However, phase 5 of the Inquiry is presently scheduled to occur in February and March of next year. In the course of your human impact hearings in London between 14 and 25 February, in Cardiff on 1 and 2 March, in Leeds on 9 and 10 March, in Glasgow on 11 and 12 May, and in Belfast on 18, 19 May, you heard from a number of subpostmasters and members of their families about the devastating financial consequences that the operation of the Horizon IT system had and is having on them, the financial consequences that civil proceedings brought against them by the Post Office had and is having on them, and the financial consequences that wrongful conviction for criminal offences (including in some cases resulting in imprisonment) had and is having on them. This included significant accounts of penury, precarious financial arrangements, bankruptcies, debt

1	Wednesday, 6 July 2022	1	the hearings won't impede the Inquiry's work in any way.
2	(10.30am)	2	With that introduction, I'm about to hand over to
3	<b>SIR WYN WILLIAMS:</b> Good morning, everyone. By the reaction	3	Mr Beer QC who will open the proceedings.
4	of one or two people so far in the distance that I can	4	I do have one announcement. I was told in no
5	hardly see them, I guess you can hear me. Is that	5	uncertain terms that I should not make any cricketing
6	correct? Good. Thank you very much.	6	analogies. In fact, I can't avoid it. Because this
7	We're going to embark today on the first of two	7	evening there is a cricket match starting at the Oval
8	days of hearings, dealing with various compensation	8	and that may begin in terms of its preparation at around
9	issues.	9	about 3.30 to 4 o'clock. I am hopeful I am not
10	There's been some misreporting about the extent of	10	saying I am confident I am hopeful that by that time
11	what's going on in the next two days. So can I be clear	11	the submissions will be more or less complete. But if
12	that there are two days devoted to discussions about	12	they are not, we will have to compete with various
13	compensation issues, and I use the word discussions,	13	things going on around the cricket ground. Now, I'm
14	because essentially what we're going to have are oral	14	sorry I had to raise the word cricket but I do not think
15	submissions from lawyers about those issues. We won't	15	I can be criticised for so doing in all the
16	be hearing oral evidence.	16	circumstances.
17	With that introduction, I should just also explain	17	Mr Beer?
18	why the two days are split apart. As you'd imagine, to	18	Submission by MR BEER
19	get so many lawyers into the same room at the same time	19	MR BEER: Thanks very much, sir. As you said, this is the
20	is not an easy business. So to facilitate all the	20	hearing of submissions by all participants on the issues
21	lawyers who needed to be here over these hearings	21	arising from the payment or non-payment of compensation
22	I agreed that we would schedule them on a day when their	22	to subpostmasters at their families.
23	advocate of choice could come to present their	23	I appear as counsel along with Mr Blake today.
24	submissions, so that's why we're having a hearing this	24	You will hear oral submissions later today in accordance
25	week and a hearing next week. The short delay between	25	with the timetable that you have published from
	,		2
1	Ms Gallafent QC on behalf of Post Office Ltd, from	1	183, to what extent, if at all, has the creation
2	Mr Mertens on behalf of UK Government Investments and	2	and implementation of the Historic Shortfall Scheme and
3	from Mr Stein QC on behalf of those core participants	3	the interim compensation scheme provided an adequate
4	represented by Howe & Co solicitors.	4	means for affected subpostmasters, managers, and
5	Your terms of reference, sir, require you, amongst	5	assistants to obtain financial redress for wrongs which
6	other things, to assess whether the commitments made by	6	they have suffered.
7	Post Office Ltd within the mediation settlement,	7	However, phase 5 of the Inquiry is presently
8	including the Historical Shortfall Scheme, have been	8	scheduled to occur in February and March of next year.
9	properly delivered. The reference there to the	9	In the course of your human impact hearings in London
10	mediation settlement is a reference to the settlement	10	between 14 and 25 February, in Cardiff on 1 and 2 Marcl
11	deed of 10 December 2019.	11	in Leeds on 9 and 10 March, in Glasgow on 11 and 12 M
12	You had originally planned to address this issue	12	and in Belfast on 18, 19 May, you heard from a number of
13	in phase 5 of your Inquiry, which is concerned with,	13	subpostmasters and members of their families about the
14	amongst other things, redress, access to justice, the	14	devastating financial consequences that the operation of
15	complaint review and mediation scheme, responding to the	15	the Horizon IT system had and is having on them, the
16	scandal and compensation schemes.	16	financial consequences that civil proceedings brought
17	In our concluded list of issues, we had isolated	17	against them by the Post Office had and is having on
18	the following issues in particular for consideration	18	them, and the financial consequences that wrongful
19	within phase 5 of the Inquiry: issue 182, to what	19	conviction for criminal offences (including in some
20	extent, if at all, has Post Office Ltd properly	20	cases resulting in imprisonment) had and is having on
21	delivered upon the commitments which it made in the	21	them. This included significant accounts of penury,
22	mediation settlement to make improvements in its	22	precarious financial arrangements, bankruptcies, debt
23	relationships with subpostmasters and to bring finality	23	management plans, loss of credit ratings, loans for
24	to all outstanding issues in respect of historic	24	significant sums of money, and second mortgages, many
25	shortfalls via the Historic Shortfall Scheme.	25	which continue to this day.
	3		4

management plans, loss of credit ratings, loans for significant sums of money, and second mortgages, many of

(1) Pages 1 - 4

1	The evidence also touched upon the operation,	1	Mr Alan Bates and 554 other claimants against Post
2	effectiveness and speed of past and present compensation	2	Office Ltd, which is known as the group litigation.
3	schemes offered by the Post Office.	3	That is because it proceeded under a group litigation or
4	In the light of that evidence, you decided that	4	a GLO.
5	you ought not to wait until early spring of next year to	5	In this litigation the claimants brought claims
6	hear the evidence about past and present compensation	6	for compensation for alleged losses consequent on
7	schemes. As you put it in a public announcement, some	7	breaches of contract and other wrongful acts arising out
8	of these issues, "needed to be addressed sooner rather	8	of decisions made by the Post Office in reliance upon
9	than later". So accordingly, on 9 May, you announced	9	information generated by the Horizon IT system.
10	that you would be conducting these hearings and	10	Those proceedings were brought to an end by a deed
11	thereafter gave directions for the making of written	11	of settlement dated 10 December 2019. During the course
12	submissions and a timetable for delivering oral	12	of the litigation the managing judge handed down six
13	submissions from the recognised legal representatives of	13	judgments, two of those judgments, the common issues
14	core participants.	14	judgment and the Horizon issues judgment, were it is
15	In terms of the factual background, although you,	15	reasonable to suppose critical to the decision made by
16	sir, know the steps in the long and tortuous chronology	16	the Post Office subsequently to offer terms of
17	which brings us to this point in mid-2022, addressing	17	settlement of the litigation.
18	issues about the payment of compensation, to wronged	18	The deed of settlement contains terms that are
19	subpostmasters, there may be those listening or watching	19	relevant to the issues that arise today, including by
20	the proceedings that do not. Therefore with your	20	clause 2.1 the Post Office agreed to make settlement
21	permission I should like to spend a little time	21	payments are they as called which in aggregate amounted
22	detailing some of the background which brings us to that	22	to £57.75 million. Of that sum £15 million was
23	point today.	23	earmarked for the legal costs of the solicitors and
24	For present purposes it is sufficient to begin	24	barristers who acted for the claimants in the group
25	with the litigation that commenced in 2017 between	25	litigation, 42 million was paid over by way of damages,
	5		6
1	litigation funding, ATE costs and other costs or other	1	substantially less than the alleged losses which they
2	relief claimed in the action. That was called the	2	had claimed in the group litigation.
3	settlement payment.	3	Pursuant to the deed the Historical Shortfall
4	By clause 3 it was provided that none of the terms	4	Scheme was established in 2020. It is a remediation
5	of the Settlement Deed were to be construed as an	5	scheme. Under its terms none of the claimants who had
6	admission of liability on the part of the Post Office in	6	been party to the Group litigation were eligible to seek
7	respect of any of the various claims made by the	7	compensation under the scheme. The HSS was and is
8	claimants which were the subject of the litigation.	8	intended to benefit all of those subpostmasters who
9	Clause 4.1 provided that the terms of the	9	suffered loss as a consequence of Horizon but who were
10	settlement set out in the deed were to be in full and	10	not a part to the group litigation.
11	final settlement of all claims made by the claimants,	11	The scheme secondly identifies a number of
12	save for the claims brought for malicious prosecution	12	principles upon which compensation under it must be
13	which were defined as being brought by "convicted	13	assessed.
14	claimants".	14	Thirdly, the scheme includes detailed provisions,
15	Clause 9.4 and schedule 6 of the deed laid the	15	dispute resolution procedures for resolving how claims
16	foundation for the establishment of what is now known as	16	should be determined in the event that an applicant and
17	the Historical Shortfall Scheme or the HSS.	17	the Post Office cannot agree upon the compensation which
18	Approximately £10.5 million of the £42 million set	18	should be awarded.
19	aside as the settlement payment were shared between the	19	The scheme finally closed on 20 November 2020.
20	GLO claimants as compensation for the losses which they	20	If you turn up in your bundle sir, tab 17, there
21	claimed in the litigation, a very substantial proportion	21	will be an update to these in a moment, you should see
22	of the settlement payment was therefore swallowed up in	22	figures published on 7 June 2020.
23	litigation funding and other costs.	23	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Sorry, Mr Beer. Is that occasional
24	Accordingly, most if not all of the claimants	24	banging disturbing you? Because if so I will try to get
25	received a sum by way of compensation which was	25	something done about it.
	7		8

(2) Pages 5 - 8

4	ND DEED. Madagatak	4
1 2	MR BEER: Moderately. SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Somebody is going to try and suggest that	1 2
2	they should bang when we're having a break.	2
4	<b>MR BEER:</b> Thank you very much. I see somebody leaving from	4
5	the back. Very kind of you, sir.	5
6	You will see that at the foot of page 302 as at	6
7	7 June there were of the applications which had been	7
8	made 2,368 assessed to be eligible, 155 assessed to be	8
9	non-eligible. Which means that by 7 June if one adds	9
10	those two figures together, some 2,523 applications had	10
11	been made, so the scheme closed 27 November 2020, by	11
12	June 2022, 2,523 applications made.	12
13	On 21 July 2021 the Secretary of State for	13
14	Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy announced that	14
15	funds would be made available to the Post Office so that	15
16	interim payments of compensation of up to £100,000 per	16
17	person could be paid to subpostmasters whose convictions	17
18	for dishonesty offences had been quashed. That	18
19	announcement was made in a statement in Parliament.	19
20	The announcement was followed up by a press	20
21	release the next day, which we have in your tab 8A of	21
22	the bundle. You will see it is dated 22 July 2021 and	22
23	is a press release on behalf of BEIS. It is the second	23
24	page of that, page 217, to which I should draw attention	24
25	under the heading "Additional information", and it 9	25
	5	
1	There remains the issue of final appointments for	1
2	those whose convictions were quashed. On	2
2	14 December 2021, the Minister, Paul Scully MP, made	3
4	a further statement which is relevant to the payment of	4
5	compensation to subpostmasters whose convictions had by	5
6	then been quashed or would after then be quashed, and we	6
7	have that behind tab 8B, the statement of 14	7
8	December 2021.	8
9	The relevant parts are the last two paragraphs on	9
10	page 219 where the Minister said:	10
11	"I am pleased to confirm that today the Government	11
12	is making funding available to facilitate Post Office to	12
13	make final compensation payments to postmasters whose	13
14	convictions have been overturned. We are working with	14
15	Post Office to finalise the arrangements that will	15
16	enable the final settlement negotiations to begin as	16
17	soon as possible. By providing this funding, Government	17
18	is helping Post Office deliver the fair compensation	18
19	postmasters deserve. With the Secretary of State's	19
20	status as sole shareholder in the Post Office my	20
21	department continues to engage actively with Post Office	21
22	Ltd on this and will maintain strong oversight of the	22
23	compensation process."	23
24	On 21 March 2022 you requested core participants	24
25	to respond to the Inquiry with written submissions on 11	25
	11	

reads:

"For final compensation the Post Office is proposing alternative dispute resolution arrangements which aim to facilitate the swift quantification and resolution of compensation claims. However, interim payments announced today do not prevent people from bringing civil claims through the courts."

So the HSS had been set up. Then in July 2021 an announcement of the payment of up to £100,000 per person for each postmaster by way of interim payments, and a proposal by the Post Office it was said to set up alternative dispute resolution arrangements for compensation to be paid finally to those whose convictions had been overturned.

As we understand it, in fact, no formal remediation scheme was constituted thereafter, and alternative dispute resolution has not occurred in relation to those whose convictions have been quashed. In practice, those whose convictions have been quashed have applied to the Post Office for an interim payment and, in the main, the Post Office has made such a payment within a very short time, i.e., promptly, often within weeks of the application being made. And the information that the Inquiry has received suggests that that interim scheme has operated well and effectively. 10

the availability of compensation for three discrete subcategories of postmasters. I'm not going to outline them as matters have moved on more broadly since then.

The next day, 22 March 2022, the Minister, Paul Scully MP, made a further announcement in Parliament which we have in our tab 8C, the relevant part of which is in the second paragraph, where he said:

"The Government has long considered unfair the unequal treatment received by members of the GLO and their non-GLO peers, I am therefore pleased to announce that the Chancellor will make additional funding available to give those in the GLO group compensation similar to that which is available to their non-GLO peers."

You received submissions in response to your request from the core participants represented by Howe & Co and Hudgell solicitors and on 9 May 2022 you issued a preliminary view in relation to compensation schemes for subpostmasters.

On 30 June 20202, so seven days ago, the Minister, Mr Scully, made a further statement to the House and you have that behind your tab 8D. I'm not going to read it all out. The main elements of it were, firstly, in relation to the GLO claimants. He said, firstly, that the Government intended to make interim payments of 12

1	compensation to eligible members of the GLO cohort who	1
2	were not already covered by another scheme totalling	2
3	£19.5 million.	3
4	Secondly, he said that the Government was working	4
5	towards delivering a final compensation scheme for the	5
6	GLO claimants and would be appointing Freeths Solicitors	6
7	to assess the data and methodology that they had	7
8	developed in relation to the 2019 settlement.	8
9	Third, that members of the GLO group would be able	9
10	also to claim reasonable legal fees as part of their	10
11	participation in the final compensation scheme.	11
12	Then, secondly, in relation to those who	12
13	convictions had been quashed, the Minister announced	13
14	that a number of subpostmasters had agreed to refer the	14
15	issues of non-pecuniary damages to a process of early	15
16	neutral evaluation to be conducted by Lord Dyson.	16
17	So your request to core participants invited	17
18	submissions on 12 issues and they are set out in tab 2	18
19	of your bundle, which I would invite you to turn up.	19
20	They are broadly divided into three categories: issues	20
21	arising from the existing Historical Shortfall Scheme;	21
22	issues concerning the compensation to be paid to those	22
23	subpostmasters whose convictions have been quashed; and	23
24	issues relating to the payment of fair compensation to	24
25	the Group litigation claimants.	25
	13	
1	105 to 202 you have the version that was extant from	1
1	195 to 202 you have the version that was extant from	1
2	June 2020. So that's the underlying material.	2
2 3	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had	2 3
2 3 4	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for	2 3 4
2 3 4 5	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along	2 3 4 5
2 3 4 5 6	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core	2 3 4 5 6
2 3 4 5 6 7	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues	2 3 4 5 6 7
2 3 4 5 6 7 8	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by	2 3 5 6 7 8
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the additional issue, and do the same.	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2 3 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the additional issue, and do the same. Issue 1 is the heads of loss which are recoverable	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the additional issue, and do the same. Issue 1 is the heads of loss which are recoverable under the HSS and the reasons for any exclusions. That	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the additional issue, and do the same. Issue 1 is the heads of loss which are recoverable under the HSS and the reasons for any exclusions. That on its face raises two separate issues, the heads of	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the additional issue, and do the same. Issue 1 is the heads of loss which are recoverable under the HSS and the reasons for any exclusions. That on its face raises two separate issues, the heads of recoverable loss and reasons for exclusions from the	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the additional issue, and do the same. Issue 1 is the heads of loss which are recoverable under the HSS and the reasons for any exclusions. That on its face raises two separate issues, the heads of recoverable loss and reasons for exclusions from the scheme.	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15
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2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the additional issue, and do the same. Issue 1 is the heads of loss which are recoverable under the HSS and the reasons for any exclusions. That on its face raises two separate issues, the heads of recoverable loss and reasons for exclusions from the scheme. Dealing with heads of recoverable loss first, you will have seen that despite its name which suggests that	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the additional issue, and do the same. Issue 1 is the heads of loss which are recoverable under the HSS and the reasons for any exclusions. That on its face raises two separate issues, the heads of recoverable loss and reasons for exclusions from the scheme. Dealing with heads of recoverable loss first, you will have seen that despite its name which suggests that the focus of attention is shortfalls, the HSS in fact	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the additional issue, and do the same. Issue 1 is the heads of loss which are recoverable under the HSS and the reasons for any exclusions. That on its face raises two separate issues, the heads of recoverable loss and reasons for exclusions from the scheme. Dealing with heads of recoverable loss first, you will have seen that despite its name which suggests that the focus of attention is shortfalls, the HSS in fact allows in principle the payment by the Post Office of	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the additional issue, and do the same. Issue 1 is the heads of loss which are recoverable under the HSS and the reasons for any exclusions. That on its face raises two separate issues, the heads of recoverable loss and reasons for exclusions from the scheme. Dealing with heads of recoverable loss first, you will have seen that despite its name which suggests that the focus of attention is shortfalls, the HSS in fact	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the additional issue, and do the same. Issue 1 is the heads of loss which are recoverable under the HSS and the reasons for any exclusions. That on its face raises two separate issues, the heads of recoverable loss and reasons for exclusions from the scheme. Dealing with heads of recoverable loss first, you will have seen that despite its name which suggests that the focus of attention is shortfalls, the HSS in fact allows in principle the payment by the Post Office of much wider classes of compensation than the simple repayment of sums of money wrongfully taken by the Post	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the additional issue, and do the same. Issue 1 is the heads of loss which are recoverable under the HSS and the reasons for any exclusions. That on its face raises two separate issues, the heads of recoverable loss and reasons for exclusions from the scheme. Dealing with heads of recoverable loss first, you will have seen that despite its name which suggests that the focus of attention is shortfalls, the HSS in fact allows in principle the payment by the Post Office of much wider classes of compensation than the simple	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the additional issue, and do the same. Issue 1 is the heads of loss which are recoverable under the HSS and the reasons for any exclusions. That on its face raises two separate issues, the heads of recoverable loss and reasons for exclusions from the scheme. Dealing with heads of recoverable loss first, you will have seen that despite its name which suggests that the focus of attention is shortfalls, the HSS in fact allows in principle the payment by the Post Office of much wider classes of compensation than the simple repayment of sums of money wrongfully taken by the Post	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the additional issue, and do the same. Issue 1 is the heads of loss which are recoverable under the HSS and the reasons for any exclusions. That on its face raises two separate issues, the heads of recoverable loss and reasons for exclusions from the scheme. Dealing with heads of recoverable loss first, you will have seen that despite its name which suggests that the focus of attention is shortfalls, the HSS in fact allows in principle the payment by the Post Office of much wider classes of compensation than the simple repayment of sums of money wrongfully taken by the Post Office from subpostmasters, or wrongly paid by	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	June 2020. So that's the underlying material. It seems to us that the four issues which you had previously identified in your document asking for submissions remain fit for consideration by you along with an additional issue identified by core participants. I will describe the four issues previously identified and fill them out a little by reference to the submissions and then turn to the additional issue, and do the same. Issue 1 is the heads of loss which are recoverable under the HSS and the reasons for any exclusions. That on its face raises two separate issues, the heads of recoverable loss and reasons for exclusions from the scheme. Dealing with heads of recoverable loss first, you will have seen that despite its name which suggests that the focus of attention is shortfalls, the HSS in fact allows in principle the payment by the Post Office of much wider classes of compensation than the simple repayment of sums of money wrongfully taken by the Post Office from subpostmasters, or wrongly paid by subpostmasters to the Post Office, or sums of money	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

I would propose to identify by reference to those three categories the issues that we have identified as your counsel team as arising in the light of all of the written material that has been lodged by the core participants. I should state in that regard that we as your counsel team will not be making positive submissions as to outcome on any of those issues. So category 1 or category A, issues arising under the Historical Shortfall Scheme. You have in front of you, sir, the core material in relation to the operation by design of the Historical Shortfall Scheme. So in tab 14 you have the Terms of Reference of the HSS; in tab 15 you have the Terms of Reference for the Independent Advisory Panel to the Historical Shortfall Scheme; in tab 16 you have the eligibility criteria for the Historical Shortfall Scheme; in tab 17 you have a document called "Consequential loss principles and guidance for the Historical Shortfall Scheme"; in tab 18 you have a questions and answers document published by the Post Office as to the operation of the Historical Shortfall Scheme. Then going back to tab 7A, please, you have two versions of application forms under the Historical Shortfall Scheme, and so from page 188 to 194 you have the version that was extant from May 2020, and then from 14 payment of much wider classes of compensation is not clear from the Terms of Reference of the scheme at tab 14, which only refer to shortfalls, or the eligibility criteria at tab 16, which again only refer to shortfalls. However, it is clear from the Terms of Reference of the HSS Independent Advisory Panel at tab 15 that the scheme does permit the payment of consequential losses, and if I could invite you to turn that up please, tab 15 at page 285. If one looks at paragraph 4A of the Terms of Reference for the Independent Advisory Panel consequential losses are defined to mean financial or non-financial losses that are not shortfall losses, shortfall losses being defined by paragraph 4D. Then perhaps more significantly, it's also clear from the consequential loss principles and guidance at tab 17 that such consequential losses are in principle recoverable. One can see that from paragraph 1.3 but more significantly, from paragraphs 5.1 to 5.10 between pages 291 to 295, one can just scan the headings there which include claims for loss of earnings, loss of profit, loss of property, loss of opportunity or loss of chance, penalties, and increased costs of financing, bankruptcy and insolvency, legal and professional fees, 16

# The Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry

2       harassmett. That a wide range. a very brack spectrum of toeses are in principle recoverable, providing that they are been caused as a direct consequence of the forcom shortfall los that is claimed.       2       is about the way in which the scheme is operated that has caused such a result.         3       have been caused as a direct consequence of the forcom shortfall los thems of the tests, but at a more practical level, as to whether the operation of the set previous on these of the tests.       5       SR WYM WILLIAMS: When you say it is missed out, if that's claimed.         7       with the scheme is operated that is a more practical level, as to whether the operation of the test position provision of legal assistance, to make and pursue claims under the HSS.       5       SR WYM WILLIAMS: When you say it is missed fract.         10       a more practical level, as to whether the operation of the test position provision of legal assistance, to make and pursue claims under the HSS.       5       SR WYM WILLIAMS: Whether the application form machine as baby and whether the application form inteal was displiced in a way which and the scheme is to pursue these direct many is the instance, to make and pursue claims under the HSS.       5         14       make and pursue claims under the HSS.       12       Term for Comparison of the application form accounding invited pursue claims under the HSS.       12         15       appear to arise include the following: both the subposimaters a min fractile as a may obta's the application.       14       15       15         16       applint the subposimates a min fractile sthe more m	1	stigma and damage to reputation, and personal injury or	1	If that is right, you may wish to consider what it
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22       consequential losses, have been routinely missed from       22       consequential losses, have been routinely missed from       23         24       money to which the subpostmasters are in principle       24       and guidance document.         25       entitled have been left out.       25       and guidance document.         1       defined to mean financial or non-financial loss that is       1       directly related to the alleged shortfalls in respect of         2       not a shortfall loss, which we have seen is obviously       2       which you would like to claim. If yes, please provide         3       correct by looking at the consequential loss and       3       the following details for each alleged loss, then ature         6       If we turn up the application form, which is the       6       shortfall, and the value/size of the loss."         7       next tab, using the May 2020 version, there is no       7       Then there is a little box for a person to include         8       material difference between the May and the June version       8       You may wish to consequential loss principles and         10       boxes for an applicant to presented with the following statement:       12       goidance, has led to the issue that both Howe & Co and         11       page, on page 191, under the facing "Nortfall", the       11       mentioning the consequential loss principles and				
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25       entitled have been left out.       25       It is said, continuing, consequential loss is         1       defined to mean financial or non-financial loss that is       1       directly related to the alleged shortfalls in respect of         2       not a shortfall loss, which we have seen is obviously       2       which you would like to claim. If yes, please provide         3       correct by looking at the consequential loss and       3       directly related to the alleged shortfalls in respect of         4       guidance document - sorry, consequential loss       4       of the alleged loss, the dates of the alleged loss; the nature         6       If we turn up the application form, which is the       6       Then there is alittle box for a person to include         7       next tab, using the May 2020 version, there is no       7       Then there is alittle box for a person to include         8       material difference between the May and the June version       8       that information.         9       in this regard, you will see from page 190 a series of       9       you may wish to consider whether that single         10       boxes for an applicant to complete, and on the second       10       You may wish to consider whether that single         11       page, on page 191, under the heading "Shortfalls", the       11       guidance, has led to the issue that both Howe & Co and         12				
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25 "Have you experienced any other losses that are 25 which is the consequential loss principles and guidance				
			20	

1	document.	1
2	Under paragraph 3.1 at the foot of page 289 under	2
3	the heading "Key principles", paragraph 3.1 is headed	3
4	"Burden of proof in relation to consequential losses",	4
5	and reads:	5
6	"3.1.1 The burden of proof is on the postmaster	6
7	to provide sufficient evidence in support of their claim	7
8	to demonstrate that on the balance of probabilities,	8
9	i.e. a greater than 50 per cent likelihood, (a) such	9
10	losses have been suffered, and (b) as a consequence of	10
11	a Horizon shortfall as such are found in the common	11
12	issues judgment or the Horizon issues judgment. This	12
13	means evidencing the fact that a loss was incurred, the	13
14 15	amount of that loss, and that the cause of the loss was due to Horizon shortfall.	14 15
15 16	"3.1.2 where the subpostmaster is unable to	15 16
17	satisfy the burden of proof in relation to their claim,	10
18	their claim may nonetheless be accepted in whole or in	18
19	part if the scheme considers it to be fair in all the	10
20	circumstances."	20
20	Then under 3.2.3, which is under a cross heading	20
22	of "Evidence", the guidance document states:	21
23	"The need to provide evidence is particularly	22
24	important where a postmaster's claim relates to matters	24
25	which are known only to the postmaster. While the	25
20	21	20
1	So in those two places one can see that the scheme	1
2	and, in particular, the Panel are to be guided by broad	2
3	considerations of fairness, that the Panel's discretion	3
4	is not confined solely to heads of loss claimed, and	4
5	that the Panel may take into account any facts and	5
6	matters which it considers will produce a fair result in	6
7	the circumstances of a particular case.	7
8	In terms of the operation of the scheme in	8
9	practice, there is no information that we have seen as	9
10	the Inquiry, no data in particular, and no explanation	10
11	as to the approach that's been taken, as to the	11
12	frequency with which this facility has been used, i.e.	12
13	the fairness principle applied even though	13
14	a subpostmaster on evidence grounds has fallen short of	14
15	proving a loss on the balance of probabilities, nor	15
16	whether there are any examples of the initiative in fact	16
17	having come from the Panel to award a sum outside	17
18	a class of loss, a consequential loss claimed by the	18
19	subpostmaster, i.e. where the Panel has taken the	19
20	initiative and suggested to a subpostmaster it appears	20
21	on the facts that you have presented that there is	21
22	a category of loss or there are broader categories of	22
23	loss that you ought to have claimed. You should do so.	23
24	Or examples of where the Panel has made an award on the	24
25	basis of a broad consideration of what is fair, rather	25
	23	

hurden is on nostr	asters to provide sufficient evidence
	ir claim for consequential loss, the
	1 .
	onsider any relevant evidence Post
	assessing the claim. Any key
	entation relied upon will be shared wit
	they receive the outcome of their
	em to consider whether they wish to
accept the offers m	
	back to that in a moment.
	I place in which we can see the fairne
	is in tab 15, of your bundle which
is the terms of refe	rence for the Independent Advisory
Panel to the HSS.	It is at page 287 and clause 30, this
reads:	
"In formulat	ing its recommended offer the Panel
may recommend th	e making of an offer to the postmast
if, guided by broad	considerations of fairness, the
Panel considers the	at doing so would produce a fair
result in all the circ	umstances of the particular case.
For the avoidance	of doubt, in doing so the Panel's
discretion will not b	e confined solely to the specific
heads of conseque	ntial loss claimed by the postmaster
but will take into ac	count at any facts and matters
which the Panel co	nsiders will produce a fair result on
the facts of a partic	_

than the application of the legal principles of
remoteness, causation, mitigation, and quantum.
So the question which arises is whether this
fairness facility is operating in practice in
circumstances where for the reasons described by the
subpostmasters it's very likely that a high number of
them have not retained records from a decade or two
decades ago that are necessary to prove to the relevant
standard the losses that they have suffered. That's an
issue that you may wish to explore in particular with
the Post Office.
Turning then to the reasons for exclusion. The
reasons for exclusion of certain classes of applicant
have been broadly explained in all of the submissions of
the core participants and I'm not going to rehearse
them. But an outstanding issue is the exclusion of
applicants who did not apply within the relatively short
window during which the scheme was open for
applications, which relatively short window was at the
height of the pandemic, and the approach that the Post
Office has taken after that closure of the window to
applications made out of time.

You will see in tab 7, at page 176, at paragraph 23, this is the Post Office submissions, the Post Office say:

4	"The exhance was initially enough analizations	4
1 2	"The scheme was initially open to applications from 1 May to 14 August 2020. This deadline was	1 2
2	subsequently extended by 15 weeks until 27 November 2020	2
4	in order to enable further applicants to apply following	4
5	an amendment to the scheme's eligibility criteria, as	5
6	well as to accommodate difficulties in making	6
0 7	applications due to the Covid 19 pandemic."	7
8	Then this:	8
9	"Since closure of the scheme to applications, Post	9
10	Office has received in excess of 170 applications to	10
11	date, all of which Post Office is actively considering	11
12	how best to address", so you may wish to consider the	12
13	approach that the Post Office is taking to applications	13
14	made out of time and whether that statement, which is	14
15	"We're still thinking about it", is adequate in the	15
16	circumstances.	16
17	Issue 2, sir, under this first category is whether	17
18	there has been delay and, if so, the causes of delay in	18
19	processing applications under the HSS. As we said,	19
20	after the 15-week extension period to 27 November 2020	20
21	the scheme was closed.	21
22	In terms of the number of applications made and	22
23	the awards made, if we can go back to tab 19, please,	23
24	which we looked at earlier, this time look at the second	24
25	page, page 303. Again, these are figures to 7 June this	25
	25	
1	issue that may arise for your consideration is what is	1
2	the cause of the delay that 19 months on only 50 per	2
2	cent of eligible claimants have had payments made to	3
4	them.	4
5	Sir, issue 3 is the provision which has been made	1
Ū		5
6	for applicants to obtain independent legal advice in	5 6
6 7	for applicants to obtain independent legal advice in respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has	6
7	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has	6 7
7 8	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes	6
7 8 9	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or	6 7 8
7 8 9 10	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or £1,200 in respect of legal fees. That figure is	6 7 8 9 10
7 8 9	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or £1,200 in respect of legal fees. That figure is dependent on whether the Post Office offers to pay the	6 7 8 9
7 8 9 10 11	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or £1,200 in respect of legal fees. That figure is dependent on whether the Post Office offers to pay the claim in full, in which case the former figure is paid,	6 7 8 9 10 11
7 8 9 10 11 12	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or £1,200 in respect of legal fees. That figure is dependent on whether the Post Office offers to pay the	6 7 8 9 10 11 12
7 8 9 10 11 12 13	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or £1,200 in respect of legal fees. That figure is dependent on whether the Post Office offers to pay the claim in full, in which case the former figure is paid, or whether it does not, in which case the latter figure	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or £1,200 in respect of legal fees. That figure is dependent on whether the Post Office offers to pay the claim in full, in which case the former figure is paid, or whether it does not, in which case the latter figure may be paid.	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or £1,200 in respect of legal fees. That figure is dependent on whether the Post Office offers to pay the claim in full, in which case the former figure is paid, or whether it does not, in which case the latter figure may be paid. The scheme makes no provision for any other forms	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15
7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or £1,200 in respect of legal fees. That figure is dependent on whether the Post Office offers to pay the claim in full, in which case the former figure is paid, or whether it does not, in which case the latter figure may be paid. The scheme makes no provision for any other forms of assistance, for example, fees for medical evidence to	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or £1,200 in respect of legal fees. That figure is dependent on whether the Post Office offers to pay the claim in full, in which case the former figure is paid, or whether it does not, in which case the latter figure may be paid. The scheme makes no provision for any other forms of assistance, for example, fees for medical evidence to be obtained to support a claim for consequential losses,	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or £1,200 in respect of legal fees. That figure is dependent on whether the Post Office offers to pay the claim in full, in which case the former figure is paid, or whether it does not, in which case the latter figure may be paid. The scheme makes no provision for any other forms of assistance, for example, fees for medical evidence to be obtained to support a claim for consequential losses, or forensic accountancy services, again, to prove on the	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18
7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or £1,200 in respect of legal fees. That figure is dependent on whether the Post Office offers to pay the claim in full, in which case the former figure is paid, or whether it does not, in which case the latter figure may be paid. The scheme makes no provision for any other forms of assistance, for example, fees for medical evidence to be obtained to support a claim for consequential losses, or forensic accountancy services, again, to prove on the balance of probabilities that losses which are	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19
7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or £1,200 in respect of legal fees. That figure is dependent on whether the Post Office offers to pay the claim in full, in which case the former figure is paid, or whether it does not, in which case the latter figure may be paid. The scheme makes no provision for any other forms of assistance, for example, fees for medical evidence to be obtained to support a claim for consequential losses, or forensic accountancy services, again, to prove on the balance of probabilities that losses which are consequential on a shortfall have been suffered.	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or £1,200 in respect of legal fees. That figure is dependent on whether the Post Office offers to pay the claim in full, in which case the former figure is paid, or whether it does not, in which case the latter figure may be paid. The scheme makes no provision for any other forms of assistance, for example, fees for medical evidence to be obtained to support a claim for consequential losses, or forensic accountancy services, again, to prove on the balance of probabilities that losses which are consequential on a shortfall have been suffered. You may wish to consider whether this approach is	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21
7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or £1,200 in respect of legal fees. That figure is dependent on whether the Post Office offers to pay the claim in full, in which case the former figure is paid, or whether it does not, in which case the latter figure may be paid. The scheme makes no provision for any other forms of assistance, for example, fees for medical evidence to be obtained to support a claim for consequential losses, or forensic accountancy services, again, to prove on the balance of probabilities that losses which are consequential on a shortfall have been suffered. You may wish to consider whether this approach is adequate in circumstances where, firstly, the nature of	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22
7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	respect of their claims under the HSS and whether it has been adequate. Sir, you know that the scheme makes provision for the payment of a figure of either £400 or £1,200 in respect of legal fees. That figure is dependent on whether the Post Office offers to pay the claim in full, in which case the former figure is paid, or whether it does not, in which case the latter figure may be paid. The scheme makes no provision for any other forms of assistance, for example, fees for medical evidence to be obtained to support a claim for consequential losses, or forensic accountancy services, again, to prove on the balance of probabilities that losses which are consequential on a shortfall have been suffered. You may wish to consider whether this approach is adequate in circumstances where, firstly, the nature of the consequential losses claimed are in many instances	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

year, so these are figures 19 months after the closure of the scheme, it shows that settlement offers of the eligible claims have been made in 1,483 cases, i.e. 63 per cent, and payments have been made in 1,135 cases, i.e. 48 per cent, so less than half.

Last night the Post Office filed some additional submissions to update these figures amongst other things. The 63 per cent has gone up to 65 per cent, i.e. the number of eligible claims in which offers made, and payments have been made in -- sorry, that's 67 per cent, not 65. Payments have been made in 52 per cent of eligible cases as opposed to the previous figure of 48 per cent. So still at around the half figure, and we're 19 months after the closure of the scheme. Now, those numbers, those figures, obscure perhaps the human stories that sit behind them. You may recall Mr Baljit Sethi who I asked questions of in the human impact hearings. He told you, sir, that although he had received standard form acknowledgements from the Post Office after he had made the claim, he waited for just under two years before he received any substantive reply. That was a couple of days before he gave evidence to you. There were other accounts of delays in any contact at all from the Post Office in the HSS. So, sir, the 26 contemporaneous and other documentary material, material which a lay person may not be used to collecting, organizing and presenting; where, thirdly, the scheme self evidently applies legal concepts such as remoteness, causation, mitigation, and quantum that may be unfamiliar to people; where, fourthly, further difficult issues may arise in claims that arise following bankruptcy, where the trustee-in-bankruptcy must be involved and the consequential losses that are properly recoverable may be complex; where, fifthly, tax advice it's likely to be necessary in relation to different elements of payments made under the scheme. No provision is made for the payment of legal costs when the dispute resolution procedure within the scheme is triggered, including where a good faith meeting is required or if the case goes to mediation. The point has been made by the subpostmasters that by contrast the Post Office has appointed a law firm to operate the scheme on its behalf and to prepare the analysis which is then passed to the Independent Advisory Panel, i.e. which appears to form the basis of the material on which the Independent Advisory Panel makes its decisions.

In its submissions of last night, the Post Office stated that it has contributed to the legal costs of 45 28

1	applicants. If that is correct that means that it has	1	not to be seen as controversial or novel, but instead
2	made a contribution in 45 out of 1,242 cases in which	2	the norm.
3	the payments have been made, a tiny proportion. It	3	You may wish to consider whether this approach of
4	follows that no appointments have been made in some	4	generally not making interim payments under the HSS has
5	1,100 or so of the cases sorry, 1,200 of the cases in	5	placed pressure on subpostmasters to accept early
6	which compensation payments have been made.	6	payments at undervalues or instead hold out for the
7	In the same submissions the Post Office says that	7	possibility of a higher payment.
8	it's currently considering whether contributions to	8	If we go to tab 7 again, the Post Office
9	legal fees or other professional costs can be made	9	submissions, at page 182, at the foot 182 and on to 183,
10	available and that it will update the inquiry in due	10	it is said, as noted in some previous submissions,
11	course.	11	payments have been made on an interim basis prior to
12	You may wish to consider whether that is	12	a final offer of compensation, so those applicants to
13	satisfactory in circumstances where the scheme has been	13	the HSS whom Post Office understood to be in difficult
14	operating for 2 years and according to the Post Office	14	circumstances, who could be irredeemably impacted by the
15	figures, half of the eligible applicants have already	15	time necessary fully to assess their claim and make
16	been paid a sum of money and only 45 of them have had	16	a fair offer. To date Post Office has made payments on
17	their legal fees paid.	17	an interim basis to 25 applicants, including of
18	Issue 4, is the provision which has been made for	18	circumstances of severe financial hardship, terminal
19	interim payments pending completion of the procedures	19	illness, risk of personal hardship and old age.
20	under the HSS. You will have seen that Hudgell & Co	20	So interim payments made in 25 cases, and you will
21	suggest that the Post Office has refused to make interim	21	recall that as of 7 June 1,482 offers of settlement have
22	payments under the HSS in respect of losses which are	22	been made, so interim payments in about 1.6/1.7 per cent
23	agreed whilst other species of loss are investigated,	23	of cases. There appears to be a difference of desire or
24	and that Howe & Co have suggested that the making of an	24	of approach here. You may wish to consider whether
25	interim payment under the scheme, such as the HSS ought	25	interim payments ought to be made irrespective of
	29		30
1	showing for example, a terminal illness or old age, but	1	and 3 or B and C. Category 2, back to tab 2, sir, final
2	instead where some losses have been agreed and payment	2	compensation for subpostmasters with quashed
3	of that sum should be effected, whilst argument	3	convictions. Issue 5 was the principles which are being
4	continues over other losses.	4	applied to the calculation of final compensation
5	Sir, those are the four issues that arise under	5	schemes sorry, final compensation payments; issue 6,
6	the first category.	6	the mechanism which by which final compensation payments
7	Howe & Co have raised an additional issue over the	7	are being calculated; issue 7, the provision, if any,
8	operation of paragraph 3.2 of the consequential loss and	8	which is made for applicants to obtain independent legal
9	principles guidance. That is tab 17 at page 290.	9	advise in relation to their claims; issue 8, the
10	I mentioned it to you earlier. Tab 17, page 290, and	10	procedures which are being adopted to resolve the
11	it's 3.2.3 which I read out earlier. The point made on	11	disputes about the value of compensation payments.
12	behalf of Howe & Co is that subpostmasters are provided	12	These are all about subpostmasters who have had their
13	under this scheme with the evidence that the Post Office	13	convictions quashed.
14	possesses at the stage and only at the stage when "they	14	These issues do not address the question of
15	received the outcome of their claim", i.e. they received	15	interim payments and that's deliberately so. That's
16	evidence from the Post Office after they had formulated	16	because, as I mentioned already, the payment of sums of
17	a claim and after receipt of an offer.	17	money to subpostmasters in this category of claim appear
18	So the burden is on the postmaster to prove his or	18	on the information received by the Inquiry largely to
19	her claim without the material that the Post Office	19	have worked well, with such payments generally being
20	itself possesses. It's suggested by Howe & Co that such	20	made promptly.
21	material as to the Post Office possesses as is relevant	21	In their May submissions the Post Office noted
22	to the claim that is made, ought to be disclosed at the	22	that of the 73 men and women whose convictions have been
23	outset or at least in the course of the process and not	23	quashed, 69 had applied for interim payments and such
24	at its end.	24	payments had been made by the Post Office in 66 of them.
24 25		24 25	payments had been made by the Post Office in 66 of them. The questions that we have instead raised relate to 32

(8) Pages 29 - 32

1	final payments. That's what questions five to eight	1	non-binding view, on the likely outcome were the matter
2	relate to.	2	before him or her to proceed to court, and it is has
3	The collective answer to all of those questions is	3	been announced by the Minister, Mr Scully, and in the
4	that there is no formal mechanism or scheme to value	4	BEIS submissions of last night that Lord Dyson has
5	claims or to administer claims. Instead, the claims are	5	agreed to act as the evaluator.
6	being pursued through pre-action correspondence in the	6	So rather than looking individually at issues
7	hope that they will be resolved without recourse to yet	7	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Sorry, Mr Beer. Did you say BEIS
8	further litigation.	8	submissions of last night?
9	It's been said in the submissions both by BEIS and	9	MR BEER: No, I meant Post Office of submissions of last
10	the Post Office that the absence of a formal mechanism	10	night.
11	or scheme was at the express request of the	11	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I thought you were in advance of me
12	subpostmasters themselves. Certainly in the submissions	12	that's all.
13	of Hudgell & Co there is no request for such a scheme to	13	MR BEER: No, the Post Office submissions of 8.59pm last
14	be set up. Instead, the Hudgell & Co submissions to you	14	night.
15	focus on the merits of their clients' claims for certain	15	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I know we all work late but I was
16	losses, a matter which I anticipate you will not wish to	16	thinking when could they have come.
17	address, the individual substantive merits of the claims	17	MR BEER: Yes. So the issue rather than individually
18	made.	18	looking at points 5, 6, 7 and 8 that you may wish to
19	However, there has been a further development in	19	explore, in particular with counsel for the Hudgell & Co
20	that a number of subpostmasters represented by	20	core participants, who represent it seems 62 of these
21	Hudgell & Co have agreed that the issue of non-pecuniary	21	claimants, i.e. the vast majority of them, is whether
22	losses, which it is said was causing a particularly	22	they are content for the current approach to continue.
23	difficulty to assess and to agree, should be referred to	23	That's a polite way of saying whether they, in
24	early neutral evaluation, a process which by a valuer	24	fact, ask you to butt out. Whether they wish you to
25	who is respected expresses a non-binding conclusion,	25	stand back and not interfere in arrangements that are
	33		34
1	proceeding satisfactorily.	1	and understood in the course of and at the conclusion of
2	Can I turn then to category 3, fair compensation	2	the litigation the extent to which any sums paid by the
	Can I turn then to category 3, fair compensation for the group litigation claimants. This raises issues		the litigation the extent to which any sums paid by the Post Office would be lost in legal and other
2 3 4	Can I turn then to category 3, fair compensation for the group litigation claimants. This raises issues 9 to 12 on your list, sir. These issues have been	2 3 4	the litigation the extent to which any sums paid by the Post Office would be lost in legal and other professional fees, and issues as to the extent to which
2 3	Can I turn then to category 3, fair compensation for the group litigation claimants. This raises issues 9 to 12 on your list, sir. These issues have been overtaken by events. In particular, the announcement by	2 3	the litigation the extent to which any sums paid by the Post Office would be lost in legal and other professional fees, and issues as to the extent to which their interests were represented in a structured and
2 3 4 5	Can I turn then to category 3, fair compensation for the group litigation claimants. This raises issues 9 to 12 on your list, sir. These issues have been overtaken by events. In particular, the announcement by the Minister seven days ago about the payments by way of	2 3 4 5	the litigation the extent to which any sums paid by the Post Office would be lost in legal and other professional fees, and issues as to the extent to which their interests were represented in a structured and transparent way by the JFSA.
2 3 4 5 6	Can I turn then to category 3, fair compensation for the group litigation claimants. This raises issues 9 to 12 on your list, sir. These issues have been overtaken by events. In particular, the announcement by the Minister seven days ago about the payments by way of interim payments to the GLO claimants with a fund of	2 3 4 5 6	the litigation the extent to which any sums paid by the Post Office would be lost in legal and other professional fees, and issues as to the extent to which their interests were represented in a structured and transparent way by the JFSA. The inquiry has not of course been a party to and
2 3 4 5 6 7	Can I turn then to category 3, fair compensation for the group litigation claimants. This raises issues 9 to 12 on your list, sir. These issues have been overtaken by events. In particular, the announcement by the Minister seven days ago about the payments by way of interim payments to the GLO claimants with a fund of £19.5 million set aside for that purpose and his	2 3 4 5 6 7	the litigation the extent to which any sums paid by the Post Office would be lost in legal and other professional fees, and issues as to the extent to which their interests were represented in a structured and transparent way by the JFSA. The inquiry has not of course been a party to and knows nothing about the negotiations which it seems have
2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Can I turn then to category 3, fair compensation for the group litigation claimants. This raises issues 9 to 12 on your list, sir. These issues have been overtaken by events. In particular, the announcement by the Minister seven days ago about the payments by way of interim payments to the GLO claimants with a fund of £19.5 million set aside for that purpose and his announcement that a new scheme for the payment of final	2 3 4 5 6 7 8	the litigation the extent to which any sums paid by the Post Office would be lost in legal and other professional fees, and issues as to the extent to which their interests were represented in a structured and transparent way by the JFSA. The inquiry has not of course been a party to and knows nothing about the negotiations which it seems have taken place between BEIS on the one hand, the JFSA on
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	Can I turn then to category 3, fair compensation for the group litigation claimants. This raises issues 9 to 12 on your list, sir. These issues have been overtaken by events. In particular, the announcement by the Minister seven days ago about the payments by way of interim payments to the GLO claimants with a fund of £19.5 million set aside for that purpose and his announcement that a new scheme for the payment of final compensation was being developed. There are no details	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	the litigation the extent to which any sums paid by the Post Office would be lost in legal and other professional fees, and issues as to the extent to which their interests were represented in a structured and transparent way by the JFSA. The inquiry has not of course been a party to and knows nothing about the negotiations which it seems have taken place between BEIS on the one hand, the JFSA on the other, and Freeths on the third part as to the sums
2 3 5 6 7 8 9 10	Can I turn then to category 3, fair compensation for the group litigation claimants. This raises issues 9 to 12 on your list, sir. These issues have been overtaken by events. In particular, the announcement by the Minister seven days ago about the payments by way of interim payments to the GLO claimants with a fund of £19.5 million set aside for that purpose and his announcement that a new scheme for the payment of final compensation was being developed. There are no details yet available as to that scheme for the payment of final	2 3 5 6 7 8 9 10	the litigation the extent to which any sums paid by the Post Office would be lost in legal and other professional fees, and issues as to the extent to which their interests were represented in a structured and transparent way by the JFSA. The inquiry has not of course been a party to and knows nothing about the negotiations which it seems have taken place between BEIS on the one hand, the JFSA on the other, and Freeths on the third part as to the sums of money to be paid by BEIS, the scheme by which such
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	Can I turn then to category 3, fair compensation for the group litigation claimants. This raises issues 9 to 12 on your list, sir. These issues have been overtaken by events. In particular, the announcement by the Minister seven days ago about the payments by way of interim payments to the GLO claimants with a fund of £19.5 million set aside for that purpose and his announcement that a new scheme for the payment of final compensation was being developed. There are no details	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	the litigation the extent to which any sums paid by the Post Office would be lost in legal and other professional fees, and issues as to the extent to which their interests were represented in a structured and transparent way by the JFSA. The inquiry has not of course been a party to and knows nothing about the negotiations which it seems have taken place between BEIS on the one hand, the JFSA on the other, and Freeths on the third part as to the sums of money to be paid by BEIS, the scheme by which such payments will be made on an interim and on a final
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	Can I turn then to category 3, fair compensation for the group litigation claimants. This raises issues 9 to 12 on your list, sir. These issues have been overtaken by events. In particular, the announcement by the Minister seven days ago about the payments by way of interim payments to the GLO claimants with a fund of £19.5 million set aside for that purpose and his announcement that a new scheme for the payment of final compensation was being developed. There are no details yet available as to that scheme for the payment of final compensation to the Group litigation claimants.	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	the litigation the extent to which any sums paid by the Post Office would be lost in legal and other professional fees, and issues as to the extent to which their interests were represented in a structured and transparent way by the JFSA. The inquiry has not of course been a party to and knows nothing about the negotiations which it seems have taken place between BEIS on the one hand, the JFSA on the other, and Freeths on the third part as to the sums of money to be paid by BEIS, the scheme by which such payments will be made on an interim and on a final basis, or the principles that will apply under that
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14 15 16 17	In short, this scheme, it is presumed, is designed to put right what went wrong at the conclusion of the		your consideration
15 16 17	to put right what went wrong at the conclusion of the	14	your consideration.
16 17			SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Thank you very much.
17		15	Ms Gallafent, I think you are next up but I t
	Group litigation. It will be unfortunate putting it	16	it we'd all like a morning break so is this a convenio
19	mildly if something similar was to happen again.	17	moment to have it?
10	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Can I say now, Mr Beer, so that there is	18	MS GALLAFENT: In your hands, sir.
19	no misunderstanding about what's in my mind, that that	19	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right then, 10 minutes and t
20	sentence that you just focused on "on behalf of	20	will start again.
21	individual GLO claimants who chose to instruct us [past	21	(11.42 am)
22	tense]. We are consulting with BEIS and JFSA in order	22	(A short break)
23	to collaborate on developing a scheme and associated	23	(11.56 am)
24	arrangements that work in the interests of those of the	24	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Before I ask Ms Gallafent to m
25	GLO claimants who will instruct us." 37	25	submissions, I appreciate that there is a large num 38
1	of people here and when we have our break it's very	1	particular we have not treated today's hearing as t
2	tempting to have a chat with people. Let me tell you a	2	appropriate point for Post Office to make its openir
3	story about a crusty old judge who used to walk into	3	statement generally, which we look forward to mak
4	court dead on the appointed time regardless of who was	4	the beginning of phase 2 in September.
5	there. On one occasion I wasn't there and got a rocket.	5	So far as the content of our submissions to
6	So from now on, if you want to have a chat outside	6	concerned could I make three preliminary points.
1	please do but I'm going carry on without you. All	7	in line with the position adopted in our written
8	right.	8	submissions we will primarily be focusing on the
9	Ms Gallafent.	9	specific questions asked by you rather than other i
10	Submission by MS GALLAFENT	10	which may be raised in due course.
11	<b>MS GALLAFENT:</b> Sir, thank you. I would like to state at the	11	Secondly, in line with the indication in your
12	outset that Post Office is grateful for the opportunity	12	statement of 30 June of this year, we will be taking
13	to make both written and oral submissions on the issues	13	opportunity to highlight the aspects of the written
14	you identified in your invitation of 10 May as well as	14	submissions made on behalf of other organisation
15	oral submissions on the matters set out in your	15	persons with which we agree or disagree, and see
16	provisional view on compensation issues relating to	16	explain the reasons for any disagreement.
17	prosecuted subpostmasters of 9 May of this year.	17	Thirdly as, sir, we expect you will have
18	We are conscious that so far as your invitation of	18	anticipated from our own written submissions, we i
19 00	10 May is concerned, these hearings are only intended to	19	to focus on sections of A and B of your invitation a
20	cover points that you consider should be addressed	20	that is questions 1 to 8 and leave section C to the
21	sooner rather than later and are not intended as	21	Secretary of State for BEIS to address in due cour
22	a substitute for the full hearing on the issues of	22	Can I start then with section A and Historic
23	financial and other sorts of redress which fall within	23	Shortfall Scheme. Before I address the particular
24 25	phase 5 of the Inquiry's work currently scheduled to	24	questions, can I just make clear that we had not
25	take place next spring. In these circumstances in 39	25	ourselves understood or anticipated that the first 40

I'm not quite sure how the past and the present fits together there. MR BEER: Yes, in particular where the
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•
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I am not asking you to answer. I am
throwing it out so that that puzzle in my mind can be
pondered on by those who may know the answer.
MR BEER: That's why I focused on that sentence in
particular, sir. Because, as I said, putting it mildly,
it may cause concerns that the issues that unfolded in
December 2019 have the potential to repeat themselves
once again.
Sir, those are the only points that I raise for
your consideration.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Thank you very much.
Ms Gallafent, I think you are next up but I take
it we'd all like a morning break so is this a convenient
moment to have it?
MS GALLAFENT: In your hands, sir. SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right then, 10 minutes and then w
will start again.
(11.42 am)
(A short break)
(11.56 am)
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Before I ask Ms Gallafent to make h
submissions, I appreciate that there is a large number
38
particular we have not treated today's hearing as the
appropriate point for Post Office to make its opening
statement generally, which we look forward to making at
the beginning of phase 2 in September.
So far as the content of our submissions today a
concerned could I make three preliminary points. First,
in line with the position adopted in our written
submissions we will primarily be focusing on the
specific questions asked by you rather than other issues
which may be raised in due course.
Secondly, in line with the indication in your
statement of 30 June of this year, we will be taking the
opportunity to highlight the aspects of the written
submissions made on behalf of other organisations and
persons with which we agree or disagree, and seeking t
explain the reasons for any disagreement.
Thirdly as, sir, we expect you will have
anticipated from our own written submissions, we intend
to focus on sections of A and B of your invitation and
that is questions 1 to 8 and leave section C to the
Secretary of State for BEIS to address in due course.
Can I start then with section A and Historical
Shortfall Scheme. Before I address the particular

1	sussiin concerning boods of less, and which were	1	loss principles and suideness and want through at
1 2	question concerning heads of loss, and which were recoverable or not recoverable, would be read and	1 2	loss principles and guidance and went through at section 5 the non-exhaustive list of the types of loss
2	regarded as covering the rather wider question of the	2	that can be claimed, assuming they meet the applicable
4	functioning and application of the fairness principle	4	legal tests and noting there they must be linked clearly
5	under the scheme and, in particular, the use of the	5	back to Horizon shortfall.
6	provisions under the Terms of Reference of the	6	It is suggested by Mr Beer that effectively the
7	Independent Advisory Panel when it comes to its	7	question as to what is or is not recoverable by way of
8	recommendations. We make no criticism in this respect	8	a consequential head of loss is pretty much settled,
9	but we emphasise that is why, sir, you haven't to date	9	that nothing is ruled out. At the risk of perhaps
10	received data or analysis on the use of that fairness	10	raising questions that no longer arise can I just
10	principle.	10	address a couple of points that are made in the written
12	Now, I can confirm that it is used regularly, and	12	submissions of other core participants.
13	we are happy to assist the Inquiry by providing some	12	The first one is in relation to expert advice, and
14	data and analysis on that issue should it be of	13	it is suggested by Howe & Co that the heads of loss
15	assistance. But that is why we haven't done it so far	14	under the guidance are deficient in that there is no
16	because we hadn't interpreted that issue in the way that	16	provision to obtain expert guidance to support or
17	Mr Beer has indicated it may be read this morning.	10	quantify claims under the heads set out in the guidance.
18	Can I move on to then the particular question	18	We'd make four points in response. This is a point
19	which is asked about recoverable heads of loss. We're	10	raised in relation to heads of loss.
20	grateful to Mr Beer for introducing in particular the	20	
20	Terms of Reference of the Independent Advisory Panel and	20 21	The first is that the guidance itself, and we say rightly, expressly delineates sir, for your note
22	the definition of shortfall loss and consequential loss,	21	that's paragraph 5.8.1, of course, the guidance itself
22	consequential loss being there defined as financial or	22	is tab 17, I do not suggest you need to turn it up
23 24	non-financial loss that is not a shortfall loss.	23 24	but it delineates between a claim for legal or
24 25	Mr Beer also took you to, sir, the consequential	24 25	professional fees incurred in relation to dealing with
20	41	25	42
1	a Horizon shortfall at the time which may be recoverable	1	Panel agrees then it can recommend it's obtained at no
2	as loss under the terms of the scheme, and any legal and	2	cost to the applicant. So it would be unnecessary for
3	professional fees incurred by a postmaster in bringing	3	such an applicant in those circumstances themselves to
4	an application to the scheme. We say that simply	4	bring any claim or seek any reimbursement of any such
5	reflects the position in line with civil proceedings	5	expenses. It would be Post Office who would be footing
6	generally, which is that the costs associated with the	6	the bill in that case.
7	bringing or making of an application or claim are	7	Sir, you might like to note that the Panel in the
8	treated separately to actual losses flowing from	8	past has asked Post Office to obtain expert evidence on
9	a relevant breach of contract or breach of duty that's	9	generic issues, including cardiac and mental health
10	relied upon on which the claim is founded.	10	issues to assist it in adopting an approach to claims
11	The second point we make in this context in	11	generally.
12	relation to expert advice, is that every case will be	12	The fourth point I make in this context is that
13	assessed by three members of the Independent Advisory	13	the Panel's Terms of Reference also provide and, sir,
14	Panel, comprising one legal specialist, one forensic	14	you have already been taken to this provision at Section
15	accounting specialist, and one retail specialist. There	15	35, in relation to personal injury claims, where
16	is therefore a very significant degree of expertise	16	insufficient evidence has been provided for a claim to
17	already built into the process.	17	succeed, without further medical and/or expert evidence,
18	Thirdly, where a panel considers that it requires	18	the Panel may nevertheless recommend the making of an
19	expert assistance in order to make a recommendation, it	19	offer to the postmaster which the Panel considers fair.
20	may recommend to Post Office that such assistance be	20	Now, this provision is designed to be advantageous
21	obtained at Post Office's cost. That's paragraph 27 of	21	to an applicant. It enables an applicant who is not
22	the Independent Advisory Panel's terms of reference.	22	potentially able to obtain expert evidence to prove and
23	That's, sir, for your note page 286 in the bundle for	23	support their claim, nevertheless to obtain
24	today. So it's open to any applicant to raise the	24	a recommendation from the Panel on the basis of
25	question of expert assistance being required and if the	25	fairness.
	43		44

(11) Pages 41 - 44

1	We're conceive also that an applicant may wish to	1	identified as such as the face of any desision as
2	We're conscious also that an applicant may wish to avoid the inconvenience and potential distress of	1 2	identified as such on the face of any decision as aggravated damages. It would most likely be taken into
	-	2	account when the Panel considers the issue of distress
3	obtaining a report which may be a particularly acute and sensitive concern in cases involving mental health		and inconvenience.
4	•	4	The Panel's role of course is with a view to
5	issues, but that the Panel has the power nevertheless in	5	
6	the absence of such evidence to recommend an offer which	6	recommending an offer which is fair overall, hence why
7	it considers to be fair.	7	it isn't specifically identified as such necessarily.
8	In these circumstances we wouldn't agree that there is any deficiency in the Historical Shortfall	8	So although applicants may not have expressly
9 10		9 10	characterised their claim as including a claim for
10	Scheme in this respect.	10	aggravated damages, a number of offers have included an
11	The second head of loss that's flagged up again by	11	element reflecting just such a claim where it is
12	Howe & Co as potentially not being recoverable under	12	justified on the facts of the case.
13	this scheme, is the question of aggravated and exemplary	13	The position for exemplary damages is potentially
14	damages, and what is said is that no reference to them	14	slightly different in principle. Were any claim to be
15	or provision for them in the guidance and the heads of	15	made it would be carefully considered along with all the
16	loss are therefore deficient.	16	other claims that have been made. That said, POL's
17	Now, Post Office's response so far as aggravated	17	initial view is that as a legal matter a claim for
18	damages are concerned is that where an applicant has	18	exemplary damages does not naturally sit within the
19	identified aggravation or stress that Post Office caused	19	scheme. It can't, strictly speaking, be said to be
20	when having to deal with shortfall issues, however that	20	a loss incurred by an applicant, or a type of damage
21	claim is described by the postmaster, that is something	21	that's typically available for a breach of contract
22	that would be fully taken into account when assessing,	22	claim. However, the Panel can and does consider overall
23	recommending and making offers in that particular case.	23	fairness when recommending offers to applicants and, as
24	Compensation for aggravation would be taken into	24	I have said, any such claim would be carefully
25	account in the round rather than being characterised or	25	considered. We therefore do not agree there is
	45		46
1	a deficiency in respect of the question of aggravated or	1	if a particular claim was made in which, as a matter of
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(12) Pages 45 - 48

1	understand what you are saying. I recognise the limits	1	
2	of my Terms of Reference. Everyone should understand	2	
3	that.	3	
4	MS GALLAFENT: Thank you. Thank you, sir.	4	
5	Sir, can I move on to another category of loss	5	
6	which it is suggested is not covered, which is third	6	
7	party losses. Again, Howe & Co have suggested that the	7	
8 9	heads of loss should reflect suffering caused to	8 9	
9 10	children and family members and others in caring roles. Can I emphasise that the Panel has throughout sort	9 10	
11	to take an applicant-friendly approach to compensation,	10	
12	including for this issue. Whilst a family member's	12	
13	distress and inconvenience is not technically	13	
14	recoverable from Post Office for a breach of contact	14	
15	claim, such as in the scheme, in a number of cases the	15	
16	Panel has nevertheless taken distress and inconvenience	16	
17	of family members or others into account by considering	17	
18	and having regard to the indirect impact of that on the	18	
19	applicant when they are making recommendations. In	19	
20	other words, when they feel it is fair to do so, so	20	
21	practically speaking it will be taken into account where	21	
22	it is justified to do so, despite the fact that our	22	
23	position is it is not technically recoverable.	23	
24	For completeness, I would note that the Panel has	24	
25	also made recommendations for compensation for distress 49	25	
1	Mr Beer noted that it doesn't there refer to	1	
2	consequential losses. Indeed it doesn't, and we say	2	
3	that the reason for that is simply because this form was	3	
4	designed and anticipated to be completed by lay persons	4	
5	rather than having to require explanation or advice from	5	
6	a lawyer in order to understand the meaning of	6	
7	consequential losses. So the description of losses	7	
8	directly related to the alleged shortfalls we say is	8	
9	adequate in all the circumstances.	9	
10	A suggestion is made by Hudgells that this	10	
11	question was, as they put it, potentially misleading	11	
12 12	because it didn't signpost applicants to any of the	12 12	
13 14	examples set out in the guidance. We do not accept the	13 14	
14	form was misleading on this or any basis. It was designed to strike a balance between being comprehensive	14	
16	and being capable of being used by lay persons.	16	
17	Now, the guidance was introduced on 1 October 2020	17	
18	at which point Post Office wrote to all applicants to	18	
19	the scheme at that stage to communicate that update and	19	
20	the availability of the guidance. Post Office also	20	
21	published a press release about the guidance. And	21	
22	published it on the scheme website so any applicants who	22	
23	hadn't applied by that point would be made aware of it	23	
24	from the website itself.	24	
25	So we do not say there is any fault or deficiency	25	
	51		

and inconvenience or personal injury for corporate entities that are stress and inconvenience or personal injury suffered by directors or shareholders. Going back to my point which we do not consider it to be technically recoverable, I will emphasise again that it does not follow from the fact that claims may not fall directly within the scheme that a claimant is precluded from bringing a claim because of course it remains open to a potential claimant to bring proceedings in which the legal basis for any such claim could be fully considered. Again, we therefore wouldn't agree that there is a deficiency in the scheme in this respect. Those three points are, in our view, as it were, the core points raised by other core participants on the question of heads of loss themselves and what is or is not recoverable. We do recognise that the submissions from other core participants went rather more widely than that and, in particular, the question of the application form and question 24. It's common ground that what was asked was, of an applicant, whether they had experienced any losses that were directly related to the alleged shortfalls in respect of which they would like to claim and asked for details of each such loss to be provided if so. 50 in not sign posting the guidance in the application form. Sir, as you have heard from Mr Beer, the application forms, of course, predate the guidance. But POL took all reasonable and appropriate steps to flag up the existence of the guidance to applicants and potential applicants. Moreover, of course, and you have been taken to this part of the terms of the reference of the Panel as well, they provide that the discretion of the Panel making a recommendation is not confined solely to

matters which the Panel considers will produce a fair result on the facts of a particular case. That's paragraph 30. Sir, you have it that tab 15, page 287.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I just wanted to check that I had marked it. I had.
MS GALLAFENT: I am grateful, thank you. We've already set out in our submissions that we put in in May for the purpose of these hearings the proactive approach that is being taken to assessing consequential loss. That includes not just a proactive approach by the Panel, but a proactive approach by those, as it were, the case managers by virtue of the very detailed bespoke process

specific heads of consequential loss claimed by the postmaster but will take into account any facts and

for requesting further information.

