

From: Cooper, Tom - UKGI
Sent: Fri, 20 Mar 2020 10:24:17 +0000
To: Scott, Joshua - UKGI
Cc: Cole, Alex - UKGI; Desai, Meet - UKGI; Adegun, Oluwatosin - UKGI; UKGI POL Team; Watson, Richard - UKGI; Lambert, Lucie - UKGI
Subject: Re: Secret Post Office deals cause fury among Horizon IT scandal campaigners

I'm expecting an email from the company today

Sent from my iPhone

On 20 Mar 2020, at 10:23, Scott, Joshua - UKGI <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Yep – we need to understand this.

Also the special cases review team has come up. Shanice is getting lines on this.

Cheers,

Josh

Joshua Scott | Analyst
Post Office Shareholder Team
National Air Traffic Services Shareholder Team
UK Government Investments
1 Victoria Street | London | SW1H 0ET
T: [REDACTED] M: [REDACTED]
E: [REDACTED] W: www.ukgi.org.uk/

From: Cole, Alex - UKGI <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 19 March 2020 17:38
To: Cooper, Tom - UKGI <[REDACTED]>; Desai, Meet - UKGI <[REDACTED]>; Adegun, Oluwatosin - UKGI <[REDACTED]>; UKGI POL Team <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Watson, Richard - UKGI <[REDACTED]>; Lambert, Lucie - UKGI <[REDACTED]>
Subject: RE: Secret Post Office deals cause fury among Horizon IT scandal campaigners

Kevan Jones talked about it a lot in the debate just now

Alex Cole | Assistant Director

UK Government Investments

1 Victoria Street | London | SW1H 0ET

T: **GRO**
M:
E:

From: Cooper, Tom - UKGI < > **GRO**
Sent: 19 March 2020 17:37
To: Desai, Meet - UKGI < > **GRO**; Adegun, Oluwatosin - UKGI
< > **GRO**; UKGI POL Team
Cc: Watson, Richard - UKGI < > **GRO**; Lambert, Lucie - UKGI < > **GRO**
Subject: RE: Secret Post Office deals cause fury among Horizon IT scandal campaigners

Haven't heard back. Will follow up

Tom Cooper
Director

UK Government Investments

1 Victoria Street | London | SW1H 0ET

T: **GRO**
M:
E:
PA:

From: Desai, Meet - UKGI < > **GRO**
Sent: 19 March 2020 17:33
To: Cooper, Tom - UKGI < > **GRO**; Adegun, Oluwatosin - UKGI
< > **GRO**; UKGI POL Team
Cc: Watson, Richard - UKGI < > **GRO**; Lambert, Lucie - UKGI < > **GRO**
Subject: RE: Secret Post Office deals cause fury among Horizon IT scandal campaigners

Tom – what was Ben's response on the individual settlements?

Meet Desai | Manager

UK Government Investments

1 Victoria Street | London | SW1H 0ET

T: **GRO**
M:

E: [redacted] GRO
W: www.ukgi.org.uk

From: Cooper, Tom - UKGI [redacted] GRO
Sent: 17 March 2020 10:33
To: Adegun, Oluwatosin - UKGI [redacted] GRO Desai, Meet - UKGI [redacted] GRO; UKGI POL Team
<[redacted] GRO>
Cc: Watson, Richard - UKGI [redacted] GRO Lambert, Lucie - UKGI [redacted] GRO
Subject: RE: Secret Post Office deals cause fury among Horizon IT scandal campaigners

I've emailed Ben Foat to ask for the details

From: Adegun, Oluwatosin - UKGI [redacted] GRO
Sent: 17 March 2020 08:51
To: Desai, Meet - UKGI [redacted] GRO; UKGI POL Team
[redacted] GRO
Cc: Watson, Richard - UKGI [redacted] GRO Lambert, Lucie - UKGI [redacted] GRO
Subject: RE: Secret Post Office deals cause fury among Horizon IT scandal campaigners

