

No. 037/2021

2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021

Dear Colleagues

## **POST OFFICE: POSTMASTERS: HORIZON INQUIRY - HAVE YOUR SAY**

The Inquiry into the Horizon scandal currently being undertaken by retired Judge Sir Wyn Williams and his team is looking for current or former Postmasters and/or their families to take part in focus groups over the next few weeks. The CWU is encouraging as many Postmasters as possible to participate in this important process in order to further expose the ongoing flaws and previous poor attitude from Post Office management. The first focus group took place on 15<sup>th</sup> January and Mark Baker, our Postmasters Branch Secretary and serving Postmaster took part in this interesting session, along with two other CWU Postmaster members. The recording of this focus group can be accessed via:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCgdgensMdc&feature=youtu.be>

In conjunction with our Communications Department a dedicated CWU web page on the Horizon Inquiry has been constructed which provides the full details and links to the application process for the further focus groups. My thanks go to the Comms Team for their excellent work in this regard. A web story has also been published with all associated links and can be accessed via:

<https://www.cwu.org/news/horizon-inquiry-postmasters-have-your-say/>

We believe it is imperative that Postmasters' voices are heard to make sure those Senior Directors who were responsible for ruining the lives of so many are fully held to account for their actions in the Horizon scandal. Therefore, Branches are urged to give wide publicity to this activity via all available channels including social media.

## **Parliamentary Questions – 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021**

Interestingly, the following two questions was tabled by Kevan Jones Labour MP for North Durham:

*To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether (a) Post Office or (b) his Department (i) has taken or (ii) plans to take, any legal*

*action against Fujitsu following the civil litigation case Alan Bates and Others and Post Office Limited.*

*To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans the Post Office has to seek financial compensation from Fujitsu in response to the costs incurred in the civil litigation case Alan Bates and Others and Post Office Limited.*

Paul Scully, BEIS Minister provided the following identical answer to both questions:

*While the Government sets the strategic direction for the Post Office, it allows the company the commercial freedom to deliver this strategy as an independent business. The details regarding contracts with Fujitsu and seeking financial compensation, are an operational matter for Post Office Limited.*

*The Department has not taken, and has no plans to take, any legal action against Fujitsu.*

### **EDM 593: Judge-led public inquiry into the Horizon scandal**

It is good to report in recent weeks there has been a significant increase to the number of signatures to this EDM regarding Horizon, which we previously highlighted to Branches in various LTBs including 311/20. The EDM now has 137 signatures and I am grateful to those Branches and Representatives who have promoted this topical EDM to their MPs and wider political circles. However, in the absence of a proper judicial inquiry, the Union believes we should engage with the only vehicle currently open to us, meaning we will continue to participate in Sir Wyn Williams' Inquiry.

The parliamentary questions above, together with the EDM demonstrate that the Horizon scandal remains very much under the microscope from politicians.

Further developments will be reported.

Yours sincerely

**Andy Furey**  
**Assistant Secretary**