52

1	We emphasise that the bespoke request for further	1	received an offer credibly says they did not appreciate
2	information is designed to identify and ask further	2	that they needed provide information earlier, which
3	questions of an applicant only when they arise from the	3	would include matters of consequential loss, this would
4	key facts of the individual case, provided on the	4	be taken into account in the post offer process. So the
5	application form, so the case manager will be prompted	5	door is not closed in those circumstances to raising
6	by the application form to identify potential further	6	a matter of consequential loss even after the offer has
0 7	questions and those questions will be asked, and	7	been made.
8	sometimes there will be number of them asked. But that		
8 9	is all aimed to elicit information which may assist with	8 9	Another point that is raised, this time by Hudgell, is that the guidance itself, the consequential
9 10	a claim for consequential loss.	9 10	guidance, should be supplemented to ensure greater
10	-	10	
	Now, were such questions to have been asked as	12	clarity and consistency in decision making. We don't
12	a matter of course on the application form, which seems		accept that's necessary, not least as it's very clear
13	to us the logical consequence of what's being suggested,	13	that every case will turn on its own facts, but it might
14	then inevitably many of them would have been irrelevant	14	help to assuage concerns for me to address directly the
15	to any particular applicant for asking, for example,	15	three examples given by Hudgell who obviously represent
16	saying do you think there are any stigma damages, do you	16	a large number of the applicants that is suggested to
17	have any personal injury, and so forth.	17	give rise to inconsistent decision making.
18	Far from being of assistance we say that to have	18	First, its alleged that there is a difference
19	effectively built in guidance or something akin to it	19	between the level of reduction applied to shortfall
20	into the application form itself would have been	20	losses where there is an absence of paperwork. Hudgell
21	perceived as overly burdensome and a barrier to making	21	identify that as being between 10 and 30 per cent. We
22	an application. We repeat, the guidance was available	22	don't say that reflects something requiring greater
23	and flagged up to applicants and potential applicants,	23	guidance. The fact that is that a change or a
24	the form itself is not deficient in this respect.	24	difference of the level of reduction simply reflects on
25	We also note that where an applicant having	25	the particular facts of that case the Panel feels are
	53		54
1	relevant and a higher or lower reduction is appropriate.	1	answer to that is each offer letter explains the factors
2	That's likely to depend on its view of there being a	2	taken into account. for distress and inconvenience.
3	greater or lesser degree of uncertainty on the question	3	There is not a separate loss to be quantified but it's
4	of a particular element of consequential loss.	4	a matter that goes into fairness of the offer overall.
5	We say it is not just unnecessary but it would be	5	So, again, we say so far as the suggestion that greater
6	inappropriate to constrain the Panel's discretion in	6	guidance is required, we say that that is not the case
7	this context, i.e. to say you must only ever reduce	7	and there is not a deficiency in that respect.
8	shortfall losses by 10 per cent rather than 20 or 30 per	8	Can I move to other points that are not directly
9	cent, or whatever it might be. That would inevitably	9	linked to the first question but are raised in this
10	lead to unfair outcomes in some cases and overly complex	10	context. The first, and Mr Beer lagged flagged it up,
10	rules, we say, to attempt to deal with every potential	10	is in relation to late applications to the scheme. That
12	permutations of circumstances.	12	is after the closing date from November 2020.
13	The second suggestion made is that credit has been	13	In our May submissions we noted that the Post
14	given in some cases for heads of loss which haven't been	13	Office was actively considering how best to address
15	claimed, such at the time taken to deal with Horizon	15	those applications. At the time in 2020 the Post Office
16	shortfalls. I would again emphasise that the Panel does	16	went to very considerable lengths to bring the deadline
10		10	, , , ,
	not seek to hold applicants to and strict legal pleading		to the attention of all potentially eligible
18	requirement. It will recommend an offer where it feels	18 10	postmasters. It extended the initial 10-week period for
19 20	it is fair to do so and in those cases where credit has	19 20	applications by a further 15 weeks, which took it to
20	been given, that is because, on those cases, the Panel	20	November 2020, to take into account both the numbers of
21	feel on the facts its appropriate to do so, even though	21	applications that had already been made and the Covid 19
22	it hasn't been claimed.	22	situation pertaining at the time.
23	There is also, finally, a suggestion that there is	23	Nevertheless it is common ground that, for
24	an absence of a consistent explanation as to how loss	24	whatever reason, a number of postmasters didn't apply at
25	for distress and inconvenience is quantified. The 55	25	the time and I can confirm that Post Office has now 56

(14) Pages 53 - 56

# The Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry

1	received as at today's date a total of 186 applications
2	made after the deadline passed.
3	Post Office remains keen to ensure and wishes to
4	ensure that compensation is delivered to everyone
5	affected and it is sympathetic to those who could not,
6	for justifiable reasons, apply to the scheme in time.
7	It remains the case that it is considering how best to
8	deal with such applications.
9	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: You can see that I'm pondering that,
10	Ms Gallafent.
11	MS GALLAFENT: I can indeed, sir.
12	Sir, may it assist if I put it in this context: in
13	our May submissions we made very clear that we do not
14	act alone, that Post Office is part of a wider mechanism
15	of governance and one of the reasons for the delay in
16	relation to the HSS scheme itself more generally are
17	questions of funding, so we cannot act unilaterally, if
18	I can put it that like. So the position remains that we
19	are carefully considering the position and remain
20	committed to ensuring that compensation is delivered to
21	everyone affected.
22	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Well, there are two aspects to that that
23	I'll just float my thoughts about. One, the governance
24	aspect. It surprises me that an issue of this kind
25	would take quite so long.
	57

1	close at a pretty slow pace.
2	MS GALLAFENT: Sir, I hear what you say.
3	Can I pick up then, before I move off from
4	question 1, can I pick up three further points not
5	directly related but relevant we say.
6	The first is an issue raised by Hudgell in
7	relation to independent legal advice. That is whether
8	it be more appropriate for the Independent Advisory
9	Panel to have its own independent legal advice rather
10	than offers being made on the basis of legal advice and
11	analysis prepared by Herbert Smith Freehills.
12	Post Office doesn't consider this would be
13	necessary. There are five Queen's Counsel on the Panel.
14	The Panel is free to accept or reject the analysis and
15	advice given by Herbert Smith Freehills. As we
16	previously indicated in the May submissions, there have
17	been no cases where Post Office has offered an applicant
18	less than the Panel has recommended. That remains the
19	position to date.
20	Moreover, were the Panel itself to consider that
21	it wished to take independent legal advice, then it
22	would be open to it, to recommend to Post Office that
23	such advice be obtained at Post Office's cost. Just as
24	it is under section or paragraph 27 of the Panel's terms
25	of reference in relation to any other expert assistance. 59

The second is should POL be the final arbiter of
this in any event? In effect, it's akin to a limitation
provision, though I accept that there are differences,
I am not going to press that. But in most scenarios in
which a time limit is applied in one way or another, it
might surprise someone to hear that the alleged
wrongdoer is the final arbiter of whether a time limit
should apply.
MS GALLAFENT: Could I put it like this, sir: the terms of
reference for the scheme provided for a deadline which
was, of course, subsequently extended. That principle
was one of the principles that had been discussed and
agreed as part of the deed of settlement with
representatives of postmasters. So in principle the
provision of a deadline was common ground.
We are not acting unilaterally in saying we will
not take in to account late applications. We are
considering and continue to consider how to ensure that
compensation is delivered to everyone affected.
It is not that we have shut the door on those late
applicants. Can I assure you, sir, of that. We
continue to aim to ensure that those applicants are
treated fairly.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Well, I think we can leave this with my
observation that the door is moving either to open or 58
00
For the same reason we reject the suggestion that
the current scheme is not independent in the light of
the clear independence of the Panel and the procedure
followed thereafter, and I emphasise again no
recommendation has been rejected by the Panel and
a lower offer made, and some offers have been higher.
The second of the indirectly related issues to
question 1 is the evidential question. The way it was
put in the written submission of Howe & Co was that it's
unreasonable for the scheme to require contemporaneous
evidence of events from up to 20 years ago, particularly
in circumstances where postmasters may have been
deprived of access to their records at the point of
suspension and they may have been destroyed by Post Office.
But we emphasise and, sir, as you have seen and been taken to, the guidance on consequential loss makes
it clear that contemporaneous evidence is not required,
it is not a bar not to have it, but greater weight may
be placed on it as well as the factual evidence that is
undisputed or verifiable. That's what the guidance
says. Of course, where an application is concerned
about the Panel's approach to an alleged lack of
about the r and o approach to an allogod lack of

- contemporaneous evidence, that's a matter that can be
- raised as part of a dispute process.

1	That point is connected to the third point, which	1	maters and documents", so that's the starting point.
2	is the sharing of supporting information held by Post	2	The second point is that number of postmasters
3	Office. This was an issue flagged up by Mr Beer as	3	have made data subject access requests prior to or
4	well.	4	during the course of making an application and, of
5	Howe & Co have suggested that a procedural flaw in	5	course, there they will be provided with all data that
6	the scheme is that the sharing of supporting information	6	falls within that access request.
7	held by Post Office won't be until the point of	7	Turning then to the outcome letter, the outcome
8	receiving the offer. They say that's a substantial	8	letter lists all contemporaneous evidence which the
9	procedural flaw.	9	Panel assessed to make the recommendation and it
10	Can I just highlight first, the terms of reference	10	expressly explains that the applicant can request a copy
11	that you have for the scheme at tab 14. I don't	11	of any or all of those documents and pieces of evidence.
12	believe, sir, you were taken this particular element of	12	Applicants can also request a copy of the Post Office
13	it, at paragraph 6, so it's page 283 internally,	13	investigation report, the Herbert Smith Freehills legal
14	paragraph 6 provides:	14	case assessment, and a record of the Panel assessment
15	"Once an application has been made either party	15	and recommendation.
16	may write to the other to request relevant information.	16	All of this data is provided in order to support
17	The parties shall cooperate with each other in providing	17	the applicant's consideration of the offer and, of
18	any other information which the other party may	18	course, having considered it the applicant is free to
19	reasonably request. Information obtained and provided	19	accept or reject the offer, following which a good faith
20	in relation to each application should be proportionate	20	meeting can be held and, if necessary, disputes can be
20	to the circumstances of that application."	20	escalated thereafter.
22	So there is express anticipation that an applicant	22	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Sorry, this is my fault, but this
23	saying to Post Office, "I need this. Please provide me	22	information about the documentation which an applicant
23	with this", and Post Office can equally say of an	23	can obtain.
25	applicant, "Could you please provide the following	25	MS GALLAFENT: Is set out in the outcome letter.
20	61	20	62
1	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: It in the outcome letter.	1	bit of analysis and data collection on the question
2	MS GALLAFENT: Yes.	2	of
3	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: It is not in any prior guidance.	3	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Well, I think I will say now that rather
4	MS GALLIFANT: No.	4	than going along trying to listen to you and formulate,
5	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: So it's at that point.		
6		5	in inverted commas, rules and requests at the same time,
0	MS GALLAFENT: Exactly, so taking different stages, at the	5 6	in inverted commas, rules and requests at the same time, what may happen and I stress may is that if there
7			-
	MS GALLAFENT: Exactly, so taking different stages, at the	6	what may happen and I stress may is that if there
7	<b>MS GALLAFENT:</b> Exactly, so taking different stages, at the point of the application paragraph 6 of the terms of	6 7	what may happen and I stress may is that if there is any data that I require from any party before I make
7 8	<b>MS GALLAFENT:</b> Exactly, so taking different stages, at the point of the application paragraph 6 of the terms of reference emphasises the opportunity for the parties to	6 7 8	what may happen and I stress may is that if there is any data that I require from any party before I make a written report in whatever form it is following these
7 8 9	<b>MS GALLAFENT:</b> Exactly, so taking different stages, at the point of the application paragraph 6 of the terms of reference emphasises the opportunity for the parties to ask for information from each other. Then you get to	6 7 8 9	what may happen and I stress may is that if there is any data that I require from any party before I make a written report in whatever form it is following these hearings I will do it in writing after the hearings
7 8 9 10	<b>MS GALLAFENT:</b> Exactly, so taking different stages, at the point of the application paragraph 6 of the terms of reference emphasises the opportunity for the parties to ask for information from each other. Then you get to the point of the outcome letter and that is where the	6 7 8 9 10	what may happen and I stress may is that if there is any data that I require from any party before I make a written report in whatever form it is following these hearings I will do it in writing after the hearings rather than trying to do it as we are going along.
7 8 9 10 11	<b>MS GALLAFENT:</b> Exactly, so taking different stages, at the point of the application paragraph 6 of the terms of reference emphasises the opportunity for the parties to ask for information from each other. Then you get to the point of the outcome letter and that is where the applicant is expressly told there is a list of all	6 7 8 9 10 11	<ul> <li>what may happen and I stress may is that if there is any data that I require from any party before I make a written report in whatever form it is following these hearings I will do it in writing after the hearings rather than trying to do it as we are going along.</li> <li>MS GALLAFENT: I certainly wasn't suggesting that, sir. If</li> </ul>
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(16) Pages 61 - 64

# The Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry

1	for your patience with us.	1	figures based upon what your statement said last night.
2	Can I move then to the second of the questions	2	<b>MS GALLAFENT:</b> Yes, that was at the end of June.
3	posed, sir, in relation to delay. I'm not going to seek	3	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Now we're getting up to midnight on
4	to repeat the explanation set out in the May submissions	4	July 5 or 6, whichever you prefer. Is that it?
5	about the process between setting up the scheme and the	5	MS GALLAFENT: That's exactly it.
6	position reached by the time of those submissions.	6	<b>SIR WYN WILLIAMS:</b> Fine, right, so if you tell me that
7	You have our submissions on delay and I'm again	7	I will make a note on this document.
8	conscious, sir, of your indication in the note of	8	<b>MS GALLAFENT:</b> 1,659, which takes the percentage of offers
9	30 June that you have those well in mind and don't	9	to eligible applicants to come to 70 per cent.
10	require us to go through them again.	10	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right.
11	I do though want to flag up the continuing	11	The figure that Mr Beer gave me, obviously, for
12	progress being made since those submissions which	12	payments made is the same today as it was last night, so
13	demonstrates, we say, a clear and continuing positive	13	I don't need to worry about that.
14	trajectory towards resolving all current applications.	14	MS GALLAFENT: Yes.
15	Now, we provided an update in the late night note, as it	15	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right.
16	may become referred to, yesterday but in fact as of	16	MS GALLAFENT: They would have been very speedy indeed if
17	midnight yesterday I can confirm that further letters	17	they'd accepted it. Exactly.
18	have been sent out during the course of yesterday, which	18	You may note, just going back to page 302, of
19	take the number of eligible applicants who have been	19	course the information on progress and the anticipated
20	sent offer letters up to 1,659 out of 2,370, which takes	20	rate of progress to get us to 95 per cent by
21	us to us a 70 per cent rate of offers from applications.	21	December 2022 provides that the target was to reach 70
22	<b>SIR WYN WILLIAMS:</b> So I'm trying to make a note on the	22	per cent by the end of July. We have actually reached
23	relevant pages of my bundle, so this all starts on	23	it on 5 July which is why I emphasise a clear and
24	page 302 and then goes over to page 303. That was as at	24	continuing positive trajectory, and Post Office remains
25	7 June I think it was. Then Mr Beer gave me further	25	on course to provide at least 95 per cent of eligible
	65		66
1	applicants with offer letters by the end of this	1	assist the Inquiry. That then resulted in
2	calendar year. You will see that again on page 302.	2	Mr Racaldin(?) becoming Historical Matters Director in
3	To date 115 applicants have formally engaged the	3	January 2022.
4	dispute resolution process. 31 of those, 27 per cent,	4	However, in that period during which there was no
5	have now reached agreement on the amount of	5	longer a head of historical matters before Mr Recaldin
6	compensation. Good faith meetings have taken place with	6	took up his post the historical matters team continued
7	47 applicants, escalation meetings with seven	7	throughout to focus on matters arising from the group
8	applicants, are there are a further 11 good faith	8	litigation including the Historical Scheme.
9	meetings scheduled for the coming weeks.	9	We wouldn't accept that any delay arose as
10	On delay there are a couple of particular points	10	a result of the reinstructing of Historical Matters
11	raised by other core participants. The first is raised	11	Scheme which was considered necessary and appropriate to
12	by the National Federation of Subpostmasters who have	12	anticipate the needs of this Inquiry.
13	suggested it would be justifiable, sir, for you to ask	13	As I say, we've set out the reasons for the delay
13 14	-		
	suggested it would be justifiable, sir, for you to ask	13	As I say, we've set out the reasons for the delay
14	suggested it would be justifiable, sir, for you to ask whether the non-renewal of a contract of the previous	13 14	As I say, we've set out the reasons for the delay in our May submissions and I don't repeat them here.
14 15	suggested it would be justifiable, sir, for you to ask whether the non-renewal of a contract of the previous head of historical matters resulted in there being	13 14 15	As I say, we've set out the reasons for the delay in our May submissions and I don't repeat them here. Hudgell also flags up the issue of bankruptcy
14 15 16	suggested it would be justifiable, sir, for you to ask whether the non-renewal of a contract of the previous head of historical matters resulted in there being a significant period of time during which no individual	13 14 15 16	As I say, we've set out the reasons for the delay in our May submissions and I don't repeat them here. Hudgell also flags up the issue of bankruptcy cases. We recognise and agree that bankruptcy cases are
14 15 16 17	suggested it would be justifiable, sir, for you to ask whether the non-renewal of a contract of the previous head of historical matters resulted in there being a significant period of time during which no individual was responsible for driving the scheme forward.	13 14 15 16 17	As I say, we've set out the reasons for the delay in our May submissions and I don't repeat them here. Hudgell also flags up the issue of bankruptcy cases. We recognise and agree that bankruptcy cases are extremely complicated and may well take longer to
14 15 16 17 18	suggested it would be justifiable, sir, for you to ask whether the non-renewal of a contract of the previous head of historical matters resulted in there being a significant period of time during which no individual was responsible for driving the scheme forward. The position is that the fixed term contract for	13 14 15 16 17 18	As I say, we've set out the reasons for the delay in our May submissions and I don't repeat them here. Hudgell also flags up the issue of bankruptcy cases. We recognise and agree that bankruptcy cases are extremely complicated and may well take longer to resolve. We are actively working to resolve the
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14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	suggested it would be justifiable, sir, for you to ask whether the non-renewal of a contract of the previous head of historical matters resulted in there being a significant period of time during which no individual was responsible for driving the scheme forward. The position is that the fixed term contract for the previous head of historical matters ended on 23 July 2021. Prior to that, in May 2021, the Government had announced that this Inquiry would be moved on to a statutory footing. As a result, the Chief	13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	As I say, we've set out the reasons for the delay in our May submissions and I don't repeat them here. Hudgell also flags up the issue of bankruptcy cases. We recognise and agree that bankruptcy cases are extremely complicated and may well take longer to resolve. We are actively working to resolve the challenges posed by such cases, including the issue of the costs of the Official Receiver or Trustee-in-Bankruptcy. In the meantime, Post Office expects that the first offer will be made to an
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### The Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry

1	Mr Sethi who of course was the first witness to give	1
2	evidence before you, sir, in the human impact hearings.	2
3	If the Inquiry were to consider it helpful and if	3
4	Mr Sethi were to consent we would be happy to provide	4
5	the Inquiry with a full timeline of the processing of	5
6	his application. But for today it may suffice for me	6
7	just to note that his application is one of the	7
8	particularly complex ones which has raised a number of	8
9	procedural issues in terms of representation.	9
10	So far as the request for information that he	10
11	received shortly before he gave evidence is concerned,	11
12	for the avoidance of any doubt, the timing of that	12
13	request was in no way connected with the fact of his	13
14	giving evidence. Rather, it reflected that his	14
15	application had reached the request for further	15
16	information, that is the proactive request for	16
17	information designed to elicit further information,	17
18	particularly in relation to consequential losses stage	18
19	of the process.	19
20	Mr Sethi helpfully responded at the end of March	20
21	and his responses are currently being considered under	21
22	the scheme in the usual way.	22
23	Finally, there is a question of tax implications.	23
24	It is not raised again in relation to the delay. But in	24
25	this context we have been asked to confirm what 69	25
1	of enabling an applicant to consider an offer made to	1
2	them, or £400 where the offer is to pay the applicant's	2
3	claim in full or largely in full. So far as we are	3
4	aware no request for a contribution for legal advice has	4
5	ever been refused. So the figures that you have seen of	5
6	the number of contributions made we say reflects the	6
7	number of request received.	7
8	We do not consider that the absence of any	8
9	contribution to legal fees towards the making of the	9
10	application is itself unfair or inadequate. That's	10
11	suggested by Howe & Co.	11
12	This scheme has been designed to be simple and	12
13	user friendly, to avoid the need to incur such costs, as	13
14	set out in our May submissions. That's paragraph 39 for	14
15	your note.	15
16	In short, guidance is available to postmasters to	16
17	assist them in preparing an application. Sir, you have	17
18	seen a number of elements, key elements, of that	18
19	guidance.	19
20	Secondly, there is a presumption that a shortfall	20
21	was caused by a previous version of Horizon or a breach	21
22	of duty by Post Office in the absence of evidence to the	22
23	contrary.	23
24	Thirdly, Post Office has agreed not to take any	24
25	limitation defence in relation to claims brought under	25

71

provisions we have made for dealing with tax implications on certain pecuniary heads of loss. That's a request by Hudgell that it made in relation to question 2.

It's common ground that shortfall compensation does not attract tax, but Post Office is obliged to deduct tax for the other heads of compensation. It does so at the basic rate of 20% in accordance with the Income Tax Act 2007 section 874, which as is explained in outcome letters may result in POL, in Post Office, deducting less or more tax than the applicant is actually liable to pay.

Post Office notes that it's the applicant's responsibility to ensure the correct amount of tax is paid and that they may want to seek independent tax advice, and the letter also points applicants towards resources they might look to for further information on this particular issue. In these circumstances, Post Office does not consider it necessary or appropriate to offer any indemnity for scheme applications.

The third issue, if I may move on to the third question, sir, in relation to independent legal advice. It's availability. The Inquiry is obviously well aware the scheme provides for a contribution currently of £1,200 towards the cost of legal advice for the purpose 70

Fourthly, as I have already identified the Panel and case assessors act proactively to obtain further information from applicants where appropriate.

the scheme.

Again, sir, as you are also well aware, the Panel has a full discretion take into account any facts and matters which it considers will produce a fair result on the facts of each particular case, including but not limited to applicable legal principles.

As we set out in our further note and as Mr Beer emphasised as well as paying applicants the contribution towards legal fees at the offer stage, it has also paid contributions towards costs incurred by applicants prior to them receiving a compensation offer in two cases, for example, in relation to the costs of providing medical records in support of a claim for personal injury.

So far as the Post Office phase is concerned, Post Office does recognise that there may be some cases in which the current provision may be insufficient to support an individual applicant to resolve their claim. It is currently considering whether contributions towards further legal or other professional costs can be made available to applicants to help resolve their claims. We will obviously update the Inquiry as soon as a decision has been reached on this issue. 72

(18) Pages 69 - 72

1	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I mean, the impression I get and I do not	1	to accepting offers under the scheme. It is suggested
2	want to say this in any flippant sense, but many of the	2	it is instructive to examine the level of offer or award
3	offers which have been made and accepted are	3	made to unrepresented applicants as opposed to
4	comparatively easy to resolve. One is now getting to	4	represented applicants.
5	the stage where there are likely to be much more	5	The position as at midnight yesterday is 1,300
6	significant difficulties in resolving the applications.	6	applicants have accepted settlement offers. Of those,
7	MS GALLAFENT: Yes, and for the reasons we set out in the	7	two applicants had legal representation. 92 applicants
8	May submissions that was because of the approach adopted	8	have rejected settlement offers and of those 13
9	to the scheme by dealing with what we would characterise	9	applicants had legal representation. Can I put some
10	as low value claims, and those were the ones that were	10	context on those statistics by virtue of the question of
11	dealt with first. So the low value claim is a claim for	11	low value claims, sir, that I was just alluding to.
12	a shortfall up to £8,000, in some cases a claim for	12	Of the 1,300 accepted offers, just over half of
13	distress and inconvenience, but not all, but not for any	13	them, 678 for precision, were claims for shortfalls up
14	other form of consequential loss.	14	to £8,000 and no consequential loss, so potentially for
15	So those block of cases were, I would entirely	15	distress and inconvenience.
16	agree, sir, they were on their face simpler to resolve	16	Of the 92 rejected offers ten of them were those
17	because of the presumption in relation to shortfall and	17	types of claims, what we have characterised as lower
18	because of there being no issue in relation to	18	value claims. So, sir, you anticipate entirely
19	consequential loss apart from distress and	19	correctly, which is there are more as it were rejected
20	inconvenience.	20	offers where it is not a lower value claim
21	It may assist, sir, if I then deal perhaps with	21	proportionately but there are roughly half and half when
22	the statistics, because Howe & Co also suggested that we	22	it comes to acceptance of offers.
23	should provide you, sir, with the percentage of	23	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Sorry, can you repeat that? Of the 92
24	applicants who were and were not represented at the time	24	rejected, on the [draft] transcript in front of me, the
25	of the application, and the same percentages in relation	25	number has not come up after that.
20	73	20	74
1	MS GALLAFENT: Ten of them were lower value claims. That's	1	impacted by the time necessary to fully assess their
2	my lack of articulacy, I apologise. I'm standing too	2	claim and make a fair offer. To date, 28 such payments
3	far away from the microphone, ten.	3	have been made, that includes circumstances of severe
4	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I'm busily writing a note, even though	4	financial hardship, terminal illness, risk of personal
5	I have a contemporaneous transcript. It's the habit of	5	hardship, and old age, where concerns have been raised
6	a lifetime.	6	about the impact of the speed of progress on the
7	MS GALLIFANT: It is, it is. I'm grateful, thank you.	7	applicant. Some of those concerns have been raised by
8	I hope that provides some context in which the	8	the applicant. Others have been raised within Post
9	otherwise quite bald figures of representatives being on	9	Office and a proposal for an interim payment made on
10	record and contributions being made, as to why perhaps	10	Post Office's recommendation.
11	those figures are not quite so straightforwardly an	11	Where such appointments are made, it is express
12	indication there has been any form of inadequacy when it	12	explained to the applicants that they would not need to
13	comes to legal costs at the point of offer.	13	repay any of the interim payment in the event that the
14	Can I move to question 4, which is interim	14	final offer is made for less, or that accepting an
15	payments. It's been suggested by Howe & Co that the	15	interim payment would in anyway adversely impact their
16	scheme should make provision for interim payments in all	16	claim. It wouldn't.
17	cases, and it's unacceptable for Post Office to be able	17	So far as the position post offer is concerned,
18	to decide to whom such payments should be made. It is	18	other than potential hardship interim payments, Post
19	not clear whether that suggestion is made in the context	19	Office's priority is to seek to resolve applicants
20	of pre offer interim payments or post offer payments.	20	claims in a manner which is fair in all the
20	Can I address each of those in turn.	20	circumstances of the case.
21		21	That will we say typically be achieved by reaching
22 23	As Mr Beer indicated, payments have been made on an interim basis, prior to an offer being made, to those	22	
23 24	an interim basis, prior to an offer being made, to those applicants to the scheme who Post Office understood to	23 24	full and final settlements with the applicants rather
24 25	be in difficult circumstances who could be irremediably	24 25	than on a piecemeal basis through interim and part payments. As I have indicated at this stage offers have
		20	Davinging. As i have indicated at this stade uners have

1	been made to over two-thirds of applicants and of those	1	principles, and therefore potentially not in the same
2	accepted by 80 per cent of those applicants.	2	sum as any interim payment which might have been made.
3	There is a structured and clear plan to work	3	So we say that the position under the scheme is
4	through the dispute resolution process with those who	4	significantly different from the approach to interim
5	formally engaged it and to provide, as I've indicated,	5	payments in relation to postmasters whose convictions
6	at least 95 per cent of applicants with offer letters by	6	have been overturned when its considered by Post Office
7	the end of this year.	° 7	and BEIS that all such persons were likely to receive
8	Our position is it would be an unhelpful	8	greater sums than the up to £100,000 in due course for
9	divergence of resource and cost to set up some form of	9	their claims.
10	sub-scheme within the Historical Shortfall Scheme by	10	As for the suggestion that it should not be Post
11	which applicants could then apply for and interim offers	10	Office which decides when an interim payment should be
12	be made to them other than on hardship grounds.	12	made, were an independent body such as the Panel to
12	An additional factor for not making interim offers	13	determine such requests, there would inevitably be some
13	-	13	further delay in the process for applicants generally,
	is that the approach under the scheme is to reach an		in order to accommodate such cases going to the Panel
15 16	overall offer, as you have heard me say on a number of	15 16	
16	occasions, rather than break down the offer by	16	not once but twice. In those circumstances, we do not
17	individual heads of loss. As already indicated it's	17	accept that the absence of an express provision for
18	made on a number of applicant-friendly presumptions,	18	interim payments under the scheme is unfair or
19	such as the presumption that a shortfall loss was caused	19	inappropriate.
20	by Horizon. These presumptions would not apply were it	20	Sir, I'm going to move now to section B dealing
21	not possible to resolve the claim without the applicant	21	with final compensation for postmasters with quashed
22	going to court. In that situation, it's entirely	22	convictions. I note the time. I am very happy to press
23	possible in principle that a postmaster would not obtain	23	on with section B then I have very little to say on C
24	compensation in the same sum as the offer, which offer	24	and a couple of other points, but if you would prefer me
25	of course is built on those applicant-friendly 77	25	to break now and come back 78
1	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I think my view is simply this,	1	principles apply to compensation. Here the ordinary
2	Ms Gallafent, if you were to complete your submissions	2	principles do not apply, so that's why you might be able
3	within say 25 minutes that might be preferable, but if	3	to agree in principle a particular element of the offer,
4	that's not possible we'll have a break whenever it suits	4	say the shortfall or some element but I emphasise again,
5	you.	5	offers are made in the round, so you might be able to
6	MS GALLAFENT: No, I'm confident I can do that.	6	agree in principle and say, well, we accept this or
7	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Let's carry on until the end then.	7	that, but it wouldn't follow that then were there to be
8	Before we do, just a variation on the theme of	8	no agreement overall, that the applicant would actually
9	interim payments, which I don't think you touched on.	9	obtain through civil litigation a sum anything like the
10	The suggestion and this might become more	10	amount that's been offered based on the
11	a possibility as the more complicated cases are dealt	11	applicant-friendly principles. So I do say it raises
12	with that interim payments may be made about agreed	12	very different and difficult questions that simply are
13	sums, not whether they need them, just if agreed, let's	13	not there in the scheme in relation to sorry, the
14	get it over with and only discuss what's not agreed.	14	mechanism used in relation to postmasters with quashed
15	Have you got anything to say about that?	15	convictions.
16	MS GALLAFENT: I do because that's goes back to the factor	16	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right. I will think about that.
17	I mentioned in relation to the applicant-friendly	17	MS GALLAFENT: I thought you might.
18	premise of the offer. So when it's an agreed offer, it	18	Section B then, final compensation for postmasters
19	will be made on the basis that, you know, the shortfall	19	with quashed convictions. Mr Beer also emphasised and
20	of (unclear) Horizon, no limitation, et cetera. So	20	we say it is important to emphasise as well. There is
21	again it's a slightly different position to the position	21	no formal remediation scheme such as that established by
22	under the final scheme or the interim or final scheme	22	the Historical Shortfall Scheme for the payment of
23	for postmasters with quashed convictions, because	23	compensation to such persons. All claims are being
24	there's no such presumption. The approach under section	24	dealt with through without prejudice negotiations. We
25	B, which I will come on to, is simply that the ordinary	25	say that is an important distinction, because a number
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(20) Pages 77 - 80

1	of the submissions made by other core participants are	1
2	predicated on a scheme approach.	2
3	It's also important to emphasise that as at	3
4	3 July, Post Office has only received a total of six	4
5	largely fully quantified claims. So that's where we are	5
6	in terms of final compensation.	6
7	So far as the principles to be applied to the	7
8	calculation of final compensation payments are	8
9	concerned, some of those representing postmasters have	9
10	suggested that BEIS and/or ourselves should be invited	10
11	to clarify the approach to the general principles in	11
12	play in assessing liability and quantum.	12
13	I can confirm that Post Office agrees with Hudgell	13
14	Solicitors that the value of any individual claim must	14
15	be calculated applying the ordinary principles	15
16	applicable to the recovery of civil damages for	16
17	malicious prosecution. We also agree that such damages	17
18	may include aggravated and exemplary damages.	18
19	Mr Beer has already alluded to it but in applying	19
20	those principles it's the issue of non-pecuniary damages	20
21	that's proved particularly damaging in the negotiations	21
22	to date. There is case law in this area which indicates	22
23	what likely awards may look like but the current	23
24	circumstances of the particular postmasters involved are	24
25	unique, we say.	25
	81	
1	parties reaching an agreed resolution on the	1
2	non-pecuniary aspects of those claims and we hope that	2
3	that guidance may also be of wider use.	3
4	In this context it's also important for me to	4
5	emphasise that in no circumstances will Post Office be	5
6	the final arbiter of individual claims. That's	6
7	a suggestion made by Hodge Jones & Allen. If the	7
8	parties cannot resolve the claims themselves, whether	8
9	with the involvement of early evaluation, mediation, or	9
10	some other process, then the final arbiter of individual	10
11	claims will be the court. But would I would like to	11
12	emphasise that Post Office remains wholly committed to	12

seeking a negotiated outcome to all claims to avoid that 13 outcome if at all possible. 14 We also note the suggestion made by Hodge Jones 15 & Allen that the settlement deed is flawed, insofar as 16 it limits GLO claimants to claims of malicious 17 prosecution. It should be amended. 18 Paul Marshall goes further. He argues and says 19 there are prima facie grounds for the view that Post 20 Office secured the settlement deed as a result of 21 22 misleading the claimants and the court. On that basis 23 he and Hodge Jones & Allen seek to argue the approach to the calculation of direct and consequential loss should 24 25 be carried out by reference to the approach to claims in

It is in order to find a way thorough that issue that we agreed with a number of former postmasters represented by Hudgell Solicitors that the issue of non-pecuniary damages should be referred an early neutral valuation. That of course is an expression of a view on the likely outcome if the matter were to go to court.

We emphasise that the fact that the process is without prejudice and is confidential allows a more open and less formal process in that respect. We're very grateful that the very eminent senior judge Lord Dyson has agreed to act as the evaluator for that process. It is anticipated that the evaluation will be concluded by the end of this month.

The outcome is not of course binding on the parties. But it is hoped that it will allow these issues to be resolved quickly.

We are also and separate to the early neutral evaluation continuing to progress without prejudice negotiations in relation to the first of two fully quantified claims from the total of six that we have largely quantified. Good progress has been made on pecuniary loss claims to date. We anticipate that the early neutral evaluation process to be conducted by Lord Dyson will provide guidance that will facilitate the 82

#### fraud.

I note Mr Beer didn't reference to this in his opening, and I anticipate that's for the same reasons that we say is simply isn't open to you, sir, to consider it at this point. It goes way beyond the issue identified in your invitation, which is the principles that are being applied to the calculation of final compensation payments, rather than the principles which some of those representing postmasters suggest should be.

It also doesn't appear to fall within the scope of the Inquiry's Terms of Reference, but even were the Terms of Reference to be amended in some way, it is obvious that any such argument could be not be fairly considered far less in some way any view given on it at this point of Inquiry, prior to the Inquiry having heard or considered any of the evidence in relation to the conduct of the group litigation. That's a matter also due to be heard next spring.

For the avoidance of any doubt, Post Office would emphatically refute any suggestion that it behaved in a fraudulent way or misled the GLO claimants or the court in resolving those proceedings. The terms of the settlement deed were negotiated and agreed in good faith. But we do emphasise we say at this stage that 84

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(21) Pages 81 - 84

1	one simply cannot consider or reach any view on those	1
2	submissions made by Mr Marshall and Hodge Jones & Allen	2
3	in that context.	3
4	On the question of disgorgement which is raised by	4
5	Mr Marshall and Hodge Jones & Allen again, they have	5
6	raised the issue of the inclusion of sums received by	6
7	Post Office by way of compensation or confiscation post	7
8	conviction as being included as direct and consequential	8
9	losses. I can confirm that claimants can claim any sum	9
10	Post Office received through post conviction orders for	10
11	compensation or confiscation as losses directly	11
12 13	connected to their wrongly conviction, so that is claimable.	12 13
13 14		13 14
14 15	Moving to the mechanisms by which final	14
15 16	compensation payments are being calculated, to an extent	15 16
17	our response here overlaps with the question as to the principles being applied, but three discrete issues have	17
18	been raised in this context.	18
19	First, Howe & Co have suggested that BEIS should	19
20	undertake will undertake sorry, that BEIS should	20
20	undertake - will undertake - sony, that belo should undertake, that it will undertake not to seek to claw	20
22	back any interim payment made to a postmaster. This is	22
23	a subject on which Post Office has been very closely	23
24	engaged with HMRC and we confirmed in our late night	24
25	note from yesterday that as of yesterday we had received	25
	85	
1	of a postmaster's reasonable costs as part of the	1
2	negotiations.	2
3	Question 8 is about procedures adopted to resolve	3
4	disputes about the valuation of final compensation	4
5	payment. I have already highlighted in particular the	5
6	early neural evaluation process. But Post Office	6
7	remains open and supportive to the use of further such	7
8	processes or other alternative dispute mechanisms to	8
9	resolve other disputes in due course.	9
10	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Ms Gallafent, when Mr Beer was addressing	10
11	me, he suggested that I might wish to probe with the	11
12	representatives of this category of claimants to what	12
13	extent I should involve myself at all. He put it rather	13
14	more elegantly, I should butt out of it perhaps.	14
	MS GALLAFENT: He did.	
15	MS GALLAI LNT. The dia.	15
15 16	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: What's the Post Office view about that?	15 16
16	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: What's the Post Office view about that?	16
16 17	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: What's the Post Office view about that? MS GALLAFENT: Sir, in response to the questions that you	16 17
16 17 18	<ul><li>SIR WYN WILLIAMS: What's the Post Office view about that?</li><li>MS GALLAFENT: Sir, in response to the questions that you have raised, our position is that there is no need for</li></ul>	16 17 18
16 17 18 19	<ul> <li>SIR WYN WILLIAMS: What's the Post Office view about that?</li> <li>MS GALLAFENT: Sir, in response to the questions that you have raised, our position is that there is no need for you to intervene on those points. There is nothing that</li> </ul>	16 17 18 19
16 17 18 19 20	<ul> <li>SIR WYN WILLIAMS: What's the Post Office view about that?</li> <li>MS GALLAFENT: Sir, in response to the questions that you have raised, our position is that there is no need for you to intervene on those points. There is nothing that would give you concern from what we have told you about</li> </ul>	16 17 18 19 20
16 17 18 19 20 21	<ul> <li>SIR WYN WILLIAMS: What's the Post Office view about that?</li> <li>MS GALLAFENT: Sir, in response to the questions that you have raised, our position is that there is no need for you to intervene on those points. There is nothing that would give you concern from what we have told you about the concerns that have been raised by the other core</li> </ul>	16 17 18 19 20 21
16 17 18 19 20 21 22	<ul> <li>SIR WYN WILLIAMS: What's the Post Office view about that?</li> <li>MS GALLAFENT: Sir, in response to the questions that you have raised, our position is that there is no need for you to intervene on those points. There is nothing that would give you concern from what we have told you about the concerns that have been raised by the other core participants, so that's our position.</li> </ul>	16 17 18 19 20 21 22
16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	<ul> <li>SIR WYN WILLIAMS: What's the Post Office view about that?</li> <li>MS GALLAFENT: Sir, in response to the questions that you have raised, our position is that there is no need for you to intervene on those points. There is nothing that would give you concern from what we have told you about the concerns that have been raised by the other core participants, so that's our position.</li> <li>SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Fine, all right.</li> </ul>	16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

confirmation from HMRC that the removal of the claw back provisions will not affect the tax status on which the payments are made. We wrote yesterday to all claimants to communicate the position of HMRC in this regard, so that concern has been assuaged.

Secondly, it is suggested that any disputes should be referred to independent arbitration within an appropriate arbitration scheme. That's also Howe & Co.

If particular representatives wish to raise that option with Post Office they are obviously free to do so and Post Office can assess with those claimants the best way to resolve the cases. For example, arbitration or early neutral valuation or mediation or even litigation potentially were it to be regarded as being relevant for precedential value.

Thirdly, Mr Marshall has suggested that Post Office should make available to claimants data that it holds on employees' pay bands over time. I can confirm Post Office already proactively offers and provides, subject to the provision of necessary data protection consents, the remuneration data that it holds to claimants with quashed convictions.

Question 7 is the provision for applicants to obtain independent legal advice. As we indicated in our May submissions, Post Office will consider the payment 86

not a point flagged up by Mr Beer in his opening therefore I anticipate it may not be a point that you deal with directly, it's the role of Post Office in the resolution of these claims.

In their initial submissions Hodge Jones & Allen submitted that what was required was a transparent process operated by BEIS working with Herbert Smith Freehills. In an annex they now argue that Post Office should terminate its continuing retainer of Herbert Smith Freehills and they say Herbert Smith Freehills should be retained by BEIS with a consequential set of agreements about duties of confidence and the like owed to Post Office. So they say that Herbert Smith Freehills would be retained by BEIS for both final and further compensation claims. Further, by which I mean you have identified in category C fair compensation claimants.

This argument again goes well beyond the questions, sir, set out in your invitation and, arguably, again beyond the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry, but without prejudice to the position can I make it clear the Post Office immediate view is there is no justification at all for any such recommendation. So far as final compensation for postmasters with quashed convictions is concerned, it is clear we say 88

# The Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry

25	would we be the final at arbiter. 91	25	Submission by MR MERTENS 92
24 25	compensation. Sir, we say that in no circumstances	24 25	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, Mr Mertens.
23 24	subject of whether they are or are not entitled to	23	(2.07 pm)
22	claimants set out in your provisional view on the	22	(Luncheon adjournment)
21	representatives of the three named potential category 3	21	(1.10 pm)
20	representatives continue to liaise with the	20	cricket begins. Thank you.
19 20	I can also confirm that Post Office legal	19	2.05 and then we should finish comfortably before the
18	applicant having to bring civil proceedings.	18	machine I have in front of me, so I think we'll start at
17	alternative dispute resolution, to avoid if possible any	17	afternoon it is now 1.08, according to this wonderful
16	to engage in mediation, arbitration, other forms of	16	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Because of the likely timings this
15	POL, as with the scheme more generally, remains willing	15	MR STEIN: Thank you, sir.
14	of compensation, whether on an interim or final basis,	14	say no more than that.
13	I confirm in the event of any dispute over payment	13	predicted you wouldn't need a full two hours and I will
12	is payable falls to go to the court.	12	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right. Well, Mr Stein, Mr Enright
11	ultimately the question of whether or not compensation	11	<b>MR MERTENS:</b> Very short, it will be five or ten minutes.
10	establishment of a remediation scheme such as HSS, so	10	some kind of rough time estimate?
9	interim compensation, neither of those resulted in the	9	I ask just ask Mr Mertens because I think you are next,
8	December announcement nor the July announcement on	8	All right. It's time for another break. Can
7	Neither announcement by the Minister, neither the	7	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Thank you, Ms Gallafent.
6	to those postmasters.	6	can on these subjects.
5	of whether an interim or a final payment should be made	5	As I said, we stand ready to assist in any other way we
4	demands that Post Office should not be the final arbiter	4	I am very grateful. Those are our submissions.
3	your provisional view, you indicated that fairness	3	have nothing further to add.
2	public interest quashed convictions, paragraph 28 of	2	sitting behind me and behind me behind me, as it were,
1	category 3 are concerned, so those are as it were the	1	I am going to glance over just to check that those
	89		90
25	As for that scheme or mechanism, as I indicated at	25	Secondly, so far as persons falling within
24	or mechanism.	24	subject. We don't say anything about that.
23	involvement in any further or final compensation scheme	23	announcement. We have seen what BEIS says on the
22	wholly premature to raise any issue as to Post Office	22	announcement, that is predating the subsequent March
21	support from Government in that matter. So we say it's	21	eligible for claims for compensation under the December
20	or mechanism set up for that purpose and any request for	20	position that persons in categories 1 and 2 were
19	cooperate to the fullest extent possible with any scheme	19	we do not seek to make any submissions on BEIS's
18	further or fair compensation. But it will of course	18	provisional views, subject to two points. The first is
17	deliver this type of compensation. This is, sorry, the	17	compensation issue dated 9 May, we agree with your
16	it clear that it has not been asked by Government to	16	any doubt we can confirm, as set out in your document or
15	Post Office shouldn't be involved, Post Office has made	15	prosecuted subpostmasters. Just for the avoidance of
14	compensation, in that context where its suggested that	14	your provisional view on compensation issues relating
13	Finally, can I just deal then with final	13	Finally, and very briefly, can I deal shortly with
12	the speed of resolution of the claims.	12	soon as possible thereafter.
11	outweigh any perceived benefit, particularly in terms of	11	addressed so we can offer clarification or assistance as
10	negotiations take place, would very considerably	10	matters which we consider we haven't already adequately
9	terms on legal representation and the entity with whom	9	next week and we will seek to pick up any further
8	obvious complications with any such rearrangement in	8	by other core participants who follow us later today and
7	Certainly, we'd submit that the inherent and	7	ensure that we listen carefully to the points to be made
6	it will continue to do so.	6	Of course, more generally we're very keen to
5	quantified claims and there is no reason to doubt that	5	happy to do that in writing after the hearing next week.
4	settlements with those that have brought fully	4	the Inquiry would like to hear from us then we're very
2 3	represented by Herbert Smith Freehills, is acting promptly and reasonably in its approach negotiating	2	on those matters but, of course, if there is any issue arising following BEIS's submissions next week on which
	represented by Uerbert Smith Freehille, is esting	2	on those matters but of source, if there is any issue

1	MR MERTENS: Good afternoon. May I first of all thank the	1	Since the hearings began on 14 February, UKGI has
2	Inquiry for having been given the opportunity to provide	2	followed the Human Impact Hearings and Focus Groups
3	written submissions in relation to today's issues and	3	closely. It's been concerned to hear in many of the
4	also for being given the opportunity to address you	4	accounts that have been given, which are now reflected
5	briefly today. I make these submissions on behalf of UK	5	in some of the submissions that the Inquiry has received
6	Government Investments who I will refer to as UKGI.	6	for these hearings, that compensation is not being
7	As indicated in its written submissions, UKGI is	7	delivered effectively.
8	very grateful to the Inquiry for being able to attend	8	UKGI wants to ensure that it has as full an
9	and participate in these hearings concerning issues of	9	understanding of these issues as it can so that it can
10	compensation to subpostmasters and others. It	10	fulfil its functions most effectively. UKGI has
10	recognises that the issues that you have identified are	11	therefore referred each of the written submissions for
12	very important issues for the Inquiry to examine now,	12	these hearings with care. It now attends these hearings
12	and it's ready to work with the Inquiry to assist in	12	today and next week for the principal purpose of
13	anyway that it can.	13	listening, listening so as to hear clearly the
	UKGI's role in relation to these issues is, as		submissions made on behalf of all Core Participants,
15 16		15 16	•
	described in our submissions, one of assisting BEIS with		including the responses that POL gives to the issues
17	its oversight of various of the arrangements that have	17 19	that have been raised by others. In that way, the views
18	been put in place and providing challenge to POL on its	18	expressed by all concerned can be taken into account in
19	delivery of those arrangements, both at official level	19	UKGI's delivery of its function of supporting BEIS, both
20	and through the attendance of the shareholder	20	in terms of oversight and of challenge.
21	non-executive director on the Post Office board and	21	As indicated in UKGI's written submissions,
22	relevant subcommittee. It seeks to fulfil those	22	additional detail concerning its involvement in the
23	functions in light of the clear objective of achieving	23	compensation issues and arrangements have been set out
24	full and fair compensation delivered as promptly and as	24	in the Government's response to the BEIS Committee's
25	effectively as possible. 93	25	report on Post Office compensation, which appears in the 94
	50		54
1	bundle for todav at tab 13.	1	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: The floor is yours. Mr Stein.
1 2	bundle for today at tab 13. UKGI's role in supporting BEIS is also reflected	1 2	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: The floor is yours. Mr Stein. Submission by MR STEIN. QC
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(24) Pages 93 - 96

1	generally the family life of those individuals derailed	1	
2	by the actions of the Post Office, Fujitsu and BEIS.	2	
3	So we have considered your statement of 30 June of	3	
4	this year where you have stated that once you have heard	4	
5	oral submissions, you will make a determination as to	5	
6	whether to proceed to an interim report pursuant to	6	
7	section 24(3) of the Inquiries Act 2005 or provide a	7	
8	non-statutory progress update.	8	
9	Can we strongly request that you issue an interim	9	
10	report. It is our submission that it will be important	10	
11	you, sir, as the Chair of this Inquiry, having heard the	11	
12	evidence from those people that have given evidence	12	
13	before you within the Human Impact Hearings, having seen	13	
14	all of the written representations that have been made	14	
15	by the various bodies and institutions, to make findings	15	
16	as to the position reached in relation to compensation.	16	
17	But the other value of an interim report will be	17	
18	that within that report you can set out your	18	
19	recommendations, recommendations which you will then be	19	
20	able to consider and review during the lifetime of the	20	
21	Inquiry.	21	
22	Now, we know the background to this. In relation	22	
23	to the GLO litigants, it is that they played a crucial	23	
24	role in exposing the Post Office Horizon scandal. We	24	
25	also know that in 2019 much of the monies paid over as 97	25	
1	would consider them, please, in such part of your	1	
2	recommendations as you would be prepared to consider.	2	
3	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Mr Stein, will you give me those in	3	
4	slightly slower fashion because, for whatever reason,	4	
5	I'm not getting a simultaneous transcript now. I want	5	
6	to make a careful note of what you are saying.	6	
7	<b>MR STEIN:</b> Sir, not only will I do that but we will also	7	
8	undertake to provide it in writing so that you have	8	
9	those set out.	9	
10	There are six individual points that we ask you to	10	
11	consider making. Firstly, that significant interim	11	
12	payments are made immediately to all of those	12	
13	subpostmasters who are outstanding.	13	
14	Point 2, that as regards the recent press release	14	
15	from BEIS that they are making available 19.5 million as	15	
16	an interim payment fund, that you, sir, are provided	16	
17	with the principles to be used for the distribution of	17	SIR
18	these funds amongst the GLO litigants. Sir, that would	18	
19	allow you to consider the fairness of payments amongst	19	
20	the litigants and make any recommendations as may be	20	
21	required.	21	
22	Point 3, that fairness demands that the	22	MR
23	Post Office should not be the final arbiter of whether	23	SIR
24	an interim or final payment should be made in	24	MR
25	compensation claims made by any individual in categories	25	SIR
	99		

part of the settlement were swallowed in legal costs, and we also know that the settlement described in its terms a reference to "litigation funders". So it is very clear that the Post Office has known for some time that a lot of the money that would otherwise have been paid over in a settlement was never going to go to the GLO litigants. One of the points that we make, therefore, in relation to this is the delay that has taken place.

We have heard obviously on 22 March the Minister announcing that additional funding would be made available to give those in the GLO Compensation Group compensation that is similar to that which is available to non-GLO group members. One of the findings that we would ask you to make, though, is this, that since March of this year not one GLO group member has received any compensation.

