

MP Cases Review of Horizon

1. Update December 2012 Summary

- 1.1. The “Immunity Agreement” has been approved by the JFSA, 2nd Sight and Post Office. Key benefit is the agreed cut-off date, of 29th February 2013, for sub-postmasters to submit their cases; this helps to contain timelines.
- 1.2. There are currently 17 cases in the investigation. The number is expected to increase. We have not seen any cases yet from JFSA.
- 1.3. A prioritisation process is underway.
- 1.4. Preliminary findings for Yetminster and South Warnborough are due by the end of December.
- 1.5. It is unlikely that the investigation will complete before July. We are pushing for a completion date before the start of the summer recess.
- 1.6. The review has so far cost £60K. The final cost is expected to be in the order of £125K.
- 1.7. 2nd Sight are scheduling an update meeting with James Arbuthnot.
- 1.8. Challenges: These include, how best to communicate the investigation to sub-postmasters; and having little control over timelines.

2. Immunity Agreement

- 2.1. JFSA requested an Immunity Agreement to reassure sub-postmasters against reprisals if they come forward.
- 2.2. The wording for this agreement has now been approved (by JFSA, 2nd Sight and Post Office). Key points of the agreement:
 - Reassurance provided to sub-postmasters that they have no reason to fear if they come forward with potential Horizon issues.
 - Sub-postmasters have until end of February to submit cases.
 - The final report will be anonymised.
 - A clear process is defined on how sub-postmasters can submit cases into the review.

3. Scope – Number of Cases

- 3.1. There are 17 cases currently in scope, and the number is continuing to grow; three were added in November, two were added in October.
- 3.2. Once the Immunity Agreement is communicated, we are expecting another tranche of cases to be submitted.

4. Prioritisation

- 4.1. 2nd Sight has agreed with James Arbuthnot and JFSA that they will prioritise cases to enable them to focus on cases that provide most insight into the Horizon concerns. The cases at the bottom of the list will still be reviewed, although less time will be spent on them.
- 4.2. The process and criteria for prioritisation have been agreed with 2nd Sight and JFSA. Post Office is not involved in the prioritization process.

5. Yetminster and South Warnborough

- 5.1 James Arbuthnot and Oliver Letwin's cases (Yetminster and South Warnborough) are being investigated first by 2nd Sight. Their aim is to have preliminary findings for these by early in the New Year. When the South Warnborough sub-postmaster, Jo Hamilton, was interviewed by 2nd Sight she submitted new evidence of transaction anomalies these are now being investigated. This report will be available early in the New Year.
- 5.2 The investigators have not yet interviewed the Yetminster sub-postmaster and are trying to schedule an interview before the end of December. So far, their review of the documentation suggests that it is unlikely to indicate a problem with Horizon.

6. Time lines

- 6.1. The investigators have informed Post Office that, due to the amount of work required, the investigation will not complete before July.
- 6.2. Although Post Office does not want to be seen controlling the investigation, we have pushed for the investigation to be completed before the start of the summer recess.

7. Costs

- 7.1. To date, the investigation has cost Post Office £60K.

£45K	2 nd Sight
£15k	Millnet (for document scanning).
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£60k	Total spent to date

- 7.2. Fujitsu has agreed to extract the data for no charge.
- 7.3. 2nd Sight originally agreed to undertake the investigation for £100K. Since then the scope and time lines have extended; however, 2nd Sight has not requested a budget increase. Any request from 2nd Sight for additional budget will need to be approved by Susan Crichton.
- 7.4. It is expected that the total Millnet charge (for document scanning) will be £25k.

8. Communications to James Arbuthnot (JA)

- 8.1. Post Office is taking the position that for the investigation to be independent, the investigators, not Post Office, should be keeping JA informed.
- 8.2. 2nd Sight is scheduling a meeting with JA, to provide an update and discuss the prioritised list of cases. They hope to see him early in the New Year.
- 8.3. Post Office has requested that 2nd Sight, at the meeting, ask JA how best to keep the other MPs informed.

9. Challenges

- 9.1. The JFSA have requested that we inform the sub-postmaster community about the investigation, to encourage them to come forward. Post Office has not yet done this due to the concern of creating a high volume of low value cases. What we publish is being discussed internally and should be agreed by the end of next week.
- 9.2. To ensure true investigative independence, Post Office has been careful not to control the timelines of the investigation. This has resulted in a slower pace than we would have liked. To mitigate the risk of further “delays”, the Post Office has urged the following:
 - A cut-off date for sub-postmasters to submit their cases
 - A prioritisation process
 - A proposed target completion date (before summer recess)