

**MINUTE
INITIAL COMPLAINT AND MEDIATION SCHEME
WORKING GROUP
1 APRIL 2014**

Attendees

Sir Anthony Hooper
Alan Bates (JFSA)
Kay Linnell (JFSA)
Ian Henderson (Second Sight)
Ron Warmington (Second Sight)
Chris Aujard (Post Office)
Belinda Crowe (Post Office)
Angela Van Den Bogerd (Post Office)
David Oliver (Post Office)
Andy Parsons (Bond Dickinson)

1. GRO

The Working Group decided to open the meeting with a discussion of case GRO
The Working Group reviewed the case in detail from both the POL report and the CQR. A number of points were made in discussion:

- The reports should use plain English as far as possible – or have plain English explanations in brackets where not possible.
- The POL reports should conform to the principle that as far as possible they should avoid the need for mediators to refer to an evidence document for those details which the mediator is likely to need.
- The report should contain a more detailed analysis of the transactions between 10/11/2011 and 16/11/2011
- The report should reference the fact that some transactions were made with the user ID of an employee who had left the business and when Post Office had been made aware that the employee had left the business.
- Post Office need to be more assertive in its conclusions when the evidence supports this.
- The Post Office should focus their reports around the central case and the money
- Post Office needs to set out a clearer explanation of the events in the case
- This investigation report should be finalised in conjunction with GRO

ACTION AVDB to oversee a tightening of the report in line with the general feedback above

2. GRO

The report was discussed in detail by the Working Group. The following points were made in discussion:

- As with **GRO** the report needs to be clearer and written in plainer English.
- The report needed to be more assertive in its conclusions
- The Post Office should focus their reports around the central case of who was responsible for the loss – the starting point should be to follow the money

ACTION AVDB to oversee a tightening of the report in line with the feedback above

ACTION Post Office to review all reports submitted to Second Sight.

3. Timelines

The Working Group discussed the draft paper tabled on the day by Post Office on timelines and communications.

In discussion:

- The Working Group agreed that the Post Office timelines should be kept at 4 weeks.
- Second Sight did not feel that it was necessary to change their timelines.
- On Communications, the Working Group asked that Alan Bates update applicants on the status of their application on the Working group's behalf and that the Working Group should write to applicants to this effect.
- The Working Group agreed that the Post Office should keep the matter of timelines under review and return to the Working Group if it felt it necessary to do so after it had examined and modelled the potential longer term consequences of any change.
- Under this item KL flagged concerns with cases with particular personal circumstances that made the resolution of their case more pressing. It was agreed that JFSA should draw any such cases to the attention of the Working Group as and when they became aware of them.

ACTION AB to draft a letter to go to all applicants from the Chair of the Working Group setting out the new process for obtaining updates on the Scheme.

ACTION All WG members to draw any cases that they become aware of that might merit fast track consideration to the attention of the Working Group.

4. Outstanding CQRs

The Working group reviewed the spreadsheet "outstanding CQRs" and agreed that:

- All requested extensions were agreed as per the spreadsheet.
- **GRO** was extended until 17 April.

- The Chair, on behalf of the Working Group would write to James Cowper and MS Risk on their overdue cases.
- AB would speak to the applicant in case GRO to take her view on the timescales being proposed by Howe and Co*.
- The Chair, on behalf of the Working Group would write to Howe and Co confirming the deadlines and Howe and Co's commitment that this would be their last set of extensions.

***NB: AB has subsequently spoken to the applicant GRO who has clarified that she has not asked for a delay in the processing of her case. This will be picked up in the letter to Howe and Co.**

ACTION DO to draft letters for the Chair for Howe and Co, James Cowper and MS Risk as per agreements made above.

5. Part One Report

The draft Factfile was discussed by the Working Group. In discussion the following points were agreed:

- As previously agreed, Second Sight need to own the document.
- Subject to resolving the factual comments still outstanding Second Sight would take ownership and editorial control of the document.
- SS should work with AVDB to complete the report as soon as possible and certainly before the next Working Group.
- There needs to be a clear separation between Part 1 and Part 2 issues

6. Part Two Report

It was agreed that the Part Two report (previously referred to as the 'Thematic Report) provided by Second Sight was at far too early a stage in its development to be discussed by the Working Group but that completion of the Part Two report should not hold up the Part One report which was a priority or individual case reports.

7. Cases for discussion

An update was provided on the cases for discussion.

8. AOB

The letters from Dai Harvard MP and the correspondence with Priti Patel were raised. It was agreed that the Chair would reply to Dai Harvard on the Working Group's behalf maintaining the position already made clear to Howe and Co and pointing out that a number of advisors were completing the tasks without complaint and within the cost constraint.

ACTION TH to reply to MPs in a tone consistent with previous Howe and Co correspondence.

9. Next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be on Thursday 1 May at 1130 at Bond Dickinson Offices. It was also agreed that the Second Sight would provide the Working Group with the Part One report, and two or three completed case reviews for the Working Group to consider with a view to releasing them to the parties. It was suggested that [GRO] might be one such case.

ACTION Second Sight to work with Post Office to identify 2 – 3 cases that can be made ready for the next Working Group.