



Post Office Ltd
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Your reference : AF/LS/100
Our reference : NR AF 01 04 20

Andy Furey
Assistant Secretary
CWU Headquarters
150 The Broadway
London
SW19 1RX

1 April 2020

Dear Andy

**Re: MAINTAINING AN EMERGENCY POST OFFICE NETWORK
WHILST SAVING LIVES**

Nick has asked that I respond to your letter of March 30.

I need to start this letter by expressing my surprise at the tone of your correspondence to Nick on Monday night. Using references with regards to our people, your members, that suggests explicitly "...Post Office are effectively playing Russian Roulette with their lives..." is a complete misrepresentation of the decisions we are making that affect our people and indeed how we have been working with both trade unions over the past few weeks. Everything we have been doing has been geared towards ensuring that a critical service can be delivered to our most vulnerable customers whilst ensuring the risk to our people and customers is kept to a minimum.

There are so many decisions that we have already taken. To counter the tone and some of the content of your letter I feel compelled to point out:

- We took action on the feedback we had received through the IR forum that we needed to reduce Branch opening hours in the DMBs. I arranged for that to be announced via a joint statement genuinely believing that we had achieved something worthwhile between us that benefitted our people in DMBs. I was very surprised that you demanded further reductions in opening hours on day 1
- In very difficult circumstances, being mindful that NHS access to PPE has been a national priority and even they have suffered from limited supply, we have been procuring PPE from various sources. As we speak, in Supply Chain there is widespread access to gloves, hand sanitiser and masks. In the DMBs, we are now delivering hand sanitiser to all Branches. There is access to gloves in all branches and we have purchased a number of Perspex screens to create fortress positions and limit the risk of exposure in our open plan

branches. Priority for despatch of these screens is being given to the DMB network.

- We swiftly implemented policies which fully support both our own vulnerable people and those who have vulnerable dependents offering paid special leave. We have ensured that anyone needing to self-isolate does so immediately on full pay
- We're committed to the guidance regarding social distancing. To compliment the posters already in branches and depots, we will also be dispatching social distancing floor vinyl this week

It is clear to me that the CWU believes that we should do more and we want to continue to take decisions that keep our people safe throughout this crisis. I do believe that there is still scope for there to be a productive dialogue between us and I would like to establish a forum to further discuss and potentially reach agreement on some of the points that you have raised:

- The scope of such a forum will be in relation to employees only and will need to be conducted jointly with Unite to ensure that we are sharing views and ideas in the round. Any decisions from this group will not be automatically applied to Postmasters
- I will chair the forum and will feed in to the GE Covid-19 Sub Group. I will call on relevant people from around the business to help further discussions as needed
- I agree with you about the importance of PPE and social distancing. I think we are doing everything we can do to protect our people with PPE and social distancing instructions but if things aren't always as they should be in isolated areas then we need to know where, why and what our options are. We will not be agreeing to automatic closures or suspensions of service without being mindful of the exact circumstances
- We need to understand more about your views regarding employees aged over 65 and the thought process behind the suggested alternate day working patterns
- It has always been our intention to further review Branch opening hours as Covid-19 moves towards its peak phase. There needs to be further analysis that supports any further reduction of opening hours to ensure that we still offer the necessary critical service at this time. We don't agree right now that to close all branches at 1pm Monday to Friday is the right decision
- We are reviewing our definition of critical services and once we have reached our conclusions I am happy for that to be shared through this forum. I do not believe that we need to reach an agreement on what exactly is classified as critical but I am happy to take your feedback back to the GE

I know through our conversations Andy how passionate you are about both wanting the Post Office to remain a critical service at this time of national crisis and the safety and wellbeing of your members.

As you know, I want Post Office and CWU to work together, but you have to understand that the tone of your letter is not the way to do business with us. I'm hopeful that you accept my invitation to convene a forum in the way I have outlined.

Best Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Kelly", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Lee Kelly

Employee Relations and Policy Director