



## Legal and Democratic Services

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TO THE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE  
CITY COUNCIL

Please ask for:

Mr Halstead

Direct Line:

01228 817035

E-mail:

[StephenH@carlisle-city.gov.uk](mailto:StephenH@carlisle-city.gov.uk)

Your ref:

Our ref:

SH/

31 October 2003

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: COUNCIL MEETING – 4 NOVEMBER 2003 AT 6.45PM**

I refer to the summons dated 24 October 2003 relating to the meeting of Carlisle City Council to be held at **6.45pm on Tuesday 4 November 2003** in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Carlisle.

The Mayor has agreed that the following Motion should be dealt with at the City Council meeting on 4 November 2003 as a matter of urgency. The Motion was submitted by Councillors Geddes and E Mallinson and can be dealt with as Item 15(d):-

**15(d) Post Office Closures**

"This Council deplores the proposal by the Post Office to close the sub-post offices at Stanwix and Botchergate which is caused by a deliberate move by this Labour Government who are withdrawing the bulk of their Benefits Payments business."

Yours sincerely

*J. M. Egan*

Head of Legal and Democratic Services



Council Meeting held on 4 November 2003

### AMENDMENT

PROPOSED BY Cllr Martlew

SECONDED BY Cllr Bowditch

That Minute No. \_\_\_\_\_ of the Executive/Overview and Scrutiny \_\_\_\_\_

of the \_\_\_\_\_ 200 \_\_\_\_\_ referring to \_\_\_\_\_

(1) be amended by deleting the word(s) which is caused by a  
deliberate move by this Labour Government  
who are withdrawing the bulk of their  
Benefit Payments business

and substituting therefor the word(s) \_\_\_\_\_

and calls for all-party support in  
the fight against the proposal

(2) be amended by adding the words \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_ Proposer

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded

Voting: For \_\_\_\_\_

Against \_\_\_\_\_

Please see over.

Amended Item 15d): Post Office Closures

Motion with amendment reads

This Council deplores the proposal by the Post office to close the sub-post offices at Stanwix and Botchergate and calls for all-party support in the fight against the proposal.

~~Amendment~~ to Emergency Motion from Councillor J Geddes

Proposed by : Councillor John Collier

Add

We call on the MP for Carlisle, Mr Eric Martlew, to explain to the people affected why he voted in Parliament in favour of closing Urban Post Offices

# Proposed branch closure

POST  
OFFICE

Peter Stybelski  
Chief Executive  
Carlisle City Council  
Civic Centre  
Rickergate  
CARLISLE  
CA3 8QG

LOCAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICE	
FILE	
29 OCT 2003	
PAID TO	TCCE
ANSWERED	Members
MAIL LOG	

28.10.2003

Dear Mr Stybelski

## Post Office® area plan for Carlisle

I am writing to you, as a formal representative of the local community, to tell you that we have recently undertaken a comprehensive review of the 24 Post Office branches in the Carlisle area. As a result of this review, we are confident we can continue to provide the current level of service with fewer branches. We are therefore writing to outline how we propose to change the way we provide Post Office services to customers in the Carlisle area.

The proposed changes are part of our programme to restructure and modernise our nationwide network of Post Office branches, as announced at the end of 2002. Our proposals, outlined below, may lead to the closure of one or more branches in your area.

We want the local community and all relevant organisations to understand why we are considering these changes; how to contact us; and what facilities the Post Office will be able to offer if the decision is taken to proceed with the changes.

### Why are we considering changing the Post Office® branch network in your area?

As a large, national organisation, we have many challenges facing our long term viability, mainly due to falling customer numbers, increasing running costs and increased customer choice about how their benefits are paid, with the introduction of Direct Payment into bank accounts.

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Looking after a large nationwide network of some 17,000 Post Office branches, we have a responsibility to make sure every branch makes the best possible use of resources, both physical and financial, while ensuring that customers can still easily access our products and services.

Following our comprehensive review of the 24 Post Office branches in the Carlisle area, we firmly believe that there are just too many branches competing to serve both the existing and forecast customer base. If we, and those subpostmasters who want to continue, are to re-establish our long term viability, whilst at the same time operating a network of local branches that can continue to meet the needs of our customers, then we must change the way we provide Post Office services in this area.

**What changes are we planning to make to the Post Office® network in the Carlisle area?**

We are confident that we can continue to provide the current level of service to customers with fewer branches. In agreement with the subpostmasters concerned, we are proposing to permanently close 2 out of a total of 24 branches in the area. We are confident that the 22 remaining Post Office branches in the area have the capacity to cope with the increase in customers expected to migrate from the branches we are proposing to close. Our thorough survey of the area included a detailed review of every branch. We also considered aspects, such as availability of public transport, parking facilities, topography and ease of pedestrian access to the branches themselves. The results of our survey, the branches we are proposing to close and the alternative nearby branches that we believe are most likely to be the ones existing customers will choose to visit, are summarised within the attached documents. As always, customers can choose to visit other branches within our network. Full details of all Post Office branches can be obtained by contacting our customer helpline on 08457 22 33 44 or by visiting our website at [www.postoffice.co.uk](http://www.postoffice.co.uk)

To aid your consideration of our proposals, we have enclosed one map showing the current Post Office branch network in your area, and another showing the provision of Post Office services, should all the proposals go ahead.

