



Private and confidential

Horizon Compensation Advisory Board
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Post Office Horizon IT
Inquiry
5TH Floor Aldwych House
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Your ref:

25 August 2023

Dear Prof Hodges,

Re: Initial report on compensation

Thank you for your letter of 15 August 2023, particularly the Horizon Compensation Advisory Board ("HCAB") comments on the recommendations in my Interim Report on Compensation. The purpose of this letter is to respond to matters you have raised including your offer for a meeting mentioned in HCAB's minutes of 31 July 2023.

In response to the recommendations in paragraph 139 of my Interim Report, you expressed the difficulties HCAB are likely to experience should it intervene in individual cases. For the avoidance of doubt, it was not my intention for HCAB to investigate all individual cases, but to be provided with the mandate to review any case where it is necessary to do so, principally to ensure there is fairness in the operation of the compensate schemes as a whole. Without having the ability to review individual cases, it is my view that it may not be possible for HCAB properly to advise Ministers on the fairness of the compensation schemes pursuant to HCAB's Terms of Reference. As you say, it is for the Minister to respond to my recommendations, and I await the Minister's response to my recommendations.

I note HCAB's views on the position of convicted sub-postmasters and sub-mistresses ("SPMs") whose convictions remain overturned. As you will be aware, the Inquiry's Phase 4 hearings, which concern criminal investigations and proceedings against SPMs, has commenced. The hearings, which are currently paused for the Summer break, will restart on 19 September, and end in December 2023. Following the completion of the Inquiry's evidence gathering exercise, I will set out

my findings and recommendations on all matters I have investigated, including criminal actions against SPMs, in my final report.

Insofar as the offer for a private meeting is concerned, I do not think it would be appropriate, as the Chair of a public statutory inquiry, to accept your offer. Save for where I am required to hold private hearings pursuant to section 19 of the Inquiries Act 2005, I am expected to conduct inquiry related matters in public. Additionally, it is likely that I shall be asking you, as the Chair of the HCAB, to provide written and oral evidence, which is another reason why a private meeting would in my view not be appropriate.

Yours sincerely



Sir Wyn Williams
Chair
Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry