

Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 5th July 2010 – Agenda Item 10 – Post Office Closures

Questions from Cllr Alexander

Question Number	Page/ Point	Question/Observation
		<u>Scrutiny Review of Post Office Closures: Follow up Report</u>
22.	General question	Since the closure of the Haringey Post Offices has any follow up been done by Post Office Limited to assess the impact on the local community affected by the closures?
		A There are no plans for such an assessment. We do recognise the social role that Post Offices play in local communities and the decision to close any branch was not taken lightly but no change was not an option. The aim of the Network Change Programme was to reshape our branch network and put it on a more stable footing for the future, whilst ensuring people continued to have the best possible access to Post Office services through the minimum access criteria set by the Government.
23.	General question	Have the closures of the Haringey Post Offices brought about the anticipated savings for Post Office Limited locally?
		A The closures of branches in Haringey were part of the nationwide Network Change Programme and this did deliver the expected financial savings in the region of £45 million.
24.	P 37 – 4.3	Why were the national and local consultations held so far apart?
		A The national consultation was undertaken by the Government and it announced a range of measures in May 2007 to modernise and reshape the Post Office network. Post Office Ltd put the Network Change programme in place to implement the measures proposed by the Government nationwide and in order to deliver the changes required, the UK was divided into areas. During the summer 2007, Post Office Ltd needed to finalise the format for the consultation materials (posters in branches, area plan proposals) and brief subpostmasters



Haringey Council

		on the proposed changes to the network. The first area consultations began in September 2007, with the London area plan consultation being undertaken between February – April 2008.
25.	P 38 – 4.3	Why was the consultation period so short?
		A The public consultation on individual proposed branch closures was set by the Government at six weeks following its own 12 week public consultation. This six-week period allowed people to raise any issues they felt we should consider on the branches we were proposing to close and to minimise the period of uncertainty for individual subpostmasters and their customers. All feedback was carefully considered before a decision was made to close a branch. Additional time was allowed to cover public holidays and traditional summer holidays. Post Office Ltd also undertook pre-planning work, engaging with local authorities, subpostmasters and Postwatch before an area plan proposal was issued for public consultation. The process of consultation was set out in the Memorandum of Understanding between Postwatch and Post Office Ltd.