We do say that there has been obfuscation and delay in dealing with these matters as should have been appropriate by essentially what is a public body: the Post Office. We know it is privatised but it is owned by the Government. Therefore, an interim report setting out recommendations would provide a target list for the Government and for the Post Office to then follow.

We ask for the following points to be made if you 98

in A, B or C. Point 4, that BEIS should make provision for reasonable legal costs all in stages of compensation applications in all three categories that you have identified, and that claimants are provided with proper access to disclosure at all stages. Point 5, that of the principles that you have sought to discover for all compensation schemes, or proposed schemes, there needs to be transparent and disclosed settled precedents and comparables, allowing for legal advice to be given to the Post Office's victims at their individual category of claim and expected financial outcome. Finally, at point 6, a timetable be set out for the establishment of the GLO Compensation Scheme capable of being monitored and followed by all those involved. R WYN WILLIAMS: Can I just be clear with you, Mr Stein. That last point, point 6, is clearly related solely to I will call them the GLO claimants. You call them GLO. Point 1 to 5 apply to all categories, so that I'm clear, A, B and C. STEIN: Sir, yes. R WYN WILLIAMS: A, B and C, 1 to 5, 6 is specific to GLO. R STEIN: Sir, yes. R WYN WILLIAMS: Okay. 100

(25) Pages 97 - 100

1	MR STEIN: Sir, we recognise, as has already been made in	1
2	passing comment this morning, this is not a court. This	2
3	is not the High Court. Your powers are limited to	3
4	making statements, recommendations, and putting forward	4
5	findings. It is, though, nevertheless possible for you	5
6	to set out what you would regard as being within the	6
7	range of reasonable responses that could be made by	7
8	setting out a timetable and, of course, that can then be	8
9	reconsidered if there is any attempt, if you like, or	9
10	any suspicion that such a timetable is not being	10
11	followed. It would be an indication, in other words.	11
12	The reason why we say that such recommendations	12
13	are required is because, in our submission, the approach	13
14 15	of the Post Office and BEIS to compensation replicates	14 15
15 16	past behaviour. We suggest that what is happening is that the Post Office is continuing to attempt, and	15
17	actually succeeding, in siloing subpostmasters, keeping	10
18	them ignorant of what is happening in relation to	18
19	compensation claims as regards to one to another. There	19
20	is a limitation being provided on access to full legal	20
21	advice. The onus of proof point has been made already,	21
22	but the onus of proof point is that despite the fact	22
23	that many Post Office business papers and accounts were	23
24	removed, or over the years have gone, that the burden of	24
25	proof is nevertheless placed upon the applicants within	25
	101	
1	assistance.	1
2	The interim report that we ask you, sir, to make	2
3	does not relate to recent events. The Post Office and	3
4	its sole shareholder (the Department for Business,	4
5	Energy and Industrial Strategy, BEIS) which monitors the	5
6	performance of the Post Office through UK Government	6
7	Investments, has been firmly aware of the failings of	7
8	the Horizon system for many years.	8
9	There were the two judgments by Mr Justice Fraser	9
10	in 2019 that demonstrated that the Post Office had	10
11	failed to ensure that its operating system, Horizon, was	11
12	fit and reliable for the purposes of its systems and as	12
13	a basis for any type of legal case. Nevertheless, the	13
14	Post Office throughout those proceedings fought the case	14
15	tooth and nail thorough the High Court, even seeking at	15
16	one stage to remove from Mr Justice Fraser from the	16
17	case.	17
18	Not one of the Horizon system. The Horizon system	18
19	is not a sentient being. The Horizon system did not	19

 18
 Not one of the Horizon system. The Horizon system

 19
 is not a sentient being. The Horizon system did not

 20
 pick its victims. The Horizon system did not decide

 21
 which of the Post Office offices individual balances it

 22
 would disturb and infect with its bugs. The Horizon

 23
 system is a product of the negligence and lack of care

 24
 of the people who operated and owned it. In fact, we

 25
 suspect, as the Inquiry progresses we're going to find

these schemes. We say that the collection of those issues is causing the same problem that you have heard through the Human Impact Hearings, that each one of the subpostmasters in their individual post offices was left in ignorance of what going on elsewhere without information that would have assisted them in dealing with the Post Office.

Now if, sir, you are able to follow that request and put forward an interim report, it would assist in providing us with a way forward because one of the things that has been apparent this week, and indeed up until today, is that the sands have been moving in the background. We have heard very submissions coming in late. The submission that you referred to as the one last night, in fact, I think my instructing solicitors received it at 8.30 this morning, as it was passed on by the Inquiry -- we're grateful for that -- and so we didn't even have it at the 9.50 last night that it otherwise might have been available. We know that what has been happening is behind the scenes letters have been sent to many of the people that we represent and, therefore, there is a problem that exists which is a shifting sands of position that is hard to grasp, which is why, sir, an interim report setting out what you would regard as being the way forward would be of real 102

that all post offices had some problems. The question is: to what degree?

The Post Office should never have thought to preserve its reputation at all costs by fighting the High Court case. But what it did do, by doing so, was at the cost of further harm to the lives, financial health, and mental wellbeing of those we represent. The Post Office is in, in effect, a public organisation and should have immediately told the truth to its Post Office workers. Instead, what has happened in relation to compensation it has set about putting in place complicated schemes run by corporate lawyers to provide access to some compensation for some its victims.

Sir, on 8 November last year I addressed you at the first hearing of this Public Inquiry after it had been put on a statutory basis. I set out then that many ex-subpostmasters face imminent financial ruin and that people will lose their homes unless something is done urgently to assist them. I added then that some may not survive the lifetime of the Inquiry due to stress-related illnesses. Indeed, since the Inquiry has started hearings in February of this year, I am sad to say that I have been informed that another of those affected by the Post Office in this scandal has died. 104

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1	We don't, of course, forget such individuals as Marian	1	its reference and issues to compel the Post Office and
2	Holmes' husband Peter, a proud and distinguished	2	BEIS to disclose an up-to-date clarification on
3	ex-police officer who went to his grave with a wholly	3	compensation.
4	undeserved conviction recorded against his name.	4 5	Of course, all of our clients have asked me to
5	The obfuscation and denial that I have referred to	5	convey their gratitude to you and your team at this
6 7	has continued since the time of the High Court hearings.	6 7	Inquiry for acknowledging and prioritising this
7 8	On 1 December 2021, BEIS wrote to two of our clients and told them a full and final settlement was reached	7 8	important issue through conducting these hearings today
8 9	between the claimants in the GLO and the Post Office.	8 9	and next week. But it may assist you to know that many of our clients have found it helpful to give evidence in
10	There is nothing further the Department can do at this	10	the Human Impact Hearings, finding the experience
10	time.	10	cathartic and giving them a degree of closure.
12	On 6 December last year, Mr Enright, partner at	12	But the harm which the Post Office has caused to
13	Howe & Co Solicitors, wrote to Mr Scully and stated	13	our clients is ongoing and is made manifest in the their
14	that:	14	desperate financial consequences. Let me give you some
15	"Neither you nor your Government's hands are tied	15	examples of what has been said. Marion Drydale says:
16	by the settlement in the Group Litigation. It is	16	"I have sold my jewellery, used my inheritance,
17	entirely open to your department and your Government to	17	cashed in my pension. Every day is filled with
18	acknowledge the widely accepted fact that claimants in	18	uncertainty, a dread of more bills I cannot pay."
19	the Group Litigation performed a vital public service."	19	Peter Worsfold says that he has still not been
20	Without their action, for which they paid a very	20	able to repay his 94-year-old mother for bailing him out
21	high price, the greatest miscarriage of justice in	21	when the Post Office demanded money for shortfalls in
22	British legal history would never have been uncovered.	22	2002. He visits the supermarket at 4 p.m. when they
23	In November, I asked you, sir, as Chair, to use	23	have put short-dated items out at reduced prices.
24	your wide powers to require the production of evidence	24	Faisal Aziz is on the verge of declaring
25	that the Inquiry believes is relevant to the terms of	25	bankruptcy. He worries that he will not be able to feed
	105		106
1	his five children.	1	expressed in relation to groups A, B and C. We need to
		I	expressed in relation to groups A, D and C. We need to
<i>'</i> )	Sucan Hazzleton, who you will recall as you asked	2	know looking forward, what are the principles that are
2	Susan Hazzleton, who you will recall as you asked	2 3	know, looking forward, what are the principles that are
3	questions in relation to her particular circumstance.	3	going to be used in relation to the setting out of
3 4	questions in relation to her particular circumstance. She says that she is 69 years old in December and she	3 4	going to be used in relation to the setting out of compensation in the future for the GLO group.
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ensation for the Group Litigant claimants. The

(27) Pages 105 - 108

1	principles which we apply to the calculation of further	1
2	compensation payments.	2
3	10. The mechanism or mechanisms by which further	3
4	compensation payments will be calculated.	4
5	11. The provision, if any, which will be made for	5
6	applicants to obtain independent legal advice in	6
7	relation to their claims.	7
8 9	<ol> <li>The procedure or procedures which will be adopted to resolve disputes about the value of further</li> </ol>	8 9
9 10	compensation payments.	9 10
10	Yet the Post Office responded in six lines at	10
12	paragraph 58 of its written submissions to say that:	12
13	"Until further information is released by	13
14	Government, Post Office is unable to assist the Chair	14
15	further in relation to issues 9 to 12."	15
16	Well, BEIS went one better and responded in two	16
17	paragraphs. At paragraphs 38 and subsequently 39 of	17
18	their submissions dated 31 May, they have said that they	18
19	convened a working group, that decisions have been made,	19
20	and, whilst the Department has a strong desire to begin	20
21	payments as soon as possible, the Department hopes to be	21
22	able to provide a further update to the Inquiry at the	22
23	hearing in July.	23
24	So we are at a loss to understand why BEIS has	24
25	failed to answer your questions. They were simple	25
	109	
1	questions.	1
2	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has	2
2 3	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing	2 3
2 3 4	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally	2 3 4
2 3 4 5	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it	2 3 4 5
2 3 4 5 6	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and	2 3 4 5 6
2 3 4 5 6 7	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that	2 3 4 5 6 7
2 3 4 5 6 7 8	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff?	2 3 4 5 6 7 8
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now aware, and this is all it means to them, that the	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now aware, and this is all it means to them, that the Government announcement means that they may be receiving	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now aware, and this is all it means to them, that the Government announcement means that they may be receiving some interim compensation. Now, of course, this	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now aware, and this is all it means to them, that the Government announcement means that they may be receiving some interim compensation. Now, of course, this position should have been reached a very long time ago	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now aware, and this is all it means to them, that the Government announcement means that they may be receiving some interim compensation. Now, of course, this position should have been reached a very long time ago and we still have no clear time-frame for a matter that	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now aware, and this is all it means to them, that the Government announcement means that they may be receiving some interim compensation. Now, of course, this position should have been reached a very long time ago and we still have no clear time-frame for a matter that is urgent. This is not a gift. The people we represent	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now aware, and this is all it means to them, that the Government announcement means that they may be receiving some interim compensation. Now, of course, this position should have been reached a very long time ago and we still have no clear time-frame for a matter that is urgent. This is not a gift. The people we represent are not a charity. They deserve adequate immediate	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now aware, and this is all it means to them, that the Government announcement means that they may be receiving some interim compensation. Now, of course, this position should have been reached a very long time ago and we still have no clear time-frame for a matter that is urgent. This is not a gift. The people we represent are not a charity. They deserve adequate immediate compensation, as we have said many times, for their huge	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now aware, and this is all it means to them, that the Government announcement means that they may be receiving some interim compensation. Now, of course, this position should have been reached a very long time ago and we still have no clear time-frame for a matter that is urgent. This is not a gift. The people we represent are not a charity. They deserve adequate immediate compensation, as we have said many times, for their huge actual and reputational losses.	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now aware, and this is all it means to them, that the Government announcement means that they may be receiving some interim compensation. Now, of course, this position should have been reached a very long time ago and we still have no clear time-frame for a matter that is urgent. This is not a gift. The people we represent are not a charity. They deserve adequate immediate compensation, as we have said many times, for their huge	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now aware, and this is all it means to them, that the Government announcement means that they may be receiving some interim compensation. Now, of course, this position should have been reached a very long time ago and we still have no clear time-frame for a matter that is urgent. This is not a gift. The people we represent are not a charity. They deserve adequate immediate compensation, as we have said many times, for their huge actual and reputational losses. The BEIS news story says that Ministers are to	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now aware, and this is all it means to them, that the Government announcement means that they may be receiving some interim compensation. Now, of course, this position should have been reached a very long time ago and we still have no clear time-frame for a matter that is urgent. This is not a gift. The people we represent are not a charity. They deserve adequate immediate compensation, as we have said many times, for their huge actual and reputational losses. The BEIS news story says that Ministers are to provide a 19.5 million interim compensation package to	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now aware, and this is all it means to them, that the Government announcement means that they may be receiving some interim compensation. Now, of course, this position should have been reached a very long time ago and we still have no clear time-frame for a matter that is urgent. This is not a gift. The people we represent are not a charity. They deserve adequate immediate compensation, as we have said many times, for their huge actual and reputational losses. The BEIS news story says that Ministers are to provide a 19.5 million interim compensation package to the postmasters who played a crucial role in exposing	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now aware, and this is all it means to them, that the Government announcement means that they may be receiving some interim compensation. Now, of course, this position should have been reached a very long time ago and we still have no clear time-frame for a matter that is urgent. This is not a gift. The people we represent are not a charity. They deserve adequate immediate compensation, as we have said many times, for their huge actual and reputational losses. The BEIS news story says that Ministers are to provide a 19.5 million interim compensation package to the postmasters who played a crucial role in exposing the Horizon scandal. The news story contains next to no	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	The view that our clients takes is that BEIS has to be dragged kicking and screaming by my instructing solicitors Howe & Co and this Inquiry into finally agreeing to at least move in the right direction. Is it actually possible to believe that the Post Office and BEIS are so incapable of understanding, even now, that they have victimised their own staff? So what does this mean? Our clients are now aware, and this is all it means to them, that the Government announcement means that they may be receiving some interim compensation. Now, of course, this position should have been reached a very long time ago and we still have no clear time-frame for a matter that is urgent. This is not a gift. The people we represent are not a charity. They deserve adequate immediate compensation, as we have said many times, for their huge actual and reputational losses. The BEIS news story says that Ministers are to provide a 19.5 million interim compensation package to the postmasters who played a crucial role in exposing the Horizon scandal. The news story contains next to no detail. There is nothing setting out the date by which	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

questions, setting out the need for simple answers, targeted at what is required by the Group Litigation individuals.

Our clients do not wish to wait to hear BEIS proposals such as they may be on the next occasion that we meet in relation to this Inquiry.

May I make a note now that, because of the timetabling (of which I make no complaint whatsoever), that we would ask if points arise that we need to deal with that we may need to then return to make some submissions in response after hearing from BEIS on the next occasion.

Sir, what is more concerning is that on 30 June, instead of complying with your requests for information, BEIS decided to issue a press statement on its website entitled:

"New Story 19.5 million interim compensation package for subpostmasters who helped uncover Horizon scandal."

This is a terrible and heartrending scandal. It should not be an opportunity for a Government department to seek to score public relations points through the Media. Nor should BEIS seek to disregard the Inquiry process and embark on a frolic of its own, particularly when directed by the Chair to answer particular 110

basis upon which the funds will be apportioned. These matters need to be clarified so that the representatives of the Core Participants and my instructing solicitors and others can consider them and comment upon them, if necessary, on the next occasion.

May I also add at this point that the lack of trust between my client group and the Post Office, Fujitsu and BEIS is so extreme that they doubt the reality of the interim compensation package and, given the track record of the Post Office and BEIS, who can blame them? Put it this way: there are not many ex-subpostmasters who are holding their breath.

Sir, as you know from the hearings, some people who are before you and before this Inquiry, are facing ruin, absolute ruin, right now staving off people coming to their door demanding money. So we do ask for a commitment from BEIS to making immediate -- looking this up to make sure we know what it means. It mean do at once, instantly, get this done, hardship payments to those SPMs who are facing hardship as a consequence of the scandal.

We've heard Ms Gallafent today speak about hardship payments in relation to the Group A group or class A group. But what we would respectfully invite you to accept, sir, is that this appears to have been 112

1	done at the will of the Post Office when it feels that	1	C
2	it should do so in particular circumstances that it's	2	C
3	notified of. No system, no settled way ahead, no	3	
4	application process.	4	W
5	Now, aside from our criticisms of the delay and	5	е
6	the BEIS failure to follow your directions, the	6	fr
7	announcement of 30 June may represent some progress but	7	is
8	it needs to be made reality now, not at some later	8	d
9	stage. We need a timetable and we need that now.	9	fa
10	May I set out then and move on to the particular	10	р
11	positions in relation to the points that you have asked.	11	n
12	Sir, you have made it very clear that you have read all	12	р
13	the written submissions and that indeed we interpret, in	13	S
14	fact, the need of this Inquiry for these particular	14	
15	hearing purposes as being more directed towards the	15	S
16	institutions to see what they are saying about it as	16	P
17	well as the points that we make on their submissions.	17	b
18	Sir, can we set out our concerns with the HSS.	18	n
19	I wonder who came up with that title? Our first point	19	
20	is this in relation to the burden of proving losses:	20	ir
21	Post Office Limited and BEIS as responsible for this	21	te
22	scandal. They should not be treating the issue of	22	P
23	compensating victims as anything akin to litigation or,	23	n
24	indeed, what appears to be adversarial litigation. The	24	re
25	HSS scheme requires that SPMs, subpostmasters, establish 113	25	C
1	all applicants for compensation, to bear a burden of	1	w
2	producing documents which Post Office Limited have	2	С
3	seized and destroyed, in effect directing hurdles that	3	S
4	no horse could jump.	4	fa
5	It is no answer, we suggest, to our concerns for	5	s
6	Post Office Limited BEIS to rely on the statements in	6	h
7	the guidance to the effect that where the postmaster is	7	0
8	unable to satisfy the burden of proof in relation to	8	h
9	their claim, their claim may nonetheless be accepted in	9	
10	whole or in part if the scheme considers it to be fair	10	S
11	in all the circumstances. What does that mean? What	11	S
12	are the principles being used for such a determination?	12	а
13	Essentially, this has been, and remains, an	13	۷
14	enormous and far-reaching public scandal. Our clients	14	u
15	should not have to go cap in hand to the perpetrators of	15	re
16	that scandal when applying for compensation to ask for	16	W
17	indulgences or some form of largesse.	17	to
18	The heads of loss within the HSS scheme. Whilst	18	W
19	the heads of loss in the HSS are non-exhaustive and	19	Ν
20	generic, it is problematic that they do not reflect the	20	е
21	full range of harm caused by the Post Office in this	21	ir
22	scandal.	22	р
23	Now, Post Office Limited states at paragraph 11 of	23	S
24	its written submissions that there is no form of loss	24	
25	that cannot be taken into account. This approach is	25	а

115

causation and prove each and every loss, preferably with contemporaneous evidence.

Many people we represent, and I'm sure many people who have suffered at the hands of the Post Office, endure victim fatigue and some may well be suffering from undiagnosed PTSD. This system that is put forward is a system in which people who are already finding it difficult to manage their lives and look after their families then have to go through this rather difficult process. You will remember that the evidence is that in many, if not most, cases the Post Office seized the paperwork of subpostmasters and their records when suspending them.

The Post Office now seeks to place the burden on subpostmasters to produce the very records that POL (the Post Office) took from them. This is wrong-headed and badly thought out and we'll look at the details been moment.

Ms Linnell (Kay Linnell will be, we suspect, an important witness in the later phases of this Inquiry) tells us that during the mediation scheme a senior Post Office official told Sir Anthony Hooper during the mediation scheme that Post Office Limited destroys all records after six years. If that is right, then Post Office Limited requires HSS applicants, and presumably 114

wrong. The scheme should be tailored to reflect the consequences of Post Office's actions and include: suffering to children and family members; the roles that family members have played in caring for traumatised subpostmasters; and the fact that many subpostmasters have been required to work long into what would otherwise have been a planned retirement, and, sir, you have heard evidence that relates to such matters. Well, the administration of the compensation scheme has been described by Post Office Limited. They say it's designed to be simple and user-friendly to avoid the need to incur costs of legal representation. Well, we suggest that the scheme is neither simple nor user-friendly. It's beset with problems. You will recall the evidence of Mr Sethi, the Inquiry's first witness, who received a request from the HSS for answers to 68 guestions which included a number of sub-accounts, which brought the total to approximately 100 questions. Mr Sethi expressed considerable frustration while giving evidence that he has being asked to consider questions in relation to matters that had occurred some 20 years previously, in respect of which much of information was still being held by the Post Office. Nor, we suggest, is the scheme necessarily being administered fairly. Subpostmasters have said that they

116 11

1	received offered from the HSS that have been derisory.	1	There's a danger, we suggest, of there being
2	Fiona Elliott gave evidence on 19 May 2022. Ms Elliott	2	a scandal within a scandal about the compensation and
3	said that she had lost just over a £1 million but had	3	the way it is being handled by the Post Office.
4	been offered instead £24,000. BEIS's assertion at	4	Sir, you have questioned already the sign or the
5	paragraph 21 of their written submissions is that	5	lack of sign of independence in the running of the
6	sorry, the Post Office Limited is on track to issue at	6	scheme. At paragraph 31 of the submissions filed on
7	least 95 per cent of offers by the end of this year.	7	behalf of Post Office Limited, it is stated that HSS
8	It seems to us, and even having listened to	8	claims will be first assessed an assessor from Herbert
9	carefully to what Ms Gallafent has said today, that	9	Smith Freehills and then by a team of reviewers at
10	given the difficulties and the restrictions in	10	Post Office. The assessment is then reviewed again by
11	application process, that there may well be a number of	11	the case assessor before being looked at by a so-called
12	people who have already had offers, and in fact accepted	12	Independent Advisory Panel. Ultimately, it is the
13	them, through settlements, that could well have put	13	Post Office which decides the outcome with the benefit
14	forward further matters that relation to consequential	14	of the Panel's assessment and recommendation.
15	losses. It's a matter of grave concern, we suggest that	15	We suggest, and we agree with the provisional view
16	at paragraph 25 of the Post Office Limited's written	16	that you have set out, that fairness demands that the
17	submissions that they are saying that the vast mortality	17	Post Office Limited should not be the final arbiter of
18	of offers have been accepted. We say that those offers	18	whether an interim or final payment of compensation
19	may well have been made within a scheme where applicants	19	should be made in accordance with the Minister's
20	are not able to receive legal advice or disclosure in	20	announcements in July and December last year, and that
21	relation to their possible claims. It is quite likely,	21	any disputes should be determined therefore by an
22	we say, that there will be many subpostmasters who	22	independent person. In particular, it would be
23	received offers in a similar derisory way to that	23	inappropriate for Post Office Limited to play any part
24	received by Ms Elliott and who, in the absence of legal	24	in the determination of aggravated or exemplary damages
25	advice, have accepted those offers. 117	25	which will be claimed by subpostmasters. We are not 118
	117		110
1	aware of any previous scheme where an abuser institution	1	worked it out as being 4 per cent of applicants to the
2	awards punitive damages against itself.	2	HSS scheme were legally represented. In fact, having
3	The further disturbing feature of the HSS scheme	3	looked at the documentation again and considered what
4	you've already dealt with today in discussion with	4	has been said for us this morning, it looks as though
5	Ms Gallafent and Mr Beer, Queen's Counsel, is that there	5	it's 3 per cent of those applying to HSS have had some
6	is a denial before an application is made of access to	6	type of legal representation.
7	documents disclosed by Post Office Limited at those	7	Now, it may be therefore useful to briefly go to
8	initial stages. We have submitted in our written	8	the application form itself. Sir, can I take you to the
9	submissions that there is therefore a substantial	9	bundle, please. At page 192 you have been directed
10	procedural flaw in the HSS scheme. We say that that is	10	to already by Mr Beer sir, this is a form that we
11	wholly unacceptable.	11	learn from Ms Gallafent and I hope I quote her
12	Now, as to legal representation during the	12	correctly, just after midday today this is designed
13	compensation process, we saw in the BEIS news story of	13	not to refer to the consequential losses and that is
14	30 June a comment that is made there which says,	14	done to help lay persons who are making an application.
15	"Postmasters will be able to claim reasonable legal fees	15	Well, therefore it seems we're being told that it
16	as part of participating in the final compensation	16	was quite deliberate that this form didn't have a
17	scheme." Well, we hope that the wording of the	17	reference to consequential losses. You've been directed
18	Ministerial Statement reflects acceptance by POL and by	18	to paragraph, I think, 24 by Mr Beer. Can I take you to
19	BEIS that postmasters simply cannot be expected to	19	paragraph 193. Sorry, page 193 which is paragraph 29.
20	embark upon a complex procedure involving detailed and	20	In the bundle, page 193 and it's paragraph 29 of the
21	historic claims without legal representation and access	21	form. Let's see what it says here.
22	to experts, if necessary.	22	"Please provide an explanation as to why you
23	It is important to highlight (although the data is	23	believe you have not been treated fairly by the
24		04	
	still not, we suggest, entirely clear) that it appears	24	Post Office. In doing so, you should set out what you
25	still not, we suggest, entirely clear) that it appears that when we were drafting these oral submissions we 119	24 25	Post Office. In doing so, you should set out what you would like the Post Office to do to remedy the situation 120

(30) Pages 117 - 120

### The Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry

1	and why."	1
2	Well, there are a number of answers to that I'm	2
3	sure that many of my clients would like to give in	3
4	relation to what the Post Office can do with itself.	4
5	But otherwise, why is the Post Office setting out there	5
6	a suggestion of what has happened as a result of the	6
7	unfair treatment but it is not dealing in any way with	7
8	the consequential losses and the effect upon and the	8
9	stigma of having been dealt with by the Post Office in	9
10 11	a particular way or regarding people's character or what	10 11
12	has happened to them by way of their own experiences, their mental health or their medical health.	12
12	We have also been directed to the guidance that is	12
14	set out at page 303 as being guidance that might assist.	13
15	It doesn't take but a moment to look at the pages that	15
16	have been referred to already to realise that these are	16
17	complex matters, dealing with heads of loss, in terms of	17
18	loss of earnings, loss of profits, loss of property,	18
19	loss of opportunity, loss of chance (these are legal	19
20	terms), penalties, general or increased costs of	20
21	financing, bankruptcy, insolvency, and so on.	21
22	We listened carefully to Ms Gallafent who did her	22
23	very best in, we would suggest, rather difficult	23
24	circumstances to defend the Post Office's actions. This	24
25	form is wholly inadequate. It is not that it doesn't	25
	121	
1	individuals to perform with, one would hope, the	1
2	facility of a trained lawyer and that, we suggest, is	2
3	continuing unfairness.	3
4	Now, it is quite clear that Post Office Limited	4
5	views the compensation process as litigious. I mention	5
6	Ms Elliott again, Fiona Elliott. She applied to the HSS	6
7	and on 26 June Ms Elliott attended a good faith meeting,	7
8	accompanied by Mr Enright, a partner at Howe & Co who is	8
9	handling these matters, and that was because she had	9
		5
10	rejected an offer that had been made to her. Now,	10
10 11	attending at that meeting, which was conducted by	
11 12	attending at that meeting, which was conducted by a barrister instructed or employed by Herbert Smith	10 11 12
11 12 13	attending at that meeting, which was conducted by a barrister instructed or employed by Herbert Smith Freehills, it was pure good fortune that Mr Enright was	10 11 12 13
11 12 13 14	attending at that meeting, which was conducted by a barrister instructed or employed by Herbert Smith Freehills, it was pure good fortune that Mr Enright was present. At the start of the meeting, it was explained	10 11 12 13 14
11 12 13 14 15	attending at that meeting, which was conducted by a barrister instructed or employed by Herbert Smith Freehills, it was pure good fortune that Mr Enright was present. At the start of the meeting, it was explained to Ms Elliot that the meeting was to be conducted on	10 11 12 13 14 15
11 12 13 14 15 16	attending at that meeting, which was conducted by a barrister instructed or employed by Herbert Smith Freehills, it was pure good fortune that Mr Enright was present. At the start of the meeting, it was explained to Ms Elliot that the meeting was to be conducted on a without prejudice basis. Well, it seemed to us, on	10 11 12 13 14 15 16
11 12 13 14 15 16 17	attending at that meeting, which was conducted by a barrister instructed or employed by Herbert Smith Freehills, it was pure good fortune that Mr Enright was present. At the start of the meeting, it was explained to Ms Elliot that the meeting was to be conducted on a without prejudice basis. Well, it seemed to us, on her behalf, that a good faith but without prejudice	10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
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11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	attending at that meeting, which was conducted by a barrister instructed or employed by Herbert Smith Freehills, it was pure good fortune that Mr Enright was present. At the start of the meeting, it was explained to Ms Elliot that the meeting was to be conducted on a without prejudice basis. Well, it seemed to us, on her behalf, that a good faith but without prejudice meeting is absurd and this, yet again, has all the trappings of litigation. We hope that Post Office Limited and BEIS accept that the provision in the HSS scheme, which probably is going to be asked for or attempted to be replicated in	10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22

make much by way of reference to consequential losses: it makes no reference to it. We take away our legal qualifications and put ourselves in the position of the distressed subpostmaster who is trying to deal with such a form in awkward circumstances such as this thinking about, no doubt, the time that they've got to get it in otherwise that door is going to be closed. What we say is, in effect, a form that appears to be designed not to help lay people make the application but, in fact, to avoid particular types of losses. You will have seen, sir, that the HSS scheme only provides for contribution of 1200 or 400, depending on the scope of the dispute, taken in relation to an offer in relation to legal costs or legal expenses. And POL (Post Office Limited) states in its written submissions that it's made payments of legal expenses in 35 cases where requested to. This should have been built into the scheme. People that are making such applications that really have to be told, as we learned today from Ms Gallafent, that what they should do is look at this application form and look at guidance, make sure that they put in a separate document setting out their answer to these heads of damages in relation to consequential damages. The Post Office is essentially asking for 122 disadvantage subpostmasters.

Now, we understand that Post Office Limited and the Department of Business are considering using Freeths Solicitors to assist eligible subpostmasters in relation to compensation claims that were brought in the Group litigation. Now, we can provide some further update in relation to that as being contact to clients of ours by Freeths in a letter that's essentially called Freeths facts. Again, going back to the fast-moving pace of matters, this is yesterday. Freeths write to subpostmasters:

"Please note that you are not obliged to reinstruct Freeths. If you do not instruct us, this means that we will not be able to represent you in stage 1 of the process and we will not be able to pay your interim payment to you."

Freeths, therefore, have already acknowledged -and, sir, you've considered the wording of their communication to the Inquiry already -- that not all individuals will necessarily be wishing to instruct them within this process.

Now, Mr Enright of Howe & Co Solicitors recently had a meeting with BEIS and it has been accepted by BEIS that other representatives of subpostmasters before this Inquiry will be included in the further discussions 124

(31) Pages 121 - 124

1	about how the scheme for the GLO litigants will be put	1	not convicted can apply through the HSS scheme.
2	together and its terms. So moving forwards, it seems as	2	Presumably BEIS will say that any subpostmaster who was
3	though there is acceptance by BEIS that Howe & Co, and	3	acquitted and who was a member of the GLO can apply
4	no doubt other firms of solicitors, will be involved in	4	under the new, but as yet unparticularised, scheme.
5	that process.	5	Our position is that those subpostmasters who were
6	Now, we welcome that. It will enable discussions	6	acquitted fall between the mechanisms and should be
7	about funds being distributed to be discussed openly and	7	transferred into the category B cohort of cases and
8	transparently and that will be capable of being shared	8	should have the facility to receive up to $\pounds100,000$ in
9	with the Inquiry as the Inquiry makes it progress.	9	interim compensation in accordance with that process.
10	Nevertheless, the work that will need to be done	10	This would remove the unacceptable position reflected in
11	within those discussions and in making the applications	11	the evidence of Ms Hamilton and Ms Palmer, that those
12	in the future must be properly funded to put those	12	who are convicted are at least eligible for conviction
13	applicants within the GLO litigation on the same basis	13	whereas those who were acquitted were not.
14	as the Post Office in terms of legal representation.	14	We hope that the announcement of 30 June that
15	Can I then deal with interim patients themselves.	15	Ministers are to provide a 19.5 million compensation
16	This is interim payments for those who underwent	16	package for all GLO litigants will assist in practical
17	prosecutions, not convicted. We have submitted that	17	terms. But the distinction should be made. However,
18	there should be no distinction between those who are	18	basic mathematics suggest that acquitted subpostmasters
19	entitled to interim payments having had their	19	will still receive substantially less in interim relief
20	convictions overturned and to those who are prosecuted	20	than those who were convicted.
21	and acquitted at trial or where prosecutions were	21	Can we deal with the compensation questions that
22	discontinued or cautions accepted.	22	relate to subpostmasters with quashed convictions. The
23	We understand that BEIS's position as stated in	23	subpostmasters with overturned convictions who we
24	their written submissions is that any subpostmaster who	24	represent would wish that BEIS clarify their position in
25	was acquitted or otherwise prosecuted and cautioned or 125	25	relation to how it will proceed in this category of 126
	125		120
1	cases in these hearings.	1	open and clear to others.
2	Can I deal immediately with a point that's already	2	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Mr Stein, you probably heard Mr Beer
3	been subject to some discussion. We know that there are	3	suggest that I might want to enquire of the affected
4	discussions ongoing that include a reference to	4	Core Participants to what extent I should butt out or in
5	Lord Dyson who, as we understand, has agreed to come in	5	in relation to this particular issue. I asked
6	and consider these particular category of cases. We go	6	Ms Gallafent what she thought and she answered me. Am
7	back to our primary submission which is that you, sir,	7	I butting in or out or somewhere in between on what you
8	should have answers to what are the principles being	8	say?
9	employed in relation to such determinations. We were	9	<b>MR STEIN:</b> Well, sir, naturally of course, we are asking you
10	pleased to hear the possibility set out today that the	10	to stay somewhat in the doorway.
11	comparables or the precedents or the determinations made	11	The position that we are asking you to adopt is
12	by Lord Dyson may well be available so that people can	12	this: that it is important that the principles for
13	see what has happened one to another with such	13	compensation are established, are known, are transparent
14	applications.	14	and accessible. We also don't wish to interfere in
15	We do not wish to make any further submissions on	15	anyway with any current application or anything that we
16	this particular point because we would like to consider	16	put forward delay compensation being provided. So on
17	what has have be said so far between now and the next	17	that basis, and subject to further thought between now
18	hearing, but our main consideration being that	18	and the next occasion in this rather rapidly moving
19	principles need to be open, need to be transparent, need	19	situation, we suggest that the way forward will be for
20	to be capable of being examined by subpostmasters and	20	your to stand in that doorway and say that the process
21	our representatives remain in relation to all of those,	21	needs to have some level of oversight and needs to be
22	including those individuals who otherwise might go	22	transparent and to request, if all parties agree, that
23	through what may be described as the alternative scheme	23	the Lord Tyson principles, can I put it that way, be
24	employing the good services of Lord Dyson. But the	24	made available. That would seem to us to be,
25	principles upon which decisions should be made should be	25	respectfully, a halfway house that would be acceptable
-	127	-	128

(32) Pages 125 - 128

132

1	at this time.	1	the Inquiry and in such contact, the Inquiry may be
2	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I mean, I'm looking at this from	2	prepare, I know not, to accept that he would be prepared
3	a practical point of view as well. You invited me in	3	to set out the general nature of his considerations.
4	the strongest terms to provide an interim report. In	4	We don't, in any event wish, to put anything
5	the very nature of this things that would probably mean	5	forward that delays any compensation going to anyone.
6	a greater length of time between these hearings elapsing	6	There have been enough delays and enough obfuscation and
7	than if I were to just provide a progress update	7	that that cannot be done. So we accept the problem and
8	because, as you will appreciate, an interim report has	8	we accept also, therefore, the solution.
9	to be laid before Parliament and all the rest of it.	9	Now, we understand that as regards the claw-back
10	MR STEIN: Yes.	10	position that this is one of the matters that has
11	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: If it happened to be the case that	11	changed. For us, we learnt about this this morning.
12	Lord Dyson's work was I think someone suggested that	12	We're told in the correspondence that was received last
13	he may complete part of his work by the end of July, who	13	night, that we saw I think at 8.30 this morning, that
14	knows what then might follow from that. So I think the	14	there would be no attempt now to claw that back. That
15	probability is that instead of us talking to each other	15	is progress at least in relation to those payments.
16	sideways about doors open and shut, I should just the	16	We note that Post Office Limited has made that
17	very great likelihood is that Lord Dyson might pronounce	17	concession in relation to paragraph 43, we think, of its
18	before I certainly provide and interim report and my	18	written submissions. BEIS has now confirmed, it seems,
19	interim report, if that's what it is, will then no doubt	19	that it agrees with that position.
20	take great account of what transpires. Does that sound	20	Now, I turn then to paragraph 33 of the written
21	reasonable?	21	submissions from BEIS which states this:
22	MR STEIN: Sir, yes. It does seem to us to be a practical	22	"One reason for the Department providing funding
23	way forward. Being blunt, it may well be that	23	to Post Office Limited to enable claimants to receive an
24	Lord Dyson will hear of this hearing, may well pay	24	interim payment of up to 100,000 was to make ensure that
25	attention to it, and may want to consider contact with	25	they could secure independent legal advice to assist
	129		130
1	them in making claims."	1	the postmasters at source and deducted from interim
2	It also stated that the Department was concerned	2	payments at the outset.
3	to avoid a situation whereby postmasters were forced to	3	The money is needed right now to solve people's
4	engage expensive litigation funders and end up with	4	immediate problems, to get them out of the financial
5	their compensation reduced as a result, as happened of	5	hole created by the Post Office. What are those
6	course with the Group Litigation.	6	individuals to do? To receive an interim payment, put
7	The need for interim payment is such that that is	7	some rather unspecified sum of money aside which they
8	required to allow people to get their heads above water,	8	can't touch to use for legal costs. At the heart of
9	not for such luxuries as legal costs. Legal costs	9	this suggestion, it is badly wrong that those
10	should be paid for by BEIS and we suggest that there	10	individuals are being deprived of the ability to
11	still is a failure of understanding by BEIS and the	11	properly have fully funded legal assistance.
12	Post Office that the subpostmasters were, and are, their	12	BEIS will know that the aim of compensation is to
13	victims. They have created this problem. They have	13	try to place postmasters back in the position where they
14	created the need for subpostmasters to have legal	14	would have been but for the scandal. Costs are a
15	assistance at all.	15	separate issue.
16	Now, there appears to be some conflict with	16	Of course, BEIS may pay the reasonable legal costs
17	submissions made by the Post Office at paragraph 56 of	17	associated with making claims under the scheme. It
18	its written submissions, that as part of the	18	appears to have agreed to do so in relation to category
19	negotiations Post Office will consider the postmasters'	19	C, the GLO litigants. It cannot, we suggest, reasonably
20	reasonable legal costs. So it seems that BEIS will need	20	fail to do likewise in respect of HSS applicants and it
21	to reconsider its position based upon the way that the	21	should not try to short change those who are convicted
22	Post Office has set matters out.	22	unlawfully as a result of Post Office's abusive
23	Effectively, BEIS is saying that they don't want	23	prosecutions. It is obvious that Post Office or BEIS
24	legal costs to eat into subpostmasters' final	24	never has to worry about the cost of its own legal
25	compensation awards, so those costs should be taken from	25	representatives: Government is paying for that.

(33) Pages 129 - 132

# The Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry

1		
1	Our clients are very grateful, sir, that these	1
2 3	hearings have been convened in what we all know is an	2 3
3 4	early stage of the inquiry process. But sadly it seems	3 4
4 5	that it is only by repeated correspondence from my instructing solicitors and others, and by this Inquiry	4 5
5 6	taking upon itself the need to have these hearings, that	6
7	BEIS and the Post Office are having their feet held to	7
8	the fire in order to make them pay up.	8
9	There is still a very, very long way to go.	9
10	A large number of subpostmasters remain in highly	10
11	precarious situations. The HSS scheme itself is riven	11
12	with problems. No doubt for those people that have made	12
13	applications already and we suggest that it's very	13
14	likely that many people, if they are prepared to listen	14
15	to the representations we have made and others, will be	15
16	wanting to go back to the Post Office and say, "Well, we	16
17	didn't realise the consequential losses could be	17
18	claimed".	18
19	It would also be helpful to have it confirmed for	19
20	all of those people out there that might be in a	20
21	position, who having heard what is being said by	21
22	Ms Gallafent regarding the potential for there being an	22
23	open door to making a claim within the HSS scheme, for	23
24	that door to be made clear that it is open and that the	24
25	application system is still present. It needs more than	25
	133	
1	money that I had in the house, tuppences, 5ps,	1
2	everything went into the bucket."	2
3	She explained that her mummy and daddy arrived.	
0		3
4	She didn't know it until that point but Darren, her	3 4
4	She didn't know it until that point but Darren, her	4
4 5	She didn't know it until that point but Darren, her husband, had phoned them and they went to Ballymena and	4 5
4 5 6	She didn't know it until that point but Darren, her husband, had phoned them and they went to Ballymena and withdrew as much money as they could out of their own	4 5 6
4 5 6 7	She didn't know it until that point but Darren, her husband, had phoned them and they went to Ballymena and withdrew as much money as they could out of their own bank accounts but they couldn't get enough. So they	4 5 6 7
4 5 6 7 8	She didn't know it until that point but Darren, her husband, had phoned them and they went to Ballymena and withdrew as much money as they could out of their own bank accounts but they couldn't get enough. So they rang two of the uncles and they did the same.	4 5 6 7 8
4 5 6 7 8 9	She didn't know it until that point but Darren, her husband, had phoned them and they went to Ballymena and withdrew as much money as they could out of their own bank accounts but they couldn't get enough. So they rang two of the uncles and they did the same. "My sister, when she was on the way to her shop to	4 5 6 7 8 9
4 5 7 8 9 10	She didn't know it until that point but Darren, her husband, had phoned them and they went to Ballymena and withdrew as much money as they could out of their own bank accounts but they couldn't get enough. So they rang two of the uncles and they did the same. "My sister, when she was on the way to her shop to lodge her own takings, she gave me her takings. So	4 5 7 8 9 10
4 5 7 8 9 10 11	She didn't know it until that point but Darren, her husband, had phoned them and they went to Ballymena and withdrew as much money as they could out of their own bank accounts but they couldn't get enough. So they rang two of the uncles and they did the same. "My sister, when she was on the way to her shop to lodge her own takings, she gave me her takings. So I don't know the exact figure because I never got a	4 5 7 8 9 10 11
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4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	She didn't know it until that point but Darren, her husband, had phoned them and they went to Ballymena and withdrew as much money as they could out of their own bank accounts but they couldn't get enough. So they rang two of the uncles and they did the same. "My sister, when she was on the way to her shop to lodge her own takings, she gave me her takings. So I don't know the exact figure because I never got a receive but somewhere in the region of £42,000 was in that bucket." Counsel to the Inquiry asked Sinead: "Where did that bucket go?" Sinead said: "I couldn't drive at that stage. So I got my	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
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counsel on behalf of the Post Office that says that that is being considered. It needs to be said that the door is open and applications can be made. Let's compare briefly y the evidence that you have heard, what's happened in the past to what is happening now. Sinead Rainey's evidence heard in Belfast in the Human Impact Hearings, transcript 18 May (just for your note) at page 43, lines 12 onwards. You will remember that she spoke of an audit which take place on 1 May 2019 and she had just dropped her children off at school small children. Sinead said that when the auditors had finished tallying up, they came to her and they called her into the office and they said, "Sinead, have you got any more money belong beginning to the Post Office?" The auditors explained, "There's a discrepancy here of £63,000". The auditor said, "Sinead, you've got an hour to get as much money into that safe. I'll be locking that safe in an hour and you've got an hour to get as much money in there will be deducted off the total discrepancy". So Sinead says this: "Well, I got into the car. I drove home and I lifted a bucket in my house and I emptied my wee'uns	
moneyboxes into them and I emptied my own purse and any 134	
showing in the system. We need to get that £6,000 now or you'll have a criminal offence." Well, she said, "Where did that £6,000 come?" She said, "I'm constantly putting money here all the time, hundreds of pounds a week and never showed up that huge amount. What will I do now?" They said, "You'll have to pay it". She hadn't got it in the shop. "So I ended up by saying can I go to the bank?" The bank was closed. They said no. "So I couldn't leave and go that far. They wouldn't wait on until the bank was going to open in the afternoon. She tried to offer the Post Office official a cheque. They wouldn't accept that.	
And Ms Elliott said to you, Fiona said to you,sir: "Then I went and my brother owned a car business in the village as well and I asked him would he have any cash on him and he said, 'Aye, there's cash there'. So I got the cash off him and gave it to the Post Office. I never got a receipt for it." These are just two examples but you have heard scores of witnesses when the Post Office wanted their money, they wanted it there and then under threat of criminal prosecution. However, when we see the failings of the Horizon system and the Post Office's conduct is uncovered repeatedly and starkly, and they are called upon to properly compensate the victims, we suggest 136	

1	there has been delay, obfuscation and basically these	1	Chancellor will make additional funding available to
2	issues being kicked into the long grass. They make	2	give those in the GLO group compensation similar to that
3	statements to Parliament, they issue press releases,	3	which is available to their non-GLO peers."
4	they do everything but pay up promptly.	4	And accepting that, because they had signed a full
5	I go back to where I started. Our clients simply	5	and final settlement of the court case in 2019,
6	asks that compensation schemes are drawn up in such	6	postmasters in the group were ineligible to apply to the
7	a manner that indications are given as to the amounts	7	Historical Shortfall Scheme.
8	they are likely to receive by way of final compensation.	8	"So despite winning the case [the Minister went on
9	That requires precedence, it requires comparables, it	9	to say] the group was left worse off than other affected
10	requires a way of accessing what it is that they might	10	postmasters for whom they had blazed the trail."
11	be able to receive by way of the application. Schemes	11	In your announcements on 9 May, you refer to the
12	should be transparent. They should provide indications	12	fact that in their written submissions both Post Office
13	of likely quantum in a banding format. This would	13	Limited and BEIS suggest that claimants in the group
14	assist in removing the unfortunate litigious elements	14	litigation falling within categories 1 and 2 will be
15	that the schemes currently contain and provide a measure	15	eligible to claim compensation for malicious prosecution
16	of certainty and facilitate targeted representations.	16	by virtue of the Minister's announcement of 22 March.
17	Our clients, for very good reason, do not trust	17	You go on to say this:
18 10	the Post Office nor BEIS, the department of Government	18	"It is also [your] provisional view, however, that
19 20	which owns the Post Office. On 22 March, the Minister	19 20	Post Office Limited and BEIS are correct to suggest that
20	made an announcement in Parliament accepting that the	20	claimants in the Group Litigation who fall within
21 22	Government has long considered unfair the unequal	21 22	categories 1 and 2 can claim compensation for malicious
22	treatment received by members of the GLO litigation		prosecution in reliance upon the Minister's
23 24	group and their non-GLO litigation peers. The Minister said:	23 24	announcement." So it is for these reasons that I have set out
24 25		24 25	
20	"I'm therefore pleased to announce that the 137	20	today that we invite you to set out your view on the 138
1	current compensation schemes and what little is known	1	between now and then and after having had a little bit
2	about the GLO compensation proposals and that we ask you	2	more and more time to think of some of the submissions
2	do that within the format of an interim report.	2	that have been made today. I will make a promise that
4	Sir, those are our submissions this afternoon.	4	it will be a short series of submissions targeted at
5	I hope I have dealt with them reasonably so that if	5	only those issues itself, and no more than that, and
6	cricket is about to start that people might start to	6	obviously after hearing from others that set out their
7	turn out to the windows to their side and watch that.	7	submissions on that day.
8	I finish with this: it is troubling that in order	8	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr Stein. I think that
9	to get BEIS and the Post Office to come to arrangements	9	I would be remiss in not making some reference to what
10	that relate or explanations that relate to the HSS	10	might happen on the next occasion and so I'll do it.
11	scheme or to answer questions that you have set out,	11	In the notice which I published on 30 June,
12	that all of the expense that is required to set up such	12	I anticipated that these hearings would produce a flurry
13	hearing has been done. It is troubling that the	13	of activity. I didn't use those words but that was what
14	Post Office does not seem to have been able to	14	was in my mind and I'm not disappointed. I am quite
15	understand that individuals that have been affected by	15	sure that between now and 13 July there may be further
16	the Post Office's actions, Post Office being wholly	16	activity, in which case I will give people an
17	owned by BEIS, need support and need assistance. It is	17	appropriate opportunity to deal with what occurs. What
18	troubling that all of those matters have been behind the	18	is appropriate will depend on what occurs. So I'm not
19	scenes to a large extent and that, right up until the	19	going to promise anyone that they can make any further
20	day of this hearing, including today (and I am quite	20	submissions (although I don't rule it out) and, as
21	sure whilst I have been on my feet), that further	21	I say, an appropriate opportunity will be available to
22	changes have been taking place.	22	everyone to respond to this shifting process.
23	So I ask, sir, that you indulge us if need be on	23	Thank you all very much for the economy with which
24	the next occasion by the ability, if required, to make	24	you've addressed me and for accepting my invitation to
25	further short submissions in relation to what happens	25	deal with things which were controversial rather than to
-	139		140

1	major on what you thought were your good points.	1	INDEX
2	I look forward to seeing many, if not all, of you	2	Submission by MR BEER
3	again next week.	3	Submission by MS GALLAFENT
4	(3.22 pm)	4	Submission by MR MERTENS
5	(The hearing adjourned until Wednesday, 13 July at 10.30 am)	5	Submission by MR STEIN, QC
6	(	6	
7		7	
8		8	
9		9	
10		10	
11		11	
12		12	
13		13	
14		14	
15		15	
16		16	
17		17	
18		18	
19		19	
20		20	
21		21	
22		22	
23		23	
24		24	
25		25	
	141		142

(36) Pages 141 - 142

	4 000 101 07/40 00/5		50/00	0 00 141 4 4 4 4
		<b>17 [7]</b> 8/20 14/16	56/20	<b>3.22 [1]</b> 141/4
MR BEER: [10] 2/19	70/25	16/18 20/24 31/9	<b>20202 [1]</b> 12/20	<b>3.30 [1]</b> 2/9
9/1 9/4 18/7 18/9 34/9	<b>1,242 [1]</b> 29/2	31/10 42/23	<b>2021 [8]</b> 9/13 9/22	<b>30 [12]</b> 12/20 22/13
34/13 34/17 38/3 38/7		<b>170 [1]</b> 25/10	10/8 11/3 11/8 67/20	40/12 52/15 54/21
MR MERTENS: [4]	<b>1,482 [1]</b> 30/21	<b>172 [2]</b> 18/16 18/16	67/20 105/7	55/8 97/3 110/13
92/11 93/1 95/23	<b>1,483 [1]</b> 26/3	<b>173 [1]</b> 18/16	<b>2022 [10]</b> 1/1 5/17	113/7 119/14 126/14
95/25	<b>1,659 [2]</b> 65/20 66/8	<b>176 [1]</b> 24/23	9/12 11/24 12/4 12/17	140/11
MR STEIN: [9] 92/15	<b>1,800 [1]</b> 107/22	<b>18 [3]</b> 4/12 14/18	66/21 68/3 108/16	<b>30 June [1]</b> 65/9
96/3 99/7 100/22	<b>1.08 [1]</b> 92/17	134/7	117/2	<b>302 [4]</b> 9/6 65/24
100/24 101/1 128/9	<b>1.10 [1]</b> 92/21	<b>182 [3]</b> 3/19 30/9 30/9		66/18 67/2
129/10 129/22	<b>1.3 [1]</b> 16/19	<b>183 [2]</b> 4/1 30/9	36/18 117/5	<b>303 [3]</b> 25/25 65/24
MS GALLAFENT:	1.6/1.7 [1] 30/22	<b>186 [1]</b> 57/1	21 July [1] 9/13	121/14
[29] 38/18 39/11 47/8	1.7 [1] 30/22	<b>188 [1]</b> 14/24	<b>217 [1]</b> 9/24	<b>31 [3]</b> 67/4 109/18
48/5 49/4 52/18 57/11	<b>10 [8]</b> 4/11 38/19	<b>19 [9]</b> 19/17 25/7	<b>219 [1]</b> 11/10	118/6
58/9 59/2 62/25 63/2	39/14 54/21 108/12	25/23 26/1 26/14 27/2	<b>22 [5]</b> 19/20 98/10	<b>33 [1]</b> 130/20
63/6 63/16 63/18	108/22 108/24 109/3	56/21 117/2 135/24	108/15 137/19 138/16	<b>35 [2]</b> 44/15 122/17
64/11 64/24 66/2 66/5	10 December 2019 [2]		22 July [1] 9/22	<b>38 [2]</b> 107/14 109/17
66/8 66/14 66/16 73/7	3/11 6/11	<b>19.5 [1]</b> 35/8	22 March 2022 [1]	<b>39 [2]</b> 71/14 109/17
75/1 79/6 79/16 80/17		19.5 million [5] 13/3	12/4	4
87/15 87/17 87/24	10 per cent [1] 55/8	99/15 110/17 111/20	<b>23 [2]</b> 19/21 24/24	
MS GALLIFANT: [3]	10-week [1] 56/18	126/15	23 July 2021 [1]	4 o'clock [1] 2/9
47/12 63/4 75/7	<b>10.30 [1]</b> 141/5	<b>190 [1]</b> 19/9	67/20	<b>4.1 [1]</b> 7/9
SIR WYN WILLIAMS:		<b>191 [1]</b> 19/11	<b>24 [4]</b> 19/23 50/20	<b>400 [3]</b> 27/9 71/2
<b>[58]</b> 1/3 8/23 9/2 18/4		<b>192 [1]</b> 120/9	97/7 120/18	122/13
18/8 34/7 34/11 34/15		<b>193 [3]</b> 120/19 120/19	<b>24,000 [1]</b> 117/4	<b>42 million [2]</b> 6/25
37/18 38/4 38/14	<b>100,000 [5]</b> 9/16 10/9	120/20	<b>25 [3]</b> 30/17 30/20	7/18
38/19 38/24 47/3 47/9	78/8 126/8 130/24	<b>194 [1]</b> 14/24	117/16	<b>42,000 [1]</b> 135/12
47/21 48/24 52/16	<b>11 [4]</b> 4/11 67/8 109/5	<b>195 [1]</b> 15/1	25 February [1] 4/10	<b>43 [2]</b> 130/17 134/8
57/9 57/22 58/24	115/23	2	25 minutes [1] 79/3	<b>45 [3]</b> 28/25 29/2
62/22 63/1 63/3 63/5	11.42 [1] 38/21		<b>26 [1]</b> 123/7	29/16
63/15 63/17 64/3	11.56 [1] 38/23	2 March [1] 4/10	<b>27 [5]</b> 9/11 25/3 43/21	<b>47 [1]</b> 67/7
64/20 65/22 66/3 66/6	<b>115 [1]</b> 67/3	<b>2,368 [1]</b> 9/8	59/24 67/4	<b>48 [1]</b> 26/5
66/10 66/15 73/1	<b>12 [6]</b> 13/18 35/4	<b>2,370 [1]</b> 65/20	27 November [1]	48 per [1] 26/13
	108/12 109/8 109/15	<b>2,523 [2]</b> 9/10 9/12	25/20	<b>4A [1]</b> 16/11
74/23 75/4 79/1 79/7	134/8	<b>2.05 [1]</b> 92/19	<b>28 [2]</b> 76/2 91/2	<b>4D [1]</b> 16/15
80/16 87/10 87/16	12 May [1] 4/11	<b>2.07 [1]</b> 92/23	<b>283 [1]</b> 61/13	5
87/23 92/7 92/12	<b>1200 [1]</b> 122/13	<b>2.1 [1]</b> 6/20	<b>285 [1]</b> 16/10	
92/16 92/24 95/14	13 [4] 74/8 95/1	<b>20 [6]</b> 8/19 19/17 55/8	<b>286 [1]</b> 43/23	5 July [1] 66/23
95/24 96/1 99/3	140/15 141/5	60/11 70/8 116/21	<b>287 [2]</b> 22/13 52/15	<b>5.1 [1]</b> 16/20
100/17 100/23 100/25	<b>14 [7]</b> 4/10 11/7 14/12	2002 [1] 106/22	<b>289 [1]</b> 21/2	<b>5.10 [1]</b> 16/20
128/2 129/2 129/11	16/3 25/2 61/11 94/1	<b>2005 [1]</b> 9777	<b>29 [2]</b> 120/19 120/20	<b>5.8.1 [1]</b> 42/22
140/8	14 December 2021 [1]	<b>2007 [1]</b> 70/9	<b>290 [2]</b> 31/9 31/10	<b>50 [2]</b> 21/9 27/2
•	11/3	<b>2008 [1]</b> 107/10	<b>291 [1]</b> 16/21	<b>52 [1]</b> 26/11
'any [1] 18/20	<b>15 [7]</b> 14/12 16/7 16/9		<b>295 [1]</b> 16/21	<b>554 [1]</b> 6/1
<b>'Aye [1]</b> 136/16	22/11 25/3 52/15	<b>2019 [8]</b> 3/11 6/11		<b>555 [3]</b> 35/21 35/25
	56/19	13/8 38/10 97/25	3	36/15
1	15 million [1] 6/22	103/10 134/10 138/5	3 July [1] 81/4	<b>56 [1]</b> 131/17
1 May [1] 25/2	15-week [1] 25/20	<b>202 [1]</b> 15/1	<b>3.1 [2]</b> 21/2 21/3	57.75 million [1] 6/22
1 October 2020 [1]	<b>150 [1]</b> 107/10	<b>2020 [14]</b> 8/4 8/19	<b>3.1.1 [1]</b> 21/6	<b>58 [1]</b> 109/12
51/17	<b>153 [1]</b> 96/5	8/22 9/11 14/25 15/2	<b>3.1.2 [1]</b> 21/16	<b>5ps [1]</b> 135/1
1,100 [1] 29/5	<b>155 [1]</b> 9/8	19/7 25/2 25/3 25/20	<b>3.2 [1]</b> 31/8	
<b>1,135 [1]</b> 26/4	<b>16 [2]</b> 14/15 16/4	51/17 56/12 56/15	<b>3.2.3 [2]</b> 21/21 31/11	
μ	L		•	(37) MR BEER: - 6,000