All,

Some PQ's today further to this:

Gill Furniss|Sheffield, Brightside and Hillsborough|To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the oral contribution the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on 10 March 2020, Official Report, column 43WH, what steps he is taking to challenge **Post Office** Ltd leadership on its engagement with sub-postmasters. 30050

Mr Kevan Jones|North Durham|To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether officials in his Department have been notified of any payments to individual sub-postmasters following the settlement of the group litigation on the **Horizon IT system** on 12 December 2020. 29842

Thanks,
Tosin

From: Desai, Meet - UKGI [redacted] GRO
Sent: 16 March 2020 14:53
To: UKGI POL Team [redacted] GRO
Cc: Watson, Richard - UKGI [redacted] GRO Lambert, Lucie -

UKGI GRO

Subject: Secret Post Office deals cause fury among Horizon IT scandal campaigners

FYI – apparently 2 private settlements outside GLO have been made. Do we have knowledge of this / quantum?

Subpostmasters who fought the Post Office in a long and expensive court case have reacted with fury to news that the organisation has settled privately with two people outside the group litigation.

Computer Weekly understands the Post Office has insisted on confidentiality clauses in the two agreements, but the settlements total around £300,000 – much more than each of the 550 group litigants are likely to receive.

Campaigners, who are still calling on the government to pay their multimillion-pound legal bill, have hit out at the secrecy around the latest private deals.

The judgment and the previous trial judgment was clear. The Post Office had an unfair contract with subpostmasters and blamed them for errors in its own computer system. The Post Office agreed to pay those in the claimant group a total of £57.75m. But after legal costs are taken out there is just £11m for the 550 claimants to share, which leaves the subpostmasters with damages that hardly begin to pay the money they lost, never mind taking other suffering into account such as serving prison sentences, living with criminal records and experiencing ill health due to the stress caused.

Alan Bates, the former subpostmaster who set up the Justice for Subpostmasters Alliance (JFSA) and led the legal case against the Post Office, said this opaqueness of the settlement with the two subpostmasters shows the Post Office has not changed. “This is so Post Office to shoot itself in the foot and give us ammunition. We will never give up this fight,” he said.

The judgments in the multimillion-pound legal battle between the Post Office and subpostmasters over a faulty IT system cleared a few things up, but the Post Office is continuing to cause frustration through secrecy.

It has been negotiating with the two subpostmasters for months, but when the judgment in the second trial in the legal battle was handed down in December 2019, it agreed to pay the two subpostmasters the damages.

The High Court judgment, which said the Horizon system was not robust, saw the Post Office concede defeat in a case where hundreds of subpostmasters were suing it for damages caused by errors in its computer system, which it had always denied existed.

Computer Weekly first reported the problems with Horizon in 2009, when it made public the stories of a group of subpostmasters. Soon after this, as more subpostmasters came forward, the JFSA was formed (see timeline below for links to more coverage of the case).

The total settlement to the two subpostmasters has understandably caused confusion and anger within the claimant group, adding fuel to a fire already raging.

Subpostmasters, supported by some MPs, are trying to force the government to pay the legal costs of the claimants to leave them with a more substantial pot of damages. The government has so far refused this request, but pressure is building in Parliament.

Last week, the Post Office said it was establishing a scheme, which the two subpostmaster settlements are part of, for current and former postmasters. “It is not yet launched but will be shortly,” said the Post Office

“We don’t comment on individual cases, but we’re continuing to directly address past events for postmasters affected,” it said. “A scheme will be announced in the near future with the aim of addressing historic shortfalls for current and former postmasters who were not part of the group litigation. The scheme is not therefore yet open to applicants, and we intend to ensure it is widely publicised and accessible to all those who wish to make a claim.”

The Post Office has set up, but not announced, a complex cases review team to look into these claims.

In January, Computer Weekly got wind of the Post Office looking to settle with some subpostmasters, but when approached, the Post Office did not answer questions.

Meet Desai | Manager

UK Government Investments

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GRO