

To: GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE	Subject: POSTWATCH SCOTLAND	
From: DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION		
Date: 2 OCTOBER 2002	Ref: GP/MS	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise Members that correspondence has been received from Postwatch Scotland advising of the intention of Post Office Ltd to change their consultation process regarding the closure of Post Offices, effective from the end of September 2003.

2. Background

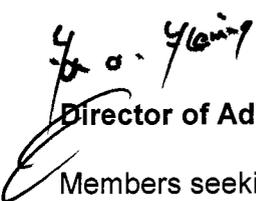
- 2.1 Previous reports to this Committee, and the many articles in the press, referred to the changes happening in the postal market. Such changes include opening the postal market to competition, changes to mail delivery schedules, payment of benefits into bank accounts, increased postage costs, and the closure of post offices.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 Post Office Limited is now eight months into its programme to close up to a third of urban post offices. Initially designed to last three years, the Chairman of the Royal Mail Group, has announced that the programme for these closures would be accelerated with the aim of completing it by the end of 2004.
- 3.2 The Chairman of the Royal Mail Group has also announced that instead of consulting on a single-case, future consultation would be based on city-by-city or area-by-area. Postwatch claim that this move should enable a more strategic approach to building a sustainable network and anticipate that to complete the programme by the end of 2004, across the UK, Post Office Ltd will have to close an average of around 200 offices per month.
- 3.3 Postwatch indicate that Post Office Limited should advise the Council of the dates in which the consultation to close post offices in its area will take place and have provided an information sheet on Post Office Closures, which has been deposited in the Members' Library.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 Members are asked to note the intention of Post Office Ltd to change their consultation process regarding the closure of Post Offices, effective from the end of September 2003.


Director of Administration

Members seeking further information are asked to contact Mr Fleming, Head of Central Services on Extension 2228