(37) MR BEER: - 6,000

C	119/15 124/14 124/15	accompanied [1]	actually [5] 66/22	117/25 120/25
6	137/11 139/14	123/8	actually [5] 66/22 70/12 80/8 101/17	117/25 130/25 advise [1] 32/9
62 [1] 34/20	about [53] 1/10 1/12	accordance [4] 2/24	111/6	Advisory [12] 14/14
<b>63 [1]</b> 26/8	1/15 2/2 2/9 4/13 5/6	70/8 118/19 126/9	acute [1] 45/3	16/7 16/12 22/12
63 per [1] 26/4	5/18 8/25 18/2 19/18		add [2] 92/3 112/6	28/21 28/22 41/7
<b>63,000 [1]</b> 134/16	20/14 25/15 30/22	according [2] 29/14 92/17		41/21 43/13 43/22
65 [2] 26/8 26/11	32/11 32/12 35/6 36/8		added [1] 104/20	59/8 118/12
<b>66 [1]</b> 32/24		accordingly [3] 5/9 7/24 18/17	additional [10] 9/25 12/11 15/6 15/10 26/6	
67 [1] 26/10	36/19 37/19 39/3		31/7 77/13 94/22	advocate [1] 1/23
678 [1] 74/13	41/19 51/21 57/23 60/23 62/23 65/5	account [16] 22/23 23/5 45/22 45/25 46/3		affect [1] 86/2
68 [1] 116/17	66/13 76/6 79/12	49/17 49/21 52/12		affected [12] 4/4 57/5 57/21 58/19 96/10
69 [2] 32/23 107/4	79/15 80/16 87/3 87/4	54/4 56/2 56/20 58/17	address [14] 3/12 17/15 25/12 32/14	96/24 96/25 96/25
7	87/16 87/20 88/12	72/6 94/18 115/25	33/17 40/21 40/23	104/25 128/3 138/9
	90/24 104/11 107/10	129/20	42/11 54/14 56/14	139/15
7 June [6] 8/22 9/7	108/5 109/9 112/22	accountancy [1]	75/21 90/1 93/4 95/13	
9/9 25/25 30/21 65/25	113/16 118/2 122/6	27/18		afford [1] 107/5 after [22] 11/6 24/21
<b>70 [3]</b> 65/21 66/9	125/1 125/7 129/16		addressed [5] 5/8 39/20 90/11 104/15	25/20 26/1 26/14
66/21	130/11 132/24 139/2	accounting [1] 43/15 accounts [6] 4/21	140/24	26/20 31/16 31/17
73 [1] 32/22	130/11 132/24 139/2	26/24 94/4 101/23	addressing [2] 5/17	54/6 56/12 57/2 64/9
<b>74 [1]</b> 107/10	above [1] 131/8	116/17 135/7	87/10	74/25 90/5 104/16
<b>7A [1]</b> 14/22	absence [8] 33/10	achieved [1] 76/22	adds [1] 9/9	110/11 114/8 114/24
8	45/6 54/20 55/24 71/8	achieving [1] 93/23	adequate [6] 4/3	120/12 123/24 140/1
-	71/22 78/17 117/24	acknowledge [1]	25/15 27/8 27/22 51/9	140/6
<b>8,000 [2]</b> 73/12 74/14	absolute [1] 112/15	105/18	111/16	afternoon [5] 92/17
<b>8.30 [2]</b> 102/16	absurd [1] 123/18	acknowledged [1]	adequately [1] 90/10	93/1 96/3 136/11
130/13	abuser [1] 123/18	124/17	adjourned [1] 141/5	139/4
8.59pm [1] 34/13	abusive [1] 132/22	acknowledgements	adjournment [1]	again [32] 16/4 25/25
80 per [1] 77/2	accept [16] 22/8 30/5	[1] 26/19	92/22	27/18 30/8 37/17
874 [1] 70/9	51/13 54/12 58/3	acknowledging [1]	administer [2] 33/5	38/11 38/20 45/11
8A [1] 9/21	59/14 62/19 68/9	106/6	35/16	49/7 50/5 50/11 55/16
8B [1] 11/7 8C [1] 12/6	78/17 80/6 112/25	acquitted [6] 125/21	administered [1]	56/5 60/4 63/21 65/7
8D [1] 12/22	123/20 130/2 130/7	125/25 126/3 126/6	116/25	65/10 67/2 69/24 72/5
	130/8 136/12	126/13 126/18	administration [1]	79/21 80/4 85/5 87/25
9	acceptable [1] 128/25		116/9	88/18 88/20 118/10
9 May [3] 5/9 12/17	acceptance [3] 74/22		admission [1] 7/6	120/3 123/6 123/18
90/17	119/18 125/3	97/7	adopt [1] 128/11	124/9 141/3
<b>9.4 [1]</b> 7/15	accepted [13] 21/18	acted [1] 6/24	adopted [5] 32/10	against [4] 4/17 6/1
<b>9.50 [1]</b> 102/18	66/17 73/3 74/6 74/12		40/7 73/8 87/3 109/9	105/4 119/2
<b>92 [3]</b> 74/7 74/16	77/2 105/18 115/9	89/2	adopting [1] 44/10	age [4] 30/19 31/1
74/23	117/12 117/18 117/25	action [6] 7/2 19/22	advance [1] 34/11	76/5 107/14
94-year-old [1]	124/23 125/22	33/6 96/15 96/18	advantageous [1]	aggravated [7] 45/13
106/20	accepting [5] 74/1	105/20	44/20	45/17 46/2 46/10 47/1
<b>95 [2]</b> 66/20 117/7	76/14 137/20 138/4	actions [5] 97/2	adversarial [1]	81/18 118/24
<b>95 per [2]</b> 66/25 77/6	140/24	107/16 116/2 121/24	113/24	aggravation [2] 45/19
	access [9] 3/14 60/13		adversely [1] 76/15	45/24
Α	62/3 62/6 100/6	actively [5] 11/21	advice [22] 27/6	aggregate [1] 6/21
ability [2] 132/10	101/20 104/13 119/6	18/11 25/11 56/14	28/11 42/13 43/12	ago [7] 12/20 24/8
139/24	119/21	68/18	51/5 59/7 59/9 59/10	35/6 35/19 60/11
able [17] 13/9 44/22	accessible [1] 128/14		59/15 59/21 59/23	108/13 111/13
75/17 80/2 80/5 93/8	accessing [1] 137/10		70/16 70/22 70/25	agree [14] 8/17 33/23
97/20 102/8 106/20	accommodate [2]	acts [1] 6/7	71/4 86/24 100/11	40/15 45/8 46/25
106/25 109/22 117/20	25/6 78/15	actual [2] 43/8 111/18		50/12 68/16 73/16
				(38) 62 - agree

(38) 62 - agree

Α	135/21 136/4 139/12	128/6 139/20 140/14	any [105] 2/1 2/5 7/7	18/19 19/10 19/12
	139/18 140/23 141/2	141/5	14/7 15/12 18/18	24/13 43/24 44/2 44/3
<b>agree</b> [6] 80/3 80/6 81/17 90/17 118/15	alleged [13] 6/6 8/1	amended [2] 83/18	19/20 19/25 22/3 22/4	44/21 44/21 45/1
	19/23 20/1 20/3 20/4	84/13	22/23 23/5 23/16	45/18 46/20 49/11
128/22	20/4 20/5 50/23 51/8	amendment [1] 25/5	26/21 26/24 27/15	49/19 50/22 53/3
agreed [19] 1/22 6/20	54/18 58/6 60/23	amongst [5] 3/5 3/14	32/7 36/2 40/16 43/2	53/15 53/25 59/17
13/14 29/23 31/2	Allen [6] 83/7 83/16	26/7 99/18 99/19	43/24 44/4 44/4 44/4	61/22 61/25 62/10
33/21 34/5 58/13	83/23 85/2 85/5 88/5	amount [5] 21/14	45/9 46/1 46/14 46/24	62/18 62/23 63/11
71/24 79/12 79/13	allow [3] 82/16 99/19	67/5 70/14 80/10	50/10 50/22 51/12	63/13 63/19 63/21
79/14 79/18 82/2	131/8	136/5	51/14 51/22 51/25	68/23 70/11 71/1
82/12 83/1 84/24	allowing [1] 100/10	amounted [1] 6/21	52/12 53/15 53/16	72/20 76/7 76/8 77/18
127/5 132/18	allows [2] 15/19 82/9	amounts [1] 137/7	53/17 58/2 59/25	77/21 77/25 79/17
agreeing [1] 111/5	alluded [1] 81/19	analogies [1] 2/6	61/18 62/11 63/3	80/8 80/11 91/18
agreement [2] 67/5	alluding [1] 74/11	analysis [6] 28/20	63/18 63/24 64/7 64/7	applicant's [3] 62/17
80/8	alone [1] 57/14	41/10 41/14 59/11	68/9 69/12 70/20 71/8	70/13 71/2
agreements [1] 88/12	along [5] 2/23 15/5	59/14 64/1	71/24 72/6 73/2 73/13	applicant-friendly [5]
agrees [3] 44/1 81/13	46/15 64/4 64/10	annex [1] 88/8	75/12 76/13 78/2	49/11 77/18 77/25
130/19	already [25] 13/2	announce [2] 12/10	81/14 84/14 84/15	79/17 80/11
ahead [1] 113/3	29/15 32/16 43/17	137/25	84/17 84/20 84/21	applicants [58] 24/17
aim [4] 10/4 58/22	44/14 52/18 56/21	announced [7] 5/9	85/1 85/9 85/22 86/6	25/4 27/6 29/1 29/15
95/15 132/12	72/2 77/17 81/19	9/14 10/6 13/13 34/3	88/23 89/8 89/11	30/12 30/17 32/8 46/8
aimed [1] 53/9	86/19 87/5 90/10	35/18 67/21	89/19 89/20 89/22	46/23 51/12 51/18
akin [3] 53/19 58/2	101/1 101/21 114/7	announcement [21]	89/23 90/2 90/9 90/16	51/22 52/5 52/6 53/23
113/23	117/12 118/4 119/4	2/4 5/7 9/19 9/20 10/9	90/19 91/13 91/17	53/23 54/16 55/17
Alan [1] 6/1	120/10 121/16 124/17	12/5 35/5 35/9 90/22	92/5 95/10 95/11	58/21 58/22 62/12
all [94] 1/20 2/15 2/20	124/19 127/2 133/13	90/23 91/7 91/8 91/8	98/16 99/20 99/25	65/19 66/9 67/1 67/3
3/20 3/24 4/1 7/11	also [43] 1/17 5/1	108/15 108/18 111/11	101/9 101/10 103/13	67/7 67/8 70/16 72/4
7/24 8/8 12/23 14/3	13/10 16/16 19/17	113/7 126/14 137/20	109/5 118/21 118/23	72/11 72/13 72/23
21/19 22/19 24/14	22/3 41/25 44/13 45/1	138/16 138/23	119/1 121/7 125/24	73/24 74/3 74/4 74/6
25/11 26/25 32/12	49/25 51/20 53/25	announcements [2]	126/2 127/15 128/15	74/7 74/7 74/9 75/24
33/3 34/12 34/15	55/23 62/12 68/15	118/20 138/11	130/4 130/5 134/14	76/12 76/19 76/23
35/14 35/25 36/15 37/9 38/16 38/19 39/7	70/16 72/5 72/12	announcing [1] 98/11	134/25 136/15 140/19	77/1 77/2 77/6 77/11
46/15 48/9 51/9 51/18	73/22 80/19 81/3	another [8] 13/2 49/5	anyone [2] 130/5	78/14 86/23 101/25
52/4 53/9 56/17 62/5	81/17 82/18 83/3 83/4	54/8 58/5 92/8 101/19	140/19	109/6 114/25 115/1
62/8 62/11 62/16	83/15 84/11 84/18	104/24 127/13	anything [6] 79/15	117/19 120/1 125/13
63/11 64/21 65/14	86/8 91/19 93/4 95/2	answer [9] 33/3 38/4	80/9 90/24 113/23	132/20
65/23 66/10 73/13	96/17 97/25 98/2 99/7	38/6 56/1 109/25	128/15 130/4	application [41]
75/16 76/20 78/7	112/6 121/13 128/14	110/25 115/5 122/23	anyway [3] 76/15	10/23 14/23 18/6
80/16 80/23 83/13	130/8 131/2 133/19	139/11	93/14 128/15	18/10 18/17 19/6 24/1
83/14 86/3 87/13	138/18	answered [1] 128/6	apart [2] 1/18 73/19	41/4 43/4 43/7 50/20
87/23 88/23 92/8 93/1	alternative [6] 10/3	answers [7] 14/19	apologise [1] 75/2	52/1 52/3 53/5 53/6
94/15 94/18 96/8 96/9	10/12 10/17 87/8	108/12 108/23 110/1	apparent [2] 37/4	53/12 53/20 53/22
96/12 97/14 99/12	91/17 127/23	116/16 121/2 127/8	102/11	60/22 61/15 61/20
100/3 100/4 100/6	although [6] 5/15	Anthony [1] 114/22	appear [5] 2/23 17/16	61/21 62/4 63/7 69/6
100/8 100/16 100/20	26/18 46/8 108/15	anticipate [7] 33/16	32/17 84/11 96/3	69/7 69/15 71/10
104/1 104/4 106/4	119/23 140/20	48/18 68/12 74/18	appears [10] 23/20	71/17 73/25 111/25
107/17 111/10 113/12	am [24] 2/9 2/9 2/10	82/23 84/3 88/2	28/21 30/23 94/25	113/4 117/11 119/6
114/23 115/1 115/11	2/10 11/11 12/10 38/4	anticipated [6] 40/18		120/8 120/14 122/10
123/18 124/19 126/16	38/4 38/21 38/23	40/25 51/4 66/19	122/9 131/16 132/18	122/22 128/15 133/25
127/21 128/22 129/9	48/25 48/25 52/18	82/13 140/12	applicable [3] 42/3	137/11
131/15 133/2 133/20	58/4 63/17 78/22 92/1			applications [31] 9/7
	92/4 104/23 107/14	anticipation [1] 61/22	applicant [42] 8/16	9/10 9/12 17/19 17/23
				9) agree - applications

(39) agree ... - applications

Α	83/6 83/10 91/4 91/25	128/9 128/11	attract [1] 70/6	balances [1] 103/21
applications [26]	99/23 118/17	<b>asks [1]</b> 137/6	audit [2] 19/19 134/9	bald [1] 75/9
24/19 24/22 25/1 25/7	arbitration [4] 86/7	aspect [1] 57/24	auditor [1] 134/16	Baljit [1] 26/17
25/9 25/10 25/13	86/8 86/12 91/16	aspects [3] 40/13	auditors [5] 134/12	Ballymena [1] 135/5
25/19 25/22 56/11	are [187]	57/22 83/2	134/15 135/19 135/24	banding [1] 137/13
56/15 56/19 56/21	area [1] 81/22	assertion [1] 117/4	135/25	bands [1] 86/18
57/1 57/8 58/17 65/14	arguably [1] 88/20	assess [6] 3/6 13/7	August [1] 25/2	bang [1] 9/3
65/21 70/20 73/6	argue [2] 83/23 88/8	30/15 33/23 76/1	August 2020 [1] 25/2	banging [1] 8/24
100/4 122/19 125/11	argues [1] 83/19	86/11	availability [3] 12/1	bank [4] 135/7 136/8
127/14 133/13 134/3	argument [3] 31/3	assessed [7] 8/13 9/8		136/8 136/10
applied [11] 10/20	84/14 88/18	9/8 43/13 62/9 63/12	available [21] 9/15	bankruptcies [1] 4/22
23/13 32/4 32/23	arise [12] 6/19 17/7	118/8	11/12 12/12 12/13	bankruptcy [9] 16/25
51/23 54/19 58/5 81/7	17/16 27/1 28/7 28/7	assessing [4] 22/4	29/10 35/11 46/21	28/8 28/8 68/15 68/16
84/7 85/17 123/6	31/5 35/13 42/10	45/22 52/21 81/12	48/22 53/22 71/16	68/21 68/23 106/25
applies [1] 28/4	47/19 53/3 110/9	assessment [4] 62/14		121/21
apply [16] 24/17 25/4	arisen [1] 37/11	62/14 118/10 118/14	98/13 99/15 102/19	bar [1] 60/19
36/13 47/14 56/24	arises [1] 24/3	assessor [2] 118/8	127/12 128/24 138/1	barrier [1] 53/21
57/6 58/8 77/11 77/20	arising [7] 2/21 6/7	118/11	138/3 140/21	barrister [1] 123/12
80/1 80/2 100/20	13/21 14/3 14/8 68/7	assessors [1] 72/3	avoid [8] 2/6 45/2	barristers [1] 6/24
109/1 126/1 126/3	90/3	assist [19] 41/13	71/13 83/13 91/17	based [4] 48/11 66/1
138/6	arose [2] 20/5 68/9	44/10 53/9 57/12	116/12 122/10 131/3	80/10 131/21
applying [5] 19/14	around [3] 2/8 2/13	64/18 68/1 71/17	avoidance [4] 22/20	basic [2] 70/8 126/18
81/15 81/19 115/16	26/13	73/21 92/5 93/13	69/12 84/20 90/15	basically [1] 137/1
120/5	arrangements [13]	102/9 104/20 106/8	award [6] 23/17 23/24	basis [22] 23/25
appointed [2] 28/18	4/22 10/3 10/12 11/15	109/14 121/14 124/4	47/10 47/24 48/16	28/21 30/11 30/17
39/4	34/25 36/24 37/9	126/16 130/25 137/14	74/2	36/13 44/24 47/18
appointing [1] 13/6	37/24 93/17 93/19	assistance [14] 17/13	awarded [2] 8/18 48/3	
appointments [3]	94/23 95/8 139/9	27/16 41/15 43/19	awards [4] 25/23	59/10 75/23 76/24
11/1 29/4 76/11	arrived [2] 135/3 135/24	43/20 43/25 53/18	81/23 119/2 131/25	79/19 83/22 91/14 103/13 104/17 112/1
apportioned [1] 112/1		59/25 90/11 103/1	aware [7] 51/23 70/23 71/4 72/5 103/7	123/16 125/13 128/17
appreciate [3] 38/25	articulacy [1] 75/2	123/23 131/15 132/11 139/17	111/10 119/1	
54/1 129/8	as [256] as I mentioned [1]	assistants [1] 4/5	away [2] 75/3 122/3	Bates [1] 6/1
approach [24] 23/11	32/16	assisted [1] 102/6	awkward [1] 122/6	be [295] bear [2]  95/4 115/1
24/20 25/13 27/21	aside [5] 7/19 17/13	assisting [1] 93/16	Aziz [1] 106/24	because [31] 1/14 2/6
30/3 30/24 34/22	35/8 113/5 132/7	associated [4] 36/24		6/3 8/24 32/16 38/8
44/10 49/11 52/20	ask [18] 19/23 34/24	37/23 43/6 132/17	В	41/16 47/9 48/20 50/8
52/22 52/23 60/23	38/24 53/2 63/9 63/14		back [22] 9/5 14/22	51/3 51/12 55/20 73/8
73/8 77/14 78/4 79/24	67/13 92/9 92/9 98/15	••••	22/9 25/23 32/1 34/25	73/17 73/18 73/22
81/2 81/11 83/23	98/25 99/10 103/2	assuming [1] 42/3	42/5 50/4 66/18 78/25	79/16 79/23 80/25
83/25 89/3 101/13	110/9 112/16 115/16	assure [1] 58/21	79/16 85/22 86/1	92/9 92/16 99/4
115/25	139/2 139/23	ATE [1] 7/1	107/9 107/23 124/9	101/13 102/10 110/7
appropriate [13] 40/2	asked [22] 26/17 40/9	attempt [4] 55/11	127/7 130/9 130/14	123/9 127/16 129/8
52/4 55/1 55/21 59/8	41/19 44/8 50/21	101/9 101/16 130/14	132/13 133/16 137/5	135/11 138/4
68/11 70/19 72/4 86/8	50/24 53/7 53/8 53/11		background [4] 5/15	become [2] 65/16
98/20 140/17 140/18	69/25 89/16 105/23	attend [1] 93/8	5/22 97/22 102/13	79/10
140/21	106/4 107/2 107/25	attendance [1] 93/20	badly [3] 96/10	becoming [1] 68/2
appropriately [1]	108/9 113/11 116/20	attended [1] 123/7	114/17 132/9	been [163]
67/25	123/22 128/5 135/14	attending [1] 123/11	bailing [1] 106/20	Beer [29] 2/3 2/17
approximately [2]	136/15	attends [1] 94/12	balance [5] 20/18	2/18 8/23 34/7 37/18
7/18 116/18	asking [7] 15/4 36/16		21/8 23/15 27/19	41/17 41/20 41/25
arbiter [8] 58/1 58/7	38/4 53/15 122/25	15/18 56/17 129/25	51/15	42/6 51/1 52/2 56/10
				(40) applications Beer

В	132/10 133/21 133/22	bills [1] 106/18	built [4] 43/17 53/19	81/15 85/15 109/4
Beer [16] 61/3	134/2 137/2 139/16	binding [3] 33/25	77/25 122/18	calculation [5] 32/4
65/25 66/11 68/25	BEIS [69] 9/23 33/9	34/1 82/15	bundle [9] 8/20 9/22	81/8 83/24 84/7 109/1
72/10 75/22 80/19	34/4 34/7 36/9 36/11	bit [2] 64/1 140/1	13/19 22/11 43/23	calendar [1] 67/2
81/19 84/2 87/10 88/1	36/22 37/7 37/22	Blake [1] 2/23	65/23 95/1 120/9	call [2] 100/19 100/19
119/5 120/10 120/18	40/21 78/7 81/10	blame [1] 112/11	120/20	called [8] 6/21 7/2
128/2 142/2	85/19 85/20 88/7	blazed [1] 138/10	burden [11] 20/18	14/17 108/11 118/11
before [20] 26/21	88/11 88/14 90/1	block [1] 73/15	21/4 21/6 21/17 22/1	124/8 134/13 136/24
26/22 34/2 38/24	90/23 93/16 94/19	blunt [1] 129/23	31/18 101/24 113/20	came [2] 113/19
40/23 59/3 64/7 68/5	94/24 95/2 97/2 99/15	board [1] 93/21	114/14 115/1 115/8	134/12
69/2 69/11 79/8 92/19	100/2 101/14 103/5	bodies [1] 97/15	burdensome [1]	can [99] 1/4 1/5 1/11
97/13 112/14 112/14	105/7 106/2 108/8	body [2] 78/12 98/20	53/21	2/15 16/19 16/21
118/11 119/6 124/24	109/16 109/24 110/4	both [11] 17/16 20/12	busily [1] 75/4	20/22 20/24 22/10
129/9 129/18	110/11 110/15 110/23	33/9 35/16 37/7 39/13	business [7] 1/20	23/1 25/23 29/9 31/25
began [1] 94/1	111/2 111/7 111/19	56/20 88/14 93/19	9/14 101/23 103/4	35/2 37/18 38/5 40/22
begin [4] 2/8 5/24	112/8 112/10 112/17	94/19 138/12	107/9 124/3 136/14	40/24 41/12 41/18
11/16 109/20	113/6 113/21 115/6	box [1] 20/7	but [90] 2/11 2/14 8/9	42/3 42/10 44/1 46/22
beginning [2] 40/4	119/13 119/19 123/20	boxes [1] 19/10	16/19 17/8 22/23	49/5 49/10 56/8 56/25
134/14	124/23 124/23 125/3	branch [1] 19/19	24/16 30/1 31/1 34/15	57/9 57/11 57/18
begins [1] 92/20	126/2 126/24 130/18	breach [6] 43/9 43/9	38/15 39/7 41/9 41/15	58/21 58/24 59/3 59/4
behalf [14] 3/1 3/2 3/3	130/21 131/10 131/11	46/21 48/23 49/14	42/24 45/5 47/4 47/15	60/24 61/10 61/24
9/23 28/19 31/12	131/20 131/23 132/12	71/21	47/16 47/19 47/25	62/10 62/12 62/20
36/21 37/20 40/14	132/16 132/23 133/7	breaches [1] 6/7	48/16 52/3 52/12	62/20 62/24 63/13
93/5 94/15 118/7	137/18 138/13 138/19	break [8] 9/3 38/16	52/22 53/8 54/13 55/5	63/14 63/23 63/24
123/17 134/1	139/9 139/17	38/22 39/1 77/16	56/3 56/9 58/4 59/5	65/2 65/17 72/22 74/9
behaved [1] 84/21	BEIS's [5] 90/3 90/19	78/25 79/4 92/8	60/16 60/19 62/22	74/23 75/14 75/21
behaviour [1] 101/15	95/3 117/4 125/23	breath [1] 112/12	64/14 65/16 69/6	79/6 81/13 85/9 85/9
behind [8] 11/7 12/22	Belfast [2] 4/12 134/6	briefly [5] 31/25	69/24 70/6 72/8 73/2	86/11 86/18 88/21
26/16 92/2 92/2 92/2	believe [3] 61/12	90/13 93/5 120/7	73/13 73/13 74/21	89/13 90/11 90/13
102/20 139/18	111/6 120/23	134/4	78/16 78/24 79/3 80/4	90/16 91/19 92/6 92/8
being [71] 7/13 10/23	believes [1] 105/25	bring [5] 3/23 44/4	80/7 81/19 81/23	93/14 94/9 94/9 94/18
16/15 32/3 32/7 32/10	belong [1] 134/14	50/9 56/16 91/18	82/16 83/11 84/12	95/16 97/9 97/18
32/19 33/6 35/10	benefit [3] 8/8 89/11	bringing [5] 10/7 43/3	84/25 85/17 87/6	100/17 101/8 105/10
35/15 41/23 43/25	118/13	43/7 50/8 135/21	88/21 89/18 90/2	108/6 112/4 112/10
45/12 45/25 51/15	beset [1] 116/14	brings [2] 5/17 5/22	95/18 97/17 98/21	113/18 120/8 120/18
51/16 51/16 52/21	bespoke [2] 52/24	British [1] 105/22	99/7 101/22 104/5	121/4 124/6 125/15
53/13 53/18 54/21	53/1	broad [5] 17/2 19/24	106/8 106/12 112/24	126/1 126/3 126/21
55/2 59/10 65/12	best [6] 17/11 25/12	22/17 23/2 23/25	113/7 117/3 121/5	127/2 127/12 128/23
67/15 69/21 73/18	56/14 57/7 86/11	broader [1] 23/22	121/7 121/15 122/10	134/3 134/20 134/20
75/9 75/10 75/23	121/23	broadly [3] 12/3	123/17 126/4 126/17	136/7 138/21 140/19
80/23 84/7 85/8 85/15	better [1] 109/16	13/20 24/14	127/18 127/24 132/14	can I be [1] 1/11
85/17 86/14 93/4 93/8	between [22] 1/25	broke [1] 96/15	133/3 135/4 135/7	Can I invite [1] 20/24
94/6 100/16 101/6	4/10 5/25 7/19 16/20	brother [1] 136/14	135/12 135/21 136/19	Can I turn [1] 31/25
101/10 101/20 102/25	19/8 36/9 42/24 51/15	• • • •	137/4 140/13	can't [4] 2/6 46/19
103/19 107/14 113/15	54/19 54/21 65/5	6/10 7/12 7/13 47/17	but I do [1] 2/14	107/5 132/8
115/12 116/20 116/23	105/9 112/7 125/18	47/17 47/20 48/21	butt [3] 34/24 87/14	cannot [10] 8/17
116/24 118/1 118/3	126/6 127/17 128/7	71/25 89/4 116/18	128/4	20/17 57/17 83/8 85/1
118/11 120/1 120/15	128/17 129/6 140/1	124/5 135/21	butting [1] 128/7	106/18 115/25 119/19
121/14 124/7 125/7	140/15	bucket [5] 134/24	by [239]	130/7 132/19
125/8 127/8 127/18	beyond [3] 84/5 88/18		С	cap [1] 115/15
127/20 128/16 129/23	88/20	135/19		capable [4] 51/16
	<b>bill [1]</b> 44/6	bugs [1] 103/22	calculated [4] 32/7	100/15 125/8 127/20
	<u> </u>			(41) Beer capable

(41) Beer... - capable

C	causation [3] 24/2	134/11	84/22 85/9 86/3 86/11	66/23 75/19 77/3
<u>C</u>	28/5 114/1	children's [1] 96/25	86/17 86/22 87/12	88/22 88/25 89/16
car [2] 134/23 136/14	cause [3] 21/14 27/2	choice [1] 1/23	88/17 91/22 100/5	93/23 98/4 100/17
cardiac [1] 44/9	38/9	choose [1] 36/21	100/19 105/9 105/18	100/20 111/14 113/12
Cardiff [1] 4/10	caused [8] 17/4 18/3	chose [1] 37/21	108/11 108/16 108/25	119/24 123/4 128/1
care [2] 94/12 103/23	45/19 49/8 71/21	chronology [1] 5/16	130/23 138/13 138/20	133/24
careful [1] 99/6	77/19 106/12 115/21	circumstance [1]	claimed [16] 7/2 7/21	clearly [3] 42/4 94/14
carefully [10] 46/15	causes [1] 25/18	107/3	8/2 17/5 18/21 22/22	100/18
46/24 47/15 47/25	causing [2] 33/22	circumstances [32]	23/4 23/18 23/23	client [3] 96/11 96/24
48/3 48/5 57/19 90/7	102/2	2/16 21/20 22/19 23/7	27/23 42/3 52/11	112/7
117/9 121/22	cautioned [2] 96/19	24/5 25/16 27/22	55/15 55/22 118/25	clients [16] 96/8 96/9
caring [2] 49/9 116/4	125/25	29/13 30/14 30/18	133/18	105/7 106/4 106/9
carried [2] 83/25	cautions [1] 125/22	37/11 39/25 44/3 45/8	claims [63] 6/5 7/7	106/13 110/4 111/2
135/18	cent [24] 21/9 26/4	48/13 51/9 54/5 55/12	7/11 7/12 8/15 10/5	111/9 111/24 115/14
carry [2] 39/7 79/7 case [35] 22/19 22/25	26/5 26/8 26/8 26/11	60/12 61/21 70/18	10/7 16/22 17/14	121/3 124/7 133/1
23/7 27/12 27/13	26/11 26/13 27/3	75/25 76/3 76/21	18/12 22/7 26/3 26/9	137/5 137/17
28/16 43/12 44/6	30/22 54/21 55/8 55/9	78/16 81/24 83/5	27/7 28/7 32/9 33/5	clients' [1] 33/15
45/23 46/12 48/13	65/21 66/9 66/20	91/24 113/2 115/11	33/5 33/5 33/15 33/17	close [1] 59/1
52/14 52/23 53/4 53/5	66/22 66/25 67/4 77/2	121/24 122/6	42/17 44/10 44/15	closed [6] 8/19 9/11
54/13 54/25 56/6 57/7	77/6 117/7 120/1	civil [7] 4/16 10/7	46/16 47/17 47/19	25/21 54/5 122/8
62/14 68/23 68/24	120/5	43/5 80/9 81/16 91/18	50/6 71/25 72/24	136/8
72/3 72/8 76/21 81/22	certain [3] 24/13	96/19	73/10 74/11 74/13	closely [2] 85/23 94/3
103/13 103/14 103/17	33/15 70/2	claim [59] 13/10 20/2	74/17 74/18 75/1	closing [1] 56/12
104/5 118/11 129/11	certainly [5] 33/12	21/7 21/17 21/18	76/20 78/9 80/23 81/5	closure [5] 24/21
138/5 138/8 140/16	64/11 64/14 89/7	21/24 22/2 22/4 26/20	82/21 82/23 83/2 83/6	25/9 26/1 26/14
cases [34] 4/20 26/3	129/18	27/12 27/17 30/15	83/8 83/11 83/13	106/11
26/4 26/12 29/2 29/5	certainty [1] 137/16	31/15 31/17 31/19	83/17 83/25 88/4	<b>Co [32]</b> 3/4 12/17
29/5 30/20 30/23 45/4	cetera [1] 79/20	31/22 32/17 42/24	88/15 89/5 89/12	17/16 20/12 29/20
48/20 49/15 55/10	Chair [4] 97/11 105/23 109/14 110/25	43/7 43/10 44/4 44/16 44/23 45/21 46/9 46/9	90/21 99/25 101/19 109/7 117/21 118/8	29/24 31/7 31/12 31/20 33/13 33/14
55/14 55/19 55/20	challenge [2] 93/18	46/11 46/14 46/17	119/21 124/5 131/1	33/21 34/19 37/5 37/7
59/17 68/16 68/16	94/20	46/22 46/24 47/6	132/17	42/14 45/12 49/7 60/9
68/19 72/14 72/18	challenges [1] 68/19	47/23 48/1 48/5 49/15	clarification [2] 90/11	
73/12 73/15 75/17	chance [2] 16/24	50/8 50/10 50/24	106/2	73/22 75/15 85/19
78/15 79/11 86/12	121/19	53/10 71/3 72/16	clarified [1] 112/2	86/8 96/4 105/13
96/19 114/11 122/17	Chancellor [2] 12/11	72/20 73/11 73/11	clarify [2] 81/11	111/4 123/8 124/22
126/7 127/1 127/6	138/1	73/12 74/20 76/2	126/24	125/3
cash [3] 136/16	change [2] 54/23	76/16 77/21 81/14	clarity [2] 54/11	cohort [2] 13/1 126/7
136/16 136/17	132/21	85/9 100/12 115/9	108/22	collaborate [2] 36/23
cashed [1] 106/17 categories [10] 13/20	changed [1] 130/11	115/9 119/15 133/23	class [2] 23/18	37/23
14/2 23/22 31/25	changes [1] 139/22	138/15 138/21	112/24	collecting [1] 28/2
90/20 99/25 100/4	character [1] 121/10	claimable [1] 85/13	classes [3] 15/20	collection [2] 64/1
100/20 138/14 138/21	characterise [1] 73/9	claimant [2] 50/7 50/9	16/1 24/13	102/1
category [18] 14/8	characterised [3]	claimants [50] 6/1 6/5		collective [1] 33/3
14/8 23/22 25/17 31/6	45/25 46/9 74/17	6/24 7/8 7/11 7/14	7/9 7/15 22/13	come [11] 1/23 22/9
32/1 32/17 35/2 49/5	charity [1] 111/16	7/20 7/24 8/5 12/24	claw [4] 85/21 86/1	23/17 34/16 66/9
87/12 88/16 91/1	chat [2] 39/2 39/6	13/6 13/25 27/3 34/21	130/9 130/14	74/25 78/25 79/25
91/21 100/12 126/7	check [2] 52/16 92/1	35/3 35/7 35/12 35/14	claw-back [1] 130/9	127/5 136/3 139/9
126/25 127/6 132/18	cheque [1] 136/12	35/17 35/22 35/25	clear [27] 1/11 16/2	comes [4] 41/7 74/22
category 3 [1] 91/21	Chief [1] 67/22	36/15 36/21 36/25	16/6 16/16 40/24	75/13 95/19
cathartic [1] 106/11	children [5] 49/9	37/2 37/4 37/10 37/21	48/24 54/12 57/13	comfortably [1] 92/19
	107/1 116/3 134/10	37/25 83/17 83/22	60/3 60/18 65/13	coming [4] 67/9 68/23
	l	1		(12) car coming

(42) car - coming

С	80/23 81/6 81/8 84/8	94/3 94/18 131/2	14/17 16/8 16/13	consistency [1] 54/11
	85/7 85/11 85/15 87/4	concerning [5] 13/22	16/17 16/18 17/12	consistent [1] 55/24
coming [2] 102/13	88/15 88/16 88/24	41/1 93/9 94/22	17/22 18/12 18/22	constantly [1] 136/3
112/15	89/14 89/17 89/18	110/13	18/23 18/25 19/3 19/4	constituted [1] 10/16
commas [1] 64/5	89/23 90/14 90/17	concerns [8] 19/20	20/10 20/11 20/25	constrain [1] 55/6
commenced [1] 5/25	90/21 91/9 91/11	38/9 54/14 76/5 76/7	21/4 22/2 22/22 23/18	construed [1] 7/5
comment [4] 101/2	91/14 91/24 93/10	87/21 113/18 115/5	27/17 27/20 27/23	consulting [2] 36/22
108/5 112/4 119/14	93/24 94/6 94/23	concession [1]	28/9 31/8 41/22 41/23	37/22
commitment [1]	94/25 95/8 97/16	130/17	41/25 42/8 51/2 51/7	contact [6] 26/24
112/17	98/12 98/13 98/17	concluded [2] 3/17	52/11 52/21 53/10	48/23 49/14 124/7
commitments [2] 3/6	99/25 100/3 100/8	82/13	54/3 54/6 54/9 55/4	129/25 130/1
3/21	100/15 101/14 101/19	conclusion [4] 33/25	60/17 69/18 73/14	contain [1] 137/15
committed [2] 57/20	104/11 104/13 106/3	36/1 37/15 48/11	73/19 74/14 83/24	contains [2] 6/18
83/12	108/4 108/10 108/25	conclusions [1]	85/8 88/11 117/14	111/22
Committee's [1]	109/2 109/4 109/10	95/10	120/13 120/17 121/8	contemporaneous [8]
94/24	110/17 111/12 111/17	conduct [2] 84/18	122/1 122/24 133/17	28/1 60/10 60/18
common [6] 6/13	111/20 112/9 115/1	136/23	consider [37] 18/1	60/24 62/8 63/12 75/5
21/11 50/21 56/23	115/16 116/9 118/2	conducted [4] 13/16	20/9 22/3 22/7 25/12	114/2
58/15 70/5	118/18 119/13 119/16	82/24 123/11 123/15	27/21 29/12 30/3	content [2] 34/22
communicate [2]	123/5 124/5 126/9	<b>conducting</b> [2] 5/10	30/24 31/25 37/6	40/5
51/19 86/4	126/15 126/21 128/13	106/7	39/20 46/22 47/15	context [13] 43/11
communication [1]	128/16 130/5 131/5	confidence [1] 88/12	50/4 58/18 59/12	44/12 55/7 56/10
124/19	131/25 132/12 137/6	confident [2] 2/10	59/20 69/3 70/19 71/1	57/12 69/25 74/10
comparables [3]	137/8 138/2 138/15	79/6	71/8 84/5 85/1 86/25	75/8 75/19 83/4 85/3
100/10 127/11 137/9	138/21 139/1 139/2	confidential [1] 82/9	90/10 97/20 99/1 99/2	85/18 89/14
comparatively [1]	compete [1] 2/12	confined [3] 22/21	99/11 99/19 112/4	continue [6] 4/25
73/4	complaint [2] 3/15	23/4 52/10	116/20 127/6 127/16	34/22 58/18 58/22
compare [1] 134/4	110/8	confirm [11] 11/11	129/25 131/19	89/6 91/20
compel [1] 106/1	complete [4] 2/11	41/12 56/25 65/17	considerable [3]	continued [2] 68/6
compensate [1] 136/25	19/10 79/2 129/13	69/25 81/13 85/9	56/16 108/22 116/19	105/6
	completed [1] 51/4	86/18 90/16 91/13	considerably [1]	continues [2] 11/21
compensated [1] 20/21	completeness [1]	91/19	89/10	31/4
	49/24	confirmation [1] 86/1	consideration [7]	continuing [8] 18/25
compensating [1] 113/23	completion [1] 29/19	confirmed [3] 85/24	3/18 15/5 23/25 27/1	65/11 65/13 66/24
compensation [135]	complex [6] 27/24	130/18 133/19	38/13 62/17 127/18	82/19 88/9 101/16
1/8 1/13 2/21 3/16 4/3	28/10 55/10 69/8	confiscation [2] 85/7	considerations [3]	123/3
5/2 5/6 5/18 6/6 7/20	119/20 121/17	85/11	22/17 23/3 130/3	contract [5] 6/7 43/9
7/25 8/7 8/12 8/17	complicated [3]	conflict [1] 131/16	considered [18] 12/8	46/21 67/14 67/18
9/16 10/2 10/5 10/13	68/17 79/11 104/12	connected [3] 61/1	46/15 46/25 47/25	contractual [2] 47/18
11/5 11/13 11/18	complications [1]	69/13 85/12	48/3 48/6 50/11 62/18	48/21
11/23 12/1 12/12	89/8	conscious [3] 39/18	68/11 69/21 78/6	contrary [1] 71/23
12/18 13/1 13/5 13/11	complying [1] 110/14		84/15 84/17 97/3	contrast [1] 28/18
13/22 13/24 15/20	comprehensive [1]	consent [1] 69/4	120/3 124/18 134/2	contributed [1] 28/25
16/1 29/6 30/12 32/2	51/15	consents [1] 86/21	137/21	contribution [6] 29/2
32/4 32/5 32/6 32/11	comprising [1] 43/14		considering [9] 25/11	
35/2 35/10 35/12	concepts [1] 28/4	17/4 21/10 53/13	29/8 49/17 56/14 57/7	122/13
36/14 39/16 45/24	concern [4] 45/4 86/5		57/19 58/18 72/21	contributions [5]
49/11 49/25 57/4	87/20 117/15	consequences [5]	124/3	29/8 71/6 72/13 72/21
57/20 58/19 67/6 70/5	concerned [14] 3/13	4/14 4/16 4/18 106/14	considers [11] 21/19	75/10
70/7 72/14 77/24	39/19 40/6 45/18	116/2	22/18 22/24 23/6	controversial [2] 30/1
78/21 80/1 80/18	60/22 69/11 72/17	consequent [1] 6/6	43/18 44/19 45/7 46/3	140/25
	76/17 81/9 88/25 91/1	consequential [53]	52/13 72/7 115/10	convene [1] 108/21
				(43) coming convene

(43) coming... - convene

С	could [22] 1/23 9/17	18/13 25/5	dead [1] 39/4	defend [1] 121/24
	16/9 30/14 34/16 40/6	critical [1] 6/15	deadline [5] 25/2	deficiency [5] 45/9
convened [2] 109/19	48/14 50/11 57/5 58/9	criticised [1] 2/15	56/16 57/2 58/10	47/1 50/12 51/25 56/7
133/2	61/25 75/25 77/11	criticism [1] 41/8	58/15	deficient [3] 42/15
convenient [1] 38/16	84/14 101/7 107/18	criticisms [1] 113/5	deal [16] 45/20 47/5	45/16 53/24
convey [1] 106/5	115/4 117/13 130/25	cross [2] 18/22 21/21	55/11 55/15 57/8	defined [5] 7/13 16/13
convicted [7] 7/13	133/17 135/6 135/22	crucial [2] 97/23	73/21 88/3 89/13	16/15 19/1 41/23
96/18 125/17 126/1	couldn't [3] 135/7	111/21	90/13 110/9 122/5	definition [1] 41/22
126/12 126/20 132/21				
conviction [6] 4/19	135/17 136/9	crusty [1] 39/3	125/15 126/21 127/2 140/17 140/25	<b>degree [4]</b> 43/16 55/3
85/8 85/10 85/12	counsel [8] 2/23 14/3			104/2 106/11
105/4 126/12	14/6 34/19 59/13	65/14 72/19 81/23	dealing [10] 1/8 15/16	
convictions [23] 9/17	119/5 134/1 135/14	128/15 139/1	42/25 70/1 73/9 78/20	25/18 27/2 57/15 65/3
10/14 10/18 10/19	count [1] 135/20	currently [6] 29/8	98/19 102/6 121/7	65/7 67/10 68/9 68/13
11/2 11/5 11/14 13/13	couple [4] 26/22	39/24 69/21 70/24	121/17	69/24 78/14 98/8
13/23 32/3 32/13	42/11 67/10 78/24	72/21 137/15	dealt [6] 73/11 79/11	98/19 113/5 128/16
32/22 78/5 78/22	course [45] 4/9 6/11	D	80/24 119/4 121/9	137/1
79/23 80/15 80/19	29/11 31/23 35/21		139/5	delays [3] 26/24
86/22 88/25 91/2	36/1 36/7 40/10 40/21	daddy [1] 135/3	debt [1] 4/22	130/5 130/6
125/20 126/22 126/23	42/22 46/5 47/6 47/15	daily [1] 107/14	decade [1] 24/7	deliberate [1] 120/16
cooperate [2] 61/17	48/10 48/13 50/8 52/3	damage [2] 17/1	decades [1] 24/8	deliberately [1] 32/15
89/19	52/7 53/12 58/11	46/20	December [12] 3/11	delineates [2] 42/21
copy [2] 62/10 62/12	60/22 62/4 62/5 62/18	damages [27] 6/25	6/11 11/3 11/8 38/10	42/24
core [25] 3/3 5/14	63/24 65/18 66/19	13/15 45/14 45/18	66/21 90/21 91/8	deliver [2] 11/18
11/24 12/16 13/17	66/25 69/1 77/25 78/8	46/2 46/10 46/13	105/7 105/12 107/4	89/17
14/4 14/10 15/6 24/15	82/5 82/15 87/9 89/18	46/18 47/2 47/6 47/11	118/20	delivered [7] 3/9 3/21
34/20 37/7 42/12	90/2 90/6 95/23 101/8	47/24 48/2 48/12	December 2019 [1]	57/4 57/20 58/19
50/15 50/15 50/18	105/1 106/4 111/12	48/16 48/19 48/22	38/10	93/24 94/7
67/11 81/1 87/21 90/8	128/9 131/6 132/16	53/16 81/16 81/17	December 2021 [2]	delivering [2] 5/12
94/15 95/9 96/6	court [15] 34/2 39/4	81/18 81/20 82/4	11/8 105/7	13/5
107/17 112/3 128/4	77/22 82/7 83/11	118/24 119/2 122/24	December 2022 [1]	delivery [2] 93/19
corporate [2] 50/1	83/22 84/23 91/12	122/25	66/21	94/19
104/12	96/16 101/2 101/3	damaging [1] 81/21	decide [3] 75/18	demanded [1] 106/21
	103/15 104/5 105/6	danger [1] 118/1	95/11 103/20	demanding [1]
<b>correct [5]</b> 1/6 19/3 29/1 70/14 138/19	138/5	Darren [1] 135/4	decided [3] 5/4	112/16
correctly [2] 74/19	courts [1] 10/7	data [14] 13/7 23/10	108/21 110/15	demands [3] 91/4
120/12	cover [1] 39/20	41/10 41/14 62/3 62/5	decides [2] 78/11	99/22 118/16
correspondence [3]	covered [2] 13/2 49/6	62/16 64/1 64/7 64/13	118/13	demonstrate [2] 21/8
33/6 130/12 133/4	covering [1] 41/3	86/17 86/20 86/21	decision [6] 6/15	22/2
	Covid [2] 25/7 56/21	119/23	37/12 46/1 54/11	demonstrated [1]
cost [7] 43/21 44/2	crack [1] 64/13	date [12] 25/11 30/16	54/17 72/25	103/10
59/23 70/25 77/9 104/6 132/24	created [3] 131/13	41/9 56/12 57/1 59/19	decisions [4] 6/8	demonstrates [1]
	131/14 132/5	67/3 76/2 81/22 82/23	28/23 109/19 127/25	65/13
costs [30] 6/23 7/1	creation [1] 4/1	106/2 111/23	declaring [1] 106/24	denial [2] 105/5 119/6
7/1 7/23 16/24 28/14	credibly [1] 54/1	dated [5] 6/11 9/22	deduct [1] 70/7	department [11]
28/25 29/9 43/6 68/20	credit [3] 4/23 55/13	90/17 106/23 109/18	deducted [2] 132/1	11/21 103/4 105/10
71/13 72/13 72/15	55/19	dates [1] 20/4	134/21	105/17 109/20 109/21
72/22 75/13 87/1 98/1	cricket [5] 2/7 2/13	day [9] 1/22 4/25 9/21	deducting [1] 70/11	110/21 124/3 130/22
100/3 104/4 116/12	2/14 92/20 139/6	12/4 64/21 64/25	deed [11] 3/11 6/10	131/2 137/18
121/20 122/15 131/9	cricketing [1] 2/5	106/17 139/20 140/7	6/18 7/5 7/10 7/15 8/3	depend [2] 55/2
131/9 131/20 131/24	criminal [4] 4/19	days [9] 1/8 1/11 1/12		140/18
131/25 132/8 132/14	96/17 136/2 136/22	1/18 12/20 26/22 35/6	84/24	dependent [1] 27/11
132/16	criteria [4] 14/15 16/4	35/19 107/5	defence [1] 71/25	depending [1] 122/13
				() convened depending

