

No: 360/24

15th November 2024

TO: ALL POSTAL BRANCHES

Dear Colleague

Post Office Chairman's Strategic Review – Attack on Crown Network and CWU Members' Jobs

Branches and our Post Office members will be aware of the significant number of press and media articles that started to appear on Tuesday evening regarding the Chairman's Strategic Review and their plans to close or franchise all of the remaining 115 Crowns. It is clear these reports were deliberately leaked and timed prior to Nigel Railton, Interim Chair's announcement on the first stage of the outcomes of his Strategic Review.

The Union has still not been provided with a copy of the Strategic Review document and recommendations to Government and tellingly, Post Office failed to consult with the CWU at any point prior to the Board endorsing the Strategic Review / Transformation Plan. As a key stakeholder, representing the majority of employees, the attitude displayed by the Interim Chair in bypassing the CWU is unacceptable – we have made this very clear to him.

Clearly, the Union needed to respond to the press leak and in particular, Post Office's apparent plans to decimate the Crown Office Network and cut over 1000 jobs. The CWU Press Release is linked below:

https://www.cwu.org/press_release/cwu-slam-post-office-closure-announcements/

We secured interviews with BBC Radio 4 Today Programme, BBC Radio 5, ITV and Sky News. This has once again led to major criticism of Post Office management's actions. Additionally, Gareth Thomas, Business & Trade Minister made a statement to the House of Commons which led to a debate with concerns being expressed by a number of MPs relating to the potential loss of their Crown Offices. The link to the debate is:

[House of Commons - Post Office Statement - BBC iPlayer](#)

Nigel Railton, when delivering his communication to staff on Wednesday, focused on his "vision for the future" which was primarily about securing better remuneration for Postmasters. At no point did he say that the Crowns would have no part in the future and

that 1,000 people would lose their jobs as a consequence. This was despite the fact that he would have undoubtedly known about all of the press activity arising from the leak. This is yet another damning indication at the lack of integrity Post Office displays at the most senior level.

The CWU has been at the forefront of campaigning for a significantly enhanced remuneration package for Postmasters and indeed we have, at every opportunity, highlighted the fact that Postmasters deliver a great service to their communities and are significantly undervalued by Post Office. We therefore totally support the need for Postmasters to be much better rewarded; however, this must not come at the expense of over 1,000 loyal and professional employees working in Crown Offices losing their jobs. This smacks of the same lack of vision and lack of honesty that we have seen from Post Office management for so long and throughout the Horizon scandal.


The money Post Office squandered on firms of lawyers could have been used to give everybody a better deal. The ill-conceived attack on the Crown Office network has led to our members quite rightly feeling they are associated victims of Horizon due to the disgraceful waste of monies which should have been invested in the Post Office Network overall, including Crowns, as well as improving Postmaster pay.

We are meeting with Gareth Thomas, on Monday and will obviously raise our serious concerns around these latest developments. Our members, both directly employed and Postmasters, deserve to have job security and fair remuneration for the long-term future.

The CWU will be developing an industrial and political campaign that will deliver a better future for our Post Office members and we will ensure you are a key part of that work, and your voice is heard.

Further developments will be reported.

Yours sincerely



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