

Dear Alice and Paula,

Thank you for sending me your proposed terms of reference - they are most helpful.

A couple of issues have struck me and I wonder if you might give me your thoughts on them please? The first is that you are proposing that meetings should be held with MPs but not necessarily with the relevant subPostmasters there to put their side of the story. And MPs will not know as much as the subPostmasters will, and so the issue will not be resolved unless the MPs are also given the chance to have their constituents at the meeting. What about their advisers? Surely they ought to be included as well? Since we are trying to clear the matter up in (as I suggest in my draft press release) a robust and transparent manner, it does seem to me that this needs further thought.

In addition, the timing which the terms of reference propose really will not suit MPs, all of whom will be on summer Recess. Whilst I understand and agree with the need to sort this problem out swiftly, it is going to be exceedingly difficult to do so given the fact that MPs and their constituents will be taking holidays just at the time meetings are meant to be taking place.

In the light of all this I attach a draft press release. Would you consider this draft, and let me have your thoughts? Depending on the outcome of the meeting, I would be looking at issuing this the next day, so if we could agree a skeleton at this stage, and tighten on the Tuesday following the meeting ready for release that afternoon, this would work well.

Could you possibly give these things some thought, and come back to me?

Yours ever,

James

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<13 June 2012 draft press release PO Horizon (1).docx>