(44) convened - depending

deprived [2]         60/13         did [11]         24/17         34/1         discontinued [1]         53/16         53/17         53/16         53/17         53/16         53/17         53/16         53/17         53/16         53/17         53	D	devoted [1] 1/12	100/6 117/20	50/17 51/13 51/25	128/20
132/10       54/1 61/15 103/19       123/2       55/2 13/13 63/25       56/1 64/24       56/1 64/24       56/1 64/24       56/1 64/24       56/1 64/24       56/1 64/24       56/1 64/24       56/1 64/24       56/1 64/24       129/1 63/25       56/1 64/24       129/1 63/25       56/1 64/24       129/1 63/21       129/1 73/1 63/21       129/1			discontinued [1]	53/16 53/16 55/19	doubt [12] 22/20
derailed [1] 97/1 derisory [2] 117/1 derisory [2] 117/1 described [1] 157/ described [2] 157/ 157/ described [2] 157/ difficult [7] 287/ difficult [7] 257/ difficult [7] 157/ difficult [7] 157/ d		54/1 87/15 103/19	125/22	55/21 57/13 63/25	
derisory [2]         135/8         135/16         136/16         136/16         122/17         123/16         123/16         122/17         123/16         123/16         123/16         123/16         123/16         123/16         123/16         123/16         123/16         123/16         123/16         123/16         123/16         123/16         123/16         123/16         123/17         123/16         123/17         12		103/20 104/5 121/22	discover [1] 100/8	64/9 64/10 64/24	90/16 108/16 108/19
distruct [1]         didn't [8]         5/1/2         13/1/2         786<798<79/16		135/8 135/15 136/3		65/11 71/8 73/1 78/16	112/8 122/7 125/4
11/1/23         64/2         102/15         64/2         102/15         64/2         102/15         64/2         102/15         64/2         104/25				79/6 79/8 79/16 80/2	129/19 133/12
describe [1]         133/17         133/14         1					
dask bill         dide [1]         104/25         discretion [5]         22/1         99/7         104/5         105/70         drafting [2]         17/8           32/6         35/20         35/6         72/6         110/4         111/24         112/16         119/25           32/7         32/3         35/20         55/6         72/6         110/4         111/24         112/16         119/25           description [1]         51/7         differences [1]         58/3         discussel [2]         58/12         120/25         121/4         122/11         121/6         diraged [1]         111/3           description [1]         51/7         46/14         63/6         78/4         79/21         125/7         120/25         121/4         122/11         127/3         diraged [1]         106/15         diraged [1]         106/15         discussion [2]         119/4         129/14         122/14         129/14         122/14         129/14         129/14         129/14         129/14         129/17         128/17         128/14         128/17         128/14         128/17         128/14         128/17         128/14         128/17         128/14         128/14         128/14         128/14         128/14         128/14					
2/13/30/30/30/30/30/30/30/30/30/30/30/30/30					
30/10 30/2 10/10       30/2 3 6/18 5/1/4       discuss [1] 79/14       11/218 113/2 115/20       11/216 113/2 115/20       11/21 11/21 11/21       11/21 11/21 11/21       11/21 11/21 11/21       11/21 11/21 11/21       11/21 11/21					
12/123         difference [1] 58/3         discussed [2] 58/12         120/25 121/4 122/21         dragged [1] 11/3           description [1] 51/7         different [6] 2012         125/7         124/13 127/15 132/6         draw [1] 9/24           111/16         design [1] 14/11         design [1] 14/11         difficult [7] 28/7         discussion [2] 11/2         12/13 127/15 132/6         draw [1] 9/24           37/14 44/20 51/4         30/13 75/25 80/12         11/3 124/25 125/6         discussions [6] 1/12         document [1] 14/11         dirive [2] 135/17         135/18         drive [2] 135/17           37/14 44/20 51/4         11/8 114/9 121/23         125/1 127/2         14/91         14/91         14/91         14/91         14/91         14/91         14/91         14/91         14/91         14/91         13/16         drive [2] 135/17           30/13 75/25 80/12         11/3 124/25 12/4         13/44         14/91         15/42         14/91					
descrup [2]         111/19           deserve [2]         111/19           designer [1]         111/19           designer [12]         111/19           designer [12]         111/19           designer [12]         111/19           designer [12]         111/19           37/14         30/13         75/25           30/13         75/25         80/12           113         124/25         125/61           diggorg [12]         30/13         75/25           diggorg [13]         41/11         13/14         13/14           51/15         53/2         69/17         13/14 <td< td=""><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>dragged [1] 111/3</td></td<>					dragged [1] 111/3
deskrev [2]         46/14         63/6         78/4         79/21         discussion [2]         119/4         132/18         132/20         136/6         drawn [1]         137/6           design [1]         14/11         80/12         127/3         137/4         13					
H11/10         60/12         127/3         137/4         137/17         139/3         dread [1]         106/18           design [1]         14/11         difficult [7]         28/7         137/4         137/17         139/3         dread [1]         106/18           37/14         44/20         51/4         14/8         14/9         12/23         document [11]         14/17         135/18         dread [1]         16/18           122/9         123/25         dignity [1]         107/13         disporgement [1]         90/16         12/2/3         document [1]         14/17         14/3/13         disporgement [1]         90/16         12/2/3         document [1]         14/17         13/14         <					
designed [12]         14/11         difficult [7]         28/7         discussions [6]         1/12         14/10         drive [2]         135/17           37/14         44/20         51/15         53/2         69/17         1/13         12/2/2         12/2/2         1/14         14/19         1/14         14/19         1/14         14/19         1/14         <					
designed [12]         16/10         30/13 75/25 80/12         1/13 124/25 125/6         document [11]         14/17         135/18           37/14 44/20 51/4         114/8 114/9 121/23         125/11 127/4         14/19 15/4 18/24 19/4         diving [1] 67/17           71/12 16/11 120/12         difficulties [3] 25/6         disports [1] 9/18         disonesty [1] 10/17         disput [13] 8/15 0/18         disonesty [1] 10/17         disput [13] 8/15 0/18         disonesty [1] 10/17         disput [13] 8/15         disonesty [1] 10/17         disonesty [1] 10/17         disput [13] 8/16 0/14         direct [4] 17/4 20/5         10/12 10/17 28/14         22/5 62/23 120/3         29/10 40/10 40/21         direct [9] 21/15 25/7           49/22 101/22 13/86         direct [3] 110/25         87/18 91/13 91/17         disput [3] 8/17 31/17         disput [3] 8/17 31/17         disput [3] 8/17 31/17         disput [3] 8/17         disf 62/16 6/17 487/9         direct [4] 6/11 42/11 41/21         direct [6] 11/12/14         direct [6] 11/12/14         direct [6] 11/12/14         direct [7] 16/8 19/23         during [10] 6/11         during [10] 6/12         during [10] 6/12         during [10] 6/12         during [10] 6/14         direct [6] 5/16 5/17         dising [10] 6/14         direct [6] 11/12	• • •				
37/14 44/20 50/17       114/8 114/9 121/23       125/11 127/4       14/19 15/4 18/24 19/4       dirving [1] 67/17         71/12 116/11 120/12       difficulties [3] 25/6       25/11 127/2       19/5 21/1 21/22 66/7       drove [1] 13/1/3         122/9 123/25       difficulties [3] 25/6       dishonesty [1] 9/18       dishonesty [1] 9/18       dicumentary [1] 28/1       Drydale [1] 106/15         desire [2] 30/23       difficulties [3] 25/6       dishonesty [1] 9/18       discourmentary [1] 28/1       Drydale [1] 106/15         desire [2] 30/23       difficulties [3] 26/6       dishonesty [1] 9/18       discourmentary [1] 28/1       Drydale [1] 106/15         despite [4] 51/7       directed [5] 10/25       divert [4] 17/2 (20/7       10/12 10/17 28/14       22/5 62/23 120/3       29/10 40/10 40/21         destroys [1] 114/23       directing [1] 115/3       directing [1] 115/3       directing [1] 110/25       70/19 72/18 103/3       10/42 14/12 (21/9)         detailed [5] 8/14       directing [2] 5/11       distance [1] 11/12       T0/19 72/18 103/3       111/2       114/21 114/22 (21/9)         detailed [5] 8/14       discours [2] 5/11       distinguished [1]       59/15 85/16 70/7       T0/14 72/12       21/14 82/24 45/18         50/25 114/17       disaponitment [1]       distirbution [1] 8/17       distirbution [1] 9/17       distirbution [1] 9/17					
31/1 33/2 09/17       difficulties [3] 25/6       disgorgement [1]       19/5 21/1 21/22 66/7         12/2 19 123/25       difficulty [1] 33/23       disficulty [1] 33/23       dispute [1] 8/14         109/20       dignity [1] 107/13       dispute [1] 8/15 10/3       documentary [1] 28/1       due [9] 21/15 25/7         109/20       dispute [1] 8/14       3/24 85/8       dispute [1] 8/15 10/3       documentation [3]       20/16 62/11 115/2       20/10 40/10 40/21         despret [1] 106/14       direct [1] 107/13       dispute [1] 8/17       10/12 10/17 28/14       20/5 62/23 120/3       20/10 40/10 40/21         destroyed [3] 60/14       113/15 120/9 120/17       12/14       119/7       10/421       10/421         destroyed [3] 60/14       direction [2] 108/13       dispute [1] 8/17       10/8 8/19 87/9       20/16 68/14 87/9       20/16 68/14 87/9         detailed [5] 8/14       direction [2] 108/13       direction [2] 108/13       10/99 118/21       10/99 118/21       10/99 72/18 103/3       60/6 55/16 70/07       114/21 114/22 119/12         detailed [5] 8/14       113/6       director [2] 68/2       distinguished [1]       10/15       20/20 8/12 39/14       dose 51/6 51/15 15/2       10/16 8/14 86/22       20/30 8/16 34/7       20/30 8/16 34/7       20/30 8/16 34/7       20/30 8/16 34/7       20/30 8/16 34/7       20/30 8					
17/12       17/12 <td< td=""><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></td<>					
12/29 1/23/25       difficulty [1] 33/23       dishonesty [1] 9/18       documentary [1] 28/1       Drydale [1] 106/15         despret [2] 30/23       dignity [1] 107/13       10/17 28/14       3/20 45/8       dispute [13] 8/15 10/3       documentary [1] 28/1       Drydale [1] 106/15         despret [4] 15/17       direct [4] 17/4 20/5       8/14 60/25 67/4 77/4       documents [5] 17/6       2/9/10 40/10 40/21         49/22 101/16 115/3       directid [5] 110/25       87/8 91/13 91/17       62/10 62/11 115/2       10/4/19 87/9         destroyel [3] 60/14       113/15 120/9 120/17       122/14       119/7       documentary [1] 10/2       10/4/21         detail [2] 94/22       113/15 120/9 120/17       122/14       119/7       documentary [1] 10/2       10/4/21         detailed [5] 8/14       firecting [1] 115/3       directing [2] 108/13       10/9/9 118/21       70/19 72/18 103/3       ditty [2] 43/9 7/1/2         detailing [1] 5/22       59/5 85/11 8/3       distore [1] 11/1       111/2       111/2       70/19 72/18 103/3       ditty [2] 43/9 7/1/2         detailing [1] 5/22       59/5 85/11 8/3       distore [1] 10/2       70/19 72/18 10/3       duty [2] 43/9 7/1/2       2/12/2       2/12/2       2/11 8/2/2       2/12/2       2/14 11/2       2/2/2       2/2/2       2/2/2       2/2/2       2/2/2					
dispite [1]         30/23         dignity [1]         107/10           desperate [1]         106/12         dignity [1]         107/12         107/20         22/5         62/23         12/0/20         29/10         20/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/10         20/10         29/11         10/12         10/12         10/17         20/17         10/21         10/21         10/21         29/11         10/21         20/16         20/17         10/21					
103/20       direct [4]       17/4       20/5       29/10       40/10       40/21         desprate [4]       15/17       33/24       85/8       48/14       60/25       67/4       71/6       62/12       21/16       10/10       40/10       40/21         desprate [4]       15/17       49/22       10/12       13/15       10/12       67/4       48/14       60/25       67/4       71/6       62/12       21/17/4       documents [5]       17/6       78/8       84/19       87/9         destroys [1]       113/15       10/12       10/17       113/15       10/12       62/12       62/12       10/14       48/14       60/25       67/16       68/17       10/42 <t< td=""><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></t<>					
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desprote [4]       15117 49/22 101/22 138/8 destroys [1]       directed [5]       110/25 113/15 120/9 120/17 121/13       87/8 91/13 91/17 122/14       62/1 62/11 115/2 119/7       104/21 during [10] 6/11 24/18 62/4 65/18         destroys [1]       114/23 directing [1]       115/3 directing [1]       10/21 111/23       109/9 118/21 directing [1]       109/9 118/21 109/9 118/21       62/20 86/6 87/4 87/9 20/65 55/16 70/6 70/7       104/21 during [10] 6/11 24/18 62/4 65/18         detailed [5]       81/4 52/22 4 95/20 108/20 119/20       111/5 directing [2]       108/13 111/5       105/9 118/21 distinguished [1]       10/9 72/18 103/3 111/9 115/11 129/20       104/21 duties [1] 88/2         detailed [5]       81/4 52/22 4 95/20 108/20 119/20       directing [9] 20/1 50/7 50/23 51/8 54/14 56/8 disteres [10] 45/2       distinguished [1] 125/18 126/17       119/15/11 129/20 distinguished [1] 105/2       119/15/2       11/16 84/9/22       20/8 00/7         determination [3] 97/5 115/12 118/24 determined [2] 8/16 disagree [1] 40/15 disagree [1] 40/15 disagree [1] 40/16 disappointed [1] 127/9 127/11 determined [2] 8/16 discose [1] 108/7 disclose [1] 108/7       distribution [1] 99/17 distribute [1] 122/4 distribute [1] 122/4 distribute [1] 122/12       done [10] 8/25 20/14 distribute [1] 122/14 119/3       done [10] 8/25 20/14 distribute [1] 13/20 130/7 139/13       11/14/1 129/15 a0/5 33/24 82/4 82/18         development [2] 33/19 35/15       106/2 33/19 35/15       106/2 33/19 35/15       106/2 33/19 35/15       106/2 33/19       106/2 31/122					
49/22 10/22 13/37       113/15 120/9 120/17       122/14       119/7       during [10] 6/11         destroyed [3] 60/14       113/15 120/9 120/17       121/13       directing [1] 115/3       directing [2] 08/13       109/9 118/21       70/19 72/18 103/3       dirties [1] 88/12         111/23       direction [2] 5/11       direction [2] 5/11       disting [1] 11/23       disting [1] 11/23       111/9 115/11 129/20       114/21 114/22 119/12         detailing [1] 5/22       directiy [9] 20/1 50/7       disting [1] 11/23       disting [1] 11/23       disting [1] 11/23       111/9 115/11 129/20       111/9 115/11 129/20       114/21 114/22 119/12         detailing [1] 5/22       directry [9] 20/1 50/7       disting [1] 45/2       12/12 127/24 129/17       12/12 127/24 129/17         determination [3]       97/5 115/12 118/24       disagreent [1]       distributed [1] 125/7       distributed [1] 122/4       distributed [1] 122/4       distributed [1] 122/4       61/11 65/9 66/13       10/11 65/9 66/13       11/10 61/20 30/23       11/10 11/11 90/23 102/3       11/11 19/15       11/10 23/12 20/3 55/12 10/2/3       11/11 19/15       11/10 23/12 20/3 55/12 10					
destroyed [3] 60/14 107/16 115/3 destroys [1] 114/23 detail [2] 94/22 111/23 detail [2] 94/22 111/23 detail [2] 94/22 111/23 detail [2] 94/22 111/23 detail [3] 8/14 52/24 95/20 108/20 directions [2] 5/11 directions [2] 5/12 details [4] 20/3 35/10 50/25 114/17 determinations [2] 127/9 127/11 determinations [2] 127/9 127/12 128/16 disagree [1] 40/15 disagree [1] 40/15 distributed [1] 122/7 distribution [1] 99/17 distribution [1] 99/17 distribution [1] 99/17 disclose [1] 106/2 disclosed [3] 31/22 100/10 119/7 disclose [1] 106/2 disclosed [3] 63/19 49/20 49/22 50/4     doise [1] 129/16 doors [2] 128/10     24/18 62/2 65/18 67/16 68/4 97/20 disclose [2] 63/19 30/19 35/12					
destroys [1] 114/23       directing [1] 115/3       62/20 86/6 87/4 87/9       27/13 46/18 46/22       67/16 68/4 97/20         detail [2] 94/22       111/23       direction [2] 108/13       109/9 118/21       50/5 5/16 70/6 70/7       114/21 114/22 119/12         detail [2] 94/22       111/5       directions [2] 5/11       113/5       disergard [1] 110/23       70/19 72/18 103/3       114/21 114/22 119/12         detail [2] 94/22       111/5       directions [2] 5/11       distiction [3] 80/25       111/2       111/9 115/11 129/12       Dyson [9] 13/16 34/4         52/24 95/20 108/20       directors [2] 5/11       distinguished [1]       105/2       125/18 126/17       59/5 85/11 88/3       105/2       125/18 44/14 121/15       127/12 127/12 127/24 129/17         determinations [3]       93/21       distress [10] 45/2       d6/3 49/13 49/16       22/20 48/25 64/23       104/5 120/24       Dyson [9] 13/16 34/4         determinations [2]       12/11       distributed [1] 125/7       distributed [1] 125/7       104/5 120/24       doing [7] 2/15 22/18       20/3 50/25 56/16 11/17       61/11 65/9 66/13       20/3 50/25 56/16 11/17       61/11 65/9 66/13       20/3 50/25 56/16 11/17       61/11 65/9 66/13       20/3 50/25 56/16 11/17       61/11 79/9 90/24       61/11 79/9 90/24       61/11 79/9 90/24       61/11 79/9 90/24       61/120 63/9 72/8 75/21       20/3					•
detail [2] 94/22       direction [2] 108/13       109/9 118/21       50/6 55/16 70/6 70/7       114/21 114/22 119/12         detailed [5] 8/14       111/5       directions [2] 5/11       distinction [3] 80/25       111/23         detailed [5] 8/14       111/5       directions [2] 5/11       distinction [3] 80/25       111/2         111/23       directions [2] 5/11       distinction [3] 80/25       111/2       111/2         111/24       113/6       distinction [3] 80/25       111/2       111/2         detailing [1] 5/22       50/2 51/8 54/14 56/8       distinguished [1]       59/12 84/11 121/15       127/12 127/24 129/17         determination [3]       93/21       director [1] 50/3       49/25 55/25 56/2       0on't [14] 54/11 54/12       Dyson's [1] 129/12         determinations [2]       124/1       disagree [1] 40/15       distributed [1] 122/4       61/14 79/9 90/24       61/12 63/13 154/2         developed [2] 13/8       discopointent [1]       distribution [1] 99/17       105/1 128/14 130/4       94/11 96/23 102/3         diveeloping [2] 36/23       37/23       disclose [1] 106/2       0i [64] 2/4 2/14 5/20       133/23 133/24 134/2       63/25 58/20         33/19 35/15       disclose [3] 31/22       32/14 39/7 42/23       32/14 39/7 42/23       33/14 3/2       33/2 83/18 8/20       33/2					
uterain [2]       94/22       111/5       1111/5       111/5       111/5					
111/23       directions [2] 5/11       distance [1] 1/4       111/9 115/11 129/20       duty [2] 43/9 71/22         detailed [5] 8/14       52/24 95/20 108/20       113/6       distinction [3] 80/25       129/22 139/14       doesn't [6] 51/1 51/2       B2/14 82/25 127/5         detailing [1] 5/22       directly [9] 20/1 50/7       50/23 51/8 54/14 56/8       distinguished [1]       59/12 84/11 121/15       127/12 127/24 129/17         determination [3]       97/5 115/12 118/24       directors [1] 50/3       46/3 49/13 49/16       22/20 48/25 64/23       Dyson's [1] 129/12         geterminations [2]       124/1       disagree [1]       73/13 73/19 74/15       don't [14] 54/11 54/22       don't [14] 54/11 54/22       20/3 50/25 56/2 61/61/17         determine [1] 78/13       disagree [1] 40/15       distributed [1] 125/7       68/14 79/9 90/24       91/19 66/13       61/12 63/9 72/8 75/21         developed [2] 13/8       discharge [1] 20/17       disclose [1] 106/2       30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18       82/24 83/9 86/13 87/6         33/19 35/15       33/19 35/15       10/10 119/7       32/14 39/7 42/23       33/19 35/15       33/19 35/15       33/19 35/15       33/19 35/15       33/19 35/15       33/19 35/15       33/19 35/15 <td< td=""><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></td<>					
detailed [5] 6/14 52/24 95/20 108/20 119/20       113/6       distinction [3] 80/25 125/18 126/17       129/22 139/14 doesn't [6] 51/1 51/2 59/12 84/11 121/15       Dyson [9] 13/16 34/4 82/11 82/25 127/5         detailing [1] 5/22 details [4] 20/3 35/10 50/25 114/17 determination [3] 97/5 115/12 118/24 determinations [2] 127/9 127/11 determine [1] 78/13 determine [1] 78/13 determine [1] 78/13 determine [1] 96/8 devastated [1] 96/8 developing [2] 36/23 37/23 development [2] 33/19 35/15       113/6 disclosure [3] 63/19       distinction [3] 80/25 125/18 126/17       129/22 139/14 doesn't [6] 51/1 51/2 59/12 84/11 121/15       Dyson [9] 13/16 34/4 82/11 82/25 127/5         distinction [3] 97/5 115/12 118/24       director [2] 68/2 disadvantage [1] 124/1       distinguished [1] 40/15       105/2 distressel [1] 122/4       129/22 139/14 doesn't [6] 51/1 51/2 121/25       Dyson [9] 13/16 34/4         determine [1] 127/9 127/11       gizet [1] 50/3 disagreement [1] 40/16       distressel [10] 45/2 distributed [1] 122/7       doing [7] 125/21       Dyson's [1] 129/12         distribution [1] 99/17 35/10       disappointed [1] 108/7       distribution [1] 99/17 disclose [1] 106/2       distribution [1] 99/17 disclose [1] 106/2       diol [1] 13/20 disclose [1] 106/2       130/7 139/13       door [8] 54/5 58/20 30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18       30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18 82/24 83/9 86/13 87/6 133/3       30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18 82/24 83/9 86/13 87/6 133/3					
32/24 95/20 106/20 119/20       directly [9] 20/1 50/7       125/18 126/17       doesn't [6] 51/1 51/2       82/11 82/25 127/5         detailing [1] 5/2       50/25 51/8 54/14 56/8       59/5 85/11 88/3       distinguished [1]       59/12 84/11 121/15       127/12 127/24 129/17         detailing [4] 20/3 35/10       59/5 85/11 88/3       director [2] 68/2       distress [10] 45/2       doing [7] 2/15 22/18       127/12 127/24 129/17         determinations [3]       93/21       directors [1] 50/3       49/25 55/25 56/2       104/5 120/24       Dyson's [1] 129/12         disadvantage [1]       124/1       distributed [1] 125/7       68/14 79/9 90/24       61/11 65/9 66/13       61/14 65/9 66/13       61/20 7/28 75/21         determined [2] 8/16       disagreement [1]       distribution [1] 99/17       distributed [1] 103/22       105/1 128/14 130/4       61/20 7/28 75/21       61/11 65/9 66/13       61/24 7/9 90/24       61/20 7/28 75/21         devastated [1] 96/8       disappointed [1]       distribution [1] 99/17       105/1 128/14 130/4       114/1 129/15       63/20 64/25         35/10       discharge [1] 20/17       discharge [1] 20/17       disclose [1] 106/2       10/6 15/10 23/23       30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18       82/24 83/9 86/13 87/6         35/10       disclose [1] 106/2       31/14 39/7 42/23       10/6 15/10 23/23       13/23 133/24 134/2 <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td>					
119/20       detailing [1] 5/22       50/23 51/8 54/14 56/8       distinguished [1]       59/12 84/11 121/15       127/12 127/24 129/17         detailing [1] 20/3 35/10       59/5 85/11 88/3       director [2] 68/2       93/21       distress [10] 45/2       doing [7] 2/15 22/18       22/20 48/25 64/23       Dyson's [1] 129/12         getermination [3]       93/21       directors [1] 50/3       49/25 55/25 56/2       104/5 120/24       doing [7] 2/15 22/18       22/20 48/25 64/23       Dyson's [1] 129/12         geterminations [2]       124/1       disagree [1] 40/15       distributed [1] 125/7       68/14 79/9 90/24       61/11 65/9 66/13       61/20 63/9 72/8 75/21         determine [1] 78/13       disagreement [1]       40/16       distributed [1] 125/7       68/14 79/9 90/24       61/14 130/4       61/20 63/9 72/8 75/21         devastated [1] 96/8       disappointed [1]       103/22       disturbing [2] 8/24       131/23 135/11 140/20       114/1 129/15       earlie [6] 25/24         140/14       discharge [1] 20/17       discharge [1] 20/17       discharge [1] 20/17       disclose [1] 106/2       133/23 133/24 134/2       33/19 35/15       33/19 35/15       33/19 35/15       33/19 35/15       33/19 35/15       33/122       33/19 35/15       33/19 31/22       33/19 33/24 134/2       33/19 22/16       armarked [1] 6/23         devel					
detailing [1]       3/3       59/5       85/11       88/3       105/2       121/25       129/24         details [4]       20/3       35/10       59/5       85/11       88/3       105/2       121/25       129/24         determination [3]       93/21       directors [1]       50/3       49/35       55/55       56/2       104/5       105/2       104/5       121/25       129/24         determination [2]       93/21       disadvantage [1]       105/2       46/3       49/13       49/16       22/20       48/25       64/23       104/5       104/5       101/5       129/24         determine [1]       78/13       disagree [1]       40/15       distributed [1]       122/4       104/5       104/5       106/23       101/5       101/1					
details [4] 20/3 35/10       director [2] 68/2       distress [10] 45/2       doing [7] 2/15 22/18       Dyson's [1] 129/12         64cermination [3]       93/21       directors [1] 50/3       46/3 49/13 49/16       22/20 48/25 64/23       104/5 120/24         97/5 115/12 118/24       disadvantage [1]       73/13 73/19 74/15       distressed [1] 122/4       61/11 65/9 66/13       61/11 65/9 66/13       61/120 63/9 72/8 75/21         127/9 127/11       disagree [1] 40/15       distributed [1] 125/7       68/14 79/9 90/24       61/120 63/9 72/8 75/21         118/21       disappointed [1]       40/16       disturbing [2] 8/24       105/1 128/14 130/4       94/11 96/23 102/3         118/21       disappointed [1]       40/16       disturbing [2] 8/24       105/1 128/14 130/4       94/11 96/23 102/3         118/21       disappointed [1]       103/22       disturbing [2] 8/24       101/14       114/1 129/15         developed [2] 13/8       140/14       119/3       divergence [1] 77/9       113/1 120/14 125/10       63/20 64/25         35/10       discharge [1] 20/17       disclose [1] 106/2       10/6 15/10 23/23       32/14 39/7 42/23       30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18         37/23       disclose [1] 106/2       10/6 15/10 23/23       32/14 39/7 42/23       133/23 133/24 134/2       133/3         33/19 35					
30/23 114/17       93/21       46/3 49/13 49/16       22/20 48/25 64/23       E         determinations [3]       97/5 115/12 118/24       directors [1] 50/3       49/25 55/25 56/2       104/5 120/24       each [15] 10/10 19/13         127/9 127/11       disagree [1] 40/15       disagree [1] 40/15       distributed [1] 125/7       68/14 79/9 90/24       61/11 65/9 66/13       20/3 50/25 56/1 61/17         18/21       disagreement [1]       40/16       distributed [1] 125/7       68/14 79/9 90/24       61/20 63/9 72/8 75/21         40/16       disappointed [1]       40/16       disturbing [2] 8/24       105/1 128/14 130/4       94/11 96/23 102/3         40/16       disappointent [1]       40/14       disappointent [1]       103/22       131/23 135/11 140/20       114/11 129/15         developed [2] 13/8       108/7       discharge [1] 20/17       divergence [1] 77/9       113/1 120/14 125/10       30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18         37/23       disclosed [3] 31/22       10/6 15/10 23/23       32/14 39/7 42/23       133/23 133/24 134/2       30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18         33/19 35/15       00/10 119/7       disclosure [3] 63/19       49/20 49/22 50/4       doors [1] 129/16       armings [2] 16/22					
determination [3]       directors [1] 50/3       49/25 55/25 56/2       104/5 120/24       E         determinations [2]       124/1       disadvantage [1]       73/13 73/19 74/15       don't [14] 54/11 54/22       each [15] 10/10 19/13         determine [1] 78/13       disagree [1] 40/15       disagree [1] 40/15       distributed [1] 125/7       68/14 79/9 90/24       61/10 63/9 72/8 75/21         determine [2] 8/16       disagree [1] 40/15       distributed [1] 103/22       131/23 135/11 140/20       114/1 129/15         devastated [1] 96/8       disappointed [1]       40/14       distributeg [2] 8/24       done [10] 8/25 20/14       earlier [6] 25/24         35/10       discharge [1] 20/17       discharge [1] 20/17       discharge [1] 20/17       disclose [1] 13/20       130/7 139/13       60/25 58/20         37/23       disclosel [3] 31/22       100/10 119/7       32/14 39/7 42/23       133/23 133/24 134/2       30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18         33/19 35/15       disclosure [3] 63/19       49/20 49/22 50/4       doors [1] 129/16       earmarked [1] 6/23				•	
97/5 115/12 118/24       disadvantage [1]       73/13 73/19 74/15       don't [14] 54/11 54/22       each [15] 10/10 19/13         determinations [2]       124/1       124/1       disagree [1] 40/15       distributed [1] 125/7       68/14 79/9 90/24       61/12 68/14 130/4       14/12 06/39 72/8 75/21         determined [2] 8/16       disagreement [1]       40/16       distributed [1] 103/22       131/23 135/11 140/20       114/1 129/15       68/14 79/9 90/24       61/12 63/9 72/8 75/21         devastated [1] 96/8       disappointed [1]       40/16       distribution [1] 99/17       105/1 128/14 130/4       114/1 129/15         developed [2] 13/8       140/14       disappointment [1]       0/18/7       0/16       119/2       0/16       0/10 31/11 54/2         35/10       discharge [1] 20/17       disclose [1] 106/2       0/16 15/10 23/23       130/7 139/13       0/16 15/10 23/23       0/15 33/24 82/4 82/18         37/23       development [2]       33/19 35/15       10/10 119/7       10/6 15/10 23/23       33/19 43/2       133/23 133/24 134/2       0/13/2       13/3/3       earmarked [1] 6/23         33/19 35/15       disclosure [3] 63/19       49/20 49/22 50/4       49/20 49/22 50/4       128/10       13/23       13/23       13/24       13/23					
127/9 127/11       124/1       distressed [1] 122/4       61/11 65/9 66/13       20/3 50/25 56/1 61/17         determine [1] 78/13       disagree [1] 40/15       disagreement [1]       distributed [1] 125/7       68/14 79/9 90/24       61/11 65/9 66/13         118/21       disagreement [1]       40/16       distribution [1] 99/17       68/14 79/9 90/24       94/11 96/23 102/3         devent [1]       40/16       distribution [1] 99/17       distribution [1] 99/17       105/1 128/14 130/4       94/11 96/23 102/3         developed [2] 13/8       140/14       disappointment [1]       divergence [1] 77/9       103/7 139/13       114/1 129/15         developing [2] 36/23       37/23       disclose [1] 106/2       disclose [3] 31/22       10/6 15/10 23/23       32/14 39/7 42/23       33/19 35/15       30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18         33/19 35/15       disclosure [3] 63/19       49/20 49/22 50/4       49/20 49/22 50/4       133/23 133/24 134/2       armarked [1] 6/23					each [15] 10/10 19/13
12/19       12/19       12/11       disagree [1]       40/15       distributed [1]       125/7       68/14       79/9       90/24       61/20       63/9       72/8       75/21         determined [2]       8/16       disagreement [1]       40/16       distribution [1]       99/17       105/1       128/14       130/4       14/14       14/1       19/20       14/1       129/15       earlier [6]       25/24       14/1       14/1       129/15       earlier [6]       25/24       14/1       14/1       129/15       earlier [6]       25/24       14/1       14/1       14/1       129/15       earlier [6]       25/24       14/1       14/1       129/15       earlier [6]       25/24       14/11       14/1       129/15       earlier [6]       25/24       14/11       14/1       129/15       63/20       64/25       63/20       64/25       63/20       64/25       63/20       64/25       63/20       64/25       63/20       64/25       63/20       64/25       63/20       63/20       64/25       63/20       63/20       63/20       64/25       63/20       63/20       64/25       63/20       63/20       63/20       64/25       63/20       63/20       63/20       64/25       63/20					20/3 50/25 56/1 61/17
determined [1]       76713       disagreement [1]       disagreement [1]       40/16       118/21         devastated [1]       96/8       disappointed [1]       40/16       131/23       135/11       140/20         devastated [1]       96/8       disappointed [1]       140/14       disturbing [2]       8/24       131/23       135/11       140/20         devastating [1]       4/14       disappointment [1]       140/14       disturbing [2]       8/24       119/3       31/10       31/11       54/25         35/10       developed [2]       13/8       36/70       discharge [1]       20/17       divergence [1]       77/9       130/7       130/7       130/7       63/20       64/25         37/23       development [2]       36/23       31/122       106/1       10/6       15/10       23/23       32/14       39/7       42/23       133/23       133/24       134/2       13/3       82/24       83/9       86/13       87/6         33/19       35/15       100/10       119/7       49/20       49/20       49/22       50/4       40orrs [1]       129/16       13/3       earmarked [1]       6/23         33/19       35/15       49/20       49/20       49/22       5					61/20 63/9 72/8 75/21
determined [2] 6/16       40/16       disturb [1] 103/22       131/23 135/11 140/20       114/1 129/15         devastated [1] 96/8       disappointed [1]       140/14       disturbing [2] 8/24       19/3       11/15 104/19 112/19       11/15 104/19 112/19         developed [2] 13/8       108/7       discharge [1] 20/17       discharge [1] 20/17       divergence [1] 77/9       130/7 139/13       60/5 33/24 82/4 82/18         developing [2] 36/23       disclose [1] 106/2       10/6 15/10 23/23       32/14 39/7 42/23       13/23 133/24 134/2       30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18         disclosed [3] 31/22       100/10 119/7       31/20 49/22 50/4       49/20 49/22 50/4       129/16       aermarked [1] 6/23         doors [1] 129/16       doorway [2] 128/10       128/10       13/23		• • •			94/11 96/23 102/3
118/21       disappointed [1]       disappointed [1]       disturbing [2]       8/24       done [10]       8/25 20/14       earlier [6]       25/24         devastating [1]       4/14       disappointment [1]       140/14       119/3       divergence [1]       77/9       113/1       120/14       125/10       63/20       64/25       63/20       64/25         developed [2]       13/8       35/10       discharge [1]       20/17       discharge [1]       20/17       disclose [1]       13/20       130/7       130/7       130/7       130/7       33/24       82/24       82/18         37/23       development [2]       33/19       35/15       disclosed [3]       31/22       10/6       15/10       23/23       58/25       112/16       122/8       30/5       33/24       82/24       83/9       86/13       87/6         33/19       35/15       disclosure [3]       63/19       49/20       49/22       50/4       doors [1]       129/16       earmarked [1]       6/23         earnings [2]       16/22       49/20       49/22       50/4       40/25       128/10       13/22       16/22					114/1 129/15
devastated [1] 90/8       140/14       119/3       41/15 104/19 112/19       31/10 31/11 54/2         developed [2] 13/8       140/14       119/3       41/15 104/19 112/19       31/10 31/11 54/2         35/10       discharge [1] 20/17       discharge [1] 20/17       disclose [1] 106/2       10/6 15/10 23/23       130/7 139/13       30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18         37/23       disclose [1] 106/2       10/6 15/10 23/23       32/14 39/7 42/23       58/25 112/16 122/8       30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18         development [2]       33/19 35/15       100/10 119/7       40/20 49/22 50/4       40/20 49/22 50/4       10/6 15/10       128/10       armarked [1] 6/23					earlier [6] 25/24
devastating [1] 4/14 developed [2] 13/8 35/10 developing [2] 36/23 37/23 development [2] 33/19 35/15       disappointment [1] 108/7 discharge [1] 20/17 disclose [1] 106/2 32/14 39/7 42/23 46/25 48/18 48/20 49/20 49/22 50/4       divergence [1] 77/9 113/1 120/14 125/10 130/7 139/13 door [8] 54/5 58/20 58/25 112/16 122/8 133/23 133/24 134/2 doors [1] 129/16 door way [2] 128/10       63/20 64/25 early [11] 5/5 13/15 30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18 82/24 83/9 86/13 87/6 133/3			• • • •		31/10 31/11 54/2
developed [2]       13/6         35/10       108/7         developing [2]       36/23         discharge [1]       20/17         disclose [1]       106/2         disclose [1]       31/22         100/10       119/7         disclosure [3]       63/19         49/20       49/22         50/4       49/20         disclosure [2]       16/22	•				63/20 64/25
35/10       discharge [1] 20/17       do [64] 2/4 2/14 5/20       door [8] 54/5 58/20       30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18         37/23       disclose [1] 106/2       10/6 15/10 23/23       32/14 39/7 42/23       58/25 112/16 122/8       32/24 83/9 86/13 87/6         development [2]       33/19 35/15       100/10 119/7       46/25 48/18 48/20       46/25 50/4       133/23 133/24 134/2       133/3         disclosure [3] 63/19       49/20 49/22 50/4       49/20 20/2       128/10       armings [2] 16/22					
37/23       disclose [1]       106/2       10/6       15/10       23/23       58/25       112/16       122/8       82/24       83/9       86/13       87/6         37/23       disclosed [3]       31/22       32/14       39/7       42/23       133/23       133/24       134/2       133/3       133/3       133/3       earmarked [1]       6/23         33/19       35/15       disclosure [3]       63/19       49/20       49/22       50/4       doors [1]       128/10       earmarked [1]       6/23         earnings [2]       16/22       16/22       16/22       16/22       16/22       16/22					30/5 33/24 82/4 82/18
37/23       disclosed [3]       31/22       32/14       39/7       42/23       133/23       133/24       134/2       133/3         development [2]       100/10       119/7       46/25       48/18       48/20       40/22       133/24       134/2       133/3       earmarked [1]       6/23         33/19       35/15       disclosure [3]       63/19       49/20       49/22       50/4       doors [1]       128/10       earmarked [1]       6/23         earnings [2]       16/22       16/22       16/22       16/22       16/22       16/22       16/22					82/24 83/9 86/13 87/6
33/19 35/15       100/10 119/7       46/25 48/18 48/20       doors [1] 129/16       earmarked [1] 6/23         disclosure [3] 63/19       49/20 49/22 50/4       doorway [2] 128/10       earnings [2] 16/22					
disclosure [3] 63/19 49/20 49/22 50/4 doorway [2] 128/10 earnings [2] 16/22					
	20/12 20/12				earnings [2] 16/22

(45) deprived - earnings

F	amplexed [2] 102/10	104/0	av [2] 104/10 105/2	ovnorionogo [4]
E	employed [2] 123/12 127/9	124/8 establish [1] 113/25	ex [3] 104/18 105/3	experiences [1] 121/11
earnings [1] 121/18	employees' [1] 86/18	established [3] 8/4	ex-police [1] 105/3	expert [9] 42/13
easy [2] 1/20 73/4	employing [1] 127/24		ex-subpostmasters	42/16 43/12 43/19
eat [1] 131/24	emptied [2] 134/24	establishment [3]	<b>[2]</b> 104/18 112/12	43/25 44/8 44/17
economy [1] 140/23	134/25	7/16 91/10 100/15	exact [1] 135/11	44/22 59/25
effect [8] 58/2 104/8	enable [5] 11/16 22/7	estimate [1] 92/10	exactly [3] 63/6 66/5	expertise [1] 43/16
107/15 108/17 115/3	25/4 125/6 130/23	et [1] 79/20	66/17	experts [1] 119/22
115/7 121/8 122/9	enables [1] 44/21	et cetera [1] 79/20	examination [1]	explain [3] 1/17 40/16
effected [1] 31/3	enabling [1] 71/1	Etheridge [1] 107/21	95/20	96/12
effectively [7] 10/25	encouraged [1] 18/11		examine [3] 74/2	explained [6] 24/14
42/6 53/19 93/25 94/7	end [13] 6/10 31/24	33/24 82/13 82/19	93/12 95/7	70/9 76/12 123/14
94/10 131/23	36/16 66/2 66/22 67/1	82/24 83/9 87/6	examined [1] 127/20	134/15 135/3
effectiveness [1] 5/2	69/20 77/7 79/7 82/14	evaluator [2] 34/5	example [5] 27/16	explains [2] 56/1
eight [1] 33/1	117/7 129/13 131/4	82/12	31/1 53/15 72/15	62/10
either [5] 27/9 47/2	endeavour [1] 64/24	even [11] 20/17 23/13		explanation [6] 23/10
48/6 58/25 61/15	ended [2] 67/19 136/7	54/6 55/21 75/4 84/12	examples [7] 23/16	51/5 55/24 65/4 95/17
elapsing [1] 129/6	endorses [1] 95/5	86/13 102/18 103/15	23/24 51/13 54/15	120/22
elegantly [2] 47/4	endure [1] 114/5	111/7 117/8	106/15 107/18 136/19	explanations [1]
87/14	Energy [2] 9/14 103/5		excess [1] 25/10	139/10
element [5] 46/11	engage [3] 11/21	event [5] 8/16 58/2	exclusion [3] 24/12	explore [2] 24/10
55/4 61/12 80/3 80/4	91/16 131/4	76/13 91/13 130/4	24/13 24/16	34/19
elements [5] 12/23 28/12 71/18 71/18	engaged [4] 35/19	events [4] 35/5 48/6	exclusions [2] 15/12	expose [1] 107/20
137/14	67/3 77/5 85/24	60/11 103/3	15/14	exposing [2] 97/24
	enormous [1] 115/14	ever [2] 55/7 71/5	executive [2] 67/23	111/21
elicit [2] 53/9 69/17 eligibility [4] 14/15	enough [3] 130/6	every [5] 43/12 54/13	93/21	express [4] 33/11
16/3 18/13 25/5	130/6 135/7	55/11 106/17 114/1	exemplary [13] 45/13	61/22 78/17 95/11
eligible [18] 8/6 9/8	enquire [1] 128/3	everyone [6] 1/3 49/2	46/13 46/18 47/2 47/6	expressed [3] 94/18
9/9 13/1 26/3 26/9	Enright [5] 92/12	57/4 57/21 58/19	47/11 47/24 48/2	108/1 116/19
26/12 27/3 29/15	105/12 123/8 123/13	140/22	48/12 48/19 48/22	expresses [1] 33/25
56/17 65/19 66/9	124/22	everything [3] 107/20		expression [1] 82/5
66/25 90/21 111/25	ensure [14] 20/20	135/2 137/4	exhaustive [2] 42/2	expressly [5] 42/21
124/4 126/12 138/15	36/14 37/8 54/10 57/3		115/19	46/8 62/10 63/11
Elliot [1] 123/15	57/4 58/18 58/22	5/1 5/4 5/6 21/7 21/22		76/11
Elliott [8] 117/2 117/2	67/25 70/14 90/7 94/8	21/23 22/1 22/3 23/14		extant [2] 14/25 15/1
117/24 123/6 123/6	103/11 130/24	26/23 27/16 31/13	67/24	extended [3] 25/3
123/7 135/23 136/13	ensuring [1] 57/20	31/16 35/24 44/8	exists [1] 102/22	56/18 58/11
elsewhere [1] 102/5	entertained [1] 47/7	44/16 44/17 44/22	expect [2] 40/17	extension [1] 25/20
embark [3] 1/7	entirely [5] 73/15	45/6 60/11 60/18	95/21	extent [12] 1/10 3/20
110/24 119/20	74/18 77/22 105/17	60/20 60/24 62/8	expected [2] 100/13	4/1 35/25 36/2 36/4
eminent [1] 82/11	119/24	62/11 63/12 69/2	119/19	85/15 87/13 89/19
emphasise [15] 41/9	entities [1] 50/2	69/11 69/14 71/22	expects [1] 68/22	95/4 128/4 139/19
49/10 50/5 53/1 55/16	entitled [4] 17/25	84/17 95/20 96/22 97/12 97/12 105/24	expeditiously [1] 108/18	extreme [1] 112/8
60/4 60/16 66/23 80/4	91/23 110/16 125/19	106/9 114/2 114/10		extremely [2] 68/17 108/17
80/20 81/3 82/8 83/5	entity [1] 89/9	116/8 116/15 116/20	expense [1] 139/12	
83/12 84/25	equally [1] 61/24 eroded [1] 107/14	117/2 126/11 134/4	expenses [3] 44/5 122/15 122/17	F
emphasiseu [3] 4//10	escalated [1] 62/21	134/6 135/23	expensive [1] 131/4	face [4] 15/13 46/1
72/11 80/19	escalation [1] 67/7	evidenced [1] 27/25	experience [2] 17/19	73/16 104/18
emphasises [1] 63/8	especially [1] 17/21	evidencing [1] 21/13	106/10	facie [1] 83/20
emphatically [1]	essentially [5] 1/14	evidential [1] 60/8	experienced [2]	facilitate [5] 1/20 10/4
84/21	98/20 115/13 122/25	evidently [1] 28/4	19/25 50/22	11/12 82/25 137/16
	SOLO ITO/TO ILLILO			
		1	·	46) earnings - facilitate

(46) earnings... - facilitate

F	84/11 126/6 138/20	final [50] 7/11 10/2	firstly [5] 12/23 12/24	122/22
	fallen [1] 23/14	11/1 11/13 11/16 13/5	18/9 27/22 99/11	formal [5] 10/15 33/4
facility [6] 20/15	falling [2] 90/25		fit [2] 15/5 103/12	33/10 80/21 82/10
20/22 23/12 24/4	138/14	32/5 32/6 33/1 35/9	fits [1] 38/2	formally [2] 67/3 77/5
123/2 126/8	falls [2] 62/6 91/12	35/11 35/16 36/12	five [4] 33/1 59/13	format [2] 137/13
facing [2] 112/14	familiar [1] 95/15	36/19 58/1 58/7 76/14		139/3
112/20	families [4] 2/22 4/13	76/23 78/21 79/22	fixed [1] 67/18	former [2] 27/12 82/2
fact [23] 2/6 10/15	96/24 114/9	79/22 80/18 81/6 81/8	flag [2] 52/4 65/11	forms [4] 14/23 27/15
15/18 20/19 21/13	family [6] 49/9 49/12	83/6 83/10 84/7 85/14	• • •	52/3 91/16
23/16 34/24 49/22	49/17 97/1 116/3	87/4 88/14 88/24	53/23 56/10 61/3 88/1	formulate [1] 64/4
50/6 54/23 65/16	116/4	89/13 89/23 91/4 91/5	flagging [1] 48/16	formulated [1] 31/16
69/13 82/8 101/22	far [22] 1/4 39/18 40/5	91/14 91/25 99/23	flags [1] 68/15	formulating [1] 22/15
102/15 103/24 105/18 113/14 116/5 117/12	41/15 45/17 47/17	99/24 105/8 118/17	flaw [3] 61/5 61/9	forth [1] 53/17
120/2 122/10 138/12	47/20 53/18 56/5	118/18 119/16 131/24	119/10	fortune [1] 123/13
factor [2] 77/13 79/16	64/22 69/10 71/3	137/8 138/5	flawed [1] 83/16	forward [15] 40/3
factors [1] 56/1	72/17 75/3 76/17 81/7	finalise [1] 11/15	flippant [1] 73/2	48/17 67/17 101/4
facts [14] 22/23 22/25	84/15 88/24 90/25	finality [1] 3/23	float [1] 57/23	102/9 102/10 102/25
23/5 23/21 46/12	115/14 127/17 136/9	finally [9] 8/19 10/13	floor [1] 96/1	108/2 114/6 117/14
52/12 52/14 53/4	far-reaching [1]	55/23 68/24 69/23	flowing [1] 43/8	128/16 128/19 129/23
54/13 54/25 55/21	115/14	89/13 90/13 100/14	flurry [1] 140/12	130/5 141/2
72/6 72/8 124/9	fashion [1] 99/4	111/4	focus [6] 15/18 18/14	forwards [1] 125/2
factual [2] 5/15 60/20	fast [1] 124/9	financial [19] 4/5 4/14		fought [1] 103/14
fail [1] 132/20	fast-moving [1] 124/9		focused [2] 37/20	found [2] 21/11 106/9
failed [2] 103/11	fatigue [1] 114/5	16/14 19/1 19/1 30/18		foundation [1] 7/16
109/25	fault [3] 51/25 62/22	39/23 41/23 41/24	focusing [1] 40/8	founded [1] 43/10
failings [2] 103/7	96/21	76/4 100/13 104/6	follow [7] 50/6 80/7	four [5] 15/3 15/7
136/22	feature [1] 119/3	104/18 106/14 132/4	90/8 98/24 102/8	31/5 42/18 107/5
failure [2] 113/6	February [4] 4/8 4/10	financing [2] 16/24	113/6 129/14	fourth [1] 44/12
131/11	94/1 104/23	121/21	followed [5] 9/20 60/4 94/2 100/16 101/11	frame [1] 111/14
fair [27] 11/18 13/24	Federation [1] 67/12 feed [1] 106/25	find [2] 82/1 103/25 finding [2] 106/10	following [12] 3/18	frankly [1] 64/17
21/19 22/18 22/24	feel [4] 49/20 55/21	114/7	17/16 19/12 20/3 25/4	Fraser [2] 103/9
23/6 23/25 30/16 35/2	107/15 135/20	findings [3] 97/15	28/8 61/25 62/19 64/8	103/16
35/22 36/14 44/19	feels [4] 54/25 55/18	98/14 101/5	90/3 95/12 98/25	fraud [1] 84/1
45/7 46/6 47/21 49/20	63/21 113/1	Fine [3] 18/8 66/6	follows [1] 29/4	fraudulent [1] 84/22
52/13 55/19 72/7 76/2	fees [12] 13/10 16/25	87/23	foot [3] 9/6 21/2 30/9	free [3] 59/14 62/18
76/20 88/16 89/18	27/10 27/16 29/9		footing [2] 44/5 67/22	86/10
93/24 108/10 108/25			footnote [1] 18/23	Freehills [10] 59/11
115/10			footnote 7 [1] 18/23	59/15 62/13 88/8
fairly [5] 35/15 58/23 84/14 116/25 120/23	feet [2] 133/7 139/21	135/23 135/25 136/13		88/10 88/10 88/14
fairness [16] 20/17	fifthly [1] 28/10	fire [1] 133/8	forensic [2] 27/18	89/2 118/9 123/13
20/23 22/10 22/17	fighting [1] 104/4	firm [2] 28/18 35/21	43/14	Freeths [13] 13/6
23/3 23/13 24/4 41/4	figure [8] 26/12 26/13	firmly [1] 103/7	forget [1] 105/1	35/19 36/10 36/17
41/10 44/25 46/23	27/9 27/10 27/12	firms [1] 125/4	form [29] 18/6 18/10	36/20 37/1 37/10
56/4 91/3 99/19 99/22	27/13 66/11 135/11	first [25] 1/7 15/16	18/17 19/6 26/19	124/3 124/8 124/8
118/16	figures [11] 8/22 9/10	25/17 31/6 40/6 40/25		124/10 124/13 124/17
Faisal [1] 106/24	25/25 26/1 26/7 26/15	42/13 42/20 54/18	51/14 52/2 53/5 53/6	frequency [1] 23/12
faith [8] 28/15 62/19	29/15 66/1 71/5 75/9	56/9 56/10 59/6 61/10		friendly [8] 49/11
63/23 67/6 67/8 84/25	75/11	67/11 68/22 69/1	64/8 73/14 75/12 77/9	71/13 77/18 77/25
123/7 123/17	filed [2] 26/6 118/6	73/11 82/20 85/19	115/17 115/24 120/8	79/17 80/11 116/11
fall [5] 39/23 50/7	fill [1] 15/8	90/18 93/1 104/16	120/10 120/16 120/21	116/14 fraile [1] 110/24
	filled [1] 106/17	113/19 116/15 118/8	121/25 122/5 122/9	frolic [1] 110/24
			1	(47) facility - frolic

(47) facility - frolic

F	131/4	79/14 112/19 122/7	64/4 64/10 65/3 66/18	12/12 13/9 13/25 35/3
	funding [9] 7/1 7/23	131/8 132/4 134/17	77/22 78/15 78/20	35/12 35/17 35/22
from [91] 1/15 2/21	11/12 11/17 12/11	134/19 135/7 136/1	92/1 98/6 102/5	37/13 37/16 68/7
2/25 3/1 3/3 4/12 5/13	57/17 98/11 130/22	139/9	103/25 108/3 122/8	84/18 96/11 96/14
9/4 10/6 12/16 13/21	138/1	getting [3] 66/3 73/4	123/22 124/9 130/5	98/12 98/14 98/16
14/24 14/25 14/25	funds [4] 9/15 99/18	99/5	136/10 140/19	105/16 105/19 107/22
15/1 15/14 15/22 16/2	112/1 125/7	gift [1] 111/15	gone [2] 26/8 101/24	108/4 108/10 108/17
16/6 16/17 16/19	further [51] 11/4 12/5		good [17] 1/3 1/6	108/25 109/19 110/2
16/20 17/6 17/13	12/21 25/4 28/6 33/8	69/1 87/20 98/12 99/3	28/15 62/19 63/23	112/7 112/23 112/23
17/22 19/9 23/17 24/7	33/19 44/17 48/14	106/9 106/14 121/3	67/6 67/8 82/22 84/24	112/24 124/5 131/6
25/2 26/19 26/25	52/25 53/1 53/2 53/6	138/2 140/16	93/1 96/3 123/7	137/23 138/2 138/6
31/16 39/6 40/18 43/8				
44/24 49/14 50/6 50/8	56/19 59/4 65/17	given [16] 18/23	123/13 123/17 127/24	138/9 138/13 138/20
50/18 51/5 51/24 52/2	65/25 67/8 69/15	19/16 54/15 55/14	137/17 141/1	groups [2] 94/2 108/1
53/3 53/18 56/12 59/3	69/17 70/17 72/3	55/20 59/15 84/15	got [12] 39/5 79/15	guess [1] 1/5
60/11 63/9 63/25 64/7	72/10 72/22 78/14	93/2 93/4 94/4 97/12	122/7 134/14 134/17	guidance [40] 14/18
64/19 64/23 65/21	83/19 87/7 88/15	100/11 108/18 112/9	134/19 134/23 135/11	16/17 18/24 19/4 19/5
68/7 72/4 73/19 75/3	88/15 89/18 89/23	117/10 137/7	135/17 136/7 136/17	20/12 20/25 21/22
78/4 82/21 85/25 86/1	90/9 92/3 104/6	gives [1] 94/16	136/18	31/9 42/1 42/15 42/16
87/20 89/1 89/21 90/4	105/10 109/1 109/3	giving [3] 69/14	<b>governance [2]</b> 57/15	42/17 42/20 42/22
97/12 99/15 103/16	109/9 109/13 109/15	106/11 116/19	57/23	45/15 51/13 51/17
103/16 107/20 107/22	109/22 117/14 119/3	glance [1] 92/1	Government [21] 3/2	51/20 51/21 52/1 52/3
108/7 110/11 112/13	124/6 124/25 127/15	Glasgow [1] 4/11	11/11 11/17 12/8	52/5 53/19 53/22 54/9
112/17 113/5 114/6	128/17 139/21 139/25	GLO [50] 6/4 7/20	12/25 13/4 35/19	54/10 54/23 56/6
114/16 116/16 117/1	140/15 140/19	12/9 12/10 12/12	67/21 89/16 89/21	60/17 60/21 63/3
118/8 120/11 122/20	future [2] 108/4	12/13 12/24 13/1 13/6	93/6 98/22 98/24	71/16 71/19 82/25
129/2 129/14 130/21	125/12	13/9 35/7 35/14 35/21	103/6 105/17 109/14	83/3 115/7 121/13
131/25 132/1 133/4	G	35/25 36/15 36/21	110/21 111/11 132/25	121/14 122/22
	•		1 1 1 7 / 1 0 1 1 7 / 0 1	
140/6	Collefort [201 2/1	36/25 37/2 37/4 37/9	137/18 137/21	guided [2] 22/17 23/2
140/6 front [3] 14/9 74/24	Gallafent [20] 3/1	37/21 37/25 83/17	Government's [2]	
front [3] 14/9 74/24	38/15 38/24 39/9	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15	H
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23	H habit [1] 75/5
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3 19/19 26/18 26/20
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3 19/19 26/18 26/20 27/3 29/16 31/16
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20 105/8 107/11 115/21	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11 117/2 135/10 135/23	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2 go [19] 25/23 30/8	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3 117/15	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3 19/19 26/18 26/20 27/3 29/16 31/16 32/12 32/23 32/24
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20 105/8 107/11 115/21 138/4	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11 117/2 135/10 135/23 136/17	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2 <b>go [19]</b> 25/23 30/8 65/10 82/6 91/12 98/6	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3 117/15 great [3] 47/5 129/17	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3 19/19 26/18 26/20 27/3 29/16 31/16 32/12 32/23 32/24 35/19 40/24 50/22
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20 105/8 107/11 115/21 138/4 fullest [1] 89/19	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11 117/2 135/10 135/23 136/17 general [3] 81/11	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2 <b>go [19]</b> 25/23 30/8 65/10 82/6 91/12 98/6 107/22 114/9 115/15	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3 117/15 great [3] 47/5 129/17 129/20	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3 19/19 26/18 26/20 27/3 29/16 31/16 32/12 32/23 32/24 35/19 40/24 50/22 52/16 52/17 56/21
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20 105/8 107/11 115/21 138/4 fullest [1] 89/19 fully [8] 30/15 45/22	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11 117/2 135/10 135/23 136/17 general [3] 81/11 121/20 130/3	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2 <b>go [19]</b> 25/23 30/8 65/10 82/6 91/12 98/6 107/22 114/9 115/15 120/7 127/6 127/22	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3 117/15 great [3] 47/5 129/17 129/20 greater [9] 21/9 54/10	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3 19/19 26/18 26/20 27/3 29/16 31/16 32/12 32/23 32/24 35/19 40/24 50/22 52/16 52/17 56/21 58/12 67/21 69/15
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20 105/8 107/11 115/21 138/4 fullest [1] 89/19 fully [8] 30/15 45/22 50/11 76/1 81/5 82/20	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11 117/2 135/10 135/23 136/17 general [3] 81/11 121/20 130/3 generally [11] 30/4	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2 <b>go [19]</b> 25/23 30/8 65/10 82/6 91/12 98/6 107/22 114/9 115/15 120/7 127/6 127/22 133/9 133/16 135/15	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3 117/15 great [3] 47/5 129/17 129/20 greater [9] 21/9 54/10 54/22 55/3 56/5 60/19	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3 19/19 26/18 26/20 27/3 29/16 31/16 32/12 32/23 32/24 35/19 40/24 50/22 52/16 52/17 56/21 58/12 67/21 69/15 74/7 74/9 85/25 96/8
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20 105/8 107/11 115/21 138/4 fullest [1] 89/19 fully [8] 30/15 45/22 50/11 76/1 81/5 82/20 89/4 132/11	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11 117/2 135/10 135/23 136/17 general [3] 81/11 121/20 130/3 generally [11] 30/4 32/19 40/3 43/6 44/11	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2 <b>go [19]</b> 25/23 30/8 65/10 82/6 91/12 98/6 107/22 114/9 115/15 120/7 127/6 127/22 133/9 133/16 135/15 136/8 136/9 137/5	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3 117/15 great [3] 47/5 129/17 129/20 greater [9] 21/9 54/10 54/22 55/3 56/5 60/19 78/8 95/22 129/6	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3 19/19 26/18 26/20 27/3 29/16 31/16 32/12 32/23 32/24 35/19 40/24 50/22 52/16 52/17 56/21 58/12 67/21 69/15 74/7 74/9 85/25 96/8 96/9 103/10 104/1
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20 105/8 107/11 115/21 138/4 fullest [1] 89/19 fully [8] 30/15 45/22 50/11 76/1 81/5 82/20 89/4 132/11 function [1] 94/19	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11 117/2 135/10 135/23 136/17 general [3] 81/11 121/20 130/3 generally [11] 30/4 32/19 40/3 43/6 44/11 48/22 57/16 78/14	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2 <b>go [19]</b> 25/23 30/8 65/10 82/6 91/12 98/6 107/22 114/9 115/15 120/7 127/6 127/22 133/9 133/16 135/15 136/8 136/9 137/5 138/17	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3 117/15 great [3] 47/5 129/17 129/20 greater [9] 21/9 54/10 54/22 55/3 56/5 60/19 78/8 95/22 129/6 greatest [1] 105/21	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3 19/19 26/18 26/20 27/3 29/16 31/16 32/12 32/23 32/24 35/19 40/24 50/22 52/16 52/17 56/21 58/12 67/21 69/15 74/7 74/9 85/25 96/8 96/9 103/10 104/1 104/16 107/6 108/5
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20 105/8 107/11 115/21 138/4 fullest [1] 89/19 fully [8] 30/15 45/22 50/11 76/1 81/5 82/20 89/4 132/11 function [1] 94/19 functioning [1] 41/4	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11 117/2 135/10 135/23 136/17 general [3] 81/11 121/20 130/3 generally [11] 30/4 32/19 40/3 43/6 44/11 48/22 57/16 78/14 90/6 91/15 97/1	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2 <b>go [19]</b> 25/23 30/8 65/10 82/6 91/12 98/6 107/22 114/9 115/15 120/7 127/6 127/22 133/9 133/16 135/15 136/8 136/9 137/5 138/17 <b>goes [7]</b> 28/16 56/4	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3 117/15 great [3] 47/5 129/17 129/20 greater [9] 21/9 54/10 54/22 55/3 56/5 60/19 78/8 95/22 129/6 greatest [1] 105/21 ground [6] 2/13 17/10	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3 19/19 26/18 26/20 27/3 29/16 31/16 32/12 32/23 32/24 35/19 40/24 50/22 52/16 52/17 56/21 58/12 67/21 69/15 74/7 74/9 85/25 96/8 96/9 103/10 104/1 104/16 107/6 108/5 116/21 117/3 117/3
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20 105/8 107/11 115/21 138/4 fullest [1] 89/19 fully [8] 30/15 45/22 50/11 76/1 81/5 82/20 89/4 132/11 function [1] 94/19 functionig [1] 41/4 functions [2] 93/23	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11 117/2 135/10 135/23 136/17 general [3] 81/11 121/20 130/3 generally [11] 30/4 32/19 40/3 43/6 44/11 48/22 57/16 78/14 90/6 91/15 97/1 generated [1] 6/9	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2 <b>go [19]</b> 25/23 30/8 65/10 82/6 91/12 98/6 107/22 114/9 115/15 120/7 127/6 127/22 133/9 133/16 135/15 136/8 136/9 137/5 138/17 <b>goes [7]</b> 28/16 56/4 65/24 79/16 83/19	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3 117/15 great [3] 47/5 129/17 129/20 greater [9] 21/9 54/10 54/22 55/3 56/5 60/19 78/8 95/22 129/6 greatest [1] 105/21 ground [6] 2/13 17/10 50/21 56/23 58/15	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3 19/19 26/18 26/20 27/3 29/16 31/16 32/12 32/23 32/24 35/19 40/24 50/22 52/16 52/17 56/21 58/12 67/21 69/15 74/7 74/9 85/25 96/8 96/9 103/10 104/1 104/16 107/6 108/5 116/21 117/3 117/3 117/12 120/5 123/9
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20 105/8 107/11 115/21 138/4 fullest [1] 89/19 fully [8] 30/15 45/22 50/11 76/1 81/5 82/20 89/4 132/11 function [1] 94/19 functioning [1] 41/4 functions [2] 93/23 94/10	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11 117/2 135/10 135/23 136/17 general [3] 81/11 121/20 130/3 generally [11] 30/4 32/19 40/3 43/6 44/11 48/22 57/16 78/14 90/6 91/15 97/1 generated [1] 6/9 generic [2] 44/9	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2 <b>go [19]</b> 25/23 30/8 65/10 82/6 91/12 98/6 107/22 114/9 115/15 120/7 127/6 127/22 133/9 133/16 135/15 136/8 136/9 137/5 138/17 <b>goes [7]</b> 28/16 56/4 65/24 79/16 83/19 84/5 88/18	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3 117/15 great [3] 47/5 129/17 129/20 greater [9] 21/9 54/10 54/22 55/3 56/5 60/19 78/8 95/22 129/6 greatest [1] 105/21 ground [6] 2/13 17/10 50/21 56/23 58/15 70/5	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3 19/19 26/18 26/20 27/3 29/16 31/16 32/12 32/23 32/24 35/19 40/24 50/22 52/16 52/17 56/21 58/12 67/21 69/15 74/7 74/9 85/25 96/8 96/9 103/10 104/1 104/16 107/6 108/5 116/21 117/3 117/3 117/12 120/5 123/9 123/10 124/23 125/19
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20 105/8 107/11 115/21 138/4 fullest [1] 89/19 fully [8] 30/15 45/22 50/11 76/1 81/5 82/20 89/4 132/11 function [1] 94/19 functioning [1] 41/4 functions [2] 93/23 94/10 fund [2] 35/7 99/16	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11 117/2 135/10 135/23 136/17 general [3] 81/11 121/20 130/3 generally [11] 30/4 32/19 40/3 43/6 44/11 48/22 57/16 78/14 90/6 91/15 97/1 generated [1] 6/9 generic [2] 44/9 115/20	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2 <b>go [19]</b> 25/23 30/8 65/10 82/6 91/12 98/6 107/22 114/9 115/15 120/7 127/6 127/22 133/9 133/16 135/15 136/8 136/9 137/5 138/17 <b>goes [7]</b> 28/16 56/4 65/24 79/16 83/19 84/5 88/18 <b>going [31]</b> 1/7 1/11	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3 117/15 great [3] 47/5 129/17 129/20 greater [9] 21/9 54/10 54/22 55/3 56/5 60/19 78/8 95/22 129/6 greatest [1] 105/21 ground [6] 2/13 17/10 50/21 56/23 58/15 70/5 grounds [3] 23/14	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3 19/19 26/18 26/20 27/3 29/16 31/16 32/12 32/23 32/24 35/19 40/24 50/22 52/16 52/17 56/21 58/12 67/21 69/15 74/7 74/9 85/25 96/8 96/9 103/10 104/1 104/16 107/6 108/5 116/21 117/3 117/3 117/12 120/5 123/9 123/10 124/23 125/19 134/10 134/12 135/1
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20 105/8 107/11 115/21 138/4 fullest [1] 89/19 fully [8] 30/15 45/22 50/11 76/1 81/5 82/20 89/4 132/11 function [1] 94/19 functioning [1] 41/4 functions [2] 93/23 94/10 fund [2] 35/7 99/16 funded [2] 125/12	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11 117/2 135/10 135/23 136/17 general [3] 81/11 121/20 130/3 generally [11] 30/4 32/19 40/3 43/6 44/11 48/22 57/16 78/14 90/6 91/15 97/1 generated [1] 6/9 generic [2] 44/9 115/20 Geoffrey [1] 107/8	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2 <b>go [19]</b> 25/23 30/8 65/10 82/6 91/12 98/6 107/22 114/9 115/15 120/7 127/6 127/22 133/9 133/16 135/15 136/8 136/9 137/5 138/17 <b>goes [7]</b> 28/16 56/4 65/24 79/16 83/19 84/5 88/18 <b>going [31]</b> 1/7 1/11 1/14 2/13 9/2 12/2	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3 117/15 great [3] 47/5 129/17 129/20 greater [9] 21/9 54/10 54/22 55/3 56/5 60/19 78/8 95/22 129/6 greatest [1] 105/21 ground [6] 2/13 17/10 50/21 56/23 58/15 70/5 grounds [3] 23/14 77/12 83/20	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3 19/19 26/18 26/20 27/3 29/16 31/16 32/12 32/23 32/24 35/19 40/24 50/22 52/16 52/17 56/21 58/12 67/21 69/15 74/7 74/9 85/25 96/8 96/9 103/10 104/1 104/16 107/6 108/5 116/21 117/3 117/3 117/12 120/5 123/9 123/10 124/23 125/19 134/10 134/12 135/1 135/5 138/4 138/10
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20 105/8 107/11 115/21 138/4 fullest [1] 89/19 fully [8] 30/15 45/22 50/11 76/1 81/5 82/20 89/4 132/11 function [1] 94/19 functionig [1] 41/4 functions [2] 93/23 94/10 fund [2] 35/7 99/16 funded [2] 125/12 132/11	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11 117/2 135/10 135/23 136/17 general [3] 81/11 121/20 130/3 generally [11] 30/4 32/19 40/3 43/6 44/11 48/22 57/16 78/14 90/6 91/15 97/1 generated [1] 6/9 generic [2] 44/9 115/20 Geoffrey [1] 107/8 get [16] 1/19 8/24	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2 <b>go [19]</b> 25/23 30/8 65/10 82/6 91/12 98/6 107/22 114/9 115/15 120/7 127/6 127/22 133/9 133/16 135/15 136/8 136/9 137/5 138/17 <b>goes [7]</b> 28/16 56/4 65/24 79/16 83/19 84/5 88/18 <b>going [31]</b> 1/7 1/11 1/14 2/13 9/2 12/2 12/22 14/22 24/15	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3 117/15 great [3] 47/5 129/17 129/20 greater [9] 21/9 54/10 54/22 55/3 56/5 60/19 78/8 95/22 129/6 greatest [1] 105/21 ground [6] 2/13 17/10 50/21 56/23 58/15 70/5 grounds [3] 23/14 77/12 83/20 group [43] 6/2 6/3	H           habit [1]         75/5           had [62]         2/14           3/17         4/15           4/15         4/17           8/2         8/5           9/7         9/10           9/2         8/2           8/2         8/5           9/7         9/10           9/12         8/2           10/8         10/14           10/8         10/14           10/8         10/14           10/8         10/14           10/8         10/14           10/8         10/14           10/15         13/7           13/13         13/14           13/13         13/14           13/14         15/3           19/19         26/18           20/20         27/3           29/16         31/16           32/12         32/24           35/19         40/24           50/21         56/21           58/12         67/21           59/15         74/7           74/9         85/25           96/9         103/10           104/16         107/6
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20 105/8 107/11 115/21 138/4 fullest [1] 89/19 fully [8] 30/15 45/22 50/11 76/1 81/5 82/20 89/4 132/11 function [1] 94/19 functioning [1] 41/4 functions [2] 93/23 94/10 fund [2] 35/7 99/16 funded [2] 125/12	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11 117/2 135/10 135/23 136/17 general [3] 81/11 121/20 130/3 generally [11] 30/4 32/19 40/3 43/6 44/11 48/22 57/16 78/14 90/6 91/15 97/1 generated [1] 6/9 generic [2] 44/9 115/20 Geoffrey [1] 107/8	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2 <b>go [19]</b> 25/23 30/8 65/10 82/6 91/12 98/6 107/22 114/9 115/15 120/7 127/6 127/22 133/9 133/16 135/15 136/8 136/9 137/5 138/17 <b>goes [7]</b> 28/16 56/4 65/24 79/16 83/19 84/5 88/18 <b>going [31]</b> 1/7 1/11 1/14 2/13 9/2 12/2	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3 117/15 great [3] 47/5 129/17 129/20 greater [9] 21/9 54/10 54/22 55/3 56/5 60/19 78/8 95/22 129/6 greatest [1] 105/21 ground [6] 2/13 17/10 50/21 56/23 58/15 70/5 grounds [3] 23/14 77/12 83/20	H habit [1] 75/5 had [62] 2/14 3/12 3/17 4/15 4/17 4/20 8/2 8/5 9/7 9/10 9/18 10/8 10/14 11/5 13/7 13/13 13/14 15/3 19/19 26/18 26/20 27/3 29/16 31/16 32/12 32/23 32/24 35/19 40/24 50/22 52/16 52/17 56/21 58/12 67/21 69/15 74/7 74/9 85/25 96/8 96/9 103/10 104/1 104/16 107/6 108/5 116/21 117/3 117/3 117/12 120/5 123/9 123/10 124/23 125/19 134/10 134/12 135/1 135/5 138/4 138/10
front [3] 14/9 74/24 92/18 frustration [1] 116/19 Fujitsu [2] 97/2 112/8 fulfil [2] 93/22 94/10 full [16] 7/10 27/12 39/22 69/5 71/3 71/3 72/6 76/23 92/13 93/24 94/8 101/20 105/8 107/11 115/21 138/4 fullest [1] 89/19 fully [8] 30/15 45/22 50/11 76/1 81/5 82/20 89/4 132/11 function [1] 94/19 functions [2] 93/23 94/10 fund [2] 35/7 99/16 funded [2] 125/12 132/11	38/15 38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3 57/10 64/20 79/2 87/10 92/7 112/22 117/9 119/5 120/11 121/22 122/21 128/6 133/22 142/3 Gareth [1] 107/21 gave [9] 5/11 26/22 65/25 66/11 69/11 117/2 135/10 135/23 136/17 general [3] 81/11 121/20 130/3 generally [11] 30/4 32/19 40/3 43/6 44/11 48/22 57/16 78/14 90/6 91/15 97/1 generated [1] 6/9 generic [2] 44/9 115/20 Geoffrey [1] 107/8 get [16] 1/19 8/24	37/21 37/25 83/17 84/22 96/11 96/13 97/23 98/7 98/12 98/14 98/16 99/18 100/15 100/19 100/19 100/23 105/9 107/17 108/4 108/23 125/1 125/13 126/3 126/16 132/19 137/22 137/23 138/2 138/3 139/2 <b>go [19]</b> 25/23 30/8 65/10 82/6 91/12 98/6 107/22 114/9 115/15 120/7 127/6 127/22 133/9 133/16 135/15 136/8 136/9 137/5 138/17 <b>goes [7]</b> 28/16 56/4 65/24 79/16 83/19 84/5 88/18 <b>going [31]</b> 1/7 1/11 1/14 2/13 9/2 12/2 12/22 14/22 24/15	Government's [2] 94/24 105/15 grasp [1] 102/23 grass [1] 137/2 grateful [10] 39/12 41/20 52/18 75/7 82/11 92/4 93/8 95/17 102/17 133/1 gratitude [1] 106/5 grave [2] 105/3 117/15 great [3] 47/5 129/17 129/20 greater [9] 21/9 54/10 54/22 55/3 56/5 60/19 78/8 95/22 129/6 greatest [1] 105/21 ground [6] 2/13 17/10 50/21 56/23 58/15 70/5 grounds [3] 23/14 77/12 83/20 group [43] 6/2 6/3	H           habit [1]         75/5           had [62]         2/14           3/17         4/15           4/15         4/17           8/2         8/5           9/7         9/10           9/2         8/2           8/2         8/5           9/7         9/10           9/12         8/2           10/8         10/14           10/8         10/14           10/8         10/14           10/8         10/14           10/8         10/14           10/8         10/14           10/15         13/7           13/13         13/14           13/13         13/14           13/14         15/3           19/19         26/18           20/20         27/3           29/16         31/16           32/12         32/24           35/19         40/24           50/21         56/21           58/12         67/21           59/15         74/7           74/9         85/25           96/9         103/10           104/16         107/6

