

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE

Post Office Compensation Programme Board Minutes

Chair: Rob Brightwell

14 September 2023 – 10:00 – 11:00

Programme Board Members:

Carl Creswell (CC) - Chair - Director, Business Resilience, DBT
 Ciara Lawrence (CL) – Senior Policy Advisor, DBT Post Office Policy (deputising for Beth White)
 Rob Brightwell (RB) – Deputy Director, DBT Post Office Policy
 Patrick Kilgarriff (PK) - Director, DBT Legal
 Kirsty Wedderspoon (KW) - Deputy Director, DBT Finance
 Matt Barnes (MB) - Head of Business & Trade Spending and Strategy, HMT (deputising for Joshua Fleming)
 Ellen Wasden (EWa) - Senior Economist, DBT (deputising for Monique Ebell)

Other Attendees:

Milo Kershaw (MK) - Policy Advisor, Business and Trade Spending, HMT (Observer)
 Simon Recaldin (SR) – Remediation Unit, POL (Observer)
 Joshua Scott (JS) - Head of GLO Compensation, DBT (Observer)
 Rob Mackie (RM) - Executive Director, UKGI (Observer)
 James Gourlay (JG) - Assistant Director, UKGI (Observer)
 Carlos Martinex (CM) – Project Manager, DBT (Observer)

Apologies:

Beth White (BW) - Deputy Director, DBT Post Office Policy
 Monique Ebell (ME) - Deputy Director, Business Resilience and Industry Sectors Analysis, DBT
 Joshua Fleming (JF) - Deputy Director, HMT

Note:

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Discussion, Actions and Decisions</u>
1. Action Log	PB013: EW discussing with central M&E team. SR to point her to the right people in POL. PB020: JL to provide a detailed email to Ministers on plans for Comms opportunities moving forward
2. Scheme Data	RB explained an updated versions will be issued with OC announcement. CC requested that the HSS data is aligned. JS encouraged officials to be clear about terminology –e.g. the use of interim, and not partial, payments consistently.
3. Comms	RB explained this the list is regularly reviewed by Strat Comms. CC noted the OC announcement was pending HMT approval. Should it be approved POL will be notified. SR requested that POL comms be aligned.
4. Assurance on Fairness of Offers	RB explained the rationale regarding the proposal to seek assurance on the fairness of offers, noting that this could be delivered in a phased approach. CC clarified that engagement on this could be on a quarterly / regular basis.

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	<p>RB noted that fairness is a subjective issue, and proposed that in the first instance it should be claimants and/or their legal representatives that should be consulted.</p> <p>RM queried what DBT would be asking stakeholders to be assessed against, noting all cases across the schemes have been assessed extensively.</p> <p>CC noted that it would be impracticable to reopen all cases. LG agreed and noted two means of looking at fairness: compensation outcome and internal consistency.</p> <p>JS raised that the options considered must be data protection compliant. RB noted that the reviewer could review anonymised data.</p> <p>LG and JG considered an open survey would not be helpful and presents risks. PK agreed noting that the outcome must be an objective as practicable. JS agreed citing the current perception of the schemes being delivered.</p> <p>PK flagged that there is a difference between "my lawyer advised me to accept this as a good offer" and "I think it is fair" which should be considered.</p> <p>SR raised the need for a reviewer absolutely independent of PO to undertake the work. SR offered to share previous work POL had done on the issue including metrics if helpful.</p> <p>JG proposed a process whereby (1) claimants' solicitors are asked for the issues on the process / principles (2) principles are checked via sample (3) any potential issues raised and shared (4) set out appeals and/or top-ups if required process.</p>
5. X-Cutting Issues	No comment
6. AOB and Close	