



Dan Neidle
[REDACTED]

Date
11 April 2023

Post Office
Ground Floor
Finsbury Dials
20 Finsbury Street
London EC2Y 9AQ
Classification:
Public

Dear Dan Neidle,

Freedom of Information Request – FOI2023/00106, FOI2023/00108 & FOI2023/00109

We write in relation to the above requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act and further to our email of 29 March which let you know that we had aggregated these requests and indicated that an extension of time was required to complete the public interest test balancing test.

We also note your responding email dated 29 March and would like to reaffirm that Post Office takes all Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“FOIA”) requests seriously, seeks to be as transparent as possible and to respond as soon as we are able. Post Office is now able to respond to part of your request. In your email of 28 February, you requested the following:

“Please provide me with the following statistics:

- 1. total HSS settlements paid by the Post Office to date**
- 2. the total legal fees of postmasters which the Post Office agreed to pay under those settlements**
- 3. total tax advisory/tax accounting fees of postmasters which the Post Office agreed to pay under those settlements**

And then the same three statistics for the SRR.”



Post Office confirms that it holds the information you have requested and that it is appropriate to disclose this information at this stage, ahead of any other considerations and disclosure decisions that are being undertaken.

1. Total HSS settlements paid by the Post Office to date.

This information is published on our website -

<https://corporate.postoffice.co.uk/en/historical-matters/historical-matters-progress/historical-shortfall-scheme-information-on-progress/> - and is

updated regularly. As of 4 April, the total number of settlements paid out is 1,924 totalling £62m

2. The total legal fees of postmasters which the Post Office agreed to pay under those settlement.

198 legal fees of postmasters have been paid under HSS settlements made up to and including 9 March 2023, at a combined value of £217k. In addition, there are a further 29 pending legal fees which are moving through approvals to payment.

3. Total tax advisory/tax accounting fees of postmasters which the Post Office agreed to pay under those settlements

As at 9 March 2023, there have been 2 tax accounting/advisory fees paid to date at a value of £1k

With regards to the Suspensions Remuneration Review (SRR), at the time of your request, Post Office had not yet made any payments. Since then, however, Post Office has made some settlements and, in line with our commitment to transparency, we are able to provide this information below:



1. Total SRR settlements paid by the Post Office to date.

As of the date of this letter, there have been 79 settlements totalling over £1.29m. These are being processed in the April 2023 payroll.

This information has recently been published on our website and we will be continuing to update it there as we do with the Historical Shortfall Scheme and the Overturned Historical Convictions process. Please see our website - <https://corporate.postoffice.co.uk/en/historical-matters/wider-changes/policy-on-remuneration-during-a-period-of-suspension/> - for further information on the scheme

2. The total legal fees of postmasters which the Post Office agreed to pay under those settlement.
3. Total tax advisory/tax accounting fees of postmasters which the Post Office agreed to pay under those settlements

For both the above questions, Post Office can confirm that it has not made any payments to date in respect of such fees but it can confirm that reasonable fees for legal and tax advice will be paid if claimed, per the SRR principles which are on our website - https://corporate.postoffice.co.uk/media/vrphwcgn/suspension-remuneration-review_questions_and_answers.pdf

The remainder of the information you have sought is still under consideration in respect of which, if any, exemptions may need to be applied under FOIA. If we conclude that further information can be disclosed in advance of the due date we have indicated, we will of course do so.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of this response, you do have a right to request an internal review. You can do this by writing to the address above or information.rights@postoffice.co.uk stating your reasons for your internal review request.



If, having requested an internal review by Post Office, you are still not satisfied with our response you also have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

<https://ico.org.uk>

Yours sincerely,

Information Rights Team

information.rights@postoffice.co.uk

<https://corporate.postoffice.co.uk/en/governance/access-to-information/access-to-information/>

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