

From: Minister THOMAS (DBT) [GRO]
Sent: Wed 21/08/2024 5:14:30 PM (UTC)
To: Carl CRESWELL (DBT) [GRO]; Stephanie COSSOM (DBT) [GRO]; Charlotte HEYES (DBT) [GRO]; Elena MICHAEL (DBT) [GRO]; Brooks-White Jobshare [GRO] [GRO]; Harry FALLOWFIELD (DBT) [GRO]
Cc: Secretary of State DBT (DBT) [GRO]; DBT Ministerial Submission [GRO]
Subject: READOUT - Min Thomas meeting with Subpostmaster Tony Downey - 21/08/2024

Hi Beth, Harry, James,

Thanks again for your help facilitating today's meeting – PSB a readout and list of actions.

Please let me know if there's anything I've missed and happy to discuss anything if needed.

Best,
Jamie



Department for
Business & Trade

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Actions

@Brooks-White Jobshare please could we address Neils points highlighted below as follows:

1. Please can we push POL through official channels that the Minister wants to increase the pace at which redress is delivered while also improving Comms with claimants. We will then also discuss this with the interim CEO when we get this in the diary.
2. If the pace of MoJ letters is still not improving by the second week of Sep after MoJ orals, would you recommend sending a letter to MoJ?
3. Please can you forward on details to Neil on the deadlines for letters being sent and background around what the sift process is.

Attendees

- Minister Thomas (MT)
- Tony Downey, Former Subpostmaster (TD)
- Neil Hudgell, legal representative, Hudgell Solicitors (NH)
- Beth White, Post Office DD, DBT
- James Lovesey, Senior Policy Advisor Comms and Stakeholder Engagement Horizon Convictions Redress, DBT
- Harry Fallowfield, HSS lead, DBT

----STARTS----

- MT opened the meeting by apologising to TD for the impact Horizon had on him and his family and

acknowledged TD's experience with Horizon shortfalls and the challenges he faced with this claim in the HSS. MT wanted to hear TDs criticisms of the HSS and offered his reassurance that DBT is supporting Post Office to make improvements to deliver swift and fair compensation.

- TD thanked MT for taking the time to meet with him and outlined the difficulty he had had over the past 2 years trying to get his claim processed.
- NH noted the positive relationship with DBT in terms of the collegiate work to done to pull everything together but did note bureaucratic blockages associated with the compensation schemes. NH emphasised the need to improve Comms around the status of claimant's redress cases as well as a commitment to resources, to help reduce the backlog of cases and delays. NH also stressed the following points:
 - The need for TDs case to have a date pinned down in September to relieve uncertainty and pushed MT for any assistance.
 - The pace of MoJ letters for the HCRS scheme.
 - Clarity around the deadline for when those letters are to be sent to help manage claimant's expectations.
 - What order HCRS claims were being processed and if MT could provide more background on the sift process.
- MT noted that he would take these points away and talk to POL. On letters, MT did highlight that the process of identifying convictions that are in scope of the Act, has taken some time after Royal Assent due to the need to ensure the accuracy of the data. Some of the data is patchy, so data is being pulled from multiple sources, and in some cases, work with partners to gather data which goes back decades to cross check manually, so that we are sure conditions are met.
- TD noted the potential waste of money associated with the HSS fixed £75k sum to claimants who have only incurred £100s worth of damages. He also noted that since the ITV drama, POL have been inundated with inquiries which have overwhelmed their case services, with 5 payments being made a month on average.

----ENDS----