

Horizon scandal: CWU keeps up pressure for judge-led inquiry

Postal, Post Office (PO) June 29 2020

Monday 29th June 2020

Andy Furey has repeated his appeal for members and branches to write to their MPs urging them to sign EDM 593 demanding a full, judge-led Inquiry into the Horizon scandal.

As of Monday, the EDM had 71 signatures from across all the main political parties.

The renewed call from the union follows the rejection by Government Minister Paul Scully of the formal request from the Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Select Committee of MPs for a full, statutory investigation into what has been described as “the worst miscarriage of justice for many years.”

And written submissions to the BEIS Select Committee from Paula Vennells, who was Post Office CEO during the Horizon period, her successor Nick Read and the company’s IT service provider, Fujitsu – **as reported by Karl Flinders for Computer Weekly** – have further heightened concerns that only a formal legal process will be sufficient to hold those responsible fully accountable.

Speaking to CWU News, Andy explained: “The letters received by the BEIS Select Committee from these three parties revealed, in each instance, an attempt to shift blame to someone else.

“And this is not just the CWU’s impression of the tone of these letters – the same view is shared by BEIS Select Committee Chair Darren Jones, who said, in response to this correspondence:

‘The letters we have received from the Post Office Ltd, Fujitsu, and former CEO, Paula Vennells, will likely be seen by many as attempts to shift the blame to the others for the dismal failings which saw sub-postmasters and postal staff suffer so grievously and, in some cases, face prosecution’.

It is the government’s decision to “dumb down” its original promise of a full inquiry to a non-statutory review which enables Paula Vennells to evade the consequences of her actions – or inactions – which led to a situation where innocent postmasters were fired,



“Darren Jones is doing an excellent job as the new BEIS SC Chair and is absolutely right to insist that a full, judge-led Inquiry is the only way to truly get to the bottom of this whole affair, to properly sanction those responsible, award appropriate recompense to the victims and make formal recommendations for change that government cannot ignore,” Andy explains.

“And that’s why I sent out another letter to branches ([LTB 337](#)) asking members to write to MPs and win their support for EDM 593 – a Motion which demands precisely that.”

The longer-term future of our post office network is another issue that the union is urgently seeking political attention for, and the CWU continues to seek meaningful dialogue with government on this.

“We will, of course, fully update members regularly on any further developments, but in the meantime, please contact your MP and urge her or him to sign EDM 593,” Andy urges.

“The more pressure that can be brought to bear on this matter, the more likely we will achieve justice for all.”

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