



Business and Trade Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

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Nick Read
CEO, Post Office
[By email]

22 February 2024

Dear Mr Read

Post Office and Horizon: Ensuring fair and swift Redress

Following the allegations made by the former Post Office Chair, Henry Staunton, in *The Sunday Times* on 18 February 2024, I am writing to request that the Post Office provide the following documents to the Business and Trade Committee before the oral evidence session at which you will appear on Tuesday 27 February 2024:

- (a) A draft report on the role of UKGI in the governance of the Post Office. This draft report allegedly contains the board's findings that UKGI had an 'outsized' influence on the Board.
- (b) Copies of exit interviews, conducted by Green Park, of the three Board Members who resigned close to Mr Staunton's departure. In those interviews, Board Members allegedly criticised the influence of UKGI and asserted that UKGI undermined the effectiveness of the Independent Directors.
- (c) Any records relating to the Board's choice of candidate for the post of Senior Independent Director.
- (d) The letter you allegedly sent to Secretary of State for Justice Alex Chalk MP that included a legal opinion from the Post Office's solicitors Peters & Peters and in which you allegedly stated that in more than 300 cases non-Horizon evidence supported sub-postmasters' convictions.
- (e) Any correspondence or file notes relating to letter (d) that either refer to UKGI or to Mr Staunton.
- (f) Any correspondence that relates to the Post Office's decision not to take action against or to dismiss any of the 40 investigators, colloquially known as the 'untouchables.'
- (g) Any memos from Nick Read in which he refers to the investigators as 'untouchables.'

(h) The file note from Mr Staunton to Nick Read on an alleged discussion with the legal director on investigations into postmaster directors.

(i) The note Mr Staunton sent you after his discussion with the Permanent Secretary in which he alleges he was told to 'go slow' with compensation payments.

To be clear, this is a formal request for documents to help the Committee scrutinise the serious issues in relation to the Post Office and Horizon.

As you may be aware, the Committee has the “power to send for persons, papers and records”, where it deems it necessary to exercise it. That power is set out in Standing Order 135(1) of the Standing Orders of the House of Commons. I note that in previous cases persons failing to comply with such requests have been found to be in contempt of Parliament.

To facilitate Select Committee scrutiny by Parliament, I expect a response to this request by 2pm on Friday 23 February 2024. If the Post Office is unable to identify any of the documents listed above, please make a statement to that effect in writing in your response to this request.

The Committee has a general presumption in favour of publication of documents, which will apply in this case. The Committee also intends to publish this letter.

If any of those requests for documents require clarification, please contact the Clerk of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

LIAM BYRNE

Chair of the Business and Trade Committee