



Dear Sir/Madam

**St Leonards On Sea Post Office®**  
**12-14 London Road, St Leonards On Sea, TN37 6AA**

**Proposed branch modernisation**

Further to my letter dated 27 June 2017, about our plans to change the way we operate St Leonards On Sea Post Office I wanted to update you on the current situation.

As you may recall, in order to secure a viable Post Office for the local community we were proposing that the branch would be run from the current premises by our new retail partner, Mr Selva Muttiah, alongside an associated retail business.

I would like to thank everyone who took the time to let us have their comments and provide information during the local public consultation period and the enclosed appendix provides further information about the feedback received during this period.

I can now confirm that Mr Muttiah has decided not to progress his application. The branch will instead now be temporarily transferred to Potent Solutions Ltd, which currently run 32 Post Offices across the country. Post Office Limited has a long standing and successful commercial relationship with Potent Solutions Ltd having worked with them over the last nine years. The branch will continue to operate from the same site and all the same wide range of products and services will continue to be available. Opening hours will be extended to include Saturday afternoons. The branch will be transferred to Potent Solutions Ltd early in 2018 and the date of transfer will be confirmed in the coming weeks.

The agreement with Potent Solutions Ltd means that the branch can be operated sustainably, whilst securing Post Office services for the community in St Leonards On Sea and ensuring that our people working in the branch do not face an extended period of uncertainty whilst we seek a new, permanent retail partner.

We will be re-advertising the opportunity for retailers to run a Post Office branch to replace the current service, either at the current site or at nearby retail premises. We will also seek to open more, smaller branches in the area so that we can respond to our customers' needs for greater convenience in locations and extended opening hours to fit in with their busy lives. Potent Solutions Ltd will operate the branch until a longer term plan is in place to ensure sustainable, convenient and accessible Post Office services for St Leonards On Sea for the future.

We remain committed to providing Post Office services for our customers in the St Leonards On Sea area and will let local customers know of any further changes as appropriate and in line with our Code of Practice.

Yours faithfully

**Roger Gale**  
**Sales & Trade Marketing Director**  
**Post Office Limited**

## How to contact us:



comments@postoffice.co.uk



Customer Helpline: 03452 66 01 15  
Textphone: 03457 22 33 55



FREEPOST Your Comments

**Please note this is the full address to use and no further address details are required.**



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**To get this information in a different format, for example, in larger print, audio or braille please contact the Customer Helpline on 03452 66 01 15 or Textphone 03457 22 33 55.**

## **Appendix**

### **St Leonards On Sea Post Office® - Local public consultation**

**Consultation started** 28 June 2017

**Consultation ended** 9 August 2017

#### **Consultation responses**

- 180 individual representations from customers and local representatives
- Campaign letters and customer pledges
- Petition

#### **Key issues raised**

- the impact the changes would have on the community and local businesses
- effect on local regeneration plans
- the recruitment process
- the sale of the building
- long term sustainability of the retail offer
- downgrading of services
- praise for the efficient and knowledgeable service provided by the existing staff
- loss of staff expertise

#### **Customer forum event**

Held on Thursday 3 August 2017 attended by approximately 150 members of the public.

#### **The public consultation process**

All public consultations undertaken by Post Office Limited are subject to a Code of Practice agreed with Citizens Advice, the independent statutory consumer watchdog. While the decision to change the management of the branch is not a matter for public consultation, the consultation is designed to provide customers and local representatives with the opportunity to understand our plans for the branch and let us have their views on any impact the changes may have on customer access to Post Office services.

#### **Background to the change**

Our plans to change the branch to one that is operated by a franchise partner is part of our continuing modernisation of the network. Our priority is to ensure that we provide services that will meet customer needs, both now and into the future.

We are aware of the ongoing regeneration taking place in St Leonards On Sea and we believe that our plans support this regeneration by ensuring that Post Office services remain in the heart of the community. We are confident that the most effective way to achieve this is through a retail partner. The vast majority of our branches are already successfully operated in this way and we believe this is the best approach to retaining the branch so it can continue to serve our customers in St Leonards On Sea for the long term.

#### **The recruitment process**

The Post Office runs a robust recruitment process and no appointments are made unless we are entirely satisfied that the applicant has met all of our stringent criteria and can demonstrate their ability to successfully run the Post Office and this also applies to temporary operators such as Potent Solutions Ltd. The opportunity in St Leonards On Sea will shortly be re-advertised on our website and we welcome applications from all interested parties.

#### **Sale of building and retail offer**

As our proposed operator has withdrawn his application there are currently no plans to sell the freehold of the existing premises. Any future plans for the building will be decided when we have secured a new franchise partner. Potent Solutions Ltd plan to incorporate a small retail offer into the current premises.

**Post Office services and products**

The same wide range of Post Office products and services will continue to be available, including all banking services offered currently.

**Customer service training and existing staff**

Any person employed to work in St Leonards On Sea Post Office will be trained to the highest Post Office standards and, just as with branches we run ourselves, the branch staff will receive on-going training on products and services, as well as general operational and service related matters. Post Office Area Managers will work with our new partner and the branch team to provide support, in the same way they already do in existing Post Office branches operated by us or other retail partners.

It's pleasing to hear of the high regard for our existing staff and we understand that this is a difficult time for our colleagues. We have a strong track record of supporting our staff through any change. We will do all that we can to find a solution that works for each individual within the options available.