

Our Ref: AF/SN/100

Date: 23rd October 2017

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 Group: Communication Workers Union

 @CWUnews

From the office of **Andy Furey** Assistant Secretary

Email: afurey@cwu.org | Direct line: 020 8971 7361

Dear Martin

**CEIRF – COLLECTIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE – FORMAL LETTER:
REGISTERING OF STAGE 3 – UNACCEPTABLE CEF & REPRESENTATIVE
STRUCTURE**

It is disappointing you have failed to respond to my letter of the 9th October which instigated Stage 2 of the Collective Dispute Resolution Procedure (CDRP). My letter was a genuine attempt to engage with you via the appropriate procedure to find a way forward.

As you have evaded engagement at Stage 2 clearly this collective dispute remains unresolved. Consequently the lack of meaningful engagement by the Post Office at either Stage 1 or 2 since I instigated the CDRP on 26th September leaves escalation to Stage 3 as the only option. My strong preference would have been to have resolved the collective dispute at either Stage 1 or 2 however this opportunity has been denied to the union.

**CEIRF Appendix B - Collective Dispute Resolution Procedure - Stage 2
Exhausted – Registering of Stage 3**

In view of the above I am now placing you under formal notification this union considers Stage 2 of the procedure to have been exhausted. As the collective dispute remains unresolved Stage 3 is being instigated. Therefore as a priority I am prepared to make myself available to meet with you at a Stage 3 meeting within the next 5 days as per the procedure.

I am bound to emphasise the following from the CEIRF: *"If the matter remains unresolved following the Stage 3 meeting, the National collective dispute resolution procedure will be deemed to be exhausted"*. Crucially at this point having concluded Stage 3, the agreement stipulates that **"either party may request the intervention of the offices of Acas for the purposes of conciliation or mediation"**.

Acas and Status Quo

Assuming the Post Office continues to refuse to engage in the appropriate procedure for resolving collective disputes (as it has done for Stage 1 and 2) and following the formal 5 days, I will then unilaterally escalate this dispute directly to David Prince Chief Conciliator Acas. I do hope this action will be unnecessary nevertheless in these circumstances I would naturally expect the **"Status Quo"** to prevail. This means our representative structure will continue in place as it is today until such time as the Post Office engages in a meaningful dialogue to resolve this matter to our mutual satisfaction.

I had hoped as the Group HR Director you would have grasped the opportunity to progress this matter to a mutually agreed conclusion. However should the Post Office persist with its current attitude it really does bring into question the merit of having a Collective Engagement Framework particularly if the Post Office when it suits, so readily dismisses the agreed principles and procedures.

Finally it is inconceivable the Post Office will continue to blithely ignore the Collective Dispute Resolution Procedure especially as full engagement at Stage 3 could still achieve an agreement providing the Post Office adopts a constructive approach rather than the current obstructive and entrenched position.

In conclusion I look forward to meeting you at stage 3 within the next 5 days.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Furey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end of the name.

Andy Furey
Assistant Secretary

c.c. Paula Vennells – Group Chief Executive
John Whitefoot – Employee Relations & Policy Director