

NEWS RELEASE

The Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission (“the Commission”) has referred the case of Joanne Hughes (“the applicant”) on behalf of Caren Lorimer (deceased) to the High Court of Justiciary for determination.

In 2009, Mrs Lorimer pled guilty at Kilmarnock Sheriff Court to one charge of embezzlement from a Post Office. The court imposed a community service order requiring 300 hours of unpaid work and a compensation order for £15,000.

In 2022, the applicant applied to the Commission, seeking a review of Mrs Lorimer’s conviction.

The Commission has referred Mrs Lorimer’s conviction to the High Court of Justiciary as it concluded that she pled guilty in circumstances that were, or could be said to be, clearly prejudicial to her. The Commission also concluded that ‘Horizon’ evidence was essential to the proof of the accounting shortfall that led to the charge being brought against Mrs Lorimer and that the prosecution was oppressive because the process was an affront to justice.

In accordance with the Commission’s statutory obligations, a statement of reasons for its decision has been sent to the applicant, the High Court, the Lord Advocate and Crown Office. The Commission has no power under its founding statute to make copies of its statements of reasons available to the public.

Michael Walker, the Commission’s Chief Executive, said today:

"The SCCRC is the body which reviews potential miscarriages of justice in Scotland. Subpostmasters are still coming forward to tell us that they have suffered a miscarriage of justice. We encourage anyone who hasn't yet done so to get in touch. If the person affected has died, we will accept applications from next-of-kin. Our service is free and easy to use. You don't need a solicitor. If you believe that you or a close family member might have suffered a miscarriage of justice as a result of Horizon, our staff would be pleased to talk you through the application process."

This news release is for information purposes only and its content should not be treated as forming part of the Commission’s statement of reasons.

Notes for Editors

Post Office/Horizon Cases

The Commission described its legal analysis of Horizon cases in its [press release](#) of November 2022.

The SCCRC is still accepting applications from those affected by the Horizon computer system. It encourages anyone who believes that they, or a close family member, have suffered a miscarriage of justice to make contact.

General Information

The Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission was established as an independent body on 1 April 1999 to review alleged miscarriages of justice in Scottish convictions and/or sentences. Under section 194 A–T of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995, the Commission may refer a case to the High Court if it believes that a miscarriage of justice may have occurred and that it is in the interests of justice that a reference should be made. Once a case is referred to the High Court by the Commission, it will proceed as a normal appeal.

The Commission operates with a Board of 8 Members, one of whom is the Chairperson, a Chief Executive, a Director of Corporate Services, 2 Senior Legal Officers, 3 Legal Officers and administrative support staff.

In terms of its disclosure policy, the Commission will disclose the fact that a case has been referred. However, as it operates under statutory non-disclosure provisions, the Commission will not disclose any further information about such cases.

For any further general information about the Commission please contact:

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