

Horizon Compensation Programme Board Note

Chair: Carl Creswell (CC) Date: 18/04/2024

Attendees

Rob Brightwell (RB), Helen Thomas (HT), Joshua Scott (JS), Eleri Wones (EW1), Ellen Wasden (EW2), Monique Ebell (ME), Harry Fallowfield (HF), Elena Michael (EM), Sophie Bell (SB), Joel Miah (JM)

External Attendees

Simon Recaldin [Post Office] (SR), Milo Kershaw [HMT] (MK),

Previous Actions

- JM Updated the board that the action regarding Risk Management was complete.

Upcoming Communications

- RB took the group through the comms tracker, highlighting that much of the comms is around the upcoming bill. Regular meetings with comms colleagues ensure the tracker is updated and accurately reflects the comms landscape of the programme.
- CC commented on a report that had gone to the select committee.
- CC reflected that there would be a capture moment in the future, though the exact time of that was to be determined.
- SR reflected that ITN would be doing a documentary around the impact of the ITV series and should be reflected on the comms tracker. RB clarified that this was on the tracker.

PI Awards and Judicial College Guidelines (JCG)

- JS talked through the JCG, highlighting that they are used across the schemes for person injury awards, and that the current version in use at the time would be superseded by the latest edition.
- JS noted that Freeths had been requesting an increase in Personal Injury claims, considering that inflation had been high for a number of years.
- JS covered how consistency across schemes would be ensured in introducing the new bandings, covering that data was analysed across the schemes and was tested.
- JS also noted that the uplift would be applied from March, retrospectively, as a policy decision.
- However, this was countered by the POL view to apply them from the present, rather than retrospectively, JS highlighted that this was something to be agreed.
- The new JCG specifically addressed the issues of inflation, awards should take account of uplifted inflation as and when the award is made. JS highlighted this hadn't been done on any of the schemes to date, and that for a small number of GLO cases this would be applied retrospectively.
- ME commented that uplifting awards in line with the JCG is not a complicated process, and that there now exists JCG guidelines to uplift awards from month to month, suggestion to consider the optics of the implementation of the guidelines.
- EW2 reflected that adopting the latest guidelines was a clear step to take. Reflection was also taken on the financial impacts of these changes, considering if an award was given according to regularly updated guidelines much later on, e.g. in 2026, those awards would be at a disadvantage compared to awards in the present.

- JS responded saying that there wasn't as much an economic case for not using these guidelines but was pushed by legal reasons.
- RB commented that the overarching principle is to put claimants in a position that they would have been in as if the scandal had not happened.
- EW1 asked why the 1st of March was chosen over the 17th of March to apply guidelines retrospectively. JS responded that this was an arbitrary decision, accounting in for a grace period, and unfair to leave out those whose claims had just been assessed before the new guidelines were published.
- MK agreed with EW1's point that perhaps the retrospective application of the guidelines should be applied in line with the publication date of the guidelines.
- CC asked SR about his views and the POL view, SR responded that applying these guidelines were a positive step in the right direction.
- CC asked JS to reflect on the boards discussion and that necessary clearances would be completed via correspondence.

Project Dashboards

- **GLO**
 - CC commented that with the vast majority of the £75k claims having been issued, that there was a notable slowdown in how quickly claims were being processed. This was followed by CC highlighting that the pilot of accelerated case assessments, if successful would contribute to mitigating the risk of not meeting the August 2024 timeline for delivering compensation to claimants.
- **OC**
 - CC highlighted that claims were getting out, though not at the speed that was desired.
 - SR commented that in a discussion with Niel Hudgell, the feedback was that he wasn't clear on what HCRS looked like, and on the 44 outstanding cases, he had an intention of getting them processed via OC1.
 - MK commented it would be helpful to track what is being spent on admin as part of the MI, to assess what is being spent to get the awards out to claimants.
 - **Action:** To consider about including this type of data, if we have access to it, and for what that information might look like across the programme. (Ellen)
 - **Action:** should we resume quarterly letters to the select committee. (Elena)
- **HSS**
 - Large influx of cases, big effort being made on £75k payments where policy changes are being made,
 - As of the board, CST sign off for the appeals mechanism was being awaited.
 - MK commented that advice was being sought at the clearance level, and that the aim was to get a response to DBT for the end of the week.
 - Harry added that there were plans to speak to Simon's team, move onto the detailed design side and that there were lessons learned from the GLO to be applied to HSS.
- **Post Office Process Review**
 - Currently waiting for the pilot to be up and running, and also waiting for availability of funding.

- **Suspension Remuneration**
 - Switch positions for the two entries so that SSR is before PPR in terms of board pack structure, moving into amber, £5.8m so far was out paid out.
- **HCRS**
 - CC commented that more capacity is needed for this project, and that this has been escalated up to the minister
 - SR commented that from a collaborative perspective it would be good to get guidance around whether new processes for HCRS would require ENE staff and OC1 principles. **Action** for Charlotte

Statistics

- CC noted that these were the published stats on the GOV.UK website.
- RB added an addendum – adding that the GLO scheme had reached its target of 90% on claims.

Issues

- JM commented that the key issues around resourcing and capture have been logged on the programme board slide
- JM highlighted the resourcing issue was reflected in its narrative. CC responded that this is something that SCS staff were focusing on addressing.
- JM also noted the capture issue and its potential impact on HMG.
- CC added that a forensic accountant was being brought in, and that the commercial team had quoted a 6-week lead time.

Risks

- JM reflected that DBT's principal risk had been captured on the programme slide and resourcing risk that was linked to the resourcing issue. A scope creep risk had also been covered and the link between this and capture issue.