

## **BRIEFING FOR WELSH OFFICE MEETING WITH DEREK HODGSON (CWU) ABOUT THE POST OFFICE REVIEW**

### **Lines to Take**

- The Post Office part of our history and culture; and business and individuals rely on it for a wide range of services. It is particularly important to those who live in remote areas. Critical that it continues to serve the community.
- Government proceeding with its review of public sector options for granting the Post Office greater commercial freedom. This will implement our manifesto pledge to enable the Post Office to meet the challenges of changing domestic and international markets.
- Work very much still in progress. Still hope to announce decisions in the Autumn. Understand that completed work of the Review will not be available for some weeks yet. Not appropriate for me to anticipate the outcome of the Review.
- Government has an open mind about options. Concern is to find the best public sector option for meeting the needs of the Post Office for greater commercial freedom to meet the challenges of the future.
- Recognise that this is an important issue for the unions. Understand you have been given opportunity to put your views forward at all levels within the review process.
- Vital that the process is not derailed. Speculative public debate now would be counter productive.
- *[if pressed on alleged “privatisation”]* The terms of reference are unequivocal: the Post Office will remain in the public sector and will continue to provide a universal postal service at a uniform tariff and a nation-wide network of post offices.

- ***[if pressed on future of individual post offices or on size of network]*** Neither the Government or the Post Office can guarantee the future of individual post offices, the vast majority of which are privately owned. But the Government is fully committed to the maintenance of a nation-wide network of post offices. Part of the strength of the Post Office lies in its ability to reach customers in all corners of the UK. Review considering ways in which the Government can help the Post Office to sustain a nation-wide network.
- ***[if pressed on Crown conversions]*** Crown conversion being considered in the context of the Review.
- ***[if devolution raised]*** The Post Office serves the UK. Postal services have been reserved and will not be devolved to the Welsh Assembly.