

Working Group for the Initial Complaint Review and Mediation Scheme

Key points and actions from the conference call at 1pm on 5 December 2013

Present:

Sir Anthony Hooper (**SAH**) Chair
Kay Linnell (**KL**) JFSA
Ron Warmington (**Ron W**) Second Sight
Andy Parsons (**AP**) Bond Dickinson
Claire Parmenter (**CP**) Bond Dickinson
Angela Van Den Bogerd (**AVDB**) Post Office
Chris Aujard (**CA**) Post Office
Rodric Williams (**Rod W**) Post Office
Belinda Crowe (**BC**) Post Office
Suzie McGregor (**SM**) Post Office

1. **New Applications.** The Working Group agreed that due to the provision of further information application M133 now be accepted onto the Scheme.
2. **Completed case questionnaires.** The Working Group approved that case questionnaire for application M007 to proceed to the next stage.
3. **Matters arising from existing applications.**
 - a. M014 – the applicant had previously submitted a case questionnaire which has been investigated by Post Office. The applicant has now made a late application for funding for a professional advisor (Emma Porter). The Working Group agreed that Second Sight will carry out its investigation and the request for funding is placed on hold. In the event Second Sight requires further information from the applicant it will refer the issue of funding for a professional advisor back to the Working Group.

Action: AP to draft a letter to the applicant, cc to Emma Porter.

- b. M004 & M037 – AVDB is continuing to investigate and will provide an update at the meeting of the Working Group on 3 January 2014.

4. **Questions from professional advisors.** A professional advisor (Steven Darlington of Howe & Co) has raised a number of questions and in response the Working Group agreed as follows:
 - a. In exceptional circumstances applicants can apply for additional funding for professional advisors. Any requests for additional funding should be made to Second Sight and will then be considered by the Working Group.
 - b. The terms of funding for professional advisors is set out in the packs sent to applicants and in the Investigation Funding Agreement. Professional advisors are not entitled to claim disbursements from Post Office in excess of the amount of funding agreed, with the exception of the mediation phase of the Scheme where Post Office has agreed to pay the travel expenses of the applicant and up to two advisors travelling to and from a mediation.
 - c. Extensions of time for submitting case questionnaires will be considered in exceptional circumstances. The power to decide whether an extension is

granted is delegated to Second Sight. Therefore, applications for an extension of time should be submitted to Second Sight. The Working Group expressed its concern at professional advisors taking on more cases than they have capacity to deal with and this should therefore not be the cause of delay.

Action: AP to draft a letter to the professional advisor.

5. **Hotline email address.** The Working Group agreed that a hotline email address will be set up by Post Office and managed by SM and BC to handle queries raised by applications and professional advisors.

Action: SM and BC to set up hotline email address and circulate to the Working Group.

6. **Investigation Report.** The Working Group agreed that Post Office Investigation Reports will remain confidential to Second Sight and will not be made available to the Working Group until Second Sight has produced its final response. This is with the exception of SAH who can review Investigation Reports from time to time as he sees fit.