

## **PROPOSED CLOSURE OF THE CHASE POST OFFICE, RAYLEIGH**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report brings to Members' attention Post Office Ltd's proposal to close the Chase Post Office in Rayleigh.

### **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 Members will recall that over a period, the Council has been consulted on a number of occasions in relation to area reviews carried out by Post Office Ltd of Rayleigh and Rochford. Where closures have been proposed, representations have been made on behalf of the local community, although these have largely resulted in the proposed closure still going ahead.
- 2.2 The Council considered a consultation on the Post Office network in February 2007 (min 54/2007) and resolved that the Government be called upon to halt further closure of Post Offices in both rural and urban locations, in recognition of the important community and socio-economic functions they fulfil over and above their normal operation.

### **3 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 Post Office Ltd have now written to the Council and a number of stakeholders across Essex and Suffolk announcing further proposals in connection with closures and the establishment of outreach branches. The proposals are subject to consultation, which closes on 19 November.
- 3.2 Amongst the branches indicated for closure is the Chase in Rayleigh. This Post Office was closed for a temporary period in 2005 and, at that time, the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee invited Mr Drew McBride, the Head of Area for Post Office Counters, and Mr Mark Rush, Royal Mail's Centre Manager – Operations, into the Committee where part of the discussion centred on the temporary closure of the Chase (min 106/2005). At that time, reassurances were given that the Chase Post Office would be reopened at the earliest opportunity, which in fact proved the case. It is therefore extremely disappointing to find that it has now appeared on the list of proposed closures.
- 3.3 In the light of the Council's policy on Post Office closures, as agreed by Full Council earlier this year, and past discussions and reassurances specifically in connection with the Chase, it is recommended that the Executive Board object in the strongest possible terms to the Chase Post Office's closure as now proposed.

**4 RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Executive Board **RESOLVES** to object in the strongest possible terms to the closure of the Chase Post Office, Rayleigh, as set out in Post Office Ltd's latest consultation on Post Office closures and outreach services, given the value of the service provided to the local community.

Paul Warren

Chief Executive

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**Background Papers:-**

None

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