(48) from - hadn't

Н	72/12 72/25 74/25	42/14 42/17 42/19	120/11 121/22 123/10	Hooper [1] 114/22
	75/12 81/4 81/19	45/15 49/8 50/16	123/17 134/10 134/12	
hadn't [1] 136/7	82/12 82/22 85/23	52/11 55/14 70/2 70/7	134/13 135/3 135/4	83/2 119/17 120/11
half [7] 26/5 26/13	86/5 86/16 89/15	77/17 115/18 115/19	135/9 135/10 135/10	123/1 123/20 126/14
29/15 36/19 74/12	89/16 94/1 94/5 94/8	121/17 122/24 131/8	Herbert [10] 59/11	139/5
74/21 74/21	94/10 96/22 98/4 98/8		59/15 62/13 88/7 88/9	
halfway [1] 128/25	98/16 98/18 101/1	104/7 121/12 121/12	88/10 88/13 89/2	hopeful [2] 2/9 2/10
Hamilton [1] 126/11	101/21 102/11 102/20	hear [11] 1/5 2/24 5/6	118/8 123/12	hopes [1] 109/21
hand [4] 2/2 36/9 48/9	103/7 104/10 104/11	58/6 59/2 90/4 94/3	here [10] 1/21 30/24	Horizon [26] 4/15 6/9
115/15	104/22 104/25 105/6	94/14 110/4 127/10	39/1 68/14 80/1 85/16	6/14 8/9 17/4 18/21
handed [1] 6/12	106/12 106/15 106/19	129/24	120/21 134/16 135/25	21/11 21/12 21/15
handled [1] 118/3	107/6 109/20 109/24	heard [20] 4/12 35/15	136/4	42/5 43/1 55/15 71/21
handling [1] 123/9	111/2 115/13 116/10	52/2 77/15 84/16	high [7] 24/6 96/16	77/20 79/20 97/24
hands [3] 38/18	116/20 117/9 120/4	84/19 96/23 97/4	101/3 103/15 104/5	103/8 103/11 103/18
105/15 114/4	101/6 101/11 103/18	97/11 98/10 102/2	105/6 105/21	103/18 103/19 103/20
happen [3] 37/17 64/6	123/24 124/23 127/5	102/13 107/20 112/22	higher [3] 30/7 55/1	103/22 110/18 111/22
140/10	127/13 127/17 129/8	116/8 128/2 133/21	60/6	136/23
happened [7] 104/10	130/10 130/16 130/18	134/5 134/6 136/19	highlight [3] 40/13	horse [1] 115/4
121/6 121/11 127/13	131/22 132/24 137/1	hearing [18] 1/16	61/10 119/23	hounded [1] 96/20
129/11 131/5 134/5	137/21 139/13	1/24 1/25 2/20 39/22	highlighted [1] 87/5	hour [3] 134/17
happening [4] 101/15	hasn't [1] 55/22	40/1 90/5 104/16	highly [1] 133/10	134/18 134/19
101/18 102/20 134/5	have [266]	108/20 109/23 110/11	him [5] 34/2 106/20	hours [2] 92/13
happens [1] 139/25	haven't [4] 41/9 41/15		136/15 136/16 136/17	123/24
happy [4] 41/13 69/4	55/14 90/10	139/13 139/20 140/6	his [17] 31/18 35/8	house [6] 12/21 107/6
78/22 90/5	having [24] 1/24 4/15	141/5	68/6 68/25 69/6 69/7	107/9 128/25 134/24
harassment [1] 17/2	4/17 4/20 9/3 23/17	hearings [34] 1/8	69/13 69/14 69/21	135/1
hard [1] 102/23	45/20 49/18 51/5	1/21 2/1 4/9 5/10	84/2 88/1 105/3 105/4	how [10] 8/15 20/4
hardly [1] 1/5	53/25 62/18 63/20	26/18 39/19 52/20	106/20 107/1 129/13	25/12 38/1 55/24
hardship [9] 30/18	84/16 91/18 93/2	64/9 64/9 69/2 93/9	130/3	56/14 57/7 58/18
30/19 76/4 76/5 76/18	97/11 97/13 117/8	94/1 94/2 94/6 94/12	historic [4] 3/24 3/25	125/1 126/25
77/12 112/19 112/20	120/2 121/9 125/19	94/12 95/3 95/12	4/2 119/21	Howe [27] 3/4 12/17
112/23	133/7 133/21 140/1	95/16 96/23 97/13	historical [24] 3/8	17/16 20/12 29/24
harm [3] 104/6	Hazzleton [1] 107/2	102/3 104/23 105/6	7/17 8/3 13/21 14/9	31/7 31/12 31/20 37/5
106/12 115/21	he [25] 12/7 12/24	106/7 106/10 112/13	14/11 14/14 14/16	37/7 42/14 45/12 49/7
has [120] 3/20 4/1	13/4 26/18 26/18	127/1 129/6 133/2	14/18 14/20 14/23	60/9 61/5 68/24 71/11
10/17 10/21 10/24	26/20 26/20 26/21	133/6 134/7 140/12	40/22 45/9 67/15	73/22 75/15 85/19
10/25 12/8 14/4 18/3	26/22 69/10 69/11	heart [1] 132/8	67/19 67/24 68/2 68/5	86/8 96/4 105/13
18/19 20/12 23/12	83/19 83/23 87/11	heartrending [1]	68/6 68/8 68/10 77/10	111/4 123/8 124/22
23/14 23/19 23/24	87/13 87/15 106/19	110/20	80/22 138/7	125/3
24/21 25/10 25/18	106/22 106/25 106/25		history [1] 105/22	however [10] 4/7 10/5
26/8 27/5 27/7 28/17	116/20 129/13 130/2	held [5] 61/2 61/7	HMRC [3] 85/24 86/1	16/6 33/19 45/20
28/18 28/25 29/1	136/15 136/16	62/20 116/23 133/7	86/4	46/22 68/4 126/17
29/13 29/18 29/21	head [5] 42/8 45/11	help [4] 54/14 72/23	Hodge [6] 83/7 83/15	136/22 138/18
30/4 30/16 33/19 34/2	67/15 67/19 68/5	120/14 122/9	83/23 85/2 85/5 88/5	HSS [44] 7/17 8/7
34/4 35/23 35/24 36/7	headed [2] 21/3	helped [1] 110/18	hold [2] 30/6 55/17	10/8 14/12 15/12
41/17 44/8 44/16 45/5	114/16	helpful [4] 64/16 69/3	holding [1] 112/12	15/18 16/7 17/8 17/12
45/18 49/10 49/16	heading [4] 9/25	106/9 133/19	holds [3] 22/4 86/18	17/14 17/20 18/17
49/24 54/6 55/13	19/11 21/3 21/21	helpfully [1] 69/20	86/21	22/13 25/19 26/25
55/19 56/25 59/17	headings [1] 16/21	helping [1] 11/18	hole [1] 132/5	27/7 29/20 29/22
59/18 60/5 61/15	heads [24] 15/11	hence [1] 46/6	Holmes' [1] 105/2	29/25 30/4 30/13
63/20 63/22 69/8 71/4	15/13 15/16 17/21	her [17] 31/19 34/2	home [1] 134/23	47/17 57/16 91/10
71/12 71/24 72/6	22/22 23/4 41/1 41/19	38/24 107/3 107/6	homes [1] 104/19	113/18 113/25 114/25
	•		•	224 - t'abad (91)

(49) hadn't... - HSS

Н	86/18 91/19	I make [6] 40/6 44/12	I would [9] 14/1 36/16	ignorant [1] 101/18
	I can't [1] 2/6	64/7 88/22 110/7	39/11 49/24 55/16	illness [3] 30/19 31/1
HSS [17] 115/18 115/19 116/16 117/1	I cannot [1] 106/18	110/8	73/15 83/11 95/21	76/4
118/7 119/3 119/10	I carried [1] 135/18	I mean [5] 47/5 73/1	140/9	illnesses [1] 104/22
120/2 120/5 122/12	I certainly [2] 64/11	88/15 96/12 129/2	I'II [4] 57/23 96/11	imagine [1] 1/18
123/6 123/21 126/1	129/18	I meant [1] 34/9	134/18 140/10	immediate [4] 88/22
132/20 133/11 133/23	I confirm [1] 91/13	I mentioned [3] 31/10	l'm [29] 2/2 2/13 12/2	111/16 112/17 132/4
139/10	I could [1] 135/22	79/17 135/23	12/22 24/15 38/1 39/7	immediately [3] 99/12
Hudgell [16] 12/17	l couldn't [2] 135/17	I might [2] 87/11	48/15 48/16 57/9	104/9 127/2
17/17 20/13 29/20	136/9	128/3	64/14 65/3 65/7 65/22	imminent [1] 104/18
33/13 33/14 33/21	I deal [1] 127/2	I move [6] 41/18 49/5	75/2 75/4 75/7 78/20	impact [12] 4/9 26/18
34/19 54/9 54/15	l didn't [1] 140/13	56/8 59/3 65/2 75/14	79/6 95/16 99/5	49/18 69/2 76/6 76/15
54/20 59/6 68/15 70/3	l do [7] 2/4 42/23	I need [1] 61/23	100/20 114/3 121/2	94/2 96/23 97/13
81/13 82/3	65/11 73/1 79/16	I never [2] 135/11	129/2 136/3 137/25	102/3 106/10 134/7
Hudgells [1] 51/10	80/11 136/6	136/18	140/14 140/18	impacted [2] 30/14
huge [2] 111/17 136/5	I don't [6] 61/11 66/13		l've [1] 77/5	76/1
human [10] 4/9 26/16	68/14 79/9 135/11	l pick [2] 59/3 59/4	i.e [11] 10/22 21/9	impede [1] 2/1
26/17 69/2 94/2 96/23	140/20	I published [1]	23/12 23/19 26/3 26/5	implementation [1]
97/13 102/3 106/10	I drove [1] 134/23	140/11	26/9 28/21 31/15	4/2
134/7	I emphasise [4] 49/10 60/4 66/23 80/4	74/9 128/23	34/21 55/7 identified [14] 14/2	implications [2] 69/23 70/2
hundreds [1] 136/4		<b>I quote [1]</b> 120/11	15/4 15/6 15/8 39/14	
hurdles [1] 115/3	I emphasised [1] 47/16	I raise [1] 38/12	45/19 46/1 46/7 68/25	important [12] 21/24 80/20 80/25 81/3 83/4
husband [2] 105/2	l emptied [2] 134/24	I recognise [1] 49/1	72/2 84/6 88/16 93/11	93/12 97/10 106/7
135/5	134/25	l refer [1] 96/13	100/5	108/17 114/20 119/23
1	l ended [1] 136/7	I require [1] 64/7	identifies [1] 8/11	128/12
I accept [1] 58/3	I feel [1] 107/15	I said [1] 38/8	identify [5] 14/1 18/18	
l added [1] 104/20	I finish [1] 139/8	I say [3] 37/18 95/16	53/2 53/6 54/21	imprisonment [1]
l address [1] 40/23	I first [1] 93/1	140/21	if [73] 2/11 3/20 4/1	4/20
I addressed [1]	I focused [1] 38/7	I see [1] 9/4	7/24 8/20 8/24 9/9	improvements [1]
104/15	l get [1] 73/1	I set [2] 104/17	16/9 16/11 18/1 18/4	3/22
l agreed [1] 1/22	<b>l go [1]</b> 136/8	113/10	19/6 20/2 20/13 21/19	inadequacy [1] 75/12
I also [1] 112/6	I got [3] 134/23	I should [1] 128/4	22/17 25/18 25/23	inadequate [2] 71/10
I am [11] 2/9 2/10	135/17 136/17	I start [1] 40/22	28/16 29/1 30/8 32/7	121/25
38/4 38/4 48/25 48/25	I had [4] 2/14 52/16	I started [1] 137/5	37/17 39/6 43/25	inappropriate [3]
58/4 63/17 78/22	52/17 135/1	I stress [1] 64/6	47/22 48/1 50/25	55/6 78/19 118/23
107/14 140/14	I have [14] 35/20	<b>I take [3]</b> 38/15 120/8	57/12 57/17 62/20	incapable [1] 111/7
I anticipate [1] 88/2	46/24 72/2 75/5 78/23	120/18	63/20 63/21 64/6	include [8] 16/22
I anticipated [1]	87/5 92/18 104/24	I then [2] 73/21	64/11 66/6 66/16 69/3	17/16 20/7 35/14 54/3
140/12	105/5 106/16 108/20	125/15	69/3 70/21 73/21 78/24 79/2 79/3 79/13	81/18 116/2 127/4
l appear [2] 2/23 96/3	138/24 139/5 139/21 I hear [1] 59/2	I thought [3] 34/11 80/17 107/13	82/6 83/7 83/14 86/9	included [6] 4/21 18/5 46/10 85/8 116/17
<b>I appreciate [1]</b> 38/25	<b>I hope [2]</b> 120/11	<b>I turn [2]</b> 35/2 130/20	90/2 91/17 96/12	124/25
l ask [3] 38/24 92/9	139/5	I want [1] 99/5	98/25 101/9 101/9	includes [4] 8/14
139/23	l indicated [1] 89/25	l wasn't [1] 39/5	102/8 109/5 110/9	15/25 52/22 76/3
l asked [3] 105/23 128/5 136/15	l just [5] 40/24 42/10	<b>I went [1]</b> 136/14	112/4 114/11 114/24	including [15] 3/8
<b>I assure [1]</b> 58/21	61/10 89/13 100/17	I were [1] 129/7	115/10 119/22 124/13	4/19 6/19 28/15 30/17
<b>I brought [1]</b> 135/21	I know [2] 34/15	I will [12] 15/7 17/15	128/22 129/7 129/11	44/9 46/9 49/12 68/8
<b>I butting [1]</b> 128/7	130/2	22/9 50/5 64/3 64/9	129/19 133/14 139/5	68/19 72/8 94/16
l can [11] 2/15 41/12	I leave [1] 63/24	66/7 79/25 92/13	139/23 139/24 141/2	95/20 127/22 139/20
56/25 57/11 57/18	I lifted [1] 134/24	100/19 140/3 140/16	if I could [1] 16/9	inclusion [1] 85/6
65/17 79/6 81/13 85/9	I look [1] 141/2	I wonder [1] 113/19	ignorance [1] 102/5	Income [1] 70/9
				(50) HSS Income

(50) HSS... - Income

1	individuals [10] 96/13	130/1 133/3 133/5	103/2 110/17 111/12	irremediably [1]
<u> </u>	97/1 105/1 110/3	135/14	111/20 112/9 118/18	75/25
incomplete [1] 63/22	123/1 124/20 127/22	Inquiry's [4] 2/1	124/16 125/15 125/16	irrespective [1] 30/25
inconsistent [1]	132/6 132/10 139/15	39/24 84/12 116/15	125/19 126/9 126/19	isn't [2] 46/7 84/4
54/17	indulge [1] 139/23	insofar [1] 83/16	129/4 129/8 129/18	isolated [1] 3/17
inconvenience [11]	indulgences [1]	insolvency [2] 16/25	129/19 130/24 131/7	issue [54] 3/12 3/19
45/2 46/4 49/13 49/16	115/17	121/21	132/1 132/6 139/3	11/1 15/6 15/10 15/11
50/1 50/2 55/25 56/2	Industrial [2] 9/14	instances [1] 27/23	internally [1] 61/13	17/14 20/12 20/15
73/13 73/20 74/15	103/5	instantly [1] 112/19	interpret [1] 113/13	24/10 24/16 25/17
increased [2] 16/24	ineligible [1] 138/6	instead [10] 30/1 30/6		27/1 27/5 29/18 31/7
121/20	inevitably [3] 53/14	31/2 32/25 33/5 33/14		32/3 32/5 32/7 32/9
incur [2] 71/13	55/9 78/13	104/10 110/14 117/4	into [34] 1/19 13/20	33/21 34/17 37/6
116/12	infect [1] 103/22	129/15	19/19 19/21 20/23	41/14 41/16 46/3
incurred [5] 21/13	information [31] 6/9	institution [1] 119/1	22/23 23/5 39/3 43/17	49/12 57/24 59/6 61/3
42/25 43/3 46/20	9/25 10/24 19/15 20/8		45/22 45/24 46/2	68/15 68/19 70/18
72/13	23/9 32/18 52/25 53/2	108/6 113/16	49/17 49/21 52/12	70/21 72/25 73/18
indeed [7] 51/2 57/11	53/9 54/2 61/2 61/6	instruct [7] 36/22	53/20 54/4 56/2 56/4	81/20 82/1 82/3 84/5
66/16 102/11 104/22	61/16 61/18 61/19	36/25 37/2 37/21	56/20 72/6 94/18	85/6 87/25 89/22 90/2
113/13 113/24	62/23 63/9 64/22	37/25 124/13 124/20	111/4 115/25 116/6	90/17 97/9 106/7
indemnity [1] 70/20	66/19 69/10 69/16	instructed [2] 96/4	122/18 126/7 131/24	108/10 110/15 113/22
independence [2]	69/17 69/17 70/17	123/12	134/13 134/17 134/23	117/6 128/5 132/15
60/3 118/5	72/4 89/1 102/6			137/3
independent [26]	109/13 110/14 116/22	instructing [4] 102/15 111/3 112/3 133/5		issue 6 [1] 32/5
14/13 16/7 16/12			introduced [1] 51/17	
22/12 27/6 28/20	informed [1] 104/24	instructive [1] 74/2	introducing [1] 41/20	issued [1] 12/18
28/22 32/8 41/7 41/21	inherent [1] 89/7	insufficient [2] 44/16 72/19	introduction [2] 1/17 2/2	issues [66] 1/9 1/13 1/15 2/20 3/17 3/18
43/13 43/22 59/7 59/8	inheritance [1] 106/16	intend [1] 40/18	inverted [1] 64/5	3/24 5/8 5/18 6/13
59/9 59/21 60/2 70/15	initial [4] 46/17 56/18		investigated [1]	6/14 6/19 13/15 13/18
70/22 78/12 86/7	88/5 119/8	12/25 39/19 39/21	29/23	13/20 13/22 13/24
86/24 109/6 118/12	initially [1] 25/1	interest [1] 91/2	investigation [2]	14/2 14/7 14/8 15/3
118/22 130/25	initiative [2] 23/16	interests [6] 20/17	19/21 62/13	15/7 15/13 17/6 17/15
indicate [1] 64/12	23/20	36/5 36/24 37/2 37/9	Investments [3] 3/2	21/12 21/12 28/7 31/5
indicated [11] 41/17	injury [6] 17/1 44/15	37/24	93/6 103/7	32/14 34/6 35/3 35/4
59/16 75/22 76/25	50/1 50/3 53/17 72/16		invitation [6] 39/14	35/13 35/24 36/4
77/5 77/17 86/24	Inquiries [1] 97/7	128/14	39/18 40/19 84/6	37/11 38/9 39/13
89/25 91/3 93/7 94/21	inquiry [60] 3/13 3/19		88/19 140/24	39/16 39/22 40/9 44/9
indicates [1] 81/22	4/7 10/24 11/25 17/18	10/5 10/10 10/20	invite [5] 13/19 16/9	44/10 45/5 45/20
indication [6] 40/11	23/10 29/10 32/18	10/25 12/25 29/19	20/24 112/24 138/25	48/17 60/7 69/9 82/17
63/24 64/17 65/8	35/23 36/7 36/19 37/5	29/21 29/25 30/4	invited [5] 13/17	85/17 90/14 93/3 93/9
75/12 101/11	41/13 64/22 67/21	30/11 30/17 30/20	18/17 81/10 108/23	93/11 93/12 93/15
indications [2] 137/7	68/1 68/12 69/3 69/5	30/22 30/25 32/15	129/3	94/9 94/16 94/23
137/12	70/23 72/24 84/16	32/23 35/7 35/16	involve [1] 87/13	102/2 106/1 108/19
indirect [1] 49/18	84/16 88/21 90/1 90/4	36/12 75/14 75/16	involved [6] 28/9	109/15 137/2 140/5
indirectly [1] 60/7	93/2 93/8 93/12 93/13	75/20 75/23 76/9	81/24 89/15 96/7	it's [48] 16/16 18/16
individual [15] 33/17	94/5 95/11 96/7 97/11	76/13 76/15 76/18	100/16 125/4	24/6 28/11 29/8 31/11
36/21 37/21 53/4	97/21 102/17 103/25	76/24 77/11 77/13	involvement [3] 83/9	31/20 33/9 35/22
67/16 72/20 77/17	104/16 104/21 104/22	78/2 78/4 78/11 78/18	89/23 94/22	36/19 39/1 43/24 44/1
81/14 83/6 83/10	105/25 106/6 108/6	79/9 79/12 79/22	involving [2] 45/4	47/12 50/21 54/12
99/10 99/25 100/12	109/22 110/6 110/23	85/22 91/5 91/9 91/14	•	56/3 58/2 60/9 61/13
102/4 103/21	111/4 112/14 113/14		irredeemably [1]	63/5 63/13 70/5 70/13
individually [2] 34/6	114/20 124/19 124/25	98/22 99/11 99/16	30/14	70/23 75/5 75/15
34/17	125/9 125/9 130/1	99/24 102/9 102/24	irrelevant [1] 53/14	75/17 77/17 77/22
		55/27 102/3 102/24		10/11 11/11 11/22
L	1	1	1	(51) incomplete - it's

(51) incomplete - it's

1	jump [1] 115/4	knows [2] 36/8	46/17 47/10 47/12	63/25 64/16 80/9
it's [18] 79/18 79/21	June [20] 8/22 9/7 9/9	129/14	47/13 47/23 47/25	81/23 83/11 88/12
81/3 81/20 83/4 88/3	9/12 12/20 15/2 19/8	1	48/2 48/7 50/10 55/17	90/4 101/9 107/15
89/21 92/8 93/13 94/3	25/25 30/21 40/12	<u>L</u>	59/7 59/9 59/10 59/21	107/21 120/25 121/3
	65/9 65/25 66/2 97/3	lack [5] 60/23 75/2	62/13 70/22 70/25	127/16
113/2 116/11 116/14	110/13 113/7 119/14	103/23 112/6 118/5	71/4 71/9 72/9 72/12	likelihood [2] 21/9
117/15 120/5 120/20	123/7 126/14 140/11	lagged [1] 56/10	72/22 74/7 74/9 75/13	129/17
122/17 133/13	June 2020 [1] 15/2	laid [2] 7/15 129/9	86/24 89/9 91/19 98/1	likely [15] 24/6 27/24
items [1] 106/23	June 20202 [1] 12/20	large [4] 38/25 54/16	100/3 100/11 101/20	28/11 34/1 46/2 55/2
its [47] 2/8 3/22 8/5	June 2022 [1] 9/12	133/10 139/19	103/13 105/22 109/6	73/5 78/7 81/23 82/6
15/13 15/17 22/15	just [34] 1/17 16/21	largely [4] 32/18 71/3	116/12 117/20 117/24	92/16 117/21 133/14
28/19 28/23 28/24	26/20 37/20 40/24	81/5 82/22	119/12 119/15 119/21	137/8 137/13
31/24 40/2 41/7 54/13		largesse [1] 115/17		
54/18 55/2 55/21 59/9	42/10 46/11 48/18	last [17] 11/9 18/16	120/6 121/19 122/3	likewise [1] 132/20
78/6 88/9 89/3 89/14	52/16 52/22 55/5	26/6 28/24 34/4 34/8	122/15 122/15 122/17	limit [2] 58/5 58/7
93/7 93/17 93/18	57/23 59/23 61/10		123/23 125/14 130/25	limitation [4] 58/2
94/10 94/19 94/22	66/18 69/7 74/11	34/9 34/13 66/1 66/12	131/9 131/9 131/14	71/25 79/20 101/20
98/2 103/4 103/11	74/12 79/8 79/13	100/18 102/15 102/18	131/20 131/24 132/8	limited [24] 72/9
103/12 103/20 103/22	89/13 90/15 92/1 92/9	104/15 105/12 118/20	132/11 132/16 132/24	101/3 107/16 108/8
104/4 104/9 104/13	96/11 100/17 107/6	130/12	legally [1] 120/2	113/21 114/23 114/25
106/1 109/12 110/15	117/3 120/12 129/7	late [7] 34/15 56/11	length [1] 129/6	115/2 115/6 115/23
110/24 115/24 122/16	129/16 134/7 134/10	58/17 58/20 65/15	lengths [1] 56/16	116/10 117/6 118/7
125/2 130/17 131/18	136/19	85/24 102/14	less [10] 2/11 8/1	118/17 118/23 119/7
	justice [4] 3/14 103/9	later [6] 2/24 5/9	26/5 59/18 64/19	122/16 123/4 123/20
131/21 132/24	103/16 105/21	39/21 90/8 113/8	70/11 76/14 82/10	124/2 130/16 130/23
itself [19] 18/10 31/20	justifiable [2] 57/6	114/20	84/15 126/19	138/13 138/19
37/13 42/20 42/22	67/13	latter [1] 27/13	lesser [1] 55/3	Limited's [1] 117/16
48/5 51/24 53/20	justification [1] 88/23	law [2] 28/18 81/22	lest [1] 48/24	limits [2] 49/1 83/17
53/24 54/9 57/16	justified [2] 46/12	lawyer [2] 51/6 123/2	Let [2] 39/2 106/14	line [4] 18/16 40/7
59/20 71/10 119/2	49/22	lawyers [4] 1/15 1/19	let's [4] 79/7 79/13	40/11 43/5
120/8 121/4 133/6		1/21 104/12	120/21 134/4	lines [2] 109/11 134/8
133/11 140/5	K	lay [5] 28/2 51/4	letter [10] 36/17	linked [2] 42/4 56/9
1	Kay [1] 114/19	51/16 120/14 122/10	36/18 56/1 62/7 62/8	Linnell [2] 114/19
	keen [2] 57/3 90/6	lead [1] 55/10	62/25 63/1 63/10	114/19
Jacobs [1] 96/4	keeping [1] 101/17	learn [1] 120/11		
January [1] 68/3	key [4] 21/3 22/4 53/4		70/16 124/8	list [5] 3/17 35/4 42/2
jewellery [1] 106/16	71/18	learnt [1] 130/11	letters [6] 65/17	63/11 98/23
JFSA [4] 36/6 36/9	kicked [1] 137/2	least [8] 31/23 54/12		listen [3] 64/4 90/7
36/22 37/22		66/25 77/6 111/5	102/20	133/14
Jones [6] 83/7 83/15	kicking [1] 111/3	117/7 126/12 130/15	level [6] 17/9 54/19	listened [2] 117/8
83/23 85/2 85/5 88/5	kind [3] 9/5 57/24		54/24 74/2 93/19	121/22
judge [3] 6/12 39/3	92/10	leave [5] 40/20 58/24	128/21	listening [3] 5/19
82/11	knew [1] 35/25	63/24 90/1 136/9	liability [2] 7/6 81/12	94/14 94/14
judgment [4] 6/14	know [23] 5/16 27/8	leaving [1] 9/4	liable [1] 70/12	lists [1] 62/8
6/14 21/12 21/12	34/15 38/6 64/20	led [1] 20/12	liaise [1] 91/20	Litigant [1] 108/25
judgments [3] 6/13	79/19 96/3 97/22	Leeds [1] 4/11	life [1] 97/1	litigants [11] 96/11
6/13 103/9	97/25 98/2 98/21	left [3] 17/25 102/4	lifetime [3] 75/6 97/20	96/13 97/23 98/7
July [15] 1/1 9/13	102/19 106/8 108/2	138/9	104/21	99/18 99/20 107/17
9/22 10/8 66/4 66/22	111/24 112/13 112/18	• • •	lifted [1] 134/24	108/24 125/1 126/16
66/23 67/20 81/4 91/8	127/3 130/2 132/12	13/10 16/25 17/13	light [5] 5/4 14/3 60/2	132/19
109/23 118/20 129/13	133/2 135/4 135/11	24/1 27/6 27/10 28/4	93/23 95/8	litigation [46] 5/25
140/15 141/5	known [6] 6/2 7/16	28/13 28/25 29/9	like [22] 5/21 18/12	6/2 6/3 6/5 6/12 6/17
	21/25 98/4 128/13	29/17 32/8 36/3 42/4	20/2 38/16 39/11 44/7	6/25 7/1 7/8 7/21 7/23
July 2021 [1] 10/8	139/1	42/24 43/2 43/14	50/24 57/18 58/9	8/2 8/6 8/10 13/25
July 5 [1] 66/4				

(52) it's ... - litigation

L	loss [90] 4/23 8/9	6/2 11/22	52/24	23/5 24/10 25/2 25/12
	14/17 15/11 15/14	Luncheon [1] 92/22	managing [1] 6/12	26/16 27/1 27/14
litigation [31] 33/8	15/16 16/17 16/22	luxuries [1] 131/9	manifest [1] 106/13	27/21 28/2 28/5 28/7
35/3 35/12 35/17	16/22 16/23 16/23		manner [2] 76/20	28/10 29/12 30/3
35/22 36/2 37/13	16/23 17/5 17/21	Μ	137/7	30/24 32/21 34/18
37/16 68/8 80/9 84/18	18/23 18/25 19/1 19/2	machine [1] 92/18	many [22] 1/19 4/24	35/13 37/6 38/6 38/9
86/13 96/14 98/3	19/3 19/4 20/3 20/4	made [147]	27/23 53/14 73/2 94/3	39/14 39/17 39/19
105/16 105/19 107/22	20/4 20/5 20/6 20/11	main [3] 10/21 12/23	101/23 102/21 103/8	40/10 41/17 43/1
108/11 108/17 110/2	20/19 20/25 21/13	127/18	104/17 106/8 107/18	43/20 44/18 45/1 45/3
113/23 113/24 123/19	21/14 21/14 22/2	maintain [1] 11/22	111/17 112/11 114/3	46/8 47/18 50/6 52/19
124/6 125/13 131/4	22/22 23/4 23/15	major [1] 141/1	114/3 114/11 116/5	53/9 56/13 57/12
131/6 137/22 137/23		majority [3] 17/17		
138/14 138/20	23/18 23/18 23/22	34/21 47/16	117/22 121/3 133/14	57/13 59/16 60/12
litigious [2] 123/5	23/23 29/23 31/8 41/1	make [54] 2/5 3/22	141/2	60/14 60/19 61/16
137/14	41/19 41/22 41/22	6/20 11/13 12/11	March [12] 4/8 4/10	61/18 64/6 64/6 65/4
little [9] 5/21 15/8	41/23 41/24 41/24	12/25 17/14 29/21	4/11 11/24 12/4 69/20	65/16 66/18 67/20
20/7 63/25 64/24	42/1 42/2 42/8 42/14		90/22 98/10 98/15	68/14 68/17 69/6
78/23 107/21 139/1	42/19 43/2 45/11	30/15 38/24 39/13	108/15 137/19 138/16	70/10 70/15 70/21
140/1	45/16 46/20 49/5 49/8	40/2 40/6 40/24 41/8	March 2022 [1] 11/24	71/14 72/18 72/19
live [1] 107/10	50/16 50/25 52/11	42/18 43/11 43/19	Marian [1] 105/1	73/8 73/21 79/12
lives [5] 96/8 96/9	52/21 53/10 54/3 54/6	44/12 48/24 62/9 64/7	Marion [1] 106/15	81/18 81/23 83/3
96/25 104/6 114/8	55/4 55/14 55/24 56/3	65/22 66/7 75/16 76/2	marked [1] 52/16	86/25 88/2 90/17 93/1
loans [1] 4/23	60/17 70/2 73/14	86/17 88/22 90/19	market [1] 107/7	95/11 95/14 99/20
locking [1] 134/18	73/19 74/14 77/17	93/5 97/5 97/15 98/7	Marshall [4] 83/19	104/20 106/8 108/9
lodge [1] 135/10	77/19 82/23 83/24	98/15 99/6 99/20	85/2 85/5 86/16	108/12 108/14 108/22
lodged [1] 14/4	109/24 114/1 115/18	100/2 103/2 110/7	match [1] 2/7	109/18 110/5 110/7
logical [1] 53/13	115/19 115/24 121/17	110/8 110/10 112/18	material [10] 14/4	110/10 111/11 112/6
London [1] 4/9	121/18 121/18 121/18	113/17 122/1 122/10	14/10 15/2 19/8 28/1	113/7 113/10 114/5
long [8] 5/16 12/8	121/19 121/19	122/22 127/15 130/24	28/1 28/22 31/19	115/9 117/2 117/11
57/25 111/13 116/6	losses [51] 6/6 7/20	133/8 137/2 138/1	31/21 63/22	117/19 120/7 127/12
133/9 137/2 137/21	8/1 16/8 16/13 16/14	139/24 140/3 140/19	maters [1] 62/1	127/23 129/13 129/23
longer [3] 42/10 68/5	16/14 16/15 16/18	makes [6] 27/8 27/15	mathematics [1]	129/24 129/25 130/1
68/17	17/3 17/12 17/22	28/23 60/17 122/2	126/18	132/16 134/7 134/9
look [11] 25/24 36/16	18/12 18/20 18/21	125/9	matter [18] 33/16	135/24 138/11 140/15
40/3 70/17 81/23	18/22 19/25 20/10	making [32] 5/11	34/1 46/17 47/22	me [36] 1/5 34/11
114/8 114/17 121/15	21/4 21/10 24/9 27/17	11/12 14/6 22/16 25/6	47/24 48/1 48/7 48/14	39/2 47/22 54/14
122/21 122/22 141/2	27/19 27/23 27/25	29/24 30/4 37/13 40/3	53/12 54/6 56/4 60/24	57/24 61/23 64/15
	28/9 29/22 31/2 31/4	43/7 44/18 45/23	82/6 84/18 89/21	64/21 64/22 64/22
looked [3] 25/24	33/16 33/22 43/8 49/7	49/19 52/10 53/21	96/15 111/14 117/15	65/25 66/6 66/11 69/6
118/11 120/3	50/22 51/2 51/7 51/7	54/11 54/17 62/4 71/9	matters [29] 12/3	74/24 77/15 78/24
looking [6] 19/3 34/6	54/20 55/8 69/18 85/9	77/13 99/11 99/15	21/24 22/23 23/6	83/4 87/11 92/2 92/2
34/18 108/2 112/17	85/11 111/18 113/20	101/4 107/23 112/17	39/15 52/13 54/3	92/2 92/18 95/18 99/3
129/2	117/15 120/13 120/17	120/14 122/19 125/11	67/15 67/19 67/24	106/4 106/14 107/16
looks [2] 16/11 120/4	121/8 122/1 122/11	131/1 132/17 133/23	68/2 68/5 68/6 68/7	128/6 129/3 135/10
Lord [11] 13/16 34/4	133/17	140/9	68/10 72/7 90/2 90/10	135/18 135/19 135/20
82/11 82/24 127/5	lost [2] 36/3 117/3	malicious [5] 7/12	98/19 112/2 116/8	140/24
127/12 127/24 128/23	lot [1] 98/5	81/17 83/17 138/15	116/21 117/14 121/17	mean [12] 16/13 18/5
129/12 129/17 129/24	lousy [1] 135/20	138/21	123/9 124/10 130/10	19/1 47/5 73/1 88/15
	low [3] 73/10 73/11	manage [1] 114/8	131/22 139/18	96/12 111/9 112/18
129/24	74/11	management [1] 4/23	may [120] 2/8 4/11	115/11 129/2 129/5
Lord Dyson's [1]	lower [5] 55/1 60/6	manager [2] 53/5	4/12 5/9 5/19 12/17	meaning [2] 17/23
129/12	74/17 74/20 75/1	96/6	14/25 17/7 18/1 19/7	51/6
lose [1] 104/19	Ltd [5] 3/1 3/7 3/20	managers [2] 4/4		means [9] 4/4 9/9
	<b>.</b>			
				(53) litigation means

(53) litigation... - means

		45/04 45/00 47/04		<b>[20]</b> 44/00 27/40
Μ	mid-2022 [1] 5/17	15/21 15/23 17/24	68/25 69/1 69/4 69/20	<b>my [32]</b> 11/20 37/19 38/5 48/8 49/2 50/4
means [7] 21/13	midday [1] 120/12	29/16 32/17 36/11 96/20 98/5 106/21	72/10 75/22 80/19 81/19 84/2 85/2 85/5	57/23 58/24 62/22
29/1 96/13 111/10	midnight [3] 65/17 66/3 74/5	112/16 132/3 132/7	86/16 87/10 88/1 92/9	65/23 75/2 79/1
111/11 112/18 124/14	might [24] 44/7 54/13		92/12 92/12 92/24	102/15 106/16 106/16
meant [1] 34/9				
meantime [1] 68/21	55/9 58/6 64/16 64/18	134/20 135/1 135/6	92/25 95/14 96/1 96/2	106/17 111/3 111/24
measure [1] 137/15	70/17 78/2 79/3 79/10	136/4 136/21	96/4 99/3 100/17	112/3 112/7 121/3
mechanism [10]	80/2 80/5 80/17 87/11	moneyboxes [1]	103/9 103/16 105/12	129/18 133/4 134/24
20/20 32/6 33/4 33/10	102/19 121/14 127/22	134/25	105/13 116/15 116/19	134/24 134/25 135/9
57/14 80/14 89/20	128/3 129/14 129/17	monies [1] 97/25	119/5 120/10 120/18	135/17 136/14 139/21
89/24 89/25 109/3	133/20 137/10 139/6	monitored [1] 100/16	123/8 123/13 124/22	140/14 140/24
mechanisms [5] 37/8	140/10 mildly [2] 27/17 28/8	monitors [1] 103/5	128/2 128/2 140/8 142/2 142/4 142/5	myself [1] 87/13
85/14 87/8 109/3	mildly [2] 37/17 38/8	month [1] 82/14		Ν
126/6	million [12] 6/22 6/22 6/25 7/18 7/18 13/3	months [4] 26/1 26/14 27/2 108/13	Mr Alan [1] 6/1 Mr Beer [1] 72/10	nail [1] 103/15
Media [1] 110/23	35/8 99/15 110/17	more [30] 2/11 12/3	Mr Jacobs [1] 96/4	name [2] 15/17 105/4
mediation [10] 3/7	111/20 117/3 126/15	16/16 16/20 17/9	Mr Justice [1] 103/9	named [1] 91/21
3/10 3/15 3/22 28/16	mind [4] 37/19 38/5	31/25 50/18 57/16	Mr Mertens [2] 3/2	namely [1] 18/21
83/9 86/13 91/16	65/9 140/14	59/8 64/16 64/18	92/9	National [1] 67/12
114/21 114/23	Minister [13] 11/3	70/11 73/5 74/19	Mr Racaldin [1] 68/2	naturally [3] 37/1
medical [4] 27/16	11/10 12/4 12/20	79/10 79/11 82/9	Mr Read [1] 67/23	46/18 128/9
44/17 72/15 121/12	13/13 34/3 35/6 35/18		Mr Recaldin [1] 68/5	nature [4] 20/3 27/22
meet [2] 42/3 110/6	91/7 98/10 137/19	92/14 95/20 106/18	Mr Sethi [1] 69/4	129/5 130/3
meeting [9] 28/16	137/23 138/8	110/13 113/15 133/25	Mr Stein [5] 92/12	nearly [1] 108/13
62/20 63/23 123/7	Minister's [4] 108/15	134/14 140/2 140/2	96/1 99/3 100/17	necessarily [5] 46/7
123/11 123/14 123/15	118/19 138/16 138/22	140/5	140/8	47/19 63/20 116/24
123/18 124/23	Ministerial [1] 119/18		Mr Stein QC [1] 3/3	124/20
meetings [3] 67/6	Ministers [2] 111/19	59/20	<b>Ms [29]</b> 3/1 38/15	necessary [12] 24/8
67/7 67/9	126/15	morning [8] 1/3 38/16	38/24 39/9 39/10 47/3	28/11 30/15 54/12
member [2] 98/16	minutes [3] 38/19	41/17 101/2 102/16	57/10 64/20 79/2	59/13 62/20 68/11
126/3	79/3 92/11	120/4 130/11 130/13	87/10 92/7 112/22	70/19 76/1 86/20
member's [1] 49/12	miscarriage [1]	mortality [1] 117/17	114/19 117/2 117/9	112/5 119/22
members [11] 4/13 12/9 13/1 13/9 43/13	105/21	mortgages [1] 4/24	117/24 119/5 120/11	need [33] 21/23 42/23
49/9 49/17 98/14	misleading [3] 51/11	most [5] 7/24 46/2	121/22 122/21 123/6	61/23 64/15 66/13
116/3 116/4 137/22	51/14 83/22	58/4 94/10 114/11	123/7 123/15 126/11	71/13 76/12 79/13
men [1] 32/22	misled [1] 84/22	mother [1] 106/20	126/11 128/6 133/22	87/18 92/13 95/7
mental [4] 44/9 45/4	misreporting [1] 1/10	move [10] 41/18 49/5	136/13 142/3	107/10 108/1 110/1
104/7 121/12	missed [3] 17/22 18/4	56/8 59/3 65/2 70/21	Ms Elliott [2] 123/7	110/9 110/10 112/2
mention [1] 123/5	48/19	75/14 78/20 111/5	136/13	113/9 113/9 113/14
mentioned [4] 31/10	misunderstand [1]	113/10	Ms Gallafent [8] 3/1	116/12 125/10 127/19
32/16 79/17 135/23	48/25	moved [2] 12/3 67/22	57/10 79/2 119/5	127/19 127/19 131/7
mentioning [2] 20/10	misunderstanding [1]	•	121/22 122/21 128/6	131/14 131/20 133/6
20/11	37/19	85/14 102/12 124/9	133/22	136/1 139/17 139/17
merits [2] 33/15	misunderstood [1]	125/2 128/18	much [16] 1/6 2/19	139/23
33/17	63/22	<b>MP [2]</b> 11/3 12/5	9/4 15/20 16/1 38/14	needed [4] 1/21 5/8
Mertens [6] 3/2 92/9	mitigation [2] 24/2	Mr [69] 2/3 2/17 2/18	42/8 73/5 95/25 97/25	54/2 132/3
92/24 92/25 95/14	28/5	2/23 3/2 3/3 6/1 8/23	116/22 122/1 134/17	needs [7] 68/12 100/9
142/4	Moderately [1] 9/1	12/21 26/17 34/3 34/7	134/19 135/6 140/23	113/8 128/21 128/21
methodology [1] 13/7	moment [6] 8/21	37/18 41/17 41/20	mummy [1] 135/3	133/25 134/2
microphone [1] 75/3	17/15 22/9 38/17	41/25 42/6 51/1 52/2	must [6] 8/12 28/9	negligence [1] 103/23
mid [1] 5/17	114/18 121/15	56/10 61/3 65/25	42/4 55/7 81/14	negotiated [2] 83/13 84/24
••	money [21] 4/24	66/11 67/23 68/2 68/5	125/12	04/24
	l	l	L,	54) means - negotiater

(54) means... - negotiated

	1	1	1	
N	113/3 113/3 113/3	87/19 92/3 105/10	obliged [2] 70/6	80/10 117/1 117/4
negotiating [1] 89/3	115/4 115/5 115/24	111/23	124/12	offers [31] 22/8 26/2
negotiations [8]	122/2 122/6 125/4	notice [1] 140/11	obscure [1] 26/15	26/9 27/11 30/21
11/16 36/8 80/24	125/18 129/19 130/14	notified [1] 113/3	observation [1] 58/25	45/23 46/10 46/23
81/21 82/20 87/2	133/12 136/8 140/5	noting [1] 42/4	obtain [14] 4/5 27/6	59/10 60/6 65/21 66/8
89/10 131/19	non [22] 2/21 9/9	novel [1] 30/1	32/8 42/16 44/8 44/22	73/3 74/1 74/6 74/8
	12/10 12/13 13/15	November [8] 8/19	44/23 62/24 63/14	74/12 74/16 74/20
neither [5] 91/7 91/7	16/14 19/1 33/21	9/11 25/3 25/20 56/12	72/3 77/23 80/9 86/24	74/22 76/25 77/11
91/9 105/15 116/13	33/25 34/1 41/24 42/2	56/20 104/15 105/23	109/6	77/13 80/5 86/19
neural [1] 87/6	67/14 81/20 82/4 83/2	November 2020 [3]	obtained [5] 27/17	117/7 117/12 117/18
neutral [6] 13/16	93/21 97/8 98/14	8/19 9/11 25/3	43/21 44/1 59/23	117/18 117/23 117/25
33/24 82/5 82/18	115/19 137/23 138/3	now [59] 2/13 7/16	61/19	office [219]
82/24 86/13	non-binding [2] 33/25		obtaining [1] 45/3	Office's [11] 43/21
never [8] 18/5 98/6	34/1	41/12 44/20 45/17	obvious [3] 84/14	45/17 59/23 76/10
104/3 105/22 132/24	non-eligible [1] 9/9	51/17 53/11 56/25	89/8 132/23	76/19 100/11 116/2
135/11 136/5 136/18	non-executive [1]	64/3 65/15 66/3 67/5	obviously [9] 19/2	121/24 132/22 136/23
nevertheless [10]	93/21	73/4 78/20 78/25 88/8	54/15 66/11 70/23	139/16
44/18 44/23 45/5	non-exhaustive [2]	92/17 93/12 94/4	72/24 86/10 98/10	officer [2] 67/23
49/16 56/23 95/6	42/2 115/19	94/12 95/11 97/22	107/18 140/6	105/3
101/5 101/25 103/13	non-financial [3]	99/5 102/8 108/5	occasion [8] 39/5	offices [3] 102/4
125/10	16/14 19/1 41/24	110/7 111/7 111/9	64/25 110/5 110/12	103/21 104/1
new [3] 35/9 110/17	non-GLO [5] 12/10	111/12 112/15 113/5	112/5 128/18 139/24	official [4] 68/20
126/4	12/13 98/14 137/23	113/8 113/9 114/14	140/10	93/19 114/22 136/11
news [3] 111/19	138/3	115/23 119/12 120/7	occasional [1] 8/23	often [2] 10/22 17/23
111/22 119/13	non-payment [1] 2/21	123/4 123/10 124/2	occasions [1] 77/16	Okay [1] 100/25
next [26] 1/11 1/25	non-pecuniary [5]	124/6 124/22 125/6	occur [1] 4/8	old [7] 30/19 31/1
4/8 5/5 9/21 12/4 19/7	13/15 33/21 81/20	127/17 128/17 130/9	occurred [2] 10/17	39/3 76/5 106/20
38/15 39/25 64/25	82/4 83/2	130/14 130/18 130/20	116/21	107/4 107/11
84/19 90/3 90/5 90/9	non-renewal [1]	131/16 132/3 134/6	occurs [2] 140/17	once [5] 38/11 61/15
92/9 94/13 106/8	67/14	136/1 136/6 140/1	140/18	78/16 97/4 112/19
110/5 110/12 111/22	non-statutory [1]	140/15	October [1] 51/17	one [37] 1/4 2/4 9/9
112/5 127/17 128/18	97/8	number [30] 4/12	off [6] 59/3 112/15	16/11 16/19 16/21
139/24 140/10 141/3	none [2] 7/4 8/5	8/11 13/14 20/23 24/6	134/10 134/21 136/17	18/9 23/1 36/9 39/5
night [14] 26/6 28/24	nonetheless [2]	25/22 26/9 33/20 37/4	138/9	42/13 43/14 43/14
34/4 34/8 34/10 34/14	21/18 115/9	38/25 46/10 49/15	offence [1] 136/2	43/15 57/15 57/23
64/21 65/15 66/1	nor [7] 23/15 91/8	53/8 54/16 56/24 62/2	offences [2] 4/19 9/18	
66/12 85/24 102/15	105/15 110/23 116/13	65/19 69/8 71/6 71/7	offer [48] 6/16 22/15	85/1 93/16 96/24 98/7
102/18 130/13	116/24 137/18	71/18 74/25 77/15	22/16 30/12 30/16	98/14 98/16 101/19
no [60] 2/4 10/15 19/7	norm [1] 30/2	77/18 80/25 82/2	31/17 44/19 45/6 46/6	102/3 102/10 102/14
23/9 23/10 23/10	not [193]	116/17 117/11 121/2	54/1 54/4 54/6 55/18	103/16 103/18 109/16
27/15 28/13 29/4 33/4	note [24] 42/21 43/23		56/1 56/4 60/6 61/8	123/1 127/13 130/10
33/13 34/9 34/13	44/7 48/20 49/24	numbers [2] 26/15	62/17 62/19 65/20	130/22
35/10 37/19 41/8	53/25 65/8 65/15	56/20	67/1 68/22 70/20 71/1	ones [3] 17/7 69/8
42/10 42/15 44/1	65/22 66/7 66/18 69/7		71/2 72/12 72/14 74/2	73/10
45/14 59/17 60/4 63/4	71/15 72/10 75/4	0	75/13 75/20 75/20	ongoing [3] 95/7
67/16 68/4 69/13 71/4	78/22 83/15 84/2	o'clock [1] 2/9	75/23 76/2 76/14	106/13 127/4
73/18 74/14 79/6	85/25 99/6 110/7	obfuscation [4] 98/18	76/17 77/6 77/15	only [18] 16/3 16/4
79/20 79/24 80/8	124/12 130/16 134/8	105/5 130/6 137/1	77/16 77/24 77/24	21/25 27/2 29/16
80/21 83/5 87/18	noted [4] 30/10 32/21	object [1] 95/15	79/18 79/18 80/3	31/14 37/1 38/12
88/23 89/5 91/24	51/1 56/13	objective [1] 93/23	90/11 122/14 123/10	39/19 53/3 55/7 79/14
92/14 108/16 108/19	notes [2] 70/13 95/4	obligation [1] 48/21	123/24 136/11	81/4 99/7 122/12
110/8 111/14 111/22	nothing [6] 36/8 42/9	obligations [1] 47/18	offered [5] 5/3 59/17	123/24 133/4 140/5
		l		(55) negotiating - only

