



**LAMPETER TOWN COUNCIL  
CYNGOR TREF LLANBEDR PONT STEFFAN**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON MONDAY  
8<sup>th</sup> MAY 2007 AT 12 NOON AT THE TOWN HALL, LAMPETER**

**Re: The proposed movement of the local Post-office (P.O), from the present site 5-7 College Street, Lampeter SA48 7DY, to the Co-op (Pioneer), Bridge Street, Lampeter SA48 7AF (0.4 miles from the present site)**

**PRESENT:**

Town Councillor Dorothy Williams (**Chairperson**)  
Town Councillor Mayor Christopher Thomas  
Town & County Councillor Hag Harris and Member of the Chamber of Trade  
Tony Jones, Network Development Manager, Post Office Ltd  
Kathryn Alexander, Field Change Advisor, Post Office Ltd  
Bethan Jones-Lewis, Chairperson, Lampeter Chamber of Trade  
Dave Smith Vice-Chair, Lampeter Chamber of Trade  
Leigh Evans PostWatch Wales

Bethan Jones-Lewis, handed a petition of 2,330 names to the Post Office representatives. This petition had been organised by the *Lampeter Action Group* and called on the Post-Office Ltd to reconsider plans to move its branch in Lampeter, to the Co-op supermarket, which is situated on the edge of the town.

The disadvantages of the proposed location, as the siting of the new P.O. at the Pioneer Stores, Bridge Street, Lampeter, were discussed:

- The proposed location, as compared to the present location, is a longer distance from the main residential areas, including the residential homes for the elderly;
- It is further afield from the town centre and the general business district, the distance of 0.4miles from the present site, takes it away from the centre to the edge of the town;
- Traders in the centre are concerned that this development could have a detrimental effect on their businesses;
- A slight gradient in Bridge Street would be an added disadvantage for those with mobility problems;
- The proposed car-park is liable to flooding;
- There would be an increase in carbon emissions into the environment, which is contrary to the principles of *Cittaslow* and *Transition Town*;
- The proposed open-plan for the new P.O. could present problems with noise, especially for those with impaired hearing. This has already happened in the Crosshands venue, where the Co-op has accommodated the P.O.
- It was questioned whether the present car-park at the Co-op Store would be sufficient to meet the increased traffic.

According to Post Office Counters Ltd, the advantages could include:

- A very successful relationship already exists between the Post Office and the Co-op. The proposed partner is a well-established national retail business with well respected ethical principles. Such an enterprise is less susceptible to those type of financial pressures that affected the present subpostmaster and which could affect similar enterprises in the town.
- Longer hours – with the option of doing business on Saturday afternoons;

- Better access and hearing facilities for the less able;
- A modern, state of the art, open plan facility that customers appreciate;
- The same services will be available plus a new on-line lottery facility and a 24hour access to ATM facilities;
- Complimentary products to the Post-Office would be available;
- One-stop shopping for customers;
- Improved car parking facilities, with forecourt parking available for customers which include dedicated spaces for those with disabilities and parents with small children.

It was also conveyed that a direct bus-route exists between the Co-op premises and the present branch.

The Post-office representatives stated that after receiving the resignation from the present subpostmaster, earlier in the year, they had been extremely conscious of the time available to them to identify a suitable alternative partner and site for a branch. The team had worked extremely hard to resolve the situation and had they not acted swiftly there would have been a strong possibility, that there would not be post-office services in Lampeter. As part of the review, discussions were held with various individuals and enterprises in the town, but these were not developed once a decision was made to progress the Co-op option.

The Post-Office LTD, due to the down-grading of services, presently faces many serious financial challenges. Current networks, despite funding from the Government are currently losing in excess of £100million per annum, and over the past few years the level of work done on behalf of the Government and their agencies is now less than 10% of that previously undertaken. In the next few years, 2,500 branches will close. In light of the cutbacks and competition, maintaining a P.O. presence in Lampeter, regardless of its location, was viewed as the main priority for the Post Office Ltd.

The combining of the Tourist Information Centre with the P.O. was discussed and it was reported that the Town Council had pursued this avenue, during the last year. According to the county council, this was not a feasible option and would pose an additional resource demand.

Retaining a room for the P.O. services in the centre of the town, whilst moving the main body to the Bridge Street location was also considered. This would have to be funded by a separate entity to the P.O. Ltd e.g the Town Council. Again the financial viability was debated.

The representative from Post Watch Wales, which is an independent consumer body set up to ensure a good quality postal service, conveyed that the concerns raised at this meeting would be reported to this organisation, and appropriate action taken, where necessary.

At the conclusion, it was reported that no final decision has been made, regarding the future site of the P.O. The Consultation period between various parties in Lampeter and the P.O. is due to end on the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2007. Members of the Town Council and the Chamber of Trade hoped that an amicable solution would ensue. An appeal may be lodged after this date, if the decision is not suitable for these parties.

The meeting ended at 12.50pm.