

Baroness Neville-Rolfe meeting with Post Office: Thursday 6 August

Attendees

Paula Vennells, CEO, Post Office Limited

Jane MacLeod, General Counsel, Post Office Limited

Mark Davies, Communications Director, Post Office Limited

Richard Callard and Laura Thompson from the ShEx team will also attend.

Meeting purpose

- Post Office will want to set out the steps they have taken to ensure the mediation scheme is open, fair and independently assured.
- Post Office may also want to discuss Second Sight and the reports (in Sunday's Telegraph) that they have written to Ministers claiming that Horizon is flawed
- You may like to ask Post Office what more they can do to help the mediation scheme continue, and how they can increase their engagement with individuals
- You may like to ask Post Office about their wider strategy for communicating their messages about this issue and how they can make it more effective

Attached: annotated agenda

Opening remarks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain to Post Office that, while Government is the shareholder and is supportive of Post Office, we also want to ensure POL is behaving fairly and reasonably • While Government wants to leave POL to continue to handle this, you are looking for reassurance that they are doing so fairly and also that they are taking the presentational risks seriously • The Prime Minister has emphasised the importance of resolving this. Government wants to make sure that happens, and Post Office need to do that • Where the mediation scheme has stalled (because people are declining to mediate) Post Office need to think more creatively about how they engage
Process to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask Paula and Jane to set out how they are ensuring that there is independent oversight, and that the process is fair and reasonable • Note that Jane MacLeod joined in January this year – you could ask her how she reviewed the issues with a fresh pair of eyes
Completing the mediation scheme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask Paula what more POL are planning to do to engage positively with individuals • Explain that you are speaking to Tim Parker shortly and will emphasise the importance Government places on him taking ownership of this issue
Communications and handling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask Paula about Post Office's wider strategy for communicating their messages and making sure people are aware of the work they have done • This includes MPs such as Andrew Bridgen
Second Sight
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can explain that Second Sight have written to you objecting to the characterisation that the Horizon system is not flawed • Explain that the Government's position is that there clearly does not seem to be a systemic consistent problem with the IT, but that Second Sight have clearly raised some individual issues. The Government considers that those are best resolved between Post Office and the individual, ideally through mediation. • Ask Paula and Jane whether they agree with that characterisation and if they have any comments on Second Sight's reports.