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Sent: Fri 29/07/2016 1:26:40 PM (UTC)

To: SPADS Clark [GRO] SpAd Clark
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Cc: French Claire (Communications) [GRO] Barker Matthew (Communications) [GRO] Callard, Richard - UKGI [GRO] Gareth Evans [GRO]

Subject: Post Office: potential weekend story on litigation

Sarah cc. Sophie, Auryn

There is currently civil litigation underway in the High Court against the Post Office by a group of c.200 individuals, mostly former postmasters (postmasters are essentially “franchisees” of Post Office Limited). The claims relate to the Post Office’s “Horizon” IT system, and accusations that Post Office has treated its agents unfairly. There is a chance that there could be some media interest in this issue over the weekend, because Post Office have today sent a letter to the claimants’ solicitor, which will be shared with the claimants and could therefore be made public.

This is a legal matter and the operational responsibility of Post Office Limited, the company which manages the Post Office network. As such, our advice would be not to comment, and for Press Office to pass any media enquiries to Post Office directly. This is the approach we have taken previously on this issue – please let me know if you think SpAds or Ministers would disagree.

We will provide full briefing on this issue to Ministers – this is flagged in the Day One briefing pack, and we have also included in our briefing to Margot James.

If you have any questions do give me a call – contact numbers below, and I can be reached on the mobile number over the weekend if needed.

Many thanks.
Laura

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