



Horizon Compensation Advisory Board

Report of thirtieth meeting held on 16 April 2026

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

Apologies: Lord Beamish

Also present: Carl Creswell; Rob Brightwell; Charlotte Heyes; Eleri Wones (all Department for Business and Trade – “DBT”)

1. Acknowledgements

- The Board noted that Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) had advertised for an independent reviewer to examine the organisation’s activities related to Post Office staff prosecutions. They welcomed this development and expressed a wish to meet with the reviewer at an early stage to discuss scope and approach.
- The Board also welcomed statements issued by:
 - The Solicitors Regulation Authority, providing an update on its investigation into law firm behaviours in the context of the Post Office Horizon Scandal.
 - The Legal Services Board, expressing its aim to lead a sector-wide effort to strengthen legal ethics.
- The Board confirmed they had met with both organisations and were supportive of their work in these areas.
- The Board agreed to write to the Legal Services Board regarding whether the Bar Standards Board is constrained in its powers in relation to investigating misconduct.

2. Horizon Convictions Redress Scheme

- Following the previous meeting, the Board received further information regarding DBT’s approach to prosecuted but not convicted (PNC) claimants in the scheme.
- The Board noted that some PNC claimants were broadly analogous to HCRS claimants but risked not qualifying for compensation as they did not fall within the scope of the legislation simply because they had not been convicted, and considered they were being treated in the same way as ‘public interest’ cases had been (but were now not being) treated. The Board saw this as inconsistent

with the requirements of fairness and equivalent treatment under the schemes and were particularly concerned that some might be unfairly excluded.

- DBT explained that the eligibility assessment for PNC applicants looks at whether Horizon evidence was essential to the prosecution, such that if the prosecution had resulted in a conviction, reliance on Horizon evidence would have made that conviction unsafe. DBT underlined that each PNC case is assessed individually, based on its own facts and circumstances. A person may be found ineligible where the prosecution was supported by other evidence that did not depend on Horizon data, for example contemporaneous admissions or other independent and corroborative material, meaning that Horizon evidence was not central to the case or to the safety of any potential conviction.
- DBT explained that claims from PNC claimants had been resolved successfully across the schemes on the basis of the Hamilton test and the Department had looked to ensure consistency of treatment in applying this as the approach.
- The Advisory Board agreed to share their views with the Minister for Small Business and Economic Transformation – Blair McDougall.

3. Family Members Scheme - Update

- The Board thanked DBT for updates on the development of the scheme noting a desire to follow a more holistic approach to claims assessment akin to that being used in the Capture Scheme. The Board also noted complexities inherent to the scheme including cohort size and confirming eligibility – but were content with DBT's prospective design.

4. Capture

- The Board noted the recently published statistics of Capture claims progress and the launch of the second phase of the scheme. DBT noted that the first phase allowed testing of the claims process for a smaller cohort of claimants, but the initiation of the second phase reflected confidence that the scheme is working as intended and claimants are satisfied with their redress. DBT explained that consideration of all claims will now take place as quickly as possible.
- The Board were encouraged that over 200 claims had come forward to date.
- The Board expressed concern that the Post Office was objecting to applications in the Court of Appeal to overturn some convictions. The reason for this is not fully clear, but the Board felt that it may revolve around a perceived technicality with which they would disagree. They resolved to raise this with the Post Office Chair.

5. Scheme Statistics

- The Board welcomed the announcement that over £1.5bn in redress had been paid to over 12,000 claimants and were particularly focused on the claims that remained to be resolved. They were content that the number of outstanding claims was reducing and DBT were on track to have resolved a significant number by this summer.
- The Board discussed DBT's work to ensure fraud was minimised. DBT provided an update on the cross-scheme approach to fraud, acknowledged by the Board.

6. AOB

- The Board noted the imminent publication of the NAO report into Government compensation and financial recognition schemes.
- The Board asked for an update on DBT's ongoing work with other organisations as part of the restorative justice programme. DBT agreed to provide an update but noted that staff across DBT, Post Office and Fujitsu were working well together to ensure the programme was a success.
- DBT updated the Board on the recommendations from the BTC, which were being considered by Ministers.
- The Board asked for an update on a potential contribution from Fujitsu towards redress. DBT confirmed that discussions had taken place between Ministers and the company at the end of 2025 and were ongoing with DBT officials. Discussions would intensify once Sir Wyn Williams' final Inquiry report is released (likely by the end of 2026). The Board expressed their agreement with the Business and Trade Committee's view that Fujitsu should make an interim payment.