
From: Mark Underwood [GRO]
Sent: Mon 05/11/2018 9:11:12 PM (UTC)
To: Paula Vennells [GRO]; Mark R Davies [GRO]
Cc: Avene Regan [GRO]
Subject: RE: GLO update
Attachment: Trial Timetable.pdf

Hi Paula,

Please find attached the full Trial Timetable. Cross examinations begin for the Claimants this Thursday and will last for 4 hearing days before POL witnesses begin to give evidence on Thursday 15 November. In terms of Ms Hamilton:

- Ms Hamilton worked in the South Warnborough Post Office from December 2001 as an employee of the former agent Alwyn Stacy, until Ms Stacy's death in 2003. She became the postmaster in October 2003.
- South Warnborough Post Office is in North East Hampshire which was within then MP (now Lord) James Arbuthnot's constituency.
- On the 9 March 2006 an audit of the branch was conducted by Post Office which revealed a cash and stock shortage of £36,644.89. The Applicant was precautionary suspended from her role following the audit. A security investigation was undertaken (during which Ms Hamilton admitted all her staff used the same log on details) and consequently Post Office sought to prosecute her for theft and false accounting.
- The audit was arranged as a result of concerns by Post Office staff following a conversation with the Ms Hamilton on 06 March 2006 regarding the high levels of cash on hand at the branch. She was asked to return at least £25,000 . Ms Hamilton reported sick on 07 March.
- On the 19 November 2007, Ms Hamilton pleaded guilty to 14 false accounting charges at Winchester Crown court. The single theft charge was removed after an undertaking was given by Ms Hamilton's counsel that all monies owed to Post Office would be repaid prior to sentencing. A cheque for £37,644.89 was received by Post Office on the 18 Feb 2008 which included £1000 costs awarded to Post Office.
- The Judge is reported as saying: "This wasn't just a muddle - it turned into fraud."
- During the Complaint Review & Mediation Scheme Ms Hamilton alleged that the shortfall of over £36,000 was caused by "un-explained" issues with Horizon and a general lack of support and training from Post Office. Her claim was in the region of £500k and included £223k for the loss of a chance to develop a house and £50k for future interest on credit cards.

Mark



Mark Underwood
Head of Portfolio: Legal, Risk &
Governance

**2017 Winner of the
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Mobile number: **GRO**

From: Paula Vennells

Sent: 05 November 2018 20:40

To: Mark R Davies **GRO**

Cc: Mark Underwood **GRO**; Avene Regan **GRO**

Subject: Re: GLO update

Thanks Mark.

No it's better that we are informed about it - it reinforces that you and the team are doing the right thing.

Much appreciated.

What will be important, without commentating, is to remind us (or me at least, as I will be asked by the board) of the facts around any that are likely to get coverage. Eg., Jo Hamilton? What happened in her case that is in the public domain? What action did we take and why, that she is now challenging? (I can remember but not clearly enough and don't want to get facts wrong.)

Mark U - Mark, just remind me of the major activities/timeline related to the GLO this week? Can you make sure Avene and I have that each week.

Also, when do the witnesses get called?

Many thanks,
Paula

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From: Mark R Davies

Sent: Monday, November 5, 2018 8:05:25 PM

To: Paula Vennells

Cc: Mark Underwood **GRO**

Subject: GLO update

Hi Paula

The team have had enquiries today from the Telegraph and the Mail (again - this time doing a

piece on the Jo Hamilton case). I'm confident we are handling it well. I wouldn't be surprised if it's on the BBC on Wednesday.

I will update GE in the morning but let me know if you think this is overkill. We are keeping BEIS and UKGI informed.

Mark

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