



Department for
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Darren Jones MP
Chair of the BEIS Select Committee
House of Commons
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23 June 2020

Dear Darren,

Thank you for your letter of 16 June regarding the Independent Review the Government is undertaking in relation to the Post Office Horizon dispute.

Let me first say that I have listened to a number of postmasters' stories and, through what I have heard, understand the negative impact that the Horizon dispute and court case has had on affected postmasters' lives and that of their families. I can therefore understand the strength of feeling on all sides of the House on this matter, which was evident most recently when I responded to the Urgent Question on 10 June.

The findings outlined throughout the Horizon judgments provide an extensive insight into what went wrong at the Post Office, including an independent judicial view of the facts that all sides were looking for. Mr Justice Fraser set out his findings in considerable detail, including looking at the steps taken by the Post Office over this period, and highlighting where things could, and should, have been done differently. However, given the very serious impacts this case has had on many individual postmasters, more does need to be done, which is why we are in the process of setting up an Independent Review.

Government wants to be fully assured that through this Review, along with lessons being learned, that there is a public summary of the failings that occurred at Post Office Ltd, drawing on the aforementioned judgments and by listening to those that have been most affected. We plan to do this without repeating the work that led to the extensive findings by Mr Justice Fraser. The review will take account of these as a minimum, we are also keen to engage with both former and existing postmasters, where possible, to ensure the full lessons are learned and reforms made at Post Office go far enough.

Whilst the Terms of Reference for the Review chime with that of a statutory inquiry, a Review, in other words, a non-statutory inquiry, will allow progress to be achieved in an accelerated timeframe due to the cooperation committed to by the Post Office.

Finally, I must emphasise the importance of this Review not risking any interference with the Court of Appeal's consideration of the criminal convictions referred to it by the Criminal Cases Review Commission on Horizon, or the Director of Public Prosecution's consideration of the concerns Mr Justice Fraser referred to him about Fujitsu witnesses. These are currently ongoing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Scully', with a stylized flourish at the end.

PAUL SCULLY MP
Minister for Small Business, Consumers & Labour Markets
Minister for London