Of course, like any other commercially viable organisation, we are operating within a very competitive retail sector, which is subject to many external influences. If our proposed changes go ahead, we cannot guarantee that there would not be further changes as the surrounding retail environment takes shape. However, what I can assure you is that, when taking into account the current commercial trading environment, we are fully satisfied that the proposals put forward at this stage, will continue to meet the needs of the local communities into the long term future.

**Are there any investments or improvements planned to Post Office® branches in the area?**

As part of our network reinvention plan for the Carlisle area, I am pleased to confirm that, in partnership with the remaining subpostmasters, coupled with financial support from the investment grant scheme, we are planning to invest some £14,900 within selected branches. This investment will give subpostmasters the opportunity to enhance the overall service offer to customers. Where possible, this will include accessibility for those with disabilities, as well as internal and/or external branch refurbishments. Other improvements could include extended opening hours and additional staff serving hours, dependant on customer demand.

Improvements will, of course, vary depending on local circumstances. Improvements planned for a specific branch are detailed within the enclosed appendices, but typically, they include a selection of the following;

- Combi format
- DDA ramp
- Extra Counter
- Electronic scales

All planned improvements have been discussed and formally agreed with the subpostmasters in question. Our priority is to ensure that customers continue to receive at least the same high standard of service they have come to expect; at whichever branch they prefer to use. Post Office Ltd will give full consideration to all further suggestions that may arise during the formal period of consultation, in terms of enhancing the standard of service available within the remaining branches.

### Next steps

We listen carefully to all points of view before taking important decisions to change the Post Office branch network in any particular area. You may, therefore, want to share this information with those people within your organisation who you feel would have an active interest in this matter.

In line with our Code of Practice for network change, agreed with our independent consumer watchdog, Postwatch, I would like to invite you to write to me with any issues or suggestions that you would like us to consider before making a final decision. If you want to contact me, please note that 09 December 2003 is the closing date for all representations to be made. Our National Consultation Team will co-ordinate all responses received, in direct liaison with myself.

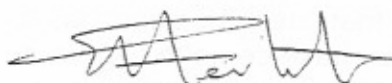
In addition to your organisation, we are also consulting, on a formal basis, with Postwatch. You may, therefore, wish to consider copying your correspondence to them at the following address; Postwatch, 28 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0TT. Of course, you are under no obligation to do so and any correspondence received by us will be treated in the strictest confidence.

At the end of the consultation period, we will carefully consider all representations received and take the decision about how to proceed with the changes proposed for the Carlisle area. If the decision is taken to go ahead, we expect them to start to take place during January 2004.

We will write to you again, shortly after the end of the consultation period, informing you of the decision taken.

Thank you for your time taken to consider this matter.

Yours sincerely



Eddie Herbert  
Head of Area  
Post Office Ltd,  
C/O National Consultation Team  
PO Box 2060, Watford WD18 8ZW  
Customer Helpline: 08457 22 33 44

The Post Office® is able to supply customers with this information, free of charge, in an alternative format for people who are visually impaired. To obtain a copy, call the Post Office® helpline on 08457 22 33 44 or textphone 08457 22 33 55.



## CLOSING BRANCH DETAILS:

<b>Botchergate branch</b> 169 Botchergate CARLISLE CA1 1SG	<b>Opening times</b> Mon - Fri 09:00 - 17:30 Sat 09:00 - 12:30  <b>Services</b> The standard range of services is available with the addition of the lottery.  <b>Disabled access/ facilities</b> This branch has a threshold strip at the entrance. Internally there is space for a wheelchair.	<b>Transport</b> There is car parking within 50 yards. There are no designated disabled spaces. There is a bus stop within 100 yards.
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## ALTERNATIVE BRANCH DETAILS:

