



# Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

020 7219 4494 - [beiscom@parliament.uk](mailto:beiscom@parliament.uk) - [www.parliament.uk/beis](http://www.parliament.uk/beis) - @CommonsBEIS

Paul Scully MP

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

1 Victoria Street,

London

16<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear Paul,

I hope this letter finds you well.

I am writing further to the announcement you made on 10 June in the House regarding the establishment of an Independent Review into the Post Office Horizon Scandal. Though the announcement was welcome, I am disappointed that it appears that the inquiry will not be judged or put on a statutory footing with subpoena powers to summon witnesses and compel them to give evidence under oath. Please can you confirm that this is the case?

It is imperative that, if wrongly convicted or accused, sub-postmasters and postal staff are to receive justice that those who took key decisions in relation to Horizon at Post Office Ltd, Fujitsu and within government are held to account. You yourself, in the written evidence you supplied to the Committee in March, noted that the advice Post Office Ltd provided to BEIS was “flawed”, while Lord Callanan stated in the Lords on 5 March that BEIS officials were “clearly misled by the Post Office”. Bearing in mind the number of successful litigants in *Bates v Post Office Ltd* and the number of cases referred by the CCRC to the Appeal Court, centering on people who went to jail or who lost their careers, homes and, in some cases their lives, this is not just a matter of learning lessons. This is also about establishing facts. If there was maladministration or deliberate withholding of evidence that might have had a material impact on the outcome of these cases and convictions, those responsible should be held to account. This in turn will allow lessons to be learnt but will also send a powerful signal that if the highest standards in our public institutions are not adhered to there will be serious consequences.

I urge you to put this Independent Review on a statutory basis so that it can summon Post Office and Horizon staff, past and present, who made key decisions related to this case. It is also important that past and current UK Government Investments (UKGI) and Departmental officials give evidence. UKGI sat on the Post Office Ltd Board and the BEIS Permanent Secretary is the Accounting Officer for arms-length bodies, including Post Office Ltd. It is crucial that those who were supposed to be scrutinising Post Office Ltd decisions and/or who were privy to board level discussions are also held to account.

A statutory judge-led Public Inquiry needs to be able to establish the truth and give closure to those who have lost so much and who have waited for justice for so long.

I would appreciate a response to this letter by 25 June 2020.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Darren Jones".

**DARREN JONES MP**  
**CHAIR OF THE BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY COMMITTEE**