



BRECKLAND COUNCIL

DELEGATED DECISION RECORD

This records a key or other decision taken by an Executive Member or the Cabinet in accordance with the Council's scheme of Delegations (as set out in Section D of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution).

Unless the Leader and the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission certify that the matter is so urgent that the normal five-day scrutiny delay on action should not apply, then this decision will come into force and may then be implemented on the expiry of five working days after the publication of the decision, unless called in under the call-in procedures as set out in Section D of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

Portfolio/Cabinet	Cabinet
Report Title (& Reference No.)	Post Office Closures Consultation (Agenda item 10)
Summary Background	To discuss the consultation undertaken in relation to the Post Office closures within Breckland.
Author/Contact Officer	Ray Johnson, Assistant Director ray.johnson@breckland.gov.uk Ralph Burton ralph.burton@breckland.gov.uk
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Urgent?	No
Key Decision?	No
In Forward Plan?	Yes
Date Decision Taken	Tuesday, 12 February 2008
Date Published	Thursday, 14 February 2008
Call-In Expiry	N/A
Exempt Information?	No
Decision (Action Agreed)	That the Council be asked to pass the following motion: This Authority formally invites the Post Office to work with the Council to provide services to residents in the most viable way in the future.

	<p>This Council notes the invaluable service provided by our Local Post Offices to the local community which relies heavily on their post office branch.</p> <p>This Council deplores the Government's current programme of 2,500 closures across the country.</p> <p>This Council notes the strength of public opinion in favour of saving local post offices.</p> <p>This Council recognises the needs of the elderly, disabled and the most disadvantaged who rely on local post offices the most.</p>
<p>Reasons(s)</p>	<p>Option 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Clearly the closure of any post office will be a loss to the community, and this will be felt even harder in rural communities as the survey results suggest. Although there will be an economic impact, the loss of jobs will not be as great as the loss of a community service. In rural areas such as Breckland the post office income usually supplements a retail income such as a grocery or newsagent. It is possible that without the post office the remaining business is not viable and could close. The knock on impact of the loss of not just a post office but also the local shop could be severe in rural areas. 2) In its community leadership role Breckland Council has undertaken activities and publicised these activities to support lobbying efforts to keep post offices open. It is unclear as to the impact or success any lobbying campaign will have but this should not detract from the Council's endeavours to secure successful outcomes for our communities. As more information from the consultation becomes available Members will be made further aware of their consideration. <p>Option 2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) By taking this option the Council has still fulfilled a non-statutory obligation to become involved in the consultation of the Post Office Network Change programme, but will not commit to a formal lobbying effort in writing. Electorate will still be aware of the Council's activities as the information and results from the survey will be published on the Council's website.
<p>Options</p>	<p>Option 1:</p> <p>Now that the research has been undertaken and there is evidence to present to POL and Postwatch the Council is now in a position to submit a response during the pre-consultation stage. Therefore this option is to conclude this project by writing a statement to POL and Postwatch on behalf of the residents of Breckland outlining how it is against post office closures and</p>

	<p>include the evidence that has been gathered. If members were to take this option they are asked what 'strength of feeling' the letter should take? For example is the Council against all closures or would the Council specifically want to save the post offices in the LDF service centre villages? If this option is taken it is also suggested that the results of the survey are published on the Council's website. It is also suggested that delegated authority be provided to the Executive Member for Commercial Services or the Leader to agree and sign the letter.</p> <p>Option 2: The Council can publish the results on the Council's website, not lobby POL/ Postwatch and not take any further action.</p>
Further Information	Post Office Closures Report