<b>Brunton Park branch</b> 264 Warwick Road CARLISLE CA1 2BX  <b>Planned improvements</b> There are plans to install a ramp at the entrance and/or at least an external bell push. Also, a new fascia, Post Office® lozenge and menu board will be installed. Internally there are plans to provide a low-level counter. Extended opening hours, as stated opposite.	<b>Opening times</b> Mon - Fri 08:00 - 20:00 Sat 09:00 - 18:00  <b>Services</b> The same range of services will continue to be available. Customers can still collect pensions, benefits, tax credits etc in cash.  <b>Disabled access/ facilities</b> This branch has plans to install a ramp at the entrance and/or an external bell push. Internally there is space for a wheelchair.	<b>Transport</b> There is parking within 50 yards. There are no designated disabled spaces. There is no bus service operating between the two branches.  <b>Route</b> This branch is situated 0.8 miles from Botchergate branch. The terrain is generally flat. There are no major roads to cross en route.
<b>Currock branch</b> 83 Blackwell Road CARLISLE CA2 4AJ  <b>Planned improvements</b> There are plans to install a hearing loop.	<b>Opening times</b> Mon - Fri 09:00 - 17:30 Sat 09:00 - 12:30  <b>Services</b> The same range of services will continue to be available. Customers can still collect pensions, benefits, tax credits etc in cash.  <b>Disabled access/ facilities</b> This branch has a small step at the entrance. Internally there is space for a wheelchair and plans to install a hearing loop.	<b>Transport</b> There is roadside parking within 50 yards. There are no designated disabled spaces. There is a bus stop within 50 yards and a direct bus route from Botchergate branch.  <b>Route</b> This branch is situated 0.7 miles from Botchergate branch along uneven terrain. Pedestrian crossings are available en route.
<b>Scotch Street branch</b> 20-22 Scotch Street CARLISLE CA3 8PX  <b>Planned improvements</b> There are plans to install a ramp to create a level access to the branch. Extended opening hours, as stated opposite.	<b>Opening times</b> Mon - Fri 08:30 - 17:30 Sat 09:00 - 17:00  <b>Services</b> The same range of services will continue to be available. Customers can still collect pensions, benefits, tax credits etc in cash.  <b>Disabled access/ facilities</b> This branch has plans to install a ramp at the entrance. Internally there is space for a wheelchair.	<b>Transport</b> There is parking for approx 400 cars within 100 yards. There are no designated disabled spaces. There is no bus service operating between the two branches.  <b>Route</b> This branch is situated 0.6 miles from Botchergate branch along undulating terrain. Pedestrian crossings are available en route.

## CLOSING BRANCH DETAILS:

<b>Stanwix branch</b> 3 Scotland Road CARLISLE CA3 9HR	<b>Opening times</b> Mon - Fri 08:30 - 17:30 Sat 09:00 - 12:30  <b>Services</b> The standard range of services is available.  <b>Disabled access/ facilities</b> This branch has a threshold strip at the entrance. Internally there is space for a wheelchair.	<b>Transport</b> There is car parking within 50 yards. There are no designated disabled spaces. There is a bus stop within 50 yards.
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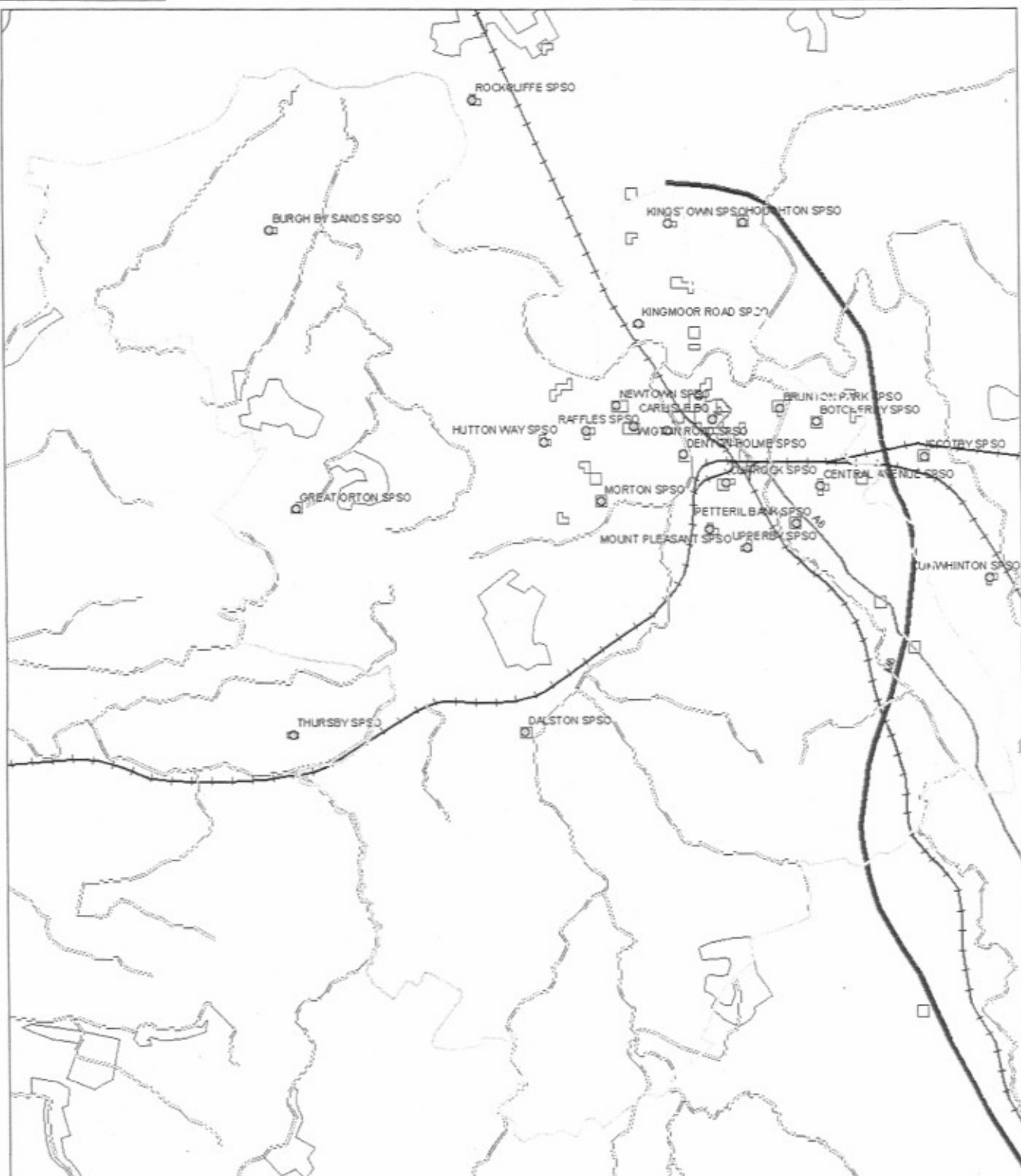
## ALTERNATIVE BRANCH DETAILS:

