpostmasters and their staff in Post Office branches with transactions and balances accurately recorded. We continue to have absolute confidence in the robustness and integrity of the Horizon system, and our branch accounting processes.

A small number of individual cases where ex-subpostmasters have felt that their contracts to run a Post Office were terminated inappropriately are being reviewed. These cases relate to the branch accounting procedures and have been brought to our attention via the office of James Arbuthnot MP. To ensure that the review is carried out with full impartiality and transparency and we are working closely with Mr Arbuthnot to ensure that this is the case. Independent forensic accountants, who have been reviewed and approved by Mr Arbuthnot, have been appointed to carry out the individual case reviews.

To ensure total independence, Post Office® is not involved in selecting the cases to be reviewed. The process is that any requests for cases to be included in the review should be forwarded by Constituency MPs direct to Mr Arbuthnot, who will consider the request and select the cases that will be passed to the forensic auditors for investigation.

www.postoffice.co.uk



As I say we are not involved either in requesting the cases that are put forward for consideration or those that are subsequently selected for investigation. Therefore if you would like to request Mrs Wall's case to be looked at as part of this review, you should send the request direct to Mr Arbuthnot for his consideration.

I do hope that I have clarified the situation and that you find the above information useful to you and your constituent.

Yours sincerely

GRO

Stakeholder Correspondence Manager
Post Office Limited



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Labour and Co-operative Party Member of Parliament for Barrow and Furness
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GRO

House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA
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GRO

Jo Swinson MP
Parliamentary under secretary of state
(Employment relations and consumer affairs)
Department for Business innovation and Skills
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

23 November 2012

Jo Swinson,

Re: Mrs Isabella Wall.

GRO

GRO

As you will see from the enclosed I have been approached by my above constituent with regard to her former role as a sub-postmistress in my constituency.

Mrs Wall's position was terminated when discrepancies arose in her account in March 2011. My constituent does not accept liability for these discrepancies and believes they were due to errors in the Horizon computer system used by Post Office Limited.

I therefore asked Paula Vennells as chief executive of Post Office Limited to appoint forensic accountants to examine the case as my constituent believes such an examination will exonerate her. My letter to her is enclosed.

I was surprised to receive a response from Michelle Graves, stakeholder correspondence manager for Post Office Limited, that advised me to submit my constituent's case to James Arbuthnot MP for his consideration (copy enclosed). You will note this suggests Mr Arbuthnot will determine which cases are considered worthy of examination by independent forensic accountants.

James Arbuthnot has undoubtedly done excellent work on these matters and I and other members recognise and appreciate this. I do not consider it appropriate however for another member of parliament to determine whether or not my constituent deserves to receive the same quality of examination of her case that others have received.

GRO

My constituent has brought her case to me because she feels an injustice has been done to her. She is eager to work with anyone examining her case and can provide witness testimony and other evidence supporting her claim.

As minister responsible for postal affairs I hope you will direct that this case is examined by independent forensic accountants without requiring to be approved by any other member of parliament and that my constituent's case will receive the same quality of examination afforded to others

Thank you for your consideration of this matter I look forward to you earliest possible reply

Yours ever,

JOHN

cc. James Arbuthnot MP

Hope this is simple

misunderstanding. I

can't imagine James

would welcome this

role...