

Message

From: Thompson, Laura - UKGI [GRO]
Sent: 20/01/2017 15:40:37
To: James MPST [GRO]; French Claire (Communications) [GRO]; Russell Philippa (Communications) [GRO]
CC: Clark MPST [GRO]; SpAd Clark MPST [GRO]; Permanent Secretary [GRO]; Baugh, James - UKGI [GRO]; Callard, Richard - UKGI [GRO]; Dollin, Michael - UKGI [GRO]; Manson, Justin - UKGI [GRO]; McInnes, Tim - UKGI [GRO]; Parker, Nick - UKGI [GRO]; Williams, Jessica - UKGI [GRO]; Evans Gareth (Legal B) [GRO]
Subject: Post Office: update on legal action on Horizon IT system

James, Claire, Philippa cc. SoS office, SpAds office, Perm Sec office for info

As you are aware, a group of (mostly) former postmasters are seeking to bring a group legal action against Post Office Limited, regarding claims that alleged faults in the Horizon IT system (used in all branches) have caused postmasters to be wrongly dismissed or prosecuted. This story has been covered quite extensively in the press in the past. Note that there remains no evidence that anyone has been wrongfully convicted, or that there are any systemic flaws in the IT system.

Next Thursday (26 January) there will be a hearing at the High Court, which is the first part of this group action process. The purpose of the hearing is largely administrative – it will define the scope of the group action, and other procedural points.

Nevertheless, the campaign group (“Justice for Subpostmasters Alliance”) bringing the legal action has been very vocal in the past, and there is the chance that they might seek to create interest in this hearing: “Post Office in the dock”, etc. The hearing will be in public, although is unlikely to cover any specific details of any of the claims.

So I wanted you to be aware that this is coming up. If there is any media interest, I would suggest our usual approach of referring any enquiries to Post Office. I would not suggest we comment on legal action – but welcome thoughts from press office.

Very happy to chat through

Thanks
Laura

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