

Message

From: Mark R Davies [GRO]
on behalf of Mark R Davies [GRO]
Sent: 03/08/2017 06:28:40
To: Jane MacLeod [GRO]
CC: Paula Vennells [GRO]; Kevin Morgan [GRO]; Louise Chatfield [GRO]
Subject: Re: JFSA release

Hi
I've got a meeting at that time but can slip out.
Mark

Mark Davies
Group Communications, Brand and Corporate Affairs Director
Post Office Ltd

[GRO]

Winner of the 2017 Global Postal Award for Customer Experience

On 3 Aug 2017, at 00:21, Jane MacLeod [GRO] wrote:

Hi Paula, I can do 12.15.

Jane MacLeod
Group Director of Legal, Risk & Governance
The Post Office

[GRO]

Sent from my iPad

On 2 Aug 2017, at 23:11, Paula Vennells [GRO] wrote:

Dear both,
Can we touch base for 5/10 mins on this tomorrow (Thurs)? I'm sorry but as its my last day, I have only got 11.00 or between 12.15-13.00.
Paula

Paula Vennells
Group Chief Executive
Post Office Ltd
2017 Winner of the Global Postal Award for Customer Experience

T: [GRO]
Paula.vennells@postoffice.co.uk [GRO]

Sent from my iPad

On 2 Aug 2017, at 17:42, Mark R Davies [GRO] wrote:

Dear all

The JFSA has issued a press release as below in relation to the Group Litigation Order.

We have a standard line on this which is that we are defending the case, welcome the opportunity to do so in court and highlights the number of Horizon users since its introduction.

It is difficult to assess how much coverage this latest release will generate but we are of course monitoring. I will also ensure that branch facing colleagues have lines, and I have alerted BEIS/UKGI.

Mark

Postmasters file evidence that looks to prove pattern of bullying and intimidation by Post Office Limited

**Embargoed until 06.00hrs Thursday 3 August
2017**

The first wave of evidence has been served on Post Office Ltd by 522 current and former subpostmasters in a group litigation action.

Claimants allege that the evidence shows a pattern of bullying and intimidation by Post Office Ltd over many years from 1999 to present – allegations that are denied by Post Office.

Hundreds of subpostmasters applied to join the Group Litigation Action in which it is alleged that the problems with Post Office Ltd's point of sale computer system *Horizon* erroneously showed financial shortfalls in post offices all around the UK.

Information emerging from a sample of postmasters reveals:

- 83% believe they have suffered ill health as a result of Post Office Ltd's behaviour
- 60% of people feel that they have suffered stigma or reputational damage
- 41% of people were advised, encouraged or felt pressured to resign by Post Office
- 85% of people did not feel that the training adequately prepared them for all aspects of their role and 95% found the helpline unhelpful
- Only a third believe that they were provided with a contract

Speaking on behalf the Justice for Subpostmasters Alliance (JFSA), Alan Bates said: "The case is now on an irreversible course to conclusion. Filing the first wave of evidence is an important milestone. Finally, we are on the path where Post Office Ltd will be called to account for its actions, and that will involve the cross examination, under oath, of senior management of Post Office Ltd."

Bates further explained: "We expect these proceedings will reveal that Post Office Ltd began with a presumption of guilt. They aggressively interviewed subpostmasters experiencing problems with the Horizon accounting system, telling them they were the only ones with these problems, locking them in darkened rooms and insisting on searching their homes. Many were pressured to pay alleged balance shortfalls and to resign – often resulting in bankruptcy and loss of homes as well as jobs. Some were even pressured to admit to false accounting and subjected to criminal prosecutions – even though there was no evidence or any proceeds of crime.

"It is outrageous that a government owned entity engaged in a systemic pattern of bullying and threatening behaviour and did so without any oversight or sanction. This litigation isn't just about money but about lives being destroyed. The consequences of Post Office Ltd's actions were devastating and include loss of homes and ability to earn an income, loss of reputation within their local

community, stress related illness and, tragically, even death.”

According to James Hartley, Partner at Freeths, who is leading the group action: “The GLO will now enable the Court to manage this large-scale litigation to an efficient and just conclusion. We are confident that this will enable the full extent of this systemic behaviour by Post Office Ltd to be brought to light, wrongdoers held to account, victims compensated and hopefully a broken Post Office Ltd culture mended.”

ENDS

Further information: Ruth Starling, Luther Pendragon

ruthstarling **GRO**
GRO

<image001.png>

Adrian Beeby

Associate Director

lutherpendragon

T: **GRO**

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