

Independent review into the Post Office Ltd Horizon IT system

News story

The review will consider whether Post Office Ltd has learned lessons from the Horizon dispute and court case.



- Review will consider whether Post Office Ltd has learned necessary lessons from the Horizon dispute
- will also provide an independent assessment of the Post Office's work to rebuild its relationship with its postmasters
- draft terms of reference published in the House of Commons today

The government will shortly launch an independent review to consider whether Post Office Ltd has learned lessons from the Horizon dispute and court case, and made the changes needed to ensure a similar case cannot happen again.

Today, Small Business and Postal Affairs Minister Paul Scully announced the draft terms of reference for the review via a [written ministerial statement](#) laid in the House of Commons.

It follows Post Office Ltd reaching a settlement of £57.75 million in December 2019 to conclude a long-running civil court case brought against it by a group of postmasters over issues related to its Horizon IT system.

Small Business and Postal Affairs Minister Paul Scully said:

The Horizon dispute and court case has had a devastating impact on the lives of many postmasters, and I have been deeply moved by the individual stories of those I have spoken to.

It is so important that a case like this can never happen again.

That is why this government is committed to establishing an independent review to ensure that lessons have been learned, and that concrete changes have taken place at Post Office Ltd.

We are keen to see the review launch as soon as possible, and the publication of draft terms of reference today is an important step toward this.

The terms of reference and the final timings for the review are subject to confirmation by the chair, who will be fully independent of Post Office Ltd. and the government. A chair will be appointed and announced in due course.

Published 10 June 2020

[SLC extends student finance deadline for full-time, returning students in England and Wales](#)

News story

Student finance deadline extended to 30 June for full-time, returning students in England and Wales



As Universities and colleges are now starting to confirm their teaching arrangements for the forthcoming academic year in response to Covid-19, SLC is extending the deadline for full-time returning students to apply for finance, from 12th June (Wales) and from 19th June (England) to 30th June.

Derek Ross, Executive Director of Operations at SLC said, “SLC recognises that students may still be gathering information on which to base their plans for next year. On that basis, we want to give them more time to complete their application before the ‘returner’ deadline.

“The clear advice to returning students is to submit their funding applications as quickly as possible and by extending the deadline we are providing students with valuable additional time. “

While SLC does everything in its power to process all applications as quickly as possible, more complex cases do take time. Students submitting late applications may not receive their full maintenance loan for the start of the new term. While the basic non income assessed payment will be made, any additional entitlement will only be paid once the application and assessment process is completed.

Derek Ross added "Submitting an application as soon as possible is the only way to ensure funding will be in place for the start of next term. For maximum peace of mind, students are encouraged to note the extension to the deadline and submit their applications as quickly as possible."

Applications can be made online at www.gov.uk/student-finance or www.studentfinancewales.com. Information is also available on [Facebook.com/SFEngland](https://www.facebook.com/SFEngland) and [Twitter.com/SF_England](https://twitter.com/SF_England) or [Facebook.com/SF_Wales](https://www.facebook.com/SF_Wales) and [Twitter.com/SF_Wales](https://twitter.com/SF_Wales)

The student finance deadline for new students has already passed but for anyone who may have missed it, the advice is still to get an application in as soon as possible. Even when someone is not sure of their eventual course, University or college, new students should apply based on their first preference, as there is no penalty for withdrawing an application or amending details later.

Applications can be made online at www.gov.uk/student-finance or www.studentfinancewales.com. Information is also available on [Facebook.com/SFEngland](https://www.facebook.com/SFEngland) and [Twitter.com/SF_England](https://twitter.com/SF_England) or [Facebook.com/SF_Wales](https://www.facebook.com/SF_Wales) and [Twitter.com/SF_Wales](https://twitter.com/SF_Wales)

Published 10 June 2020

[Blue Belt Programme Annual Update now published](#)

News story

Read about the work of the Blue Belt Programme in UK Overseas Territories in the 2019-2020 annual update.



