



Rt Hon Liam Byrne MP
Chair of the Business and Trade Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

07 March 2024

Post Office Ltd
100 Wood Street
London
EC2V 7ER

Dear Mr Byrne,

Post Office and Horizon: Ensuring fair and swift redress

Thank you for your letter yesterday afternoon. The Committee should now have received all of the documents requested, with document (c) having been shared with the Clerk yesterday afternoon.

Given that your letter raises a number of questions of detail in relation to the investigation, I am responding on behalf of Post Office rather than Mr Tidswell. I am a member of the Investigation Steering Group which has oversight of the investigation and I am therefore one of the few people who has seen the Speak Up Complaint. As previously referenced, the investigation itself is being conducted by an external investigator.

Before I come to your specific contextual requests, I would like to affirm to the Committee a point that was made in our previous letters to the Committee. In particular, that the 12 page Speak Up Complaint raises a number of allegations, a number of which relate to Mr Read but a number of which do not. The Committee will be able to see this itself from its own reading of the Speak Up Complaint (document b). In particular, we would direct you to the following paragraphs which clearly include allegations pertaining to matters and people other than Mr Read: Paras 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4, Para 3.1 and Para 5.4. You will also note from the Terms of Reference to the external investigator (document a) that these matters are included in the list of Concerns being investigated by the external investigator, see the Concerns detailed at Paras 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.7 and 2.9. It is pertinent to point out that the Concern at Para 2.7 of the Terms of Reference goes further than what was included in the original Speak Up Complaint at paragraph 5.4. This was due to the author (a) clarifying who this concern related to; and (b) expanding upon the concern during a meeting with the investigator.

Coming now to your specific contextual requests:

1. Details on when the 12-page speak up document was submitted, and when the investigation was launched.

The 12-page speak up document was submitted to Post Office on 4 September 2023 and the external investigator was provided with the terms of reference (document a) on 6 October 2023 in order to formally commence the investigation. The external investigator wished to interview the author of the speak-up complaint first. However, the author was not prepared to meet with the investigator until 10 November 2023. Due to the nature of the allegations, the external investigator has thereafter had to speak to a number of additional witnesses and consider a large volume of documents in order to ensure that these allegations are investigated thoroughly. This process is ongoing.



2. Details on who commissioned the investigation and how the investigator was selected.

The "Speak Up" team identified the matter as a complaint that required investigation. Due to the sensitivity, it was recognised that it should be investigated by an external investigator. Post Office were provided with recommendations of external investigators and the Independent Steering Group (as referenced in document a) selected the investigator based on her experience in conducting investigations of this nature.

3. Confirmation that the investigation will indeed conclude at the end of March or beginning of April.

As the investigation is being conducted by an external investigator, Post Office cannot provide the confirmation sought. However, it remains our understanding that the investigator expects to conclude the investigation at the end of March/beginning of April. Post Office are committed to providing such assistance to the investigator as is necessary to ensure that this investigation is concluded as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "A. Burton".

Amanda Burton
Non-Executive Director, Post Office Limited