



Post Office Ltd  
Finsbury Dials  
20 Finsbury Street  
London  
EC2Y 9AQ  
T: 07435 958633

Andy Furey  
Assistant Secretary  
CWU Headquarters  
150 The Broadway  
London  
SW19 1RX

E: [john.g.whitefoot@postoffice.co.uk](mailto:john.g.whitefoot@postoffice.co.uk)

Your reference : n/a

Our reference : JGW AF 25 10 17 CEIRF

25 October 2017

Dear Andy

**Re: 'CEIRF – Collective Dispute Resolution Procedure – Formal Letter: Registering of Stage 3 – unacceptable CEF and Representative structure'**

I refer to your letter to Martin Kirke dated 23 October 2017.

Following my letter of 9 October and Kelly's email to you of 23 October, I am again disappointed to note that we have not heard from you with dates to meet to discuss the CEF at NJNC. I would be happy to meet with you this week at a location and time convenient to you and I urge you to engage with the continuing process and to provide details of your availability over the coming days.

Post Office remains willing to consider any new and meaningful counterproposals that you have both with regards to the draft CEF and the question of full-time representatives. As per Kelly's email, it would be helpful if you could share any counterproposal with us prior to the meeting to enable me to discuss it internally within Post Office before we meet.

With regards to your letter of 9 October 2017, addressed to Martin Kirke, the subject matter was addressed in our letter to you of the same date.

As set out in our letter to you of 27 September 2017, Post Office is willing in principle to fund 3 full time representatives with effect from 10 November 2017 (subject to the new CEF being agreed) and the rationale for this has been shared with you on several occasions.

We have, on numerous occasions, asked you to talk us through your counterproposal. However, you have declined to do so, preferring instead to refuse to engage further in any respect in relation to the CEF 2017, your counterproposal or the process for CWU selecting 3 full time representatives.

All proposals put forward by you have been considered and responses given. We reflected on feedback provided by you and amended the proposed CEF 2017 to include the Assistant Secretary as a permanent member of the NJC alongside the 3 full time representatives. Yet, still you refuse to engage in meaningful consultation with the Post Office which we do not understand given the damaging effect this stance will inevitably have on our employees, your members and the 17 full time representatives whose futures you are needlessly toying with.

To avoid the negative impact on our employees/your members, our strong preference remains to have 3 full time representatives named by you, and in post by 10 November 2017 in order to support us in working with CWU to promote a constructive and positive climate of industrial relations for the future. This will only be possible if we agree the proposed CEF 2017 by that date.

Pending this and in the face of your refusal to engage with us pending the imminent expiry of the CEIRF we continue to seek to engage with the existing full time representatives to support them in their potential return to substantive roles or voluntary redundancy depending on their personal preferences. Please understand that if no CEF is agreed then the existing representatives on full time release will cease to hold their current representative roles with effect from 10 November 2017.

Whilst we are hopeful that the full time representatives will engage with us about the implications of this process for them, if they fail or refuse to do so then we will have to consider our options in managing our employees and we will hold the CWU accountable for any adverse impact which its stance has had on its representatives.

Post Office has repeatedly expressed its view that it does not accept that the counter proposal represents a 'reasonable compromise' as you suggest, but remains willing to consider any reasonable counterproposal you may wish to put forward. We have explained that we consider that our employees, your members are better served by representatives in the workplace taking ad hoc release rather than by full time representatives spending disproportionate amounts of unproductive time travelling between offices. This approach is also more aligned to both public and private sector employers.

You allege that you 'will not be bounced or bullied into accepting just 3 representatives by the "gun to our head" threat based approach the Post Office has adopted'. We categorically refute the suggestion that this is our approach. As you are aware, Post Office served CWU with 6 months' written notice of termination of the CEIRF in accordance with paragraph 15 of CEIRF, such notice expiring on 9 November 2017. Further, whilst we accept that it is for the CWU to determine who performs elected representative roles on behalf of its members, it is a matter for Post Office to decide to what extent it is willing to fund full time release of elected representatives. Post Office has been clear about the number it is willing to fund and the rationale for that number. In the absence of a meaningful counterproposal Post Office stands by its position.

Our preference has always been and remains to engage with CWU in meaningful and constructive dialogue in relation to the CEF 2017 and the process that you intend to use to determine which people you wish to hold the three full time representative posts that Post office is willing to fund from 10 November, as opposed to reverting to the statutory position (for reasonable paid time off only) to apply with effect from 10 November 2017. There is still time for CWU to put forward a reasonable and constructive counterproposal for consideration by Post Office.

Again, we urge you to re-engage in negotiations by meeting with us this week. We consider your continued attempts to instigate the Collective Dispute Resolution Procedure are misconceived as notice has been given to terminate the CEIRF. Moreover, the matters which you wish to discuss comprise the same subject matter as the ongoing negotiations over the replacement of the CEIRF. Please desist from the continual effort to avoid meaningful negotiations by endeavouring to invoke a dispute resolution process in circumstances where Post Office is willing to consider any new and reasonable counterproposal you may wish to share.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely



**John Whitefoot**  
**Employee Relations & Policy Director**  
**[john.g.whitefoot@postoffice.co.uk](mailto:john.g.whitefoot@postoffice.co.uk)**

cc: Martin Kirke, Paula Vennells, Lynn Simpson, David Bowmaker, Mole Meade, Chris Roche, Jim Reeves, Peter Meech.