Earlier this week on World Ocean Day, 8 June, we published our [annual update](#) on the achievements and progress of the Blue Belt Programme over the past year.

Lord Zac Goldsmith, Foreign & Commonwealth Office Minister for Pacific and the Environment said:

The Blue Belt Programme, one of the UK government's most ambitious environmental policies ever, is on course to establish 4 million square kilometres of protected and managed oceans around the UK Overseas Territories.

The update for 2019-2020 showcases how the Blue Belt Programme is helping strengthen governance, protect biodiversity, support sustainable fisheries, support compliance and manage human activities across the UK Overseas Territories.

You can also read the latest [Blue Belt newsletter](#).

The Blue Belt Programme supports the delivery of the UK government's commitment to enhance marine protection of over four million square kilometres of marine environment across UK Overseas Territories. The programme is a partnership between two world-leading agencies of the UK government, the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO).

Published 10 June 2020

[CT training at your kitchen table](#)

News story

Tens of thousands of people across the UK have been undertaking counter terrorism training from their kitchen tables during the lockdown.



CT training at your kitchen table

And with lockdown measures set to ease in the coming weeks and more people returning to towns and cities, Counter Terrorism Policing need people to return to being vigilant when out and about.

A police appeal to the public, to take part in the Action Counters Terrorism (ACT) e-Learning course while working at home, has resulted in nearly 70,000 signing up to be 'CT Citizens'. Overall half a million participants have responded to the call since the course was launched two years ago.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Lucy D'Orsi, national policing lead for Protective Security said:

It's an incredible number. We wanted to encourage more people to take the course and become 'CT citizens' as it can easily be done when you are working remotely, but the enthusiastic response has been even better than we had hoped.

With everything people have had to cope with over the past couple of months, we are delighted that they want to continue supporting Counter Terrorism Policing and play their part in keeping all communities safe.

And it is so important that they do, because as we start to move towards the easing of lockdown, and the return of busy centres of activity, we need to remind everyone that the threat from terrorism has not gone away.

Having more people with a basic level of awareness, and who know what to do if they see suspicious activity, is a real asset to the police.

The international award winning ACT Awareness e-Learning was developed in partnership with retail giant Marks and Spencer and Highfield Learning.

The interactive course, which is available to companies or private individuals, takes just 45 minutes to complete and can be done all in one go or in short modules.

It explains how to spot the signs of suspicious behaviour and what to do to help yourself, others and the emergency responders if an attack should take place.

To log on and learn, visit <https://ct.highfieldlearning.com/>

Published 10 June 2020

British High Commission Launches Covid-19 Fund

The British High Commission is inviting proposals for projects dealing with the impact of covid-19 in Mauritius. Proposals should provide a clear link to covid-19 and focus on the following priority areas:

- i) Economic recovery and response, including around climate, health and business;
- ii) Support to vulnerable groups within Mauritius and Rodrigues;
- iii) Impact on green and sustainable policies and/or activities.

We invite proposals from civil society, commercial organisations, academic institutions and government entities, operating in either Mauritius or Rodrigues.

Proposals should be of no more than Rs 450,000 with an end date of no later than March 2021.

Applicants are invited to submit proposals of no more than 3 pages which provide the following information:

- Title of the project;
- Objectives;
- An explanation of how the proposal is linked to Covid-19 and how it fits within the priority areas mentioned above;
- Description of the activity and beneficiaries;
- Timetable for implementation;

- Outcomes;
- Estimated budget including breakdown of costs;
- Description of how the project will be monitored and any associated risks;
- Measurable indicators of success;
- An explanation of how the project outcomes will continue to have impact beyond the lifetime of the project.

Short-listed applicants will have to sign an Accountable Grant Agreement with the High Commission and commit to reporting requirements agreed between both parties.

Projects should not generate a profit for the implementers.

Successful implementers must be willing to engage with the High Commission on identifying media and digital outreach opportunities to publicise the projects.

Please submit concept notes by 3 July 2020 at bhcportlouis@gmail.com