

POST OFFICE CLOSURES

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Recommendation: that the Committee considers the Post Office proposals for the future of Post Offices in Copeland and recommends a response to the consultation to Council on 15 April.

BACKGROUND

1.1 Post Office Ltd has published consultation proposals on the future of the Post Office network in Cumbria. These proposals are part of the Post Office's Network Change Programme following measures announced by the Government in May 2007 to change the overall size and shape of the network of Post Office branches in response to changes in the way services are delivered.

PROPOSALS

2.1 The Network Change Programme proposes the compulsory closure of 2,500 branches nationwide and the introduction of service points ("Outreaches") in certain locations to mitigate the impact of branch closures.

2.2 The Area Plan Proposal for Cumbria envisages closure of 35 branches and retention of the remaining 226. The proposed closures in Copeland are at the following locations:

Beckermest
Bigrigg
Gosforth
Holborn Hill
Lowca
Moor Row
Parton
Tangier Street

2.3 There are proposals for outreach services which will provide limited services at restricted hours at 10 locations where branches will be closed. None of these 10 locations is in Copeland. It is not clear from the consultation document how the locations for outreach services have been chosen.

2.4 The full consultation document is attached at Appendix "A". Branch Access reports which give demographic, access, local transport and other

information for each of the branches in Copeland proposed for closure are reproduced at Appendix "B".

CONSULTATION TIMETABLE

3.1 The consultation period runs until 27 May 2008. It is suggested that a recommended response to the consultation proposals is made by this Committee to full Council on 15 April for debate, leaving sufficient time for any further clarification of any aspects the proposals if necessary before 27 May.

List of Appendices

Appendix "A" – Consultation Document

Appendix "B" – Branch Access Reports for branches in Copeland proposed for closure

List of Background Documents:

Post Office Ltd – Network Change Programme – Area Plan Proposal for Cumbria