



Horizon Compensation Advisory Board

Report of twenty-seventh meeting held on 25 November 2025

Members present: Prof. Christopher Hodges (Chair); Lord Arbuthnot; Prof. Richard Moorhead; Lord Beamish

Carl Creswell; Rob Brightwell; Marcia King; Charlotte Heyes; Eleri Wones (all Department for Business and Trade – “DBT”).

1. Chief Secretary to the Prime Minister’s engagement with postmasters and legal representatives

- The Board welcomed the meetings held between the Chief Secretary to the Prime Minister, Minister McDougall, postmasters and legal representatives in the previous month. They agreed that the meetings had proved useful and encouraged open dialogue between all parties to ensure that the claims process is as swift and fair as possible.
- The Board also congratulated DBT officials on recent progress across the Horizon redress schemes. The Board felt that settlement of a number of high-profile claims has increased public confidence in the operation of the schemes.

2. Convictions not overturned by the 2024 Act

- DBT confirmed that advice was due to be sent to ministers on the issue of convictions not overturned by the 2024 Act. The Board remained of the view that there was real, and sometime acute, unfairness in the cases left outside the scheme.
- The Board remained of the view that such cases needed to be investigated, with written or verbal testimony provided that could then be independently reviewed.
- The Board acknowledged that it may be difficult for some convictions to be overturned by the Court of Appeal given evidence lost through the passage of time and the court’s hitherto narrow approach to appeals. They highlighted that problems with the passage of time should be recognised in the same way as it is in the redress schemes.
- DBT explained that officials from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) had confirmed that they were considering the Board’s suggestions from the

previous board meeting in respect of a review of DWP prosecutions during the Horizon scandal. The Board remained of the view that a review should be independent of DWP and consider the evidence (where DWP retained it or others could provide it) rather than just the process of DWP's own review of cases.

3. Family members

- DBT provided an update on the development of a redress scheme for family members of affected postmasters, which was announced in July 2025. Officials explained how they had engaged with groups such as postmasters' lawyers and *Lost Chances* and were considering how claims should be processed.
- The Board were keen to ensure that any process was as swift as possible and learned from successful innovations in other schemes (such as fixed sum offers). DBT agreed with this sentiment, noting this scheme would have its own unique challenges. In particular there was a heightened need to monitor the risk of fraud by individuals on whom the scandal had not impacted, something that would need to be considered alongside potential policy interventions.
- The Board highlighted the need to be clear on the types of support that would be available to claimants.
- They also asked DBT to keep in mind that the impacts of Post traumatic stress disorder could manifest many years after the event, and this understanding should be built into the claims process.
- DBT welcomed the Board's feedback and committed to providing updates on scheme development in the future.

4. Any other business

- The Board noted the publication of the Restorative Justice Council's (RJC) report regarding its Horizon Project, and the accompanying joint statement from DBT, Post Office and Fujitsu. DBT confirmed that the next step would be to work with Post Office and Fujitsu to turn the report into an actionable programme, with the RJC continuing to engage with postmasters in the interim.
- DBT confirmed that the Ministry of Justice had written out to all convicted claimants ruled out of scope of the 2024 Act overturning Horizon-related convictions. DBT officials confirmed that the department had written to 111 individuals who had not responded to their first letter confirming that their conviction had been overturned and stating that they were eligible to apply for redress, with 26 people subsequently registering for the Horizon Conviction

Redress Scheme (HCRS). Officials confirmed that they expected to have written out to all postmasters who had not responded soon.

- The Board confirmed they had met with Sir Gary Hickinbottom and Sir Ross Cranston who confirmed that they were broadly content with progress across the programme.