<b>Carlisle branch</b> 20-34 Warwick Rd CARLISLE CA1 1AB  <b>Planned improvements</b> We believe this branch to be fully compliant, as it currently stands, to meet the needs of the local community.	<b>Opening times</b> Mon - Sat 09:00 - 17:30  <b>Services</b> The same range of services will continue to be available with the addition of the lottery and motor vehicle licence facilities. Customers can still collect pensions, benefits, tax credits etc in cash.  <b>Disabled access/ facilities</b> This branch has automatic doors and level access at the entrance. Internally there is a hearing loop and space for a wheelchair.	<b>Transport</b> There is car parking within 100 yards. There are no designated disabled spaces. There is a bus stop within 200 yards and a direct bus route from Stanwix branch.  <b>Route</b> This branch is situated 1.2 miles from Stanwix branch along undulating terrain. Pedestrian crossings are available en route.
<b>Scotch Street branch</b> 20-22 Scotch Street CARLISLE CA3 8PX  <b>Planned improvements</b> There are plans to install a ramp to create a level access to the branch. Extended opening hours, as stated opposite.	<b>Opening times</b> Mon - Fri 08:30 - 17:30 Sat 09:00 - 17:00  <b>Services</b> The same range of services will continue to be available with the addition of the lottery. Customers can still collect pensions, benefits, tax credits etc in cash.  <b>Disabled access/ facilities</b> This branch has plans to install a ramp at the entrance. Internally there is space for a wheelchair.	<b>Transport</b> There is parking for approx 400 cars within 100 yards. There are no designated disabled spaces. There is a bus stop within 50 yards and a direct bus route from Stanwix branch.  <b>Route</b> This branch is situated 0.8 miles from Stanwix branch along undulating terrain. Pedestrian crossings are available en route.
<b>Kingmoor Road branch</b> Kingmoor Road CARLISLE CA3 9PS  <b>Planned improvements</b> There are plans to install a ramp to create a level access to the branch. Internally, there are plans to install a hearing loop.	<b>Opening times</b> Mon - Fri 09:00 - 17:30 Sat 09:00 - 12:30  <b>Services</b> The same range of services will continue to be available. Customers can still collect pensions, benefits, tax credits etc in cash.  <b>Disabled access/ facilities</b> This branch has plans to install a ramp at the entrance. Internally there is space for a wheelchair and plans to install a hearing loop.	<b>Transport</b> There is parking for approx 20 cars within 50 yards. There are no designated disabled spaces. There is a bus stop within 50 yards and a direct bus route from Stanwix branch.  <b>Route</b> This branch is situated 0.9 miles from Stanwix branch along undulating terrain. Pedestrian crossings are available en route.

## Constituency Map - Post Closure Carlisle Constituency

0 1.5 3 Kilometres

0 1.5 3 Miles



Network Planning Team  
Post Office Ltd.  
Tel: 020 7320 7617

Date: 06 October 2003

- Open
- Rivers
- Railways
- A Roads
- Motorways
- Westminster Constituency
- Retail Centres
- Parks Woodlands

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