



Department
for Business
Innovation & Skills

1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

Alan Bates
Chairman, JFSA
3 Bod Elian
Llanelian-yn-Rhos
LL29 8UY

GRO

www.gov.uk/bis
Our ref: MCB2014/08461

27th April 2014

Dear Mr. Bates,

Thank you for your letter of 16 April to Jo Swinson MP, about the Initial Case Review and Mediation Scheme. I am the Minister responsible for Post Office policy, while Jo Swinson takes maternity leave.

The Government is supportive of the desire to resolve the issues raised by subpostmasters in a timely manner, however, as shareholder, Government cannot be involved in operational matters concerning Post Office Ltd or the Working Group.

Clearly the matters you raise are important and I understand your desire for them to be addressed but it is important that they are addressed by the appropriate parties.

Paula Vennells, as Chief Executive of Post Office Ltd, is responsible for operational matters relating to the company; and the Scheme, which is overseen by the Working Group comprising representatives from the Justice for Subpostmasters Alliance, Post Office Ltd, and Second Sight, has an independent Chair in Sir Anthony Hooper. As a member of the Working Group I am sure you will understand that the Chair must be allowed to perform his duties independently and free from influence.

Given the matters you raise relate to the operation of the Working Group, and also about the engagement of Post Office Ltd with the Scheme I intend to forward a copy of your letter to both Sir Anthony Hooper and Paula Vennells so that they can make informed responses to the issues that you have raised. If you have any objections to my doing so, please let me know by Wednesday 30 April.

Yours,

GRO

JENNY WILLOTT MP