

A STARTING POINT FOR THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To establish whether the cash shortfalls identified in the complaints made by sub-postmasters were caused by accounting system errors.
2. To establish whether, if such accounting system errors did exist, they have now been resolved.
3. To establish that no such accounting system errors are now present in the computerised accounting system.
4. To establish the steps taken to investigate complaints by sub-postmasters about the computerised accounting system (arising following cash shortfalls). What steps have been taken and with what outcome. What steps (if any) realistically now remain to be taken to investigate the complaints.

[Note – 3 above can include (but is not limited to) the mediation scheme]

5. Should the Post Office now take any further action in respect of complaints made by sub-postmasters that errors in the computerised accounts system have caused cash shortfalls.
6. To establish whether what assistance and advice was provided by the Help Desk **[is this the correct description?]** when contacted in respect of cash shortfalls. To establish whether the assistance and advice provided was appropriate.
7. To establish whether, in the instances where cash shortfalls resulted in a decision to prosecute charges of theft, there was (at the time the charge was made) an appropriate evidential basis for the theft charge.

Note

The above is simply a starting point for discussion on what the terms of reference to be set now, should be.

I have tried to capture all course of action for the Post Office that could arise from the complaints. It may well be the position that a significant part of the work suggested above has already been undertaken. If it has, then it can be removed from the programme of work to be done now, save to the extent that the Chairman wishes to review that work to be satisfied that it has been completed to a satisfactory standard.