(55) negotiating - only

0	27/15 28/1 29/9 29/23	31/11 34/24 38/5	126/23	59/14 59/18 59/20
·	31/4 36/3 36/10 39/23	39/15 42/9 42/17 48/6	owed [1] 88/12	60/3 60/5 62/9 62/14
onus [2] 101/21	40/9 40/14 42/12	48/9 48/15 51/13	owing [2] 15/24 18/20	63/12 72/2 72/5 78/12
101/22	46/16 49/20 50/15	52/19 62/25 65/4	own [10] 40/18 54/13	78/15 118/12
onwards [1] 134/8	50/18 56/8 59/25	65/18 65/20 68/13	59/9 110/24 111/8	Panel's [9] 22/20 23/3
open [19] 2/3 24/18	61/16 61/17 61/18	71/14 72/10 73/7	121/11 132/24 134/25	43/22 44/13 46/5 55/6
25/1 43/24 50/9 58/25	61/18 63/9 67/11 70/7	83/25 87/14 88/19	135/6 135/10	59/24 60/23 118/14
59/22 64/12 82/9 84/4	72/22 73/14 76/18	90/16 91/22 94/23		
87/7 105/17 127/19		97/18 98/23 99/9	owned [4] 98/21	papers [2] 35/23 101/23
128/1 129/16 133/23	77/12 78/24 81/1		103/24 136/14 139/17	
133/24 134/3 136/10	83/10 87/8 87/9 87/21	100/14 101/6 101/8	owns [1] 137/19	paperwork [2] 54/20
opening [4] 40/2	87/24 87/24 90/8	102/24 104/17 106/20	Р	114/12
68/25 84/3 88/1	91/16 92/5 95/12	106/23 108/3 108/7	<b>p.m [1]</b> 106/22	paragraph [30] 12/7
openly [1] 125/7	97/17 101/11 107/18	108/22 108/24 110/1		16/11 16/15 16/19
openness [1] 37/12	123/23 124/24 125/4	111/23 111/24 113/10	pace [2] 59/1 124/9	21/2 21/3 24/23 31/8
operate [1] 28/19	129/15 138/9	113/18 114/17 118/16	package [4] 110/18 111/20 112/9 126/16	36/19 42/22 43/21
operated [4] 10/25	others [11] 49/9	120/1 120/24 121/5		52/15 59/24 61/13
18/2 88/7 103/24	49/17 76/8 93/10	121/14 122/23 127/10	page [31] 9/6 9/24	61/14 63/7 71/14 91/2
operating [4] 20/19	94/17 95/15 112/4	128/4 128/7 130/3	9/24 11/10 14/24	109/12 115/23 117/5
24/4 29/14 103/11	128/1 133/5 133/15	131/22 132/4 133/20	16/10 18/16 19/9	117/16 118/6 120/18
operation [9] 4/14 5/1	140/6	135/6 138/24 138/25	19/11 19/11 21/2	120/19 120/19 120/20
14/10 14/20 17/9	otherwise [8] 75/9	139/7 139/11 140/6	22/13 24/23 25/25	130/17 130/20 131/17
20/22 23/8 31/8 95/8	98/5 102/19 116/7	140/20	25/25 30/9 31/9 31/10	paragraph 6 [2] 61/14
opportunity [11]	121/5 122/7 125/25	outcome [16] 14/7	36/18 43/23 52/15	63/7
16/23 39/12 40/13	127/22	22/6 31/15 34/1 62/7	61/13 65/24 65/24	paragraphs [5] 11/9
63/8 93/2 93/4 95/13	ought [5] 5/5 23/23	62/7 62/25 63/1 63/10	66/18 67/2 120/9	16/20 108/24 109/17
110/21 121/19 140/17	29/25 30/25 31/22	70/10 82/6 82/15	120/19 120/20 121/14	109/17
140/21	ounce [1] 107/13	83/13 83/14 100/13	134/8	Parliament [5] 9/19
	our [53] 3/17 12/6	118/13	page 290 [1] 31/9	10/5 100/0 107/0
TODOSED 171 /0/17		110/10		12/5 129/9 137/3
opposed [2] 26/12	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18	outcomes [1] 55/10	page 302 [1] 65/24	137/20
74/3		outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10
74/3 option [1] 86/10	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15	137/20 <b>part [20]</b> 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166]	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22	137/20 <b>part [20]</b> 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8 orders [1] 85/10	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4 106/9 106/13 107/9 108/7 110/4 111/2 111/9 113/5 113/18	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7 over [16] 1/21 2/2	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20 25/7	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20 3/3 5/14 11/24 12/16
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8 orders [1] 85/10 ordinary [3] 79/25	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4 106/9 106/13 107/9 108/7 110/4 111/2	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7 over [16] 1/21 2/2 6/25 31/4 31/7 65/24	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20 25/7 panel [52] 14/14 16/7	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20 3/3 5/14 11/24 12/16 13/17 14/5 15/7 24/15
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8 orders [1] 85/10 ordinary [3] 79/25 80/1 81/15	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4 106/9 106/13 107/9 108/7 110/4 111/2 111/9 113/5 113/18	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7 over [16] 1/21 2/2 6/25 31/4 31/7 65/24 74/12 77/1 79/14	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20 25/7 panel [52] 14/14 16/7 16/12 22/13 22/15	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20 3/3 5/14 11/24 12/16 13/17 14/5 15/7 24/15 34/20 37/7 42/12
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8 orders [1] 85/10 ordinary [3] 79/25 80/1 81/15 organisation [2]	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4 106/9 106/13 107/9 108/7 110/4 111/2 111/9 113/5 113/18 113/19 115/5 115/14	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7 over [16] 1/21 2/2 6/25 31/4 31/7 65/24 74/12 77/1 79/14 86/18 91/13 92/1	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20 25/7 panel [52] 14/14 16/7 16/12 22/13 22/15 22/18 22/24 23/2 23/5	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20 3/3 5/14 11/24 12/16 13/17 14/5 15/7 24/15 34/20 37/7 42/12 50/15 50/18 67/11
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8 orders [1] 85/10 ordinary [3] 79/25 80/1 81/15 organisation [2] 37/12 104/8	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4 106/9 106/13 107/9 108/7 110/4 111/2 111/9 113/5 113/18 113/19 115/5 115/14 119/8 122/3 126/5	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7 over [16] 1/21 2/2 6/25 31/4 31/7 65/24 74/12 77/1 79/14 86/18 91/13 92/1 97/25 98/6 101/24	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20 25/7 panel [52] 14/14 16/7 16/12 22/13 22/15 22/18 22/24 23/2 23/5 23/17 23/19 23/24	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20 3/3 5/14 11/24 12/16 13/17 14/5 15/7 24/15 34/20 37/7 42/12 50/15 50/18 67/11 81/1 87/22 90/8 94/15
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8 orders [1] 85/10 ordinary [3] 79/25 80/1 81/15 organisation [2] 37/12 104/8 organisations [1]	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4 106/9 106/13 107/9 108/7 110/4 111/2 111/9 113/5 113/18 113/19 115/5 115/14 119/8 122/3 126/5 127/7 127/18 127/21	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7 over [16] 1/21 2/2 6/25 31/4 31/7 65/24 74/12 77/1 79/14 86/18 91/13 92/1 97/25 98/6 101/24 117/3	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20 25/7 panel [52] 14/14 16/7 16/12 22/13 22/15 22/18 22/24 23/2 23/5 23/17 23/19 23/24 28/21 28/22 41/7	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20 3/3 5/14 11/24 12/16 13/17 14/5 15/7 24/15 34/20 37/7 42/12 50/15 50/18 67/11 81/1 87/22 90/8 94/15 95/9 96/7 107/17
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8 orders [1] 85/10 ordinary [3] 79/25 80/1 81/15 organisation [2] 37/12 104/8 organisations [1] 40/14	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4 106/9 106/13 107/9 108/7 110/4 111/2 111/9 113/5 113/18 113/19 115/5 115/14 119/8 122/3 126/5 127/7 127/18 127/21 133/1 137/5 137/17 139/4 ours [1] 124/7	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7 over [16] 1/21 2/2 6/25 31/4 31/7 65/24 74/12 77/1 79/14 86/18 91/13 92/1 97/25 98/6 101/24 117/3 overall [5] 46/6 46/22	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20 25/7 panel [52] 14/14 16/7 16/12 22/13 22/15 22/18 22/24 23/2 23/5 23/17 23/19 23/24 28/21 28/22 41/7 41/21 43/14 43/18	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20 3/3 5/14 11/24 12/16 13/17 14/5 15/7 24/15 34/20 37/7 42/12 50/15 50/18 67/11 81/1 87/22 90/8 94/15 95/9 96/7 107/17 112/3 128/4
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8 orders [1] 85/10 ordinary [3] 79/25 80/1 81/15 organisation [2] 37/12 104/8 organisations [1] 40/14 organizing [1] 28/3	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4 106/9 106/13 107/9 108/7 110/4 111/2 111/9 113/5 113/18 113/19 115/5 115/14 119/8 122/3 126/5 127/7 127/18 127/21 133/1 137/5 137/17 139/4	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7 over [16] 1/21 2/2 6/25 31/4 31/7 65/24 74/12 77/1 79/14 86/18 91/13 92/1 97/25 98/6 101/24 117/3 overall [5] 46/6 46/22 56/4 77/15 80/8	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20 25/7 panel [52] 14/14 16/7 16/12 22/13 22/15 22/18 22/24 23/2 23/5 23/17 23/19 23/24 28/21 28/22 41/7 41/21 43/14 43/18 44/1 44/7 44/18 44/19	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20 3/3 5/14 11/24 12/16 13/17 14/5 15/7 24/15 34/20 37/7 42/12 50/15 50/18 67/11 81/1 87/22 90/8 94/15 95/9 96/7 107/17 112/3 128/4 participate [1] 93/9
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8 orders [1] 85/10 ordinary [3] 79/25 80/1 81/15 organisation [2] 37/12 104/8 organisations [1] 40/14 organizing [1] 28/3 originally [1] 3/12	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4 106/9 106/13 107/9 108/7 110/4 111/2 111/9 113/5 113/18 113/19 115/5 115/14 119/8 122/3 126/5 127/7 127/18 127/21 133/1 137/5 137/17 139/4 ours [1] 124/7	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7 over [16] 1/21 2/2 6/25 31/4 31/7 65/24 74/12 77/1 79/14 86/18 91/13 92/1 97/25 98/6 101/24 117/3 overall [5] 46/6 46/22 56/4 77/15 80/8 overlaps [1] 85/16	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20 25/7 panel [52] 14/14 16/7 16/12 22/13 22/15 22/18 22/24 23/2 23/5 23/17 23/19 23/24 28/21 28/22 41/7 41/21 43/14 43/18 44/1 44/7 44/18 44/19 44/24 45/5 46/3 46/22	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20 3/3 5/14 11/24 12/16 13/17 14/5 15/7 24/15 34/20 37/7 42/12 50/15 50/18 67/11 81/1 87/22 90/8 94/15 95/9 96/7 107/17 112/3 128/4 participate [1] 93/9 participating [1]
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8 orders [1] 85/10 ordinary [3] 79/25 80/1 81/15 organisation [2] 37/12 104/8 organisations [1] 40/14 organizing [1] 28/3 originally [1] 3/12 other [61] 3/6 3/14	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4 106/9 106/13 107/9 108/7 110/4 111/2 111/9 113/5 113/18 113/19 115/5 115/14 119/8 122/3 126/5 127/7 127/18 127/21 133/1 137/5 137/17 139/4 ours [1] 124/7 ourselves [3] 40/25	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7 over [16] 1/21 2/2 6/25 31/4 31/7 65/24 74/12 77/1 79/14 86/18 91/13 92/1 97/25 98/6 101/24 117/3 overall [5] 46/6 46/22 56/4 77/15 80/8 overlaps [1] 85/16 overly [2] 53/21 55/10	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20 25/7 panel [52] 14/14 16/7 16/12 22/13 22/15 22/18 22/24 23/2 23/5 23/17 23/19 23/24 28/21 28/22 41/7 41/21 43/14 43/18 44/1 44/7 44/18 44/19 44/24 45/5 46/3 46/22 48/10 49/10 49/16	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20 3/3 5/14 11/24 12/16 13/17 14/5 15/7 24/15 34/20 37/7 42/12 50/15 50/18 67/11 81/1 87/22 90/8 94/15 95/9 96/7 107/17 112/3 128/4 participate [1] 93/9 participating [1] 119/16
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8 orders [1] 85/10 ordinary [3] 79/25 80/1 81/15 organisation [2] 37/12 104/8 organisations [1] 40/14 organizing [1] 28/3 originally [1] 3/12 other [61] 3/6 3/14 6/1 6/7 7/1 7/1 7/23	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4 106/9 106/13 107/9 108/7 110/4 111/2 111/9 113/5 113/18 113/19 115/5 115/14 119/8 122/3 126/5 127/7 127/18 127/21 133/1 137/5 137/17 139/4 ours [1] 124/7 ourselves [3] 40/25 81/10 122/4	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7 over [16] 1/21 2/2 6/25 31/4 31/7 65/24 74/12 77/1 79/14 86/18 91/13 92/1 97/25 98/6 101/24 117/3 overall [5] 46/6 46/22 56/4 77/15 80/8 overlaps [1] 85/16 overly [2] 53/21 55/10	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20 25/7 panel [52] 14/14 16/7 16/12 22/13 22/15 22/18 22/24 23/2 23/5 23/17 23/19 23/24 28/21 28/22 41/7 41/21 43/14 43/18 44/1 44/7 44/18 44/19 44/24 45/5 46/3 46/22 48/10 49/10 49/16 49/24 52/8 52/9 52/13	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20 3/3 5/14 11/24 12/16 13/17 14/5 15/7 24/15 34/20 37/7 42/12 50/15 50/18 67/11 81/1 87/22 90/8 94/15 95/9 96/7 107/17 112/3 128/4 participate [1] 93/9 participating [1] 119/16 participation [1]
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8 orders [1] 85/10 ordinary [3] 79/25 80/1 81/15 organisation [2] 37/12 104/8 organisations [1] 40/14 organizing [1] 28/3 originally [1] 3/12 other [61] 3/6 3/14 6/1 6/7 7/1 7/1 7/23 17/15 18/20 19/20	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4 106/9 106/13 107/9 108/7 110/4 111/2 111/9 113/5 113/18 113/19 115/5 115/14 119/8 122/3 126/5 127/7 127/18 127/21 133/1 137/5 137/17 139/4 ours [1] 124/7 ourselves [3] 40/25 81/10 122/4 out [77] 6/7 7/10	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7 over [16] 1/21 2/2 6/25 31/4 31/7 65/24 74/12 77/1 79/14 86/18 91/13 92/1 97/25 98/6 101/24 117/3 overall [5] 46/6 46/22 56/4 77/15 80/8 overlaps [1] 85/16 overly [2] 53/21 55/10 oversight [4] 11/22 93/17 94/20 128/21	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20 25/7 panel [52] 14/14 16/7 16/12 22/13 22/15 22/18 22/24 23/2 23/5 23/17 23/19 23/24 28/21 28/22 41/7 41/21 43/14 43/18 44/1 44/7 44/18 44/19 44/24 45/5 46/3 46/22 48/10 49/10 49/16 49/24 52/8 52/9 52/13 52/22 54/25 55/16	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20 3/3 5/14 11/24 12/16 13/17 14/5 15/7 24/15 34/20 37/7 42/12 50/15 50/18 67/11 81/1 87/22 90/8 94/15 95/9 96/7 107/17 112/3 128/4 participate [1] 93/9 participating [1] 119/16 participation [1] 13/11
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8 orders [1] 85/10 ordinary [3] 79/25 80/1 81/15 organisation [2] 37/12 104/8 organisations [1] 40/14 organizing [1] 28/3 originally [1] 3/12 other [61] 3/6 3/14 6/1 6/7 7/1 7/1 7/23	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4 106/9 106/13 107/9 108/7 110/4 111/2 111/9 113/5 113/18 113/19 115/5 115/14 119/8 122/3 126/5 127/7 127/18 127/21 133/1 137/5 137/17 139/4 ours [1] 124/7 ourselves [3] 40/25 81/10 122/4 out [77] 6/7 7/10 12/23 13/18 15/8	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outside [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7 over [16] 1/21 2/2 6/25 31/4 31/7 65/24 74/12 77/1 79/14 86/18 91/13 92/1 97/25 98/6 101/24 117/3 overall [5] 46/6 46/22 56/4 77/15 80/8 overlaps [1] 85/16 overlaps [1] 85/16 overlaps [1] 85/10 oversight [4] 11/22 93/17 94/20 128/21 overtaken [1] 35/5	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20 25/7 panel [52] 14/14 16/7 16/12 22/13 22/15 22/18 22/24 23/2 23/5 23/17 23/19 23/24 28/21 28/22 41/7 41/21 43/14 43/18 44/1 44/7 44/18 44/19 44/24 45/5 46/3 46/22 48/10 49/10 49/16 49/24 52/8 52/9 52/13	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20 3/3 5/14 11/24 12/16 13/17 14/5 15/7 24/15 34/20 37/7 42/12 50/15 50/18 67/11 81/1 87/22 90/8 94/15 95/9 96/7 107/17 112/3 128/4 participate [1] 93/9 participating [1] 119/16 participation [1] 13/11 particular [44] 3/18
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8 orders [1] 85/10 ordinary [3] 79/25 80/1 81/15 organisation [2] 37/12 104/8 organisations [1] 40/14 organizing [1] 28/3 originally [1] 3/12 other [61] 3/6 3/14 6/1 6/7 7/1 7/1 7/23 17/15 18/20 19/20	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4 106/9 106/13 107/9 108/7 110/4 111/2 111/9 113/5 113/18 113/19 115/5 115/14 119/8 122/3 126/5 127/7 127/18 127/21 133/1 137/5 137/17 139/4 ours [1] 124/7 ourselves [3] 40/25 81/10 122/4 out [77] 6/7 7/10 12/23 13/18 15/8 17/25 18/4 19/15	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7 over [16] 1/21 2/2 6/25 31/4 31/7 65/24 74/12 77/1 79/14 86/18 91/13 92/1 97/25 98/6 101/24 117/3 overall [5] 46/6 46/22 56/4 77/15 80/8 overlaps [1] 85/16 overly [2] 53/21 55/10 oversight [4] 11/22 93/17 94/20 128/21 overtaken [1] 35/5 overturned [5] 10/14	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20 25/7 panel [52] 14/14 16/7 16/12 22/13 22/15 22/18 22/24 23/2 23/5 23/17 23/19 23/24 28/21 28/22 41/7 41/21 43/14 43/18 44/1 44/7 44/18 44/19 44/24 45/5 46/3 46/22 48/10 49/10 49/16 49/24 52/8 52/9 52/13 52/22 54/25 55/16	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20 3/3 5/14 11/24 12/16 13/17 14/5 15/7 24/15 34/20 37/7 42/12 50/15 50/18 67/11 81/1 87/22 90/8 94/15 95/9 96/7 107/17 112/3 128/4 participate [1] 93/9 participating [1] 119/16 participation [1] 13/11 particular [44] 3/18 22/19 22/25 23/2 23/7
74/3 option [1] 86/10 or [166] oral [8] 1/14 1/16 2/24 5/12 39/13 39/15 97/5 119/25 order [10] 25/4 36/23 37/22 43/19 51/6 62/16 78/15 82/1 133/8 139/8 orders [1] 85/10 ordinary [3] 79/25 80/1 81/15 organisation [2] 37/12 104/8 organisations [1] 40/14 organizing [1] 28/3 originally [1] 3/12 other [61] 3/6 3/14 6/1 6/7 7/1 7/1 7/23 17/15 18/20 19/20	39/1 40/5 40/7 40/18 49/22 50/14 52/19 56/13 57/13 65/7 68/14 71/14 72/10 77/8 85/16 85/24 86/24 87/18 87/22 92/4 93/16 96/8 96/9 96/10 96/24 97/10 101/13 105/7 106/4 106/9 106/13 107/9 108/7 110/4 111/2 111/9 113/5 113/18 113/19 115/5 115/14 119/8 122/3 126/5 127/7 127/18 127/21 133/1 137/5 137/17 139/4 ours [1] 124/7 ourselves [3] 40/25 81/10 122/4 out [77] 6/7 7/10 12/23 13/18 15/8 17/25 18/4 19/15	outcomes [1] 55/10 outline [1] 12/2 outset [4] 31/23 39/12 90/1 132/2 outside [2] 23/17 39/6 outstanding [3] 3/24 24/16 99/13 outweigh [1] 89/11 Oval [1] 2/7 over [16] 1/21 2/2 6/25 31/4 31/7 65/24 74/12 77/1 79/14 86/18 91/13 92/1 97/25 98/6 101/24 117/3 overall [5] 46/6 46/22 56/4 77/15 80/8 overlaps [1] 85/16 overly [2] 53/21 55/10 oversight [4] 11/22 93/17 94/20 128/21 overtaken [1] 35/5 overturned [5] 10/14	page 302 [1] 65/24 pages [3] 16/21 65/23 121/15 paid [17] 6/25 9/17 10/13 13/22 15/22 27/12 27/14 29/16 29/17 36/2 36/11 70/15 72/12 97/25 98/6 105/20 131/10 Palmer [1] 126/11 pandemic [2] 24/20 25/7 panel [52] 14/14 16/7 16/12 22/13 22/15 22/18 22/24 23/2 23/5 23/17 23/19 23/24 28/21 28/22 41/7 41/21 43/14 43/18 44/1 44/7 44/18 44/19 44/24 45/5 46/3 46/22 48/10 49/10 49/16 49/24 52/8 52/9 52/13 52/22 54/25 55/16	137/20 part [20] 7/6 8/10 12/6 13/10 21/19 36/10 52/8 57/14 58/13 60/25 76/24 87/1 96/14 98/1 99/1 115/10 118/23 119/16 129/13 131/18 participants [24] 2/20 3/3 5/14 11/24 12/16 13/17 14/5 15/7 24/15 34/20 37/7 42/12 50/15 50/18 67/11 81/1 87/22 90/8 94/15 95/9 96/7 107/17 112/3 128/4 participate [1] 93/9 participating [1] 119/16 participation [1] 13/11 particular [44] 3/18 22/19 22/25 23/2 23/7

(56) onus - particular

Р	35/9 35/11 76/9 76/13	26/8 26/10 26/11	90/9 103/20	93/18 94/16 114/15
particular [36] 35/5	76/15 78/2 78/11	26/13 27/2 30/22	piecemeal [1] 76/24	119/18 122/15
38/3 38/8 40/1 40/23	80/22 85/22 86/25	54/21 55/8 55/8 65/21	pieces [1] 62/11	POL's [1] 46/16
41/5 41/18 41/20	87/5 91/5 91/13 99/16	66/9 66/20 66/22	place [13] 22/10 36/9	police [1] 105/3
45/23 47/23 48/1	99/24 118/18 124/16	66/25 67/4 77/2 77/6	37/8 39/25 67/6 89/10	polite [1] 34/23
48/13 50/19 52/14	130/24 131/7 132/6	117/7 120/1 120/5	93/18 98/9 104/12	pondered [1] 38/6
53/15 54/25 55/4	payments [65] 6/21	perceive [1] 48/17	114/14 132/13 134/9	pondering [1] 57/9
61/12 67/10 70/18	9/16 10/6 10/10 11/13	perceived [2] 53/21	139/22	posed [2] 65/3 68/19
72/8 80/3 81/24 86/9	12/25 26/4 26/10	89/11	placed [3] 30/5 60/20	position [36] 17/11
87/5 107/3 110/25	26/11 27/3 28/12 29/3	percentage [2] 66/8	101/25	40/7 43/5 46/13 49/23
113/2 113/10 113/14	29/6 29/19 29/22 30/4	73/23	places [2] 20/24 23/1	57/18 57/19 59/19
118/22 121/10 122/11	30/6 30/11 30/16	percentages [1]	plan [1] 77/3	65/6 67/18 74/5 76/17
127/6 127/16 128/5	30/20 30/22 30/25	73/25	planned [2] 3/12	77/8 78/3 79/21 79/21
particularly [10]	32/5 32/6 32/11 32/15	perform [1] 123/1	116/7	86/4 87/18 87/22
21/23 33/22 45/3	32/19 32/23 32/24	performance [1]	plans [1] 4/23	87/24 88/21 90/20
60/11 69/8 69/18	33/1 35/6 35/7 35/16	103/6	play [2] 81/12 118/23	97/16 102/23 111/13
81/21 89/11 108/9	36/12 66/12 75/15	performed [1] 105/19	played [3] 97/23	122/4 125/23 126/5
110/24	75/16 75/18 75/20	perhaps [9] 16/16	111/21 116/4	126/10 126/24 128/11
parties [6] 61/17 63/8	75/20 75/22 76/2	26/15 42/9 48/18	pleading [1] 55/17	130/10 130/19 131/21
82/16 83/1 83/8	76/18 76/25 78/5	64/24 73/21 75/10	please [13] 14/22	132/13 133/21
128/22	78/18 79/9 79/12 81/8	87/14 123/23	16/9 19/14 20/2 20/24	positions [1] 113/11
	84/8 85/15 86/3 99/12	period [4] 25/20	25/23 39/7 61/23	positive [3] 14/6
partner [2] 105/12 123/8	99/19 109/2 109/4	56/18 67/16 68/4	61/25 99/1 120/9	65/13 66/24
	109/10 109/21 112/19	permission [1] 5/21	120/22 124/12	possesses [3] 31/14
partners [1] 96/25	112/23 122/17 125/16	permit [1] 16/8	pleased [4] 11/11	31/20 31/21
parts [1] 11/9	125/19 130/15 132/2	permutations [1]	12/10 127/10 137/25	possibility [3] 30/7
party [6] 8/6 36/7 49/7 61/15 61/18 64/7	pecuniary [7] 13/15	55/12	pm [3] 92/21 92/23	79/11 127/10
passed [3] 28/20 57/2	33/21 70/2 81/20 82/1	perpetrators [1]	141/4	possible [16] 11/17
102/16	82/23 83/2	115/15	point [45] 5/17 5/23	17/11 47/24 77/21
passing [1] 101/2	peers [4] 12/10 12/14	person [5] 9/17 10/9	18/9 28/17 31/11 40/2	77/23 79/4 83/14
past [8] 5/2 5/6 37/11	137/23 138/3	20/7 28/2 118/22	42/18 43/11 44/12	89/19 90/12 91/17
37/21 38/1 44/8	penalties [2] 16/24	personal [8] 17/1	48/8 50/4 51/18 51/23	93/25 101/5 108/19
101/15 134/5	121/20	30/19 44/15 50/1 50/2	54/8 60/13 61/1 61/1	109/21 111/6 117/21
patience [1] 65/1	pending [1] 29/19	53/17 72/16 76/4	61/7 62/1 62/2 63/5	possibly [1] 134/20
patients [1] 125/15	pennies [1] 135/21	personally [1] 47/6	63/7 63/10 75/13 84/5	post [236]
Paul [3] 11/3 12/4	pension [1] 106/17	persons [8] 40/15	84/16 88/1 88/2 99/14	Post Office [71]
83/19	pensioner [1] 107/15	51/4 51/16 78/7 80/23	99/22 100/2 100/7	99/23 101/14 101/16
pay [12] 27/11 70/12	penury [1] 4/21	90/20 90/25 120/14	100/14 100/18 100/18	101/23 102/7 103/3
71/2 86/18 96/20	people [28] 1/4 10/6	persuading [1] 47/5	100/20 101/21 101/22	103/6 103/10 103/14
106/18 124/15 129/24	28/6 39/1 39/2 48/24	pertaining [1] 56/22	107/23 112/6 113/19	103/21 104/3 104/8
132/16 133/8 136/6	64/20 97/12 102/21	Peter [2] 105/2	127/2 127/16 129/3	104/10 104/25 105/9
137/4	103/24 104/19 107/19	106/19	135/4	106/1 106/12 106/21
payable [1] 91/12	111/15 112/13 112/15	phase [7] 3/13 3/19	points [24] 34/18	107/15 108/8 109/11
paying [2] 72/11	114/3 114/3 114/7	4/7 39/24 40/4 72/17	38/12 39/20 40/6	109/14 111/6 112/7
132/25	117/12 122/10 122/19	95/19	42/11 42/18 50/14	112/10 114/4 114/11
payment [41] 2/21	127/12 131/8 133/12	phase 2 [1] 40/4	50/15 56/8 59/4 67/10	114/14 114/16 114/22
2/21 5/18 7/3 7/19	133/14 133/20 139/6	phase 5 [5] 3/13 3/19	70/16 78/24 87/19	115/21 115/23 116/10
7/22 10/9 10/20 10/22	140/16	4/7 39/24 95/19	90/7 90/18 98/7 98/25	116/23 117/6 117/16
11/4 13/24 15/19 16/1	people's [2] 121/10	phases [1] 114/20	99/10 110/9 110/22	118/3 118/10 118/13
16/8 20/16 27/9 28/13	132/3	phoned [1] 135/5	113/11 113/17 141/1	119/7 120/24 120/25
29/25 30/7 31/2 32/16	per [26] 9/16 10/9	phrase [1] 18/5	POL [10] 47/5 52/4	121/4 121/5 121/9
	21/9 26/4 26/5 26/8	pick [4] 59/3 59/4	58/1 70/10 91/15	122/16 122/25 123/4
				particular Bost Office

(57) particular... - Post Office

Ρ	126/16 129/3 129/22	71/20 73/17 77/19	probably [3] 123/21	66/19 66/20 76/6
Post Office [23]	practically [1] 49/21	79/24	128/2 129/5	82/19 82/22 97/8
124/2 125/14 130/16	practice [4] 10/19	presumptions [2]	probe [1] 87/11	113/7 125/9 129/7
130/23 131/12 131/17	20/20 23/9 24/4	77/18 77/20	problem [6] 47/9	130/15
131/19 131/22 132/5	pre [2] 33/6 75/20	pretty [2] 42/8 59/1	47/12 102/2 102/22	progresses [1]
132/23 133/7 133/16	pre-action [1] 33/6	prevent [1] 10/6	130/7 131/13	103/25
134/1 134/15 136/11	precarious [2] 4/22	previous [7] 26/12	problematic [1]	promise [2] 140/3
136/17 136/20 137/18	133/11	30/10 48/20 67/14	115/20	140/19
137/19 138/19 139/9	precedence [1] 137/9		problems [4] 104/1	prompted [1] 53/5
139/14 139/16	precedential [1]	previously [4] 15/4	116/14 132/4 133/12	promptly [5] 10/22
Post Office's [6]	86/15	15/8 59/16 116/22	procedural [4] 61/5	32/20 89/3 93/24
100/11 116/2 121/24	precedents [2] 100/10 127/11	price [1] 105/21	61/9 69/9 119/10	137/4
132/22 136/23 139/16		prices [1] 106/23	procedure [4] 28/14	pronounce [1] 129/17
post offices [2] 102/4	precisely [1] 64/15 precision [1] 74/13	prima [1] 83/20	60/3 109/8 119/20	proof [7] 21/4 21/6 21/17 101/21 101/22
104/1	precluded [1] 50/8	primarily [2] 40/8 48/21	procedures [5] 8/15 29/19 32/10 87/3	101/25 115/8
posting [1] 52/1	predate [1] 52/3	primary [1] 127/7	109/8	proper [1] 100/5
postmaster [13]	predating [1] 90/22	principal [1] 94/13	proceed [3] 34/2 97/6	properly [7] 3/9 3/20
10/10 21/6 21/25	predicated [1] 81/2	principle [22] 15/19	126/25	20/21 28/10 125/12
22/16 22/22 31/18	predicted [1] 92/13	15/25 16/18 17/3 17/7	proceeded [1] 6/3	132/11 136/25
43/3 44/19 45/21	prefer [2] 66/4 78/24	17/24 20/23 22/11	proceeding [1] 35/1	property [2] 16/23
52/12 77/23 85/22	preferable [1] 79/3	23/13 41/4 41/11	proceedings [9] 2/3	121/18
115/7	preferably [1] 114/1	46/14 47/22 47/23	4/16 5/20 6/10 43/5	proportion [2] 7/21
postmaster's [2]	prejudice [7] 63/18	47/25 48/2 48/7 58/11	50/10 84/23 91/18	29/3
21/24 87/1	80/24 82/9 82/19	58/14 77/23 80/3 80/6	103/14	proportionate [1]
postmasters [31]	88/21 123/16 123/17	principles [40] 8/12	process [35] 11/23	61/20
11/13 11/19 12/2 18/18 22/1 22/6 56/18	preliminary [2] 12/18	14/17 16/17 18/23	13/15 31/23 33/24	proportionately [1]
56/24 58/14 60/12	40/6	19/5 20/11 20/25 21/3	43/17 48/15 52/24	74/21
62/2 71/16 78/5 78/21	premature [1] 89/22	24/1 31/9 32/3 36/13	54/4 60/25 65/5 67/4	proposal [2] 10/11
79/23 80/14 80/18	premise [1] 79/18	42/1 47/10 47/13	69/19 77/4 78/14 82/8	76/9
81/9 81/24 82/2 84/9	preparation [1] 2/8	47/13 58/12 72/9 78/1	82/10 82/12 82/24	proposals [2] 110/5
88/24 91/6 111/21	prepare [2] 28/19	80/1 80/2 80/11 81/7	83/10 87/6 88/7	139/2
119/15 119/19 131/3	130/2	81/11 81/15 81/20	110/24 111/25 113/4	propose [1] 14/1
132/1 132/13 138/6	prepared [4] 59/11	84/6 84/8 85/17 99/17		proposed [1] 100/9
138/10	99/2 130/2 133/14	100/7 107/25 108/2	123/5 124/15 124/21	proposing [1] 10/3
postmasters' [1]	preparing [1] 71/17	109/1 115/12 127/8	125/5 126/9 128/20	prosecuted [4] 39/17
131/19	present [8] 1/23 5/2	127/19 127/25 128/12	133/3 140/22	90/15 125/20 125/25
potential [11] 38/10	5/6 5/24 38/1 95/18	128/23	processes [1] 87/8	prosecution [6] 7/12
45/2 48/17 50/9 52/6	123/14 133/25 presented [2] 19/12	prior [7] 30/11 62/3 63/3 67/20 72/13	processing [2] 25/19 69/5	81/17 83/18 136/22 138/15 138/22
53/6 53/23 55/11	23/21	75/23 84/16	produce [7] 22/18	prosecutions [3]
76/18 91/21 133/22	presenting [1] 28/3	prioritising [1] 106/6	22/24 23/6 52/13 72/7	125/17 125/21 132/23
potentially [8] 44/22	presently [1] 4/7	priority [1] 76/19	114/15 140/12	protection [1] 86/20
45/12 46/13 51/11	preserve [1] 104/4	privatised [1] 98/21	producing [1] 115/2	proud [1] 105/2
56/17 74/14 78/1	press [8] 9/20 9/23	proactive [4] 52/20	product [1] 103/23	prove [5] 24/8 27/18
86/14	51/21 58/4 78/22	52/22 52/23 69/16	production [1] 105/24	
Pound [1] 107/8	99/14 110/15 137/3	proactively [2] 72/3	professional [6]	proved [1] 81/21
pounds [1] 136/4 power [1] 45/5	pressure [1] 30/5	86/19	16/25 29/9 36/4 42/25	provide [32] 20/2
power [1] 45/5 powers [2] 101/3	presumably [2]	probabilities [4]	43/3 72/22	21/7 21/23 22/1 44/13
105/24	114/25 126/2	20/18 21/8 23/15	profit [1] 16/23	47/14 52/9 54/2 61/23
practical [4] 17/9	presumed [1] 37/14	27/19	profits [1] 121/18	61/25 64/17 66/25
	presumption [4]	probability [1] 129/15	progress [11] 65/12	69/4 73/23 77/5 82/25
			/5	8) Post Office provide

(58) Post Office... - provide

Р	pursue [2] 17/14	question 1 [2] 59/4	reach [4] 48/10 66/21	69/11 71/7 81/4 85/6
provide [16] 93/2	18/11	60/8	77/14 85/1	85/10 85/25 94/5
97/7 98/23 99/8	pursued [1] 33/6	questioned [1] 118/4	reached [8] 65/6	95/10 98/16 102/16
104/13 107/19 109/22	put [30] 5/7 17/11 37/8 37/15 47/3 51/11	<b>questions [30]</b> 14/19 26/17 32/25 33/1 33/3	66/22 67/5 69/15 72/25 97/16 105/8	107/21 116/16 117/1 117/23 117/24 130/12
111/20 120/22 124/6	52/19 57/12 57/18	40/9 40/20 40/24	111/13	137/22
126/15 129/4 129/7	58/9 60/9 74/9 87/13	42/10 53/3 53/7 53/7	reaching [3] 76/22	<b>Receiver [1]</b> 68/20
129/18 137/12 137/15	93/18 102/9 104/17	53/11 57/17 65/2	83/1 115/14	receiving [3] 61/8
provided [17] 4/3 7/4	106/23 107/6 112/11	80/12 87/17 88/19	reaction [1] 1/3	72/14 111/11
7/9 31/12 44/16 50/25	114/6 117/13 122/3	107/3 108/8 108/12	read [6] 12/22 31/11	recent [2] 99/14
53/4 58/10 61/19 62/5 62/16 65/15 89/1	122/23 125/1 125/12	108/23 109/25 110/1	41/2 41/17 67/23	103/3
99/16 100/5 101/20	128/16 128/23 130/4	111/1 116/17 116/18	113/12	recently [1] 124/22
128/16	132/6 134/20	116/20 126/21 139/11	reads [3] 10/1 21/5	recognise [5] 49/1
provides [6] 61/14	putting [5] 37/16 38/8		22/14	50/17 68/16 72/18
66/21 70/24 75/8	101/4 104/11 136/4	quite [9] 38/1 57/25	ready [3] 64/14 92/5	101/1
86/19 122/13	puzzle [1] 38/5	75/9 75/11 117/21	93/13	recognised [1] 5/13
providing [9] 11/17	Q	120/16 123/4 139/20	real [1] 102/25	recognises [2] 93/11
17/3 41/13 61/17	QC [5] 2/3 3/1 3/3	140/14	realise [2] 121/16	95/6
64/22 72/15 93/18	96/2 142/5	quote [1] 120/11	133/17	recommend [7] 22/16
102/10 130/22	qualifications [1]	R	reality [3] 47/4 112/9 113/8	43/20 44/1 44/18 45/6
proving [3] 20/18	122/3	Racaldin [1] 68/2	really [1] 122/20	55/18 59/22 recommendation [10]
23/15 113/20	quantification [1]	Rainey's [1] 134/6	rearrangement [1]	43/19 44/24 48/11
provision [22] 17/13	10/4	raise [6] 2/14 35/24	89/8	52/10 60/5 62/9 62/15
27/5 27/9 27/15 28/13	quantified [6] 55/25	38/12 43/24 86/9	reason [8] 51/3 56/24	76/10 88/23 118/14
29/18 32/7 42/16	56/3 81/5 82/21 82/22	89/22	60/1 89/5 99/4 101/12	recommendations
44/14 44/20 45/15 58/3 58/15 64/13	89/5	raised [25] 20/13 31/7	130/22 137/17	[11] 41/8 49/19 49/25
72/19 75/16 78/17	quantify [1] 42/17	32/25 40/10 42/19	reasonable [11] 6/15	97/19 97/19 98/23
86/20 86/23 100/2	quantum [4] 24/2	50/15 54/8 56/9 59/6	13/10 36/14 52/4 87/1	99/2 99/20 101/4
109/5 123/21	28/5 81/12 137/13	60/25 63/23 67/11	100/3 101/7 119/15	101/12 107/24
provisional [7] 39/16	quashed [19] 9/18	67/11 68/24 69/8 69/24 76/5 76/7 76/8	129/21 131/20 132/16	recommended [2]
90/14 90/18 91/3	10/18 10/19 11/2 11/6 11/6 13/13 13/23 32/2	85/4 85/6 85/18 87/18	reasonably [4] 61/19	22/15 59/18
91/22 118/15 138/18	32/13 32/23 78/21	87/21 94/17	89/3 132/19 139/5	recommending [3]
provisions [4] 8/14	79/23 80/14 80/19	raises [3] 15/13 35/3	reasons [12] 15/12	45/23 46/6 46/23
41/6 70/1 86/2	86/22 88/25 91/2	80/11	15/14 24/5 24/12 24/13 40/16 57/6	reconsider [1] 131/21
PTSD [1] 114/6	126/22	raising [2] 42/10 54/5	57/15 68/13 73/7 84/3	reconsidered [1] 101/9
public [8] 5/7 91/2	Queen's [2] 59/13	rang [1] 135/8	138/24	record [3] 62/14
98/20 104/8 104/16	119/5	range [4] 17/2 27/25	Recaldin [1] 68/5	75/10 112/10
105/19 110/22 115/14	question [39] 19/17	101/7 115/21	recall [5] 26/16 30/21	recorded [1] 105/4
published [6] 2/25 8/22 14/19 51/21	19/17 19/18 19/20	rapidly [1] 128/18	96/22 107/2 116/15	records [6] 24/7
51/22 14/19 51/21	19/21 19/23 19/24	rate [3] 65/21 66/20	receipt [2] 31/17	60/13 72/16 114/12
punitive [1] 119/2	20/10 24/3 32/14 41/1	70/8	136/18	114/15 114/24
pure [1] 123/13	41/3 41/18 42/7 43/25	rather [24] 5/8 23/25	receive [10] 22/6 78/7	recourse [1] 33/7
purpose [5] 35/8	45/13 47/1 47/18	34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9	117/20 126/8 126/19	recover [1] 17/11
52/20 70/25 89/20	50/16 50/19 50/20	41/3 45/25 50/18 51/5 55/8 59/9 64/3 64/10	130/23 132/6 135/12	recoverable [18]
94/13	51/11 55/3 56/9 59/4 60/8 60/8 64/1 69/23	69/14 76/23 77/16	137/8 137/11	15/11 15/14 15/16
purposes [4] 5/24	70/4 70/22 74/10	84/8 87/13 114/9	received [31] 7/25	16/19 17/3 28/10 41/2
95/18 103/12 113/15	75/14 85/4 85/16	121/23 128/18 132/7	10/24 12/9 12/15	41/2 41/19 42/7 43/1
purse [1] 134/25	86/23 87/3 91/11	140/25	25/10 26/19 26/21 31/15 31/15 32/18	45/12 48/8 48/12 49/14 49/23 50/5
pursuant [2] 8/3 97/6	104/1	ratings [1] 4/23	35/23 41/10 54/1 57/1	49/14 49/23 50/5 50/17
		J-LJ		00/11
·	·	·		) provide - recoverable

(59) provide... - recoverable

R	reimbursement [1]	releases [1] 137/3	129/18 129/19 139/3	requires [7] 27/25
recovery [1] 81/16	44/4	relevant [16] 6/19	repossessed [1]	43/18 113/25 114/25
	reinstruct [1] 124/13	11/4 11/9 12/6 19/19	107/9	137/9 137/9 137/10
redress [3] 3/14 4/5 39/23	reinstructing [1]	22/3 24/8 31/21 43/9	represent [13] 17/17	requiring [1] 54/22
	68/10	55/1 59/5 61/16 65/23	34/20 54/15 96/5	resolution [13] 8/15
reduce [1] 55/7	reject [3] 59/14 60/1	86/14 93/22 105/25	96/11 96/17 102/21	10/3 10/5 10/12 10/17
reduced [2] 106/23	62/19	reliable [1] 103/12	104/7 111/15 113/7	28/14 48/15 67/4 77/4
131/5	rejected [8] 48/4 48/9	reliance [2] 6/8	114/3 124/14 126/24	83/1 88/4 89/12 91/17
reduction [3] 54/19	60/5 74/8 74/16 74/19	138/22	representation [10]	resolve [14] 32/10
54/24 55/1	74/24 123/10	relied [2] 22/5 43/10	47/21 69/9 74/7 74/9	68/18 68/18 72/20
refer [8] 13/14 16/3	relate [6] 32/25 33/2	relief [2] 7/2 126/19	89/9 116/12 119/12	72/23 73/4 73/16
16/4 51/1 93/6 96/13	103/3 126/22 139/10	rely [1] 115/6	119/21 120/6 125/14	76/19 77/21 83/8
120/13 138/11	139/10	remain [4] 15/5 57/19	representations [3]	86/12 87/3 87/9 109/9
reference [37] 3/5 3/9	related [7] 20/1 50/23		97/14 133/15 137/16	resolved [2] 33/7
3/10 14/1 14/12 14/13	51/8 59/5 60/7 100/18		representatives [12]	82/17
15/9 16/2 16/6 16/12	104/22	remains [11] 11/1	5/13 37/6 58/14 75/9	resolving [4] 8/15
18/13 18/22 22/12	relates [3] 19/18	50/9 57/3 57/7 57/18	86/9 87/12 91/20	65/14 73/6 84/23
41/6 41/21 43/22	21/24 116/8	59/18 66/24 83/12	91/21 112/2 124/24	resource [1] 77/9
44/13 45/14 47/14	relating [3] 13/24	87/7 91/15 115/13	127/21 132/25	resources [1] 70/17
49/2 52/8 58/10 59/25	39/16 90/14	remediation [4] 8/4	represented [13] 3/4	respect [18] 3/24 7/7
61/10 63/8 83/25 84/2	relation [74] 10/18	10/16 80/21 91/10	12/16 33/20 35/15	19/13 20/1 27/7 27/10
84/12 84/13 88/20	12/18 12/24 13/8	remedy [1] 120/25	35/21 36/5 37/5 37/10	29/22 41/8 45/10 47/1
98/3 106/1 120/17	13/12 14/10 17/8	remember [2] 114/10	73/24 74/4 82/3 89/2	50/13 50/24 53/24
122/1 122/2 127/4	19/16 21/4 21/17	134/8	120/2	56/7 82/10 95/16
140/9	28/11 32/9 42/13	remiss [1] 140/9	representing [2] 81/9	116/22 132/20
referred [8] 33/23	42/19 42/25 43/12	remoteness [2] 24/2	84/9	respected [1] 33/25
65/16 82/4 86/7 94/11	44/15 56/11 57/16	28/5	reputation [2] 17/1	respectfully [2]
102/14 105/5 121/16	59/7 59/25 61/20 65/3	removal [1] 86/1	104/4	112/24 128/25
reflect [3] 49/8	69/18 69/24 70/3	remove [2] 103/16	reputational [1]	respond [2] 11/25
115/20 116/1	70/22 71/25 72/15	126/10	111/18	140/22
reflected [4] 69/14	73/17 73/18 73/25	removed [1] 101/24	request [22] 12/16	responded [3] 69/20
94/4 95/2 126/10	78/5 79/17 80/13	removing [1] 137/14	13/17 33/11 33/13	109/11 109/16
reflecting [1] 46/11	80/14 82/20 84/17	remuneration [1]	53/1 61/16 61/19 62/6	responding [1] 3/15
reflects [5] 43/5	93/3 93/15 97/16	86/21	62/10 62/12 69/10	response [7] 12/15
54/22 54/24 71/6	97/22 98/8 101/18	renewal [1] 67/14	69/13 69/15 69/16	42/18 45/17 85/16
119/18	104/11 107/3 107/23	repaid [1] 18/19	70/3 71/4 71/7 89/20	87/17 94/24 110/11
refused [2] 29/21	108/1 108/3 108/9	repay [3] 76/13	97/9 102/8 116/16	responses [5] 69/21
71/5	109/7 109/15 110/6	106/20 107/11	128/22	94/16 101/7 108/6
refute [1] 84/21	112/23 113/11 113/20		requested [3] 11/24	108/7
regard [7] 14/5 19/9	115/8 116/21 117/14	repeat [5] 38/10	63/21 122/18	responsibility [1]
36/16 49/18 86/4	117/21 121/4 122/14	53/22 65/4 68/14	requesting [1] 52/25	70/14
101/6 102/25	122/15 122/24 124/4	74/23	requests [4] 62/3	responsible [2] 67/17
regarded [3] 18/19	124/7 126/25 127/9	repeated [1] 133/4	64/5 78/13 110/14	113/21
41/3 86/14	127/21 128/5 130/15	repeatedly [1] 136/24		rest [1] 129/9
regarding [2] 121/10	130/17 132/18 139/25		60/10 64/7 65/10	restrictions [1]
133/22	relations [1] 110/22	replicates [1] 101/14	105/24	117/10
regardless [1] 39/4	relationships [1] 3/23		required [12] 28/16	result [16] 18/3 19/22
regards [4] 99/14	relatively [2] 24/17		43/25 56/6 60/18 88/6	20/5 22/19 22/24 23/6
101/19 108/23 130/9	24/19	64/8 94/25 95/11 97/6	99/21 101/13 110/2	52/14 63/19 67/22
region [1] 135/12	release [4] 9/21 9/23	97/10 97/17 97/18	116/6 131/8 139/12	68/10 70/10 72/7
regularly [1] 41/12	51/21 99/14	98/22 102/9 102/24	139/24	83/21 121/6 131/5
rehearse [1] 24/15	released [1] 109/13	103/2 129/4 129/8	requirement [1] 55/18	
1				
		100/2 120/4 120/0		

(60) recovery - result

R	134/18	53/16 58/16 61/23	78/23 79/24 80/18	September [1] 40/4
	said [40] 2/19 10/11	99/6 113/16 117/17	97/7	series [2] 19/9 140/4
resulted [3] 67/15	11/10 12/7 12/24 13/4	131/23 136/7	section 5 [1] 42/2	service [1] 105/19
68/1 91/9	18/25 25/19 30/10	says [14] 29/7 54/1	sections [1] 40/19	services [2] 27/18
resulting [1] 4/20	33/9 33/22 38/8 45/14	60/22 83/19 90/23	secure [1] 130/25	127/24
retail [1] 43/15	46/16 46/19 46/24	106/15 106/19 107/4	secured [1] 83/21	set [47] 7/10 7/18
retained [3] 24/7	66/1 92/5 106/15	107/8 111/19 119/14	see [17] 1/5 8/21 9/4	10/8 10/11 13/18
88/11 88/14	109/18 111/17 116/25	120/21 134/1 134/22	9/6 9/22 16/19 19/9	33/14 35/8 39/15
retainer [1] 88/9	117/3 117/9 120/4	scan [1] 16/21	20/22 22/10 23/1	42/17 51/13 52/18
retire [1] 107/6	127/17 133/21 134/2	scandal [18] 3/16	24/23 57/9 67/2	62/25 65/4 67/25
retirement [1] 116/7	134/11 134/13 134/16	96/9 96/10 96/15	113/16 120/21 127/13	68/13 71/14 72/10
return [1] 110/10	135/16 136/2 136/3	97/24 104/25 107/20	136/22	73/7 77/9 88/11 88/19
review [2] 3/15 97/20	136/6 136/8 136/13	110/19 110/20 111/22	seeing [1] 141/2	89/20 90/16 91/22
reviewed [1] 118/10	136/13 136/16 137/24	112/21 113/22 115/14	seek [12] 8/6 44/4	94/23 97/18 99/9
reviewers [1] 118/9	same [15] 1/19 1/19	115/16 115/22 118/2	55/17 65/3 70/15	100/14 101/6 104/11
revised [1] 67/23	15/10 29/7 60/1 64/5	118/2 132/14	76/19 83/23 85/21	104/17 108/7 108/22
right [18] 18/1 37/15 38/19 39/8 63/15	64/23 66/12 73/25	scenarios [1] 58/4	90/9 90/19 110/22	111/24 113/10 113/18
	77/24 78/1 84/3 102/2	scenes [2] 102/20	110/23	118/16 120/24 121/14
63/17 66/6 66/10 66/15 80/16 87/23	125/13 135/8	139/19	seeking [5] 40/15	127/10 130/3 131/22
	sands [2] 102/12	schedule [2] 1/22	48/15 48/25 83/13	138/24 138/25 139/11
92/8 92/12 111/5	102/23	7/15	103/15	139/12 140/6
112/15 114/24 132/3	satisfactorily [1] 35/1	scheduled [3] 4/8	seeks [2] 93/22	Sethi [6] 26/17 69/1
139/19	satisfactory [1] 29/13		114/14	69/4 69/20 116/15
rightly [1] 42/21	satisfy [2] 21/17	scheme [143]	seem [3] 128/24	116/19
rigorously [1] 95/7	115/8	scheme's [1] 25/5	129/22 139/14	setting [11] 19/15
rise [1] 54/17	save [1] 7/12	schemes [14] 3/16	seemed [1] 123/16	65/5 98/22 101/8
risk [3] 30/19 42/9 76/4	saw [2] 119/13	5/3 5/7 12/19 32/5	seems [12] 15/3 17/6	102/24 108/3 108/24
	130/13	100/8 100/9 102/1	34/20 35/13 36/8	110/1 111/23 121/5
risked [1] 107/19	say [72] 18/4 18/15	104/12 123/23 137/6	53/12 117/8 120/15	122/23
riven [1] 133/11 rocket [1] 39/5	24/25 34/7 35/22	137/11 137/15 139/1	125/2 130/18 131/20	settled [3] 42/8
role [10] 46/5 87/25	36/20 37/18 42/20	school [1] 134/11	133/3	100/10 113/3
88/3 93/15 95/2 95/4	43/4 47/9 47/12 47/13	scope [2] 84/11	seen [13] 15/17 19/2	settlement [30] 3/7
95/17 95/22 97/24	51/2 51/8 51/25 53/18	122/14	23/9 29/20 30/1 35/18	3/10 3/10 3/22 6/11
111/21	54/22 55/5 55/7 55/11	score [1] 110/22	35/24 60/16 71/5	6/17 6/18 6/20 7/3 7/5
roles [2] 49/9 116/3	56/5 56/6 59/2 59/5	scores [1] 136/20	71/18 90/23 97/13	7/10 7/11 7/19 7/22
room [1] 1/19	61/8 61/24 63/18 64/3	screaming [1] 111/3	122/12	11/16 13/8 26/2 30/21
rough [1] 92/10	65/13 68/13 71/6 73/2	Scully [5] 11/3 12/5	seized [2] 114/11	58/13 74/6 74/8 83/16
roughly [1] 74/21	76/22 77/15 78/3	12/21 34/3 105/13	115/3	83/21 84/24 98/1 98/2
round [2] 45/25 80/5	78/23 79/3 79/15 80/4	second [14] 4/24 9/23	self [1] 28/4	98/6 105/8 105/16
routinely [1] 17/22	80/6 80/11 80/20	12/7 19/10 20/15	senior [2] 82/11	138/5
ruin [3] 104/18	80/25 81/25 84/4	22/10 25/24 43/11	114/21	settlements [3] 76/23
112/15 112/15	84/25 88/10 88/13	45/11 55/13 58/1 60/7	sense [1] 73/2	89/4 117/13
rule [2] 48/15 140/20	88/25 89/21 90/24	62/2 65/2	sensitive [1] 45/4	seven [4] 12/20 35/6
ruled [1] 42/9	91/24 92/14 95/16	secondly [8] 8/11	sent [3] 65/18 65/20	35/19 67/7
rules [2] 55/11 64/5	98/18 101/12 102/1	13/4 13/12 27/24	102/21	severe [2] 30/18 76/3
run [1] 104/12	104/24 108/9 109/12	40/11 71/20 86/6	sentence [2] 37/20	shall [2] 61/17 64/24
running [1] 118/5	116/11 117/18 117/22	90/25	38/7	shared [3] 7/19 22/5
	119/10 122/8 126/2	Secretary [3] 9/13	sentient [1] 103/19	125/8
S	128/8 128/20 133/16	11/19 40/21	separate [5] 15/13	shareholder [3] 11/20
sad [1] 104/23	138/9 138/17 140/21	section [11] 40/20	56/3 82/18 122/23	93/20 103/4
sadly [1] 133/3	saying [12] 2/10	40/22 42/2 44/14	132/15	shareholders [1] 50/3
safe [2] 134/18	34/23 48/11 49/1	59/24 70/9 78/20	separately [1] 43/8	sharing [2] 61/2 61/6
				(61) resulted - sharing

(61) resulted - sharing

S	75/18 78/10 78/11	65/12 94/1 98/15	Smith [10] 59/11	19/4 19/17 26/10 29/5
	81/10 82/4 83/18	104/22 105/6	59/15 62/13 88/7	32/5 34/7 62/22 74/23
Shazia [1] 107/12	83/24 84/9 85/19	Sinead [7] 134/6	88/10 88/10 88/13	80/13 85/20 89/17
she [21] 107/4 107/4	85/20 86/6 86/17	134/11 134/13 134/17	89/2 118/9 123/12	117/6 120/19
107/4 107/5 107/6	87/13 87/14 88/9	134/22 135/14 135/16	so [158]	sort [1] 49/10
117/3 123/6 123/9	88/11 91/4 91/5 92/19	single [1] 20/9	so I will [1] 8/24	sorts [1] 39/23
128/6 128/6 134/9	98/19 99/23 99/24	sir [93] 2/19 3/5 5/16	so-called [1] 118/11	sought [1] 100/8
134/10 135/3 135/4	100/2 104/3 104/9	8/20 9/5 14/10 25/17	sold [1] 106/16	sound [1] 129/20
135/9 135/10 135/23	110/21 110/23 111/13	26/18 26/25 27/5 27/8	sole [2] 11/20 103/4	source [1] 132/1
136/2 136/3 136/6	113/2 113/22 115/15	31/5 32/1 35/4 38/8	solely [4] 22/21 23/4	speak [1] 112/22
136/11	116/1 118/17 118/19	38/12 38/18 39/11	52/10 100/18	speaking [2] 46/19
shifting [2] 102/23	118/21 120/24 122/18	40/17 41/9 41/25	solicitor [1] 36/18	49/21
140/22	100/01 105/10 106/6	42/21 43/23 44/7	solicitors [20] 3/4	specialist [3] 43/14
shop [3] 135/9 135/18	126/8 126/17 127/8	44/13 49/4 49/5 52/2	6/23 12/17 13/6 17/17	43/15 43/15
136/7	127/25 127/25 128/4	52/15 57/11 57/12	20/13 35/20 36/17	species [1] 29/23
short [13] 1/25 10/22	129/16 131/10 131/25	58/9 58/21 59/2 60/16	37/1 81/14 82/3 96/4	specific [5] 22/21
23/14 24/17 24/19	132/21 137/12 137/12	61/12 63/25 64/11	102/15 105/13 111/4	40/9 52/11 100/23
37/14 38/22 71/16	shouldn't [1] 89/15	64/25 65/3 65/8 67/13	112/3 124/4 124/22	108/11
92/11 106/23 132/21	showed [1] 136/5	69/2 70/22 71/17 72/5	125/4 133/5	specifically [1] 46/7
139/25 140/4	showing [2] 31/1	73/16 73/21 73/23	solution [1] 130/8	specify [1] 19/14
short-dated [1]	136/1	74/11 74/18 78/20	solve [1] 132/3	spectrum [1] 17/2
106/23	shows [1] 26/2	84/4 87/17 88/19	some [55] 1/10 4/19	speed [3] 5/2 76/6
shortfall [47] 3/8 3/25	shut [2] 58/20 129/16	91/24 92/15 96/3 96/3	5/7 5/22 9/10 26/6	89/12
4/2 7/17 8/3 13/21	Siddiq [1] 107/12	97/11 99/7 99/16	29/4 30/10 31/2 35/23	speedy [1] 66/16
14/9 14/11 14/14	side [1] 139/7	99/18 100/22 100/24	35/24 41/13 55/10	spend [1] 5/21
14/16 14/18 14/21	sideways [1] 129/16	101/1 102/8 102/24	55/14 60/6 72/18	split [1] 1/18
14/24 16/14 16/15	sign [3] 52/1 118/4	103/2 104/15 105/23	73/12 74/9 75/8 76/7	SPMs [2] 112/20
17/5 18/18 18/20 19/2	118/5	107/25 108/5 108/9	77/9 78/13 80/4 81/9	113/25
19/13 19/16 19/21	signed [1] 138/4	108/11 110/13 112/13	83/10 84/9 84/13	spoke [1] 134/9
19/23 20/6 21/11	significant [7] 4/21	112/25 113/12 113/18	84/15 92/10 94/5 95/9	spring [3] 5/5 39/25
21/15 27/20 40/23	4/24 17/23 43/16	114/22 116/7 118/4	98/4 104/1 104/13	84/19
41/22 41/24 42/5 43/1	67/16 73/6 99/11	120/8 120/10 122/12	104/13 104/20 106/14	staff [1] 111/8
45/9 45/20 54/19 55/8	significantly [4]	124/18 127/7 128/9	107/20 107/21 110/10	
70/5 71/20 73/12	16/16 16/20 78/4	129/22 133/1 139/4	111/12 112/13 113/7	31/14 51/19 64/16
73/17 77/10 77/19	95/21	139/23	113/8 114/5 115/17	69/18 72/12 73/5
79/19 80/4 80/22	signpost [1] 51/12	sister [2] 135/9	116/21 120/5 124/6	76/25 84/25 103/16
135/25 138/7	siloing [1] 101/17	135/18	127/3 128/21 131/16	113/9 124/14 133/3
shortfall' [1] 18/21	similar [5] 12/13	sit [2] 26/16 46/18	132/7 140/2 140/9	135/17
shortfalls [13] 3/25	37/17 98/13 117/23	sitting [1] 92/2	somebody [2] 9/2 9/4	stages [4] 63/6 100/3
15/18 16/3 16/5 18/14	138/2	situation [5] 56/22	someone [2] 58/6	100/6 119/8
19/11 19/18 20/1	simple [6] 15/20	77/22 120/25 128/19	129/12	stand [4] 34/25 92/5
50/23 51/8 55/16	71/12 109/25 110/1	131/3	something [6] 8/25	128/20 135/19
74/13 106/21	116/11 116/13	situations [1] 133/11	37/17 45/21 53/19	standard [2] 24/9
shortly [2] 69/11	simpler [1] 73/16	six [7] 6/12 19/14	54/22 104/19	26/19
90/13	simply [13] 37/10	81/4 82/21 99/10	sometimes [1] 53/8	standing [1] 75/2
should [76] 1/17 2/5 5/21 8/16 8/18 8/21	43/4 48/16 48/25 51/3	109/11 114/24	somewhat [1] 128/10	starkly [1] 136/24
9/3 9/24 14/5 23/23	54/24 79/1 79/25	size [1] 20/6	somewhere [2] 128/7	start [6] 38/20 40/22
31/3 33/23 39/20	80/12 84/4 85/1	slightly [3] 46/14	135/12	92/18 123/14 139/6
41/14 47/7 48/24 49/2	119/19 137/5	79/21 99/4	soon [4] 11/17 72/24	139/6
49/8 54/10 58/1 58/8	simultaneous [1]	slow [1] 59/1	90/12 109/21	started [2] 104/23
61/20 73/23 75/16	99/5	slower [1] 99/4	sooner [2] 5/8 39/21	137/5
01/2013/2313/10	since [7] 12/3 25/9	small [1] 134/11	sorry [15] 2/14 8/23	starting [3] 2/7 48/8
				(62) Shazia - starting

