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 Group: Communication Workers Union

 @CWUnews

From the office of **Andy Furey** Assistant Secretary

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Our Ref: AF/LS/100

Date: 3rd April 2020

Lee Kelly
Industrial Relations & Policy Director
Post Office Limited
Finsbury Dials
20 Finsbury Street
London
EC2Y 9AQ

Dear Lee

Coronavirus: Easter Saturday

In advance of our Joint Contingency Forum this afternoon I would invite you to seriously consider the following proposal in conjunction with your GE colleagues.

On behalf of our Crown Office members who have been performing an extraordinary job from the outset of this National Emergency, I feel there needs to be a tangible demonstration of appreciation from the senior management team.

A small token that would go down well with our members working on the frontline would be your agreement to close the Crown Network on Easter Saturday. I'm sure this can be facilitated without too much trouble in these unprecedented times.

Our members have been delivering a great public service despite their genuine fears whilst being exposed to risk. The stress and anxiety of serving the public and exposing themselves to the virus which, until the last day or so was undertaken without any meaningful PPE protection, has literally exhausted our members. From a perspective of mental wellbeing enabling our members to enjoy a full four-day break will actually help considerably as we look to keep the service going in the coming weeks.

Most Crowns have operated with significantly reduced staffing levels due to people self-isolating and being off due to being in the vulnerable category. This has meant the brunt of the pressure has been borne by fewer counter staff who desperately need a respite from this situation. A decent break of four days for Crowns in England & Wales would pay dividends in the long run as it will allow people to recharge the batteries and it could actually help to reduce people going off sick with stress related illnesses.

General Secretary: Dave Ward

 Facebook: Dave Ward CWU  @DaveWardGS

You will, of course, be aware that traditionally Post Offices in Northern Ireland already close on Easter Saturday. Also Crowns in Scotland operate on Good Friday but this proposal would still give those members a long weekend.

I believe this proposal is realistic in the abnormal circumstances we are facing. I also believe it would be understood by the general public. The PO, by embracing this proposal, would gain respect from our members who have up to now felt let down by the late provision of PPE.

I look forward to a positive and urgent response as the sooner we can communicate this proposal the sooner it will help to relieve the pressure being felt by members who would then have a nice break to look forward to.

The CWU is proud of the great public service all of our members are providing to society despite their genuine fears. The Post Office presumably feels the same way therefore my proposal should be supported without hesitation as it is the right thing to do in this crisis.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andy Furey". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Andy Furey
Assistant Secretary

c.c. Nick Read, Group Chief Executive
Lisa Cherry Group Chief People Officer