

Liam Fox MP

By email

28th March 2023

Dear Mr Fox,

Thank you for your email dated 19 March setting out the recent disruption that your constituents in Portishead have been experiencing with their service from Royal Mail. I am very sorry to hear about the ongoing delays that your constituents are experiencing and appreciate how frustrating this must be. I have asked Ofcom's post monitoring team to bring these ongoing delays to Royal Mail's attention.

I can assure you Ofcom takes the quality of service (QoS) provided by Royal Mail seriously and, for this reason, we have imposed a regulatory framework designed to monitor performance and ensure minimum levels of quality are achieved. As part of this framework, we have set a number of minimum performance standards that Royal Mail must meet in the provision of that service. Most notably these standards include the requirement for 93% of First Class items to be delivered within one working day and for 98.5% of Second Class items to be delivered within three working days.

In order to demonstrate whether Royal Mail is meeting the Universal Service Obligation, it publishes [Quality of Service reports](#) which Ofcom formally assesses annually (from April to March each year). At the end of that period, we will take action if we consider Royal Mail has failed to meet its targets without good justification. For example, we have previously [fined Royal Mail £1.5m](#) for missing its 2018/19 targets and in December 2022 we published our [investigation decision](#) regarding its performance in the 2021/22 period. While we found that it would not be appropriate to find Royal Mail in breach of its targets for this period due to the impact of Covid-19, we have stated that going forward Royal Mail must bring its QoS performance back in line with the regulatory standards.

We recognise that Royal Mail's recent performance is clearly well short of where it should be. We are very concerned about this and have asked the company to explain what it is doing to bring service levels back up as a matter of urgency. In addition, we are already preparing to carry out an assessment of its performance after it has reported for the whole financial year 2022-23 and will not hesitate to take enforcement action if required.

With regard to your concern about the lack of a functioning post office in Portishead, Ofcom does not regulate the Post Office and therefore I would encourage you to raise your concerns with the Post Office directly.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melanie Dawes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and 'D'.

MELANIE DAWES