(62) Shazia - starting

	109/20	121/10 120/12 120/1	10/10 21/0 21/11 20/1	15/17
S		131/18 138/12 139/4 139/25 140/2 140/4	18/18 21/9 21/11 28/4 29/25 31/20 32/19	15/17
starting [1] 62/1	strongest [1] 129/4 strongly [1] 97/9	140/7 140/20	32/23 33/13 36/11	suits [1] 79/4 sum [10] 6/22 7/25
starts [1] 65/23	structure [1] 67/24	submit [1] 89/7	43/20 44/3 44/4 45/6	23/17 29/16 31/3
state [5] 9/13 14/5	structured [2] 36/5	submitted [3] 88/6	46/1 46/7 46/11 46/24	77/24 78/2 80/9 85/9
17/18 39/11 40/21	77/3	119/8 125/17	49/15 50/10 50/25	132/7
State's [1] 11/19	sub [2] 77/10 116/17	subparagraphs [1]	53/11 55/15 57/8	sums [12] 4/24 15/21
stated [6] 28/25 97/4	sub-accounts [1]	19/15	59/23 64/13 68/19	15/23 17/23 32/16
105/13 118/7 125/23	116/17	subpostmaster [9]	71/13 75/18 76/2	36/2 36/10 78/8 79/13
131/2	sub-scheme [1]	20/16 21/16 23/14	76/11 77/19 78/7	85/6 96/20 107/21
statement [12] 9/19	77/10	23/19 23/20 96/5	78/12 78/13 78/15	supermarket [1]
11/4 11/7 12/21 19/12	subcategories [1]	122/5 125/24 126/2	79/24 80/21 80/23	106/22
25/14 40/3 40/12 66/1	12/2	subpostmasters [60]	81/17 84/14 87/7	supplemented [1]
97/3 110/15 119/18	subcommittee [1]	2/22 3/23 4/4 4/13	88/23 89/8 91/10 99/1	54/10
statements [3] 101/4	93/22	5/19 8/8 9/17 11/5	101/10 101/12 105/1	support [9] 21/7
115/6 137/3	subject [11] 7/8 62/3	12/19 13/14 13/23	110/5 115/12 116/8	27/17 42/16 44/23
states [4] 21/22	63/24 85/23 86/20	15/22 15/23 15/25	122/5 122/6 122/19	62/16 72/16 72/20
115/23 122/16 130/21	90/18 90/24 91/23	17/10 17/18 17/20	127/9 127/13 130/1	89/21 139/17
statistics [2] 73/22 74/10	108/19 127/3 128/17	17/24 18/11 20/21	131/7 131/9 137/6	supporting [5] 22/5
	subjects [1] 92/6	24/6 28/17 30/5 31/12	139/12	61/2 61/6 94/19 95/2
status [2] 11/20 86/2 statutory [3] 67/22	submission [13] 2/18	32/2 32/12 32/17	suffered [8] 4/6 8/9	supportive [1] 87/7
97/8 104/17	39/10 60/9 92/25 96/2	33/12 33/20 39/17	20/19 21/10 24/9	suppose [1] 6/15
staving [1] 112/15	97/10 101/13 102/14	67/12 90/15 93/10	27/20 50/3 114/4	sure [7] 38/1 112/18
stay [1] 128/10	127/7 142/2 142/3	96/21 99/13 101/17	suffering [3] 49/8	114/3 121/3 122/22
Stein [9] 3/3 92/12	142/4 142/5	102/4 104/18 110/18	114/5 116/3	139/21 140/15
96/1 96/2 99/3 100/17	submissions [98]		suffice [1] 69/6	surprise [1] 58/6
128/2 140/8 142/5	1/15 1/24 2/11 2/20	114/15 116/5 116/5	sufficient [5] 5/24	surprises [1] 57/24
steps [2] 5/16 52/4	2/24 5/12 5/13 11/25	116/25 117/22 118/25	20/20 21/7 22/1 95/18	survive [1] 104/21
stigma [3] 17/1 53/16	12/15 13/18 14/7 15/5	124/1 124/4 124/11	suggest [23] 9/2	Susan [1] 107/2
121/9	15/9 17/19 18/15	124/24 126/5 126/18	29/21 42/23 84/9	suspect [2] 103/25
still [12] 18/20 25/15	24/14 24/24 26/7	126/22 126/23 127/20 131/12 131/14 133/10	101/15 115/5 116/13	114/19
26/13 106/19 107/5	28/24 29/7 30/9 30/10 32/21 33/9 33/12	subpostmasters' [1]	116/24 117/15 118/1 118/15 119/24 121/23	suspending [1] 114/13
111/14 116/23 119/24	33/14 34/4 34/8 34/9	131/24	123/2 126/18 128/3	suspension [1] 60/14
126/19 131/11 133/9	34/13 38/25 39/13	subpostmistresses	128/19 131/10 132/19	
133/25	39/15 40/5 40/8 40/14		133/13 136/25 138/13	
stop [1] 64/23	40/18 42/12 50/17	subsequent [1] 90/22		98/1
stories [1] 26/16	52/19 56/13 57/13	subsequently [4]	suggested [22] 23/20	
story [5] 39/3 110/17	59/16 65/4 65/6 65/7	6/16 25/3 58/11	29/24 31/20 42/6	sympathetic [1] 57/5
111/19 111/22 119/13	65/12 68/14 68/25	109/17	42/14 49/6 49/7 53/13	system [15] 4/15 6/9
straightforwardly [1] 75/11	71/14 73/8 79/2 81/1	substantial [3] 7/21	54/16 61/5 67/13	103/8 103/11 103/18
Strategy [2] 9/14	85/2 86/25 88/5 90/3	61/8 119/9	71/11 73/22 74/1	103/18 103/19 103/20
103/5	90/19 92/4 93/3 93/5	substantially [2] 8/1	75/15 81/10 85/19	103/23 113/3 114/6
stress [4] 45/19 50/2	93/7 93/16 94/5 94/11	126/19	86/6 86/16 87/11	114/7 133/25 136/1
64/6 104/22	94/15 94/21 95/3 95/5			136/23
stress-related [1]	95/9 97/5 102/13	33/17	suggesting [1] 64/11	systems [1] 103/12
104/22	108/20 109/12 109/18		suggestion [13]	Т
strict [1] 55/17	110/11 113/13 113/17		51/10 55/13 55/23	tab [32] 8/20 9/21
strictly [1] 46/19	115/24 117/5 117/17	succeeding [1]	56/5 60/1 75/19 78/10	11/7 12/6 12/22 13/18
strike [1] 51/15	118/6 119/9 119/25	101/17 such [67] 10/21 16/18	79/10 83/7 83/15	14/11 14/12 14/15
strong [2] 11/22	130/18 130/21 131/17		suggests [2] 10/24	14/16 14/18 14/22
			Juggesis [2] 10/24	
L	L	L	L	(63) starting tab

(63) starting... - tab

Т	tell [3] 39/2 64/15	42/22 43/9 43/21	135/5 135/20 135/21	89/5 90/2 95/6 95/19
	66/6	43/23 45/11 46/21	135/21 139/5	98/18 99/10 100/9
tab [20] 16/2 16/4 16/7 16/9 16/18 18/15	telling [1] 47/22	48/8 52/14 54/12 55/2	theme [1] 79/8	101/9 101/19 102/22
19/7 20/24 22/11	tells [1] 114/21	60/21 60/24 61/8 62/1	themselves [7] 17/21	103/9 105/10 107/18
	tempting [1] 39/2	66/5 70/2 71/10 71/14	33/12 38/10 44/3	111/23 112/11 115/24
24/23 25/23 30/8 31/9	ten [4] 74/16 75/1	75/1 79/4 79/16 80/2	50/16 83/8 125/15	117/11 117/22 118/1
31/10 32/1 36/18	75/3 92/11	80/10 81/5 81/21 83/6	then [66] 10/8 11/6	119/5 119/9 119/14
42/23 52/15 61/11	tense [1] 37/22	84/3 84/18 86/8 87/22	11/6 12/3 13/12 14/22	121/2 121/5 125/3
95/1	term [1] 67/18	87/24 124/8 127/2	14/25 15/9 16/16	125/18 127/3 130/6
tab 17 [1] 42/23	terminal [3] 30/18	129/19	19/14 19/17 19/23	130/14 131/10 131/16
tab 2 [1] 13/18	31/1 76/4	their [79] 1/22 1/23	20/7 21/21 24/12 25/8	133/9 133/20 133/22
tab 3 [1] 36/18	terminate [1] 88/9	2/22 4/13 12/10 12/13	28/20 35/2 38/19	134/19 134/20 135/19
tab 7 [1] 18/15	terms [48] 2/5 2/8 3/5	13/10 17/18 17/19	38/19 40/22 41/18	136/21 137/1 140/15
tailored [1] 116/1	5/15 6/16 6/18 7/4 7/9	18/15 21/7 21/17	44/1 48/10 48/13	there' [1] 136/16
take [23] 22/23 23/5	8/5 14/12 14/13 16/2	21/18 22/2 22/6 27/7	53/14 59/3 59/21 62/7	there's [6] 1/10 79/24
38/15 39/25 47/4	16/6 16/11 17/8 18/13	29/17 30/15 31/15	63/9 64/13 64/18 65/2	118/1 134/15 135/25
48/18 49/11 52/12	22/12 23/8 25/22 41/6	32/9 32/12 32/21	65/24 65/25 67/24	136/16
56/20 57/25 58/17	41/21 43/2 43/22	33/15 36/5 44/23 46/9	68/1 73/21 77/11	thereafter [5] 5/11
59/21 65/19 68/17	44/13 47/14 49/2 52/8	60/13 72/20 72/23	78/23 79/7 80/7 80/18	10/16 60/4 62/21
71/24 72/6 89/10	58/9 59/24 61/10 63/7	73/16 76/1 76/15 78/9	83/10 89/13 90/4	90/12
120/8 120/18 121/15	69/9 81/6 84/12 84/13	85/12 88/5 95/5 95/17	92/19 95/20 97/19	therefore [20] 5/20
122/3 129/20 134/9	84/23 88/20 89/9	95/17 96/24 96/25	98/24 101/8 104/17	7/22 12/10 43/16
taken [26] 15/21	89/11 94/20 98/3	100/12 102/4 104/19	104/20 110/10 113/10	45/16 46/25 50/11
19/22 23/11 23/19	105/25 121/17 121/20	105/20 106/5 106/13	114/9 114/24 118/9	78/1 88/2 94/11 98/8
24/21 36/9 44/14	125/2 125/14 126/17	109/7 109/18 111/8	118/10 125/15 129/14	98/22 102/22 118/21
45/22 45/24 46/2	129/4	111/17 112/12 112/16	129/19 130/20 136/14	119/9 120/7 120/15
48/14 49/16 49/21	terrible [1] 110/20	113/17 114/8 114/8	136/21 140/1	124/17 130/8 137/25
52/7 52/21 54/4 55/15				
	tests [1] 42/4	114/12 115/9 115/9		
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6	tests [1] 42/4 than [32] 5/9 8/1	114/12 115/9 115/9 117/5 117/21 121/11	theory [1] 17/7	these [57] 1/21 5/8
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25	than [32] 5/9 8/1	117/5 117/21 121/11	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 them [58] 1/5 1/22	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 them [58] 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 them [58] 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15 tallying [1] 134/12	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25 thank [20] 1/6 9/4	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 <b>them [58]</b> 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8 24/7 24/16 26/16 27/4	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9 46/25 47/9 50/12 51/1	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7 107/17 107/19 108/19
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15 tallying [1] 134/12 target [2] 66/21 98/23	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25 thank [20] 1/6 9/4 38/14 39/11 49/4 49/4	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 <b>them [58]</b> 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8 24/7 24/16 26/16 27/4 29/16 32/24 34/21	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9 46/25 47/9 50/12 51/1 51/25 53/8 53/16	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7 107/17 107/19 108/19 112/1 113/14 119/25
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15 tallying [1] 134/12 target [2] 66/21 98/23 targeted [3] 110/2	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25 thank [20] 1/6 9/4 38/14 39/11 49/4 49/4 52/18 63/18 64/25	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 <b>them [58]</b> 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8 24/7 24/16 26/16 27/4 29/16 32/24 34/21 45/14 45/15 53/8	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9 46/25 47/9 50/12 51/1 51/25 53/8 53/16 54/18 54/20 55/2	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7 107/17 107/19 108/19 112/1 113/14 119/25 121/16 121/19 122/24
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15 tallying [1] 134/12 target [2] 66/21 98/23 targeted [3] 110/2 137/16 140/4	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25 thank [20] 1/6 9/4 38/14 39/11 49/4 49/4 52/18 63/18 64/25 75/7 92/7 92/15 92/20	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 <b>them [58]</b> 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8 24/7 24/16 26/16 27/4 29/16 32/24 34/21 45/14 45/15 53/8 53/14 65/10 68/14	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9 46/25 47/9 50/12 51/1 51/25 53/8 53/16 54/18 54/20 55/2 55/23 55/23 56/3 56/7	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7 107/17 107/19 108/19 112/1 113/14 119/25 121/16 121/19 122/24 123/9 127/1 127/6
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15 tallying [1] 134/12 target [2] 66/21 98/23 targeted [3] 110/2 137/16 140/4 tax [10] 28/10 69/23	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25 thank [20] 1/6 9/4 38/14 39/11 49/4 49/4 52/18 63/18 64/25 75/7 92/7 92/15 92/20 93/1 95/12 95/14	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 <b>them [58]</b> 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8 24/7 24/16 26/16 27/4 29/16 32/24 34/21 45/14 45/15 53/8 53/14 65/10 68/14 71/2 71/17 72/14	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9 46/25 47/9 50/12 51/1 51/25 53/8 53/16 54/18 54/20 55/2 55/23 55/23 56/3 56/7 57/22 58/3 59/13	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7 107/17 107/19 108/19 112/1 113/14 119/25 121/16 121/19 122/24 123/9 127/1 127/6 129/6 133/1 133/6
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15 tallying [1] 134/12 target [2] 66/21 98/23 targeted [3] 110/2 137/16 140/4 tax [10] 28/10 69/23 70/1 70/6 70/7 70/9	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25 thank [20] 1/6 9/4 38/14 39/11 49/4 49/4 52/18 63/18 64/25 75/7 92/7 92/15 92/20 93/1 95/12 95/14 95/24 95/25 140/8	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 <b>them [58]</b> 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8 24/7 24/16 26/16 27/4 29/16 32/24 34/21 45/14 45/15 53/8 53/14 65/10 68/14 71/2 71/17 72/14 74/13 74/16 75/1	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9 46/25 47/9 50/12 51/1 51/25 53/8 53/16 54/18 54/20 55/2 55/23 55/23 56/3 56/7 57/22 58/3 59/13 59/16 61/22 62/5	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7 107/17 107/19 108/19 112/1 113/14 119/25 121/16 121/19 122/24 123/9 127/1 127/6 129/6 133/1 133/6 135/21 136/19 137/1
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15 tallying [1] 134/12 target [2] 66/21 98/23 targeted [3] 110/2 137/16 140/4 tax [10] 28/10 69/23 70/1 70/6 70/7 70/9 70/11 70/14 70/15	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25 thank [20] 1/6 9/4 38/14 39/11 49/4 49/4 52/18 63/18 64/25 75/7 92/7 92/15 92/20 93/1 95/12 95/14 95/24 95/25 140/8 140/23	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 <b>them [58]</b> 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8 24/7 24/16 26/16 27/4 29/16 32/24 34/21 45/14 45/15 53/8 53/14 65/10 68/14 71/2 71/17 72/14 74/13 74/16 75/1 77/12 79/13 99/1	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9 46/25 47/9 50/12 51/1 51/25 53/8 53/16 54/18 54/20 55/2 55/23 55/23 56/3 56/7 57/22 58/3 59/13 59/16 61/22 62/5 63/11 63/18 64/6 67/8	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7 107/17 107/19 108/19 112/1 113/14 119/25 121/16 121/19 122/24 123/9 127/1 127/6 129/6 133/1 133/6 135/21 136/19 137/1 138/24 140/12
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15 tallying [1] 134/12 targeted [3] 110/2 137/16 140/4 tax [10] 28/10 69/23 70/1 70/6 70/7 70/9 70/11 70/14 70/15 86/2	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25 thank [20] 1/6 9/4 38/14 39/11 49/4 49/4 52/18 63/18 64/25 75/7 92/7 92/15 92/20 93/1 95/12 95/14 95/24 95/25 140/8 140/23 Thanks [1] 2/19	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 <b>them [58]</b> 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8 24/7 24/16 26/16 27/4 29/16 32/24 34/21 45/14 45/15 53/8 53/14 65/10 68/14 71/2 71/17 72/14 74/13 74/16 75/1 77/12 79/13 99/1 100/19 100/19 101/18	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9 46/25 47/9 50/12 51/1 51/25 53/8 53/16 54/18 54/20 55/2 55/23 55/23 56/3 56/7 57/22 58/3 59/13 59/16 61/22 62/5 63/11 63/18 64/6 67/8 67/10 67/15 68/4	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7 107/17 107/19 108/19 112/1 113/14 119/25 121/16 121/19 122/24 123/9 127/1 127/6 129/6 133/1 133/6 135/21 136/19 137/1 138/24 140/12 they [104] 2/12 4/6
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15 tallying [1] 134/12 targete [2] 66/21 98/23 targeted [3] 110/2 137/16 140/4 tax [10] 28/10 69/23 70/1 70/6 70/7 70/9 70/11 70/14 70/15 86/2 team [6] 14/3 14/6	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25 thank [20] 1/6 9/4 38/14 39/11 49/4 49/4 52/18 63/18 64/25 75/7 92/7 92/15 92/20 93/1 95/12 95/14 95/24 95/25 140/8 140/23 Thanks [1] 2/19 that [870]	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 <b>them [58]</b> 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8 24/7 24/16 26/16 27/4 29/16 32/24 34/21 45/14 45/15 53/8 53/14 65/10 68/14 71/2 71/17 72/14 74/13 74/16 75/1 77/12 79/13 99/1 100/19 100/19 101/18 102/6 104/20 105/8	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9 46/25 47/9 50/12 51/1 51/25 53/8 53/16 54/18 54/20 55/2 55/23 55/23 56/3 56/7 57/22 58/3 59/13 59/16 61/22 62/5 63/11 63/18 64/6 67/8 67/10 67/15 68/4 69/23 71/20 72/18	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7 107/17 107/19 108/19 112/1 113/14 119/25 121/16 121/19 122/24 123/9 127/1 127/6 129/6 133/1 133/6 135/21 136/19 137/1 138/24 140/12 they [104] 2/12 4/6 6/21 7/20 8/1 9/3 13/7
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15 tallying [1] 134/12 target [2] 66/21 98/23 target [2] 66/21 98/23 target [3] 110/2 137/16 140/4 tax [10] 28/10 69/23 70/1 70/6 70/7 70/9 70/11 70/14 70/15 86/2 team [6] 14/3 14/6 67/24 68/6 106/5	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25 thank [20] 1/6 9/4 38/14 39/11 49/4 49/4 52/18 63/18 64/25 75/7 92/7 92/15 92/20 93/1 95/12 95/14 95/24 95/25 140/8 140/23 Thanks [1] 2/19 that [870] that I can [1] 1/4	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 <b>them [58]</b> 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8 24/7 24/16 26/16 27/4 29/16 32/24 34/21 45/14 45/15 53/8 53/14 65/10 68/14 71/2 71/17 72/14 74/13 74/16 75/1 77/12 79/13 99/1 100/19 100/19 101/18 102/6 104/20 105/8 106/11 108/24 111/10	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9 46/25 47/9 50/12 51/1 51/25 53/8 53/16 54/18 54/20 55/2 55/23 55/23 56/3 56/7 57/22 58/3 59/13 59/16 61/22 62/5 63/11 63/18 64/6 67/8 67/10 67/15 68/4 69/23 71/20 72/18 73/5 73/18 74/19	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7 107/17 107/19 108/19 112/1 113/14 119/25 121/16 121/19 122/24 123/9 127/1 127/6 129/6 133/1 133/6 135/21 136/19 137/1 138/24 140/12 they [104] 2/12 4/6 6/21 7/20 8/1 9/3 13/7 13/18 13/20 17/3
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15 tallying [1] 134/12 target [2] 66/21 98/23 targeted [3] 110/2 137/16 140/4 tax [10] 28/10 69/23 70/1 70/6 70/7 70/9 70/11 70/14 70/15 86/2 team [6] 14/3 14/6 67/24 68/6 106/5 118/9	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25 thank [20] 1/6 9/4 38/14 39/11 49/4 49/4 52/18 63/18 64/25 75/7 92/7 92/15 92/20 93/1 95/12 95/14 95/24 95/25 140/8 140/23 Thanks [1] 2/19 that [870] that I can [1] 1/4 that's [46] 1/24 15/2	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 <b>them [58]</b> 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8 24/7 24/16 26/16 27/4 29/16 32/24 34/21 45/14 45/15 53/8 53/14 65/10 68/14 71/2 71/17 72/14 74/13 74/16 75/1 77/12 79/13 99/1 100/19 100/19 101/18 102/6 104/20 105/8 106/11 108/24 111/10 112/4 112/4 112/11	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9 46/25 47/9 50/12 51/1 51/25 53/8 53/16 54/18 54/20 55/2 55/23 55/23 56/3 56/7 57/22 58/3 59/13 59/16 61/22 62/5 63/11 63/18 64/6 67/8 67/10 67/15 68/4 69/23 71/20 72/18 73/5 73/18 74/19 74/21 75/12 77/3	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7 107/17 107/19 108/19 112/1 113/14 119/25 121/16 121/19 122/24 123/9 127/1 127/6 129/6 133/1 133/6 135/21 136/19 137/1 138/24 140/12 they [104] 2/12 4/6 6/21 7/20 8/1 9/3 13/7 13/18 13/20 17/3 20/17 20/19 22/6 22/7
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15 tallying [1] 134/12 target [2] 66/21 98/23 targeted [3] 110/2 137/16 140/4 tax [10] 28/10 69/23 70/1 70/6 70/7 70/9 70/11 70/14 70/15 86/2 team [6] 14/3 14/6 67/24 68/6 106/5 118/9 technically [3] 49/13	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25 thank [20] 1/6 9/4 38/14 39/11 49/4 49/4 52/18 63/18 64/25 75/7 92/7 92/15 92/20 93/1 95/12 95/14 95/24 95/25 140/8 140/23 Thanks [1] 2/19 that [870] that I can [1] 1/4 that's [46] 1/24 15/2 18/4 23/11 24/9 26/10	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 <b>them [58]</b> 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8 24/7 24/16 26/16 27/4 29/16 32/24 34/21 45/14 45/15 53/8 53/14 65/10 68/14 71/2 71/17 72/14 74/13 74/16 75/1 77/12 79/13 99/1 100/19 100/19 101/18 102/6 104/20 105/8 106/11 108/24 111/10 112/4 112/4 112/11 114/13 114/16 117/13	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9 46/25 47/9 50/12 51/1 51/25 53/8 53/16 54/18 54/20 55/2 55/23 55/23 56/3 56/7 57/22 58/3 59/13 59/16 61/22 62/5 63/11 63/18 64/6 67/8 67/10 67/15 68/4 69/23 71/20 72/18 73/5 73/18 74/19 74/21 75/12 77/3 78/13 80/7 80/13	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7 107/17 107/19 108/19 112/1 113/14 119/25 121/16 121/19 122/24 123/9 127/1 127/6 129/6 133/1 133/6 135/21 136/19 137/1 138/24 140/12 they [104] 2/12 4/6 6/21 7/20 8/1 9/3 13/7 13/18 13/20 17/3 20/17 20/19 22/6 22/7 24/9 31/14 31/15
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15 tallying [1] 134/12 target [2] 66/21 98/23 targeted [3] 110/2 137/16 140/4 tax [10] 28/10 69/23 70/1 70/6 70/7 70/9 70/11 70/14 70/15 86/2 team [6] 14/3 14/6 67/24 68/6 106/5 118/9	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25 thank [20] 1/6 9/4 38/14 39/11 49/4 49/4 52/18 63/18 64/25 75/7 92/7 92/15 92/20 93/1 95/12 95/14 95/24 95/25 140/8 140/23 Thanks [1] 2/19 that [870] that I can [1] 1/4 that's [46] 1/24 15/2 18/4 23/11 24/9 26/10 32/15 32/15 33/1	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 <b>them [58]</b> 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8 24/7 24/16 26/16 27/4 29/16 32/24 34/21 45/14 45/15 53/8 53/14 65/10 68/14 71/2 71/17 72/14 74/13 74/16 75/1 77/12 79/13 99/1 100/19 100/19 101/18 102/6 104/20 105/8 106/11 108/24 111/10 112/4 112/4 112/11 114/13 114/16 117/13 121/11 124/20 131/1	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9 46/25 47/9 50/12 51/1 51/25 53/8 53/16 54/18 54/20 55/2 55/23 55/23 56/3 56/7 57/22 58/3 59/13 59/16 61/22 62/5 63/11 63/18 64/6 67/8 67/10 67/15 68/4 69/23 71/20 72/18 73/5 73/18 74/19 74/21 75/12 77/3 78/13 80/7 80/13 80/20 81/22 83/20	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7 107/17 107/19 108/19 112/1 113/14 119/25 121/16 121/19 122/24 123/9 127/1 127/6 129/6 133/1 133/6 135/21 136/19 137/1 138/24 140/12 they [104] 2/12 4/6 6/21 7/20 8/1 9/3 13/7 13/18 13/20 17/3 20/17 20/19 22/6 22/7 24/9 31/14 31/15 31/16 33/7 34/16
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15 tallying [1] 134/12 target [2] 66/21 98/23 targeted [3] 110/2 137/16 140/4 tax [10] 28/10 69/23 70/1 70/6 70/7 70/9 70/11 70/14 70/15 86/2 team [6] 14/3 14/6 67/24 68/6 106/5 118/9 technically [3] 49/13	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25 thank [20] 1/6 9/4 38/14 39/11 49/4 49/4 52/18 63/18 64/25 75/7 92/7 92/15 92/20 93/1 95/12 95/14 95/24 95/25 140/8 140/23 Thanks [1] 2/19 that [870] that I can [1] 1/4 that's [46] 1/24 15/2 18/4 23/11 24/9 26/10	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 <b>them [58]</b> 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8 24/7 24/16 26/16 27/4 29/16 32/24 34/21 45/14 45/15 53/8 53/14 65/10 68/14 71/2 71/17 72/14 74/13 74/16 75/1 77/12 79/13 99/1 100/19 100/19 101/18 102/6 104/20 105/8 106/11 108/24 111/10 112/4 112/4 112/11 114/13 114/16 117/13	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9 46/25 47/9 50/12 51/1 51/25 53/8 53/16 54/18 54/20 55/2 55/23 55/23 56/3 56/7 57/22 58/3 59/13 59/16 61/22 62/5 63/11 63/18 64/6 67/8 67/10 67/15 68/4 69/23 71/20 72/18 73/5 73/18 74/19 74/21 75/12 77/3 78/13 80/7 80/13	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7 107/17 107/19 108/19 112/1 113/14 119/25 121/16 121/19 122/24 123/9 127/1 127/6 129/6 133/1 133/6 135/21 136/19 137/1 138/24 140/12 they [104] 2/12 4/6 6/21 7/20 8/1 9/3 13/7 13/18 13/20 17/3 20/17 20/19 22/6 22/7 24/9 31/14 31/15
56/2 60/17 61/12 67/6 94/18 98/9 115/25 122/14 131/25 takes [3] 65/20 66/8 111/2 taking [6] 25/13 40/12 63/6 96/15 133/6 139/22 takings [2] 135/10 135/10 talking [1] 129/15 tallying [1] 134/12 target [2] 66/21 98/23 targeted [3] 110/2 137/16 140/4 tax [10] 28/10 69/23 70/1 70/6 70/7 70/9 70/11 70/14 70/15 86/2 team [6] 14/3 14/6 67/24 68/6 106/5 118/9 technically [3] 49/13	than [32] 5/9 8/1 15/20 21/9 24/1 26/5 34/6 34/17 39/21 40/9 45/25 50/19 51/5 55/8 59/10 59/18 64/4 64/10 70/11 76/18 76/24 77/12 77/16 78/8 84/8 92/14 126/20 129/7 133/25 138/9 140/5 140/25 thank [20] 1/6 9/4 38/14 39/11 49/4 49/4 52/18 63/18 64/25 75/7 92/7 92/15 92/20 93/1 95/12 95/14 95/24 95/25 140/8 140/23 Thanks [1] 2/19 that [870] that I can [1] 1/4 that's [46] 1/24 15/2 18/4 23/11 24/9 26/10 32/15 32/15 33/1	117/5 117/21 121/11 121/12 121/12 122/23 124/18 125/19 125/24 126/24 131/5 131/8 131/12 133/7 135/6 136/20 137/23 138/3 138/12 139/7 140/6 <b>them [58]</b> 1/5 1/22 4/15 4/17 4/18 4/21 12/3 15/8 22/7 22/8 24/7 24/16 26/16 27/4 29/16 32/24 34/21 45/14 45/15 53/8 53/14 65/10 68/14 71/2 71/17 72/14 74/13 74/16 75/1 77/12 79/13 99/1 100/19 100/19 101/18 102/6 104/20 105/8 106/11 108/24 111/10 112/4 112/4 112/11 114/13 114/16 117/13 121/11 124/20 131/1	theory [1] 17/7 there [119] 1/12 2/7 3/9 5/19 8/20 9/7 11/1 16/21 19/7 19/14 19/19 19/20 20/7 23/9 23/16 23/21 23/22 25/18 26/24 30/23 33/4 33/13 33/19 35/10 37/18 38/2 38/25 39/5 39/5 41/23 42/4 42/15 43/15 45/9 46/25 47/9 50/12 51/1 51/25 53/8 53/16 54/18 54/20 55/2 55/23 55/23 56/3 56/7 57/22 58/3 59/13 59/16 61/22 62/5 63/11 63/18 64/6 67/8 67/10 67/15 68/4 69/23 71/20 72/18 73/5 73/18 74/19 74/21 75/12 77/3 78/13 80/7 80/13 80/20 81/22 83/20	these [57] 1/21 5/8 5/10 8/21 17/21 18/11 25/25 26/1 26/7 32/12 32/14 34/20 35/4 39/19 39/25 45/8 52/20 64/8 70/18 77/20 82/16 88/4 92/6 93/5 93/9 93/15 94/6 94/9 94/12 94/12 95/3 95/12 95/16 98/19 99/18 102/1 106/7 107/17 107/19 108/19 112/1 113/14 119/25 121/16 121/19 122/24 123/9 127/1 127/6 129/6 133/1 133/6 135/21 136/19 137/1 138/24 140/12 they [104] 2/12 4/6 6/21 7/20 8/1 9/3 13/7 13/18 13/20 17/3 20/17 20/19 22/6 22/7 24/9 31/14 31/15 31/16 33/7 34/16

(64) tab... - they

				400/04
T	those [125] 1/15 3/3	54/15 59/4 85/17	told [13] 2/4 26/18	132/21
they [81] 35/20 42/3	5/19 6/10 6/13 8/8	91/21 100/4 123/23	63/11 63/13 63/13	trying [4] 64/4 64/10
42/4 47/13 49/19	9/10/10/13/10/10	through [21] 10/7	87/20 104/9 105/8	65/22 122/5
49/20 50/22 50/24	10/19 11/2 12/12	33/6 36/20 42/1 65/10	114/22 120/15 122/20	tuppences [1] 135/1
51/11 52/9 53/3 54/1	13/12 13/22 14/1 14/7	76/24 77/4 80/9 80/24	130/12 135/25	turn [13] 8/20 13/19
54/2 60/14 61/8 62/5	17/6 23/1 26/15 26/15	85/10 93/20 96/22	too [2] 18/14 75/2	15/9 16/9 19/6 20/24
	30/12 31/5 33/3 36/25	96/23 102/3 103/6	took [6] 41/25 52/4	31/25 35/2 42/23
63/13 66/16 70/15	37/2 37/10 37/24 38/6	106/7 110/22 114/9	56/19 68/6 96/14	54/13 75/21 130/20
70/17 73/16 76/12	38/12 44/3 48/6 48/16	117/13 126/1 127/23	114/16	139/7
79/13 85/5 86/10 88/8	48/20 50/14 52/23	throughout [3] 49/10	tooth [1] 103/15	Turning [2] 24/12
88/10 88/13 91/23	53/7 54/5 55/19 55/20	68/7 103/14	tortuous [1] 5/16	62/7
95/4 97/23 99/15	56/15 57/5 58/20	throwing [1] 38/5	total [5] 57/1 81/4	tutted [1] 135/20
105/20 106/22 109/18	58/22 62/11 65/6 65/9		82/21 116/18 134/21	twice [1] 78/16
109/18 109/25 110/5				
111/8 111/11 111/16	65/12 67/4 73/10	time [37] 1/19 2/10	totalling [1] 13/2	two [28] 1/4 1/7 1/11
112/8 113/16 113/22	73/15 74/6 74/8 74/10	5/21 10/22 24/22	touch [1] 132/8	1/12 1/18 6/13 9/10
115/20 116/10 116/25	74/16 75/11 75/21	25/14 25/24 30/15	touched [2] 5/1 79/9	11/9 14/22 15/13 23/1
117/17 122/21 122/23	75/23 76/7 77/1 77/2	39/4 43/1 54/8 55/15	towards [9] 13/5	24/7 26/21 57/22
130/25 131/13 131/13	77/4 77/25 78/16 81/9	56/15 56/22 56/25	65/14 70/16 70/25	72/14 74/7 77/1 82/20
131/23 132/7 132/13	81/20 83/2 84/9 84/23	57/6 58/5 58/7 64/5	71/9 72/12 72/13	90/18 92/13 103/9
133/14 134/12 134/13	85/1 86/11 87/19 89/4	65/6 67/16 73/24 76/1	72/22 113/15	105/7 108/13 108/19
134/13 135/5 135/6	90/2 91/1 91/6 91/9	78/22 86/18 92/8	track [2] 112/10 117/6	109/16 135/8 135/24
135/7 135/7 135/8	92/1 92/4 93/19 93/22	92/10 98/4 105/6	trail [1] 138/10	136/19
135/20 136/6 136/8	95/14 96/17 96/18	105/11 111/13 111/14	trained [1] 123/2	two-thirds [1] 77/1
	96/18 96/19 96/19	122/7 129/1 129/6	trajectory [2] 65/14	type [4] 46/20 89/17
136/9 136/12 136/21	97/1 97/12 98/12 99/3	136/4 140/2	66/24	103/13 120/6
136/24 137/2 137/3	99/9 99/12 100/16	time-frame [1] 111/14		types [3] 42/2 74/17
137/4 137/8 137/10	102/1 103/14 104/7	timeline [1] 69/5	75/5 99/5 134/7	122/11
137/12 138/4 138/10	104/24 112/20 117/18		transferred [1] 126/7	typically [2] 46/21
140/19	117/25 119/7 120/5	111/17	transparency [1]	76/22
they'd [1] 66/17	125/11 125/12 125/16		37/12	Tyson [1] 128/23
they've [1] 122/7	125/18 125/20 126/5	5/12 100/14 101/8	transparent [7] 36/6	
things [7] 2/13 3/6				U
3/14 26/8 102/11	126/11 126/13 126/20		88/6 100/9 127/19	<b>UK [3]</b> 3/2 93/5 103/6
129/5 140/25		timetabling [1] 110/8	128/13 128/22 137/12	UKGI [8] 93/6 93/7
think [21] 2/14 38/15	131/25 132/5 132/9	timing [1] 69/12	transparently [1]	94/1 94/8 94/10 95/6
47/4 53/16 58/24 64/3	132/21 133/12 133/20	• • • •	125/8	
65/25 79/1 79/9 80/16	138/2 139/4 139/18	tiny [1] 29/3	transpires [1] 129/20	95/16 95/21
92/9 92/18 95/19	140/5 140/13	tired [1] 107/14	trappings [1] 123/19	<b>UKGI's [5]</b> 93/15
102/15 120/18 129/12	though [11] 20/17	title [1] 113/19	traumatised [1] 116/4	94/19 94/21 95/2 95/4
129/14 130/13 130/17	23/13 55/21 58/3	to [1168]	treated [5] 15/24 40/1	ultimately [2] 91/11
140/2 140/8	65/11 75/4 87/24	today [27] 1/7 2/23	43/8 58/23 120/23	118/12
thinking [3] 25/15	98/15 101/5 120/4	2/24 5/23 6/19 10/6	treating [1] 113/22	unable [3] 21/16
34/16 122/6	125/3	11/11 40/5 43/24	treatment [3] 12/9	109/14 115/8
	thought [8] 34/11	66/12 69/6 90/8 93/5	121/7 137/22	unacceptable [3]
third [6] 13/9 36/10	80/17 104/3 107/13	94/13 95/1 102/12	trial [1] 125/21	75/17 119/11 126/10
49/6 61/1 70/21 70/21	114/17 128/6 128/17	106/7 108/5 112/22	tried [1] 136/11	uncertain [1] 2/5
thirdly [6] 8/14 28/3	141/1	117/9 119/4 120/12	triggered [1] 28/15	uncertainty [2] 55/3
40/17 43/18 71/24	thoughts [1] 57/23	122/20 127/10 138/25		106/18
86/16	threat [1] 136/21	139/20 140/3	139/13 139/18	unclear [1] 79/20
thirds [1] 77/1	threatened [2] 96/17		trust [2] 112/7 137/17	uncles [1] 135/8
this [188]	96/19			uncover [1] 110/18
thorough [2] 82/1		93/3	trustee [2] 28/8 68/21	uncovered [2] 105/22
103/15		together [4] 9/10 38/2		400/04
	14/2 40/6 43/13 50/14	96/5 125/2	try [4] 8/24 9/2 132/13	100/27

(65) they ... - uncovered

U	unlawfully [1] 132/22	64/19 65/1 65/10	102/13 105/20 107/19	48/2 48/7 50/21 50/21
under [49] 6/3 8/5 8/7	unless [1] 104/19	65/21 65/21 66/20	108/16 111/13 113/12	51/3 51/11 51/14
8/12 9/25 14/8 14/23	unnecessary [2] 44/2	90/4 90/8 102/10	114/15 121/23 129/5	51/14 51/17 53/22
15/12 17/12 17/14	55/5	114/21 117/8 120/4	129/17 133/1 133/9	56/14 58/11 58/12
17/20 19/11 21/2 21/2	unparticularised [1]	123/16 124/13 128/24		58/15 60/8 60/9 61/3
21/21 21/21 25/17	126/4	129/15 129/22 130/11	140/23	65/24 65/25 66/2
25/19 26/21 27/7	unreasonable [1]	139/23	via [1] 3/25	66/12 66/21 67/17
28/12 29/20 29/22	60/10	use [8] 1/13 41/5	victim [1] 114/5	67/25 68/4 68/11
29/25 30/4 31/5 31/13	unrepresented [1]	41/10 83/3 87/7	victimised [1] 111/8	68/25 69/1 69/13
36/13 41/5 41/6 42/15	74/3	105/23 132/8 140/13	victims [6] 100/12	71/21 73/8 74/11
42/17 43/2 45/12 47/8	unspecified [1] 132/7	28/2 39/3 41/12 51/16	103/20 104/14 113/23 131/13 136/25	77/19 87/10 88/6 88/6 98/6 102/4 102/16
47/17 59/24 69/21	untenable [1] 123/25 until [11] 5/5 25/3	80/14 99/17 106/16	view [23] 12/18 34/1	103/11 104/5 105/8
71/25 74/1 77/14 78/3	61/7 79/7 102/12	108/3 115/12	39/16 46/5 46/17	107/13 108/13 108/16
78/18 79/22 79/24	107/10 109/13 135/4	useful [1] 120/7	48/18 50/14 55/2 79/1	116/22 120/16 123/9
90/21 126/4 132/17	136/10 139/19 141/5	user [3] 71/13 116/11	82/6 83/20 84/15 85/1	123/11 123/13 123/13
136/21	up [54] 7/22 8/20 9/16		87/16 88/22 90/14	123/14 123/15 125/25
underlying [1] 15/2	9/20 10/8 10/9 10/11	user-friendly [2]	91/3 91/22 111/2	126/2 126/3 129/12
underpin [1] 47/10	13/19 16/9 19/6 20/24	116/11 116/14	118/15 129/3 138/18	130/12 130/24 131/2
understand [11]	26/8 33/14 38/15	using [2] 19/7 124/3	138/25	135/9 135/12 136/8
10/15 49/1 49/2 51/6 96/12 109/24 124/2	42/23 45/11 48/16	usual [1] 69/22	views [3] 90/18 94/17	136/10 138/9 140/13
125/23 127/5 130/9	52/4 53/23 56/10 59/3	V	123/5	140/14
139/15	59/4 60/11 61/3 65/5	-	village [1] 136/15	wasn't [2] 39/5 64/11
understanding [4]	65/11 65/20 66/3	valuation [3] 82/5	virtue [3] 52/24 74/10	watch [2] 135/19
64/18 94/9 111/7	67/25 68/6 68/15	86/13 87/4	138/16	139/7
131/11	73/12 74/13 74/25	value [13] 20/6 32/11	visits [1] 106/22	watching [1] 5/19
understood [4] 30/13	77/9 78/8 88/1 89/20	33/4 73/10 73/11	vital [1] 105/19	water [1] 131/8
36/1 40/25 75/24	90/9 102/11 106/2	74/11 74/18 74/20 75/1 81/14 86/15	voice [1] 35/14	way [45] 2/1 6/25
undertake [5] 85/20	112/18 113/19 126/8	97/17 109/9	W	7/25 10/10 18/2 18/10
85/20 85/21 85/21	130/24 131/4 133/8	value/size [1] 20/6	wait [3] 5/5 110/4	34/23 35/6 35/20 36/6
99/8	134/12 136/5 136/7 137/4 137/6 139/12	valuer [1] 33/24	136/10	36/19 41/16 42/7 58/5 60/8 69/13 69/22 82/1
undervalues [1] 30/6	120/10	variation [1] 79/8	waited [1] 26/20	84/5 84/13 84/15
underwent [1] 125/16	up-to-date [1] 106/2	various [5] 1/8 2/12	walk [1] 39/3	84/22 85/7 86/12 92/5
undeserved [1] 105/4	update [11] 8/21 26/7	7/7 93/17 97/15	want [9] 39/6 64/19	94/17 102/10 102/25
undiagnosed [1]	29/10 51/19 65/15	vast [4] 17/17 34/21	65/11 70/15 73/2 99/5	112/11 113/3 117/23
114/6	72/24 95/12 97/8	47/16 117/17	128/3 129/25 131/23	118/3 121/7 121/10
undisputed [1] 60/21	109/22 124/6 129/7	verge [1] 106/24	wanted [3] 52/16	121/11 122/1 128/19
unequal [2] 12/9 137/21	updates [1] 89/1	verifiable [1] 60/21	136/20 136/21	128/23 129/23 131/21
unfair [7] 12/8 55/10	upon [18] 3/21 5/1 6/8	version [5] 14/25	wanting [1] 133/16	133/9 135/9 137/8
71/10 78/18 121/7	8/12 8/17 22/5 43/10	15/1 19/7 19/8 71/21	wants [1] 94/8	137/10 137/11
123/25 137/21	66/1 101/25 112/1	versions [1] 14/23	was [105] 2/4 6/22	we [268]
unfairness [1] 123/3	112/4 119/20 121/8	very [49] 1/6 2/19	6/25 7/2 7/4 7/22 7/25	we'd [4] 38/16 42/18
unfamiliar [1] 28/6	127/25 131/21 133/6	7/21 9/4 9/5 10/22	8/4 8/7 9/19 9/20	47/13 89/7
unfolded [1] 38/9	136/25 138/22	17/2 24/6 38/14 39/1	10/11 10/16 13/4	we'll [3] 79/4 92/18
unfortunate [2] 37/16	urgent [2] 95/7	43/16 47/3 52/24 54/12 56/16 57/13	14/25 15/1 18/5 18/10 19/20 19/22 21/13	114/17
137/14	111/15	66/16 78/22 78/23	21/14 24/18 24/19	we're [17] 1/7 1/14
unhelpful [1] 77/8	urgently [1] 104/20	80/12 82/10 82/11	25/1 25/2 25/21 26/22	1/24 9/3 25/15 26/14
unilaterally [2] 57/17	us [31] 5/17 5/22 15/3	85/23 89/10 90/4 90/6	32/3 33/11 33/22	41/19 45/1 66/3 82/10
58/16	35/13 36/22 36/25 37/3 37/21 37/25	90/13 92/4 92/11 93/8		90/4 90/6 102/17 103/25 107/23 120/15
unique [1] 81/25	53/13 63/25 64/17	93/12 95/25 98/4	39/4 47/23 47/24 48/1	130/12
	JJ/1J UJ/2J U4/11			100/12
L	1			(66) under - we're

(66) under - we're

[				
W	84/24 86/14 90/20	46/3 46/23 49/19	33/25 34/20 36/21	29/10 29/20 30/20
we've [3] 52/18 68/13	91/1 92/2 96/14 96/18	49/20 53/3 74/21	36/25 37/2 37/21	33/7 33/16 35/18
112/22	96/18 96/21 98/1	75/12 78/6 78/11	37/25 38/6 39/3 39/4	36/12 36/13 36/25
website [3] 51/22	101/23 103/9 107/9	79/18 87/10 95/18	44/5 44/21 51/22	37/1 37/16 37/25
51/24 110/15	109/25 119/25 120/2	95/19 106/21 106/22	54/15 57/5 65/19	38/20 40/8 40/12
Wednesday [2] 1/1	124/5 125/21 126/5	110/25 113/1 114/12	67/12 69/1 73/24	40/17 43/12 49/21
141/5	126/13 126/13 126/20	115/16 119/25 134/11	75/24 75/25 77/4 90/8	50/5 52/12 52/13 53/5
wee'uns [1] 134/24	127/9 129/7 131/3	135/9 136/20 136/22	93/6 95/14 96/18	53/7 53/8 54/13 55/18
week [13] 1/25 1/25	131/12 138/6 140/25	whenever [1] 79/4	96/18 96/20 99/13	58/16 62/5 64/3 64/9
25/20 56/18 90/3 90/5	141/1	where [50] 11/10 12/7	103/24 105/3 107/2	64/13 66/7 67/2 68/22
90/9 94/13 102/11	what [93] 1/14 3/19	21/16 21/24 23/19	107/19 110/18 111/21	72/7 72/24 76/22
106/8 107/5 136/5	4/1 7/16 18/1 20/13	23/24 24/5 27/22	111/24 112/10 112/12	79/19 79/25 80/16
	23/25 27/1 33/1 37/7	27/24 28/3 28/6 28/8	112/14 112/20 113/19	82/13 82/16 82/25
141/3	37/15 42/7 45/14	28/10 28/15 29/13	114/4 114/7 116/16	82/25 83/5 83/11
weeks [5] 10/23 25/3	47/14 47/21 48/16	31/2 36/20 37/11 38/3	117/12 117/22 117/24	85/20 85/21 86/2
56/19 67/9 68/23	48/25 49/1 50/16	43/18 44/15 45/18	120/14 121/22 122/5	86/25 89/6 89/18 90/9
weight [1] 60/19	50/21 59/2 60/21	46/11 49/21 53/25	123/8 125/16 125/18	92/11 92/13 93/6
welcome [2] 108/16	63/13 64/6 64/15	54/20 55/18 55/19	125/20 125/24 126/2	95/19 96/22 97/5
125/6	64/18 66/1 69/25 73/9	59/17 60/12 60/22	126/3 126/5 126/12	97/10 97/17 97/19
well [45] 10/25 18/20	74/17 81/23 87/12	63/10 71/2 72/4 73/5	126/13 126/20 126/23	99/3 99/7 99/7 100/19
25/6 32/19 39/14 47/3	87/20 88/6 90/23	74/20 76/5 76/11 81/5	127/5 127/22 129/13	104/19 106/25 107/2
48/5 48/11 52/9 57/22	96/12 98/20 99/6	89/14 97/4 115/7	132/21 133/21 138/20	108/19 109/4 109/5
58/24 60/20 61/4 64/3	101/6 101/15 101/18	117/19 119/1 122/18	who I asked [1] 26/17	109/8 111/24 111/24
64/20 65/9 68/17	102/5 102/19 102/24	125/21 132/13 135/15	whole [2] 21/18	112/1 113/1 114/10
70/23 72/5 72/11 80/6	104/2 104/5 104/10	136/3 137/5	115/10	114/19 116/14 117/22
80/20 88/18 92/12	106/15 108/2 110/2	whereas [1] 126/13	wholly [6] 83/12	118/8 118/25 119/15
109/16 113/17 114/5	110/13 111/9 111/25	whereby [1] 131/3	89/22 105/3 119/11	122/12 124/14 124/15
116/9 116/13 117/11	112/18 112/24 113/16	whether [42] 3/6 17/9	121/25 139/16	124/20 124/25 125/1
117/13 117/19 119/17	113/24 115/11 115/11	18/9 18/12 19/18	whom [4] 30/13 75/18	125/4 125/6 125/8
120/15 121/2 123/16	116/6 117/9 120/3	19/20 19/22 20/9	89/9 138/10	125/10 126/2 126/16
127/12 128/9 129/3	120/21 120/24 121/4	20/15 22/7 23/16 24/3	whose [10] 9/17	126/19 126/25 128/19
129/23 129/24 133/16	121/6 121/10 122/8	25/14 25/17 27/7	10/13 10/18 10/19	129/8 129/19 129/24
134/23 136/2 136/15	122/21 127/8 127/13	27/11 27/13 27/21	11/2 11/5 11/13 13/23	131/19 131/20 132/12
wellbeing [1] 104/7	127/17 127/23 128/4	29/8 29/12 30/3 30/24		133/15 134/8 134/20
went [10] 37/15 42/1	128/6 128/7 129/14	34/21 34/23 34/24	why [16] 1/18 1/24	136/5 138/1 138/14
50/18 56/16 105/3	129/19 129/20 132/5	35/14 48/7 50/22 58/7	38/7 41/9 41/15 46/6	140/3 140/4 140/16
109/16 135/2 135/5	133/2 133/21 134/5	59/7 67/14 72/21	66/23 75/10 80/2	140/18 140/21
136/14 138/8	136/5 137/10 139/1	75/19 79/13 83/8 91/5		willing [1] 91/15
were [79] 6/10 6/14	139/25 140/9 140/13	91/11 91/14 91/23	109/24 120/22 121/1	window [3] 24/18
7/5 7/8 7/10 7/13 7/19	140/17 140/17 140/18		121/5	24/19 24/21
8/6 8/9 9/7 11/2 12/23	140/17 140/17 140/18	which [195]	wide [2] 17/2 105/24	windows [1] 139/7
13/2 26/24 34/1 34/11		which I read [1] 31/11		
35/21 36/5 41/1 46/14	53/13 79/14 87/16	whichever [1] 66/4	105/18	winning [1] 138/8 wish [21] 18/1 20/9
47/15 48/10 48/19	134/5	while [2] 21/25	wider [5] 15/20 16/1	22/7 24/10 25/12
50/14 50/23 52/23		116/19	41/3 57/14 83/3	27/21 29/12 30/3
53/11 59/20 61/12	whatever [6] 55/9			30/24 33/16 34/18
64/12 64/15 69/3 69/4	56/24 64/8 99/4	whilst [6] 29/23 31/3 49/12 109/20 115/18	will [140] 2/3 2/11 2/12 2/24 8/21 8/24	
73/10 73/10 73/15	134/20 135/22			34/24 37/6 45/1 86/9 87/11 110/4 126/24
73/16 73/24 73/24	whatsoever [1] 110/8		9/6 9/22 11/15 11/22	87/11 110/4 126/24
74/13 74/16 74/19	when [37] 1/22 9/3	who [81] 1/21 2/3	12/11 14/6 15/7 15/17	127/15 128/14 130/4
75/1 77/20 78/7 78/12	17/19 18/4 22/4 22/6	6/24 8/5 8/8 8/9 13/1	17/15 19/9 22/3 22/5	wished [1] 59/21
79/2 80/7 82/6 84/12	28/14 31/14 34/16	13/12 17/17 24/17	22/9 22/21 22/23	wishes [1] 57/3
	39/1 41/7 45/20 45/22	26/17 30/14 32/12	22/24 23/6 24/23	wishing [1] 124/20
	l	l	l	(67) we've - wishing

(67) we've - wishing

147	12/10 14/1 20/2 22/10	120/0	00/1 101/2 105/15	
W	13/19 14/1 20/2 22/18	132/9	99/1 101/3 105/15	
with [156]	36/3 36/16 39/11 41/2	wrong-headed [1]	105/17 105/17 105/24	
withdrew [1] 135/6	44/2 44/5 44/5 45/22	114/16	106/5 108/13 109/25	
within [32] 3/7 3/19	45/24 46/2 46/15	wrongdoer [1] 58/7	110/14 113/6 124/15	
10/22 10/23 20/15	46/24 47/15 47/25	wronged [1] 5/18	128/20 134/7 138/11	
24/17 28/14 39/23	48/3 48/5 49/24 50/24	wrongful [2] 4/18 6/7	138/18 138/25 141/1	
46/18 50/7 62/6 76/8	51/23 53/14 53/20	wrongfully [1] 15/21	yours [1] 96/1	
77/10 79/3 84/11 86/7	54/3 54/3 55/5 55/9	wrongly [4] 15/22		
90/25 96/10 97/13	55/16 57/25 59/12	15/24 85/12 96/18		
97/18 101/6 101/25	59/22 63/25 64/12	wrongs [1] 4/5		
115/18 117/19 118/2	64/16 64/19 66/16	wrote [4] 51/18 86/3		
124/21 125/11 125/13	67/13 67/21 69/4 73/9	105/7 105/13		
133/23 138/14 138/20	73/15 76/12 76/15 77/8 77/20 77/23	Y		
139/3	78/13 78/24 80/8	year [16] 4/8 5/5 26/1		
without [14] 31/19	83/11 83/11 84/20	39/17 40/12 67/2 77/7		
33/7 39/7 44/17 77/21	87/20 88/14 89/10	97/4 98/16 104/15		
80/24 82/9 82/19	90/4 91/25 95/21	104/23 105/12 106/20		
88/21 102/5 105/20	95/21 98/5 98/11	108/12 117/7 118/20		
119/21 123/16 123/17	98/15 98/23 99/1 99/2			
witness [3] 69/1	99/18 101/6 101/11	60/11 101/24 103/8		
114/20 116/16	102/6 102/9 102/25	107/4 107/10 114/24		
witnesses [1] 136/20	102/25 103/22 105/22	116/21		
women [1] 32/22	107/10 110/9 112/24	yes [15] 18/7 20/2		
won't [3] 1/15 2/1	116/6 118/22 120/25	34/17 38/3 63/2 63/16		
61/7	121/3 121/23 123/1	66/2 66/14 73/7 92/24		
wonder [1] 113/19	126/10 126/24 127/16	95/23 100/22 100/24		
wonderful [1] 92/17	128/24 128/25 129/5	129/10 129/22		
word [2] 1/13 2/14	130/2 130/14 132/14	yesterday [8] 65/16		
wording [2] 119/17	133/19 136/15 137/13	65/17 65/18 74/5		
124/18	140/9 140/12	85/25 85/25 86/3		
words [3] 49/20	wouldn't [11] 45/8	124/10		
101/11 140/13	47/12 48/3 48/9 50/11	yet [5] 33/7 35/11		
work [14] 2/1 34/15	68/9 76/16 80/7 92/13	109/11 123/18 126/4		
36/24 37/9 37/24	136/9 136/12	you [268]		
39/24 48/6 77/3 93/13	write [3] 61/16 64/21	<b>you'd [1]</b> 1/18		
116/6 123/24 125/10 129/12 129/13	124/10	you'll [2] 136/2 136/6		
	writing [4] 64/9 75/4	you've [7] 107/25		
worked [2] 32/19 120/1	90/5 99/8	119/4 120/17 124/18		
workers [1] 104/10	written [30] 5/11	134/17 134/19 140/24		
working [5] 11/14	11/25 14/4 20/23	you,sir [1] 136/13		
13/4 68/18 88/7	36/17 39/13 40/7	your [57] 3/5 3/13 4/9		
109/19	40/13 40/18 42/11	5/20 8/20 9/21 12/15		
works [1] 107/5	60/9 64/8 93/3 93/7	12/22 13/17 13/19		
worries [1] 106/25	94/11 94/21 95/3	14/3 14/6 15/4 22/11		
worry [2] 66/13	97/14 109/12 113/13	27/1 35/4 38/13 38/18		
132/24	115/24 117/5 117/16	39/14 39/15 39/18		
worse [1] 138/9	119/8 122/16 125/24	40/11 40/19 42/21		
Worsfold [1] 106/19	130/18 130/20 131/18	43/23 65/1 65/8 66/1		
would [105] 1/22 5/10	138/12	71/15 79/2 84/6 88/19 90/14 90/16 90/17		
9/15 11/6 13/6 13/9	wrong [5] 37/15	90/14 90/16 90/17 91/3 91/22 97/3 97/18		
	114/16 116/1 123/25	31/3 31/22 31/3 31/10		
				(68) with - yours

(68) with - yours