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**From:** David Oliver [GRO]  
**Sent:** Tue 01/07/2014 3:46:13 PM (UTC)  
**To:** Chris Aujard [GRO]  
**Cc:** Belinda Crowe [GRO]; Angela Van-Den-Bogerd [GRO]  
**Subject:** FW: Mrs Jasvinder Barang - Lower Stondon Post office

Chris,

Below is the response from the constituent of Oliver Heald MP who asked to join the Scheme late. We need to decide what to do with the case and whether to update the Working Group. I have discussed with Belinda and we recommend that the application is not taken into the Scheme but that Angela is asked to look into the case under BAU processes and that the Working Group is informed of this under AOB at the close of the face to face meeting on the 10th. There are several factors that are important in coming to this recommendation:

- The case is a criminal case with a guilty plea and a sentence to community service – so given the Post Office position on criminal cases we are unlikely to mediate
- The applicant admits (both below and in her original application) that she took money from the Post Office.
- In terms of handling Tony we need to show that we are not ignoring the application given the tone of his response last time.
- We also need to draw a line under the scheme and the expectation of JFSA that there will be a further mediation Scheme for other applicants.

Are you content with that approach?

Thanks

David

**David Oliver**  
**Programme Manager**  
**Initial Complaint and Mediation Scheme**

[GRO]  
Mobile [GRO]

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**From:** schemeenquiries  
**Sent:** 01 July 2014 15:23  
**To:** David Oliver [GRO]  
**Subject:** FW: Mrs Jasvinder Barang - Lower Stondon Post office

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**From:** sharon [GRO]  
**Sent:** 26 June 2014 23:20  
**To:** schemeenquiries  
**Cc:** contact [GRO]; Jasvinderbarang [GRO]  
**Subject:** Mrs Jasvinder Barang - Lower Stondon Post office

Dear David Oliver,

I am writing in response to your letter date 11<sup>th</sup> June 2014 with regards to the post office considering if my late application should be accepted into the scheme. I shall address each point in your letter and try to provide you with as much detail as I can about my case.

**The circumstances which lead to my late application:**

I would like you to take into consideration that I have been

GRO

**GRO**

**The main issues I wish you to consider that relates to Horizon and its associated processes.**

The Post Office and village shop was running fine until the horizon computer system was introduced. The horizon system was introduced in 2000 I had training for two weeks. There were severe issues with this software. There were errors in takings generated by the system. Numerous systematical mistakes occurred involving Lottery takings, loss of cheques in the post, loss of scratch cards, loss of stamps etc.

**The following are issues that I was faced with and dates which they occurred:**

1. 01/12/05 amount £5595.39– Loss of stamps
2. 14/02/06 amount £1520.00 – error in lottery scratch cards
3. 15/09/06 amount £1436.05 – Loss of cheques
4. 02/08/07 amount £1416.04 – Loss of cheques
5. 22/10/10- –amount £139.20 – Loss of cheques
6. 19/04/2011 amount £666.00
7. 30/09/2011 amount £409.30
8. 04/11/11 amount £760.51

All of these errors and the dates they occurred can be evidence by correspondence from the post office and

screen printouts of the Horizon system.

**How I raised these issues with the post office prior to now and how these issues were resolved at the time:**

On numerous occasions I rang the help desk and asked for help. I was always passed through to various departments all of which could not find out why the errors had taken place. Instead they asked me to correct it on the computer or explain how the mistake had appeared. I explained that these were not my mistakes and could not explain how they occurred. So the Post Office could under their interpretation require me to make good the loss without delay, without question and without full access to the data. So they decided to take monthly payments from my wages or in some case I had to put personal funds into the post office to make good these error figures. I wrote to the post office on numerous occasions, one of which was on the 18/04/07, asking them to look into the errors and refund the money taken from my wages. However, the post office was not willing to reconsider or look into the errors.

On one occasion on the 19/10/05 there was an error on the Horizon system suggesting that I had a surplus of £114,767.88 worth of first class stamps. I rang the helpdesk and explained the situation. I was passed to various departments and eventually the issue was resolved as it was apparent to all parties involved that a small post office would not have been sent such an excessive amount of stamps. This was then rectified on the system. However, there was no explanation as to why the error occurred, why this error could be resolved whilst other could not be and no reassurance that no more errors would occur in future.

I asked for help numerous times both over the phone and in writing.

**What the monetary value of these issues are:**

In total I was at a loss off £11942.49. Please note that there were numerous errors over the years and the errors that I am now reporting are some of the main issues. There were many other errors that I cannot currently account for as it is difficult for me to recollect because of the number of years that I have been experiencing difficulties with the Horizon system.

**Whether I was subject to either civil recovery action or criminal prosecution regarding the issues and how these actions against me were resolved.**

In the end I had to borrow so much money off my friends and family to cover these so called 'losses' that I then took money from the post office, as it was rightfully mine, in order to pay them back. As the helpline was no use,

I felt that this would all be resolved when audited. I was audited on 11/04/12 and was asked if there were any problems and I said yes there was a constant shortfall in the cash. I admitted that I had taken this money and told the auditors of my trouble. I asked them to look into errors on the system and thought that this would show them that this money was taken from me in error and that it was mine (this can be evidenced through my interview transcripts). However they refused to look into any systematical error and interviewed me under caution. This resulted in me being convicted of Fraud and my contract with the Post Office was terminated.

My solicitor advised me to plead guilty or risk the likelihood of going to jail. I was sentenced to community service and to repay the post office £1533.42 that they said I owed them.

### **My explanation for the events that I am now reporting**

I have never committed a criminal offence in my life. I have not taken a penny of the post offices money and have always said that in my opinion there were faults with the system and that errors were made. However looking at the Post Office contract, the Post Office had no interest in looking for errors as they know that I as the postmaster was liable. Even though I asked for help numerous times both over the phone and in writing.

### **Whether I requested help from the Post office regarding these issues and if I was provided with any assistance.**

I asked for help numerous times both over the phone and in writing. I even requested someone to come and stand with me and look over the errors and see how to correct them. I was told the Post Office did not have the manpower to support me. The only assistance I ever received was somebody from the helpdesk rectifying the error of £114,767.88 worth of first class stamps. However, even then I was not provided with an explanation of why such errors were occurring.

Since this conviction my life just spiralled out of control. I had to take loans and pull out a vast amount of money from my shop in order to again 'make good' any losses to the post office. I could no longer afford to stock the shop and had to sell it at a loss. I am still in a great deal of debt and I am barely managing to keep my head above water. I am in mortgage arrears and have been given a court warning for eviction if I fall behind on payments again.

I dedicated 22 years to the post office and I ask that I be given a chance to have my case looked at. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Jasvinder Barang

