

Press Release

PO bosses for face-to-face meeting with protesters Assurance that Rippingale closure decision is NOT a done deal

Senior managers from PO Ltd have agreed a face-to-face meeting with villagers protesting about the planned closure of their local post office.

And they've given an "absolute assurance" that they have not already reached a decision about closing Rippingale Post Office (Lincolnshire).

Friends of Rippingale Post Office had invited Mark Partington, who signed the East Midlands PO closure plan as the PO Network Development Manager and who also runs the PO Network Implementation team, to a public meeting in their village hall next Tuesday (November 6).

Mr. Partington declined that invitation, but suggested a private meeting with some of the Friends group the day before (November 5). This "would address some of (Rippingale's) concerns and re-state that we will be retaining a service in the village and trying to allay any other concerns."

Phil Rippingale (correct) for the Friends said "We were concerned that the meeting would just be about the merits of Outreach schemes, which simply do not meet the needs of our village and if this were the case, were ready to turn down the PO invitation ourselves. But we asked them directly to assure us that, contrary to inaccurate, confusing and self-contradictory public closure information, no decision had yet been reached about closing Rippingale PO. The answer was 'absolutely not.' We then asked them if we produced a case, including a business case, for keeping Rippingale open, it would be considered and if accepted would take us to the next, closure review stage, the answer was 'absolutely yes'. We think this represents some progress."

Time and venue of Monday's meeting will be kept confidential pro tem, but the Friends group at the meeting will make themselves available for interview and/or comment, if required, shortly after it finishes. Details will follow. Martin Hill, Leader of Lincolnshire County Council will attend as one of the Friends.

The public meeting in Rippingale Village hall will go ahead if only as an update briefing for villagers, but the Friends are now inviting Postwatch, Quentin Davies MP, Nick Boles Conservative PCC for Stamford and Grantham and others as guests.

It's likely to be a crowded meeting (8 pm Tuesday November 6, Village Hall, Station Street, Rippingale) and discussions will be relayed outside by PA, to people unable to squeeze inside.

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