

GOOD NEWS AS NORWICH, NOTTINGHAM AND LIVERPOOL SITES ARE SAVED

RBS has announced today its plans to retain its Norwich Mortgage Centre, Nottingham Collections Centre and Liverpool Operations Centre, news which is very much welcomed by Unite after months of uncertainty for our members.

BACKGROUND TO ANNOUNCEMENTS

At the time of the announcement of a further 3500 job losses in Business Services in September 2010, RBS announced that it would close its operations in Liverpool Wavertree and Norwich Mortgage Operations and that the future of the Nottingham Collections Centre was unclear, with plans to announce the future status for Nottingham during this year. Earlier this year the bank advised that they were not yet in a position to confirm the future for Nottingham largely due to the ongoing uncertainty in the economy however gave a commitment to make a decision about the site by Quarter 4 2011. The bank has confirmed today that the outcome of the review is to retain the Nottingham site due to the ongoing global economic downturn which requires RBS to continue to support customers who find themselves in financial difficulty. This will result in some 240 permanent and 18 temporary roles being saved.

Whilst the future for Norwich and Liverpool Wavertree always looked bleak with the bank announcing from the outset that these sites would close in 2012, today's news is to be welcomed as around 350 roles in Liverpool and 300 roles in Norwich are now safe. Due to the upturn in the mortgage market and particularly the affluent market, the bank has committed to the future of the Norwich site. Liverpool had already been badly hit by the bank's Strategic Review with the earlier closure of Liverpool Princes Dock, so the news that Wavertree is to stay open is particularly pleasing.

Next Steps

For members at Norwich and Nottingham it is now very much business as usual, except of course there is no longer the continual threat of redundancy hanging in the air.

Whilst the Liverpool Wavertree site will remain, the bank has also confirmed that the site will form part of the divestment of RBS England & Wales and Nat West Scotland to Santander UK, RBS are currently working with Santander to understand the staff requirements. This means that members on site will transfer their employment to Santander and it is anticipated that this will take place during the second half of 2012. RBS have committed to consulting fully with Unite on future plans and negotiations on transfer terms. Once future plans become clearer Unite will communicate further with members and we will keep you updated every step of the way.

Unite Comment

At the time of the announcement of the 3500 job losses in September, RBS advised Unite that a significant number of the losses were directly attributable to Santander UK not requiring Business Services staff to support its newly acquired and much expanded branch network. Unite were concerned and extremely surprised by this assertion and since that time we have continued to vigorously challenge and question both RBS and Santander UK as to the business rationale behind this decision as Unite simply failed to understand or believe that no Business Services staff were required to support what would be Santander's additional 1.8 million personal customers. Santander pointed to the fact that they had existing operations and support structures in place and therefore there was no requirement for additional support staff.

Unite has never been satisfied with the response received from either Santander or RBS with the Group responding that the decision was for Santander, without providing any business or commercial rationale or explanation for placing hundreds of RBS staff at risk of redundancy. In the final analysis it appears that Unite's challenges have eventually been listened to with Santander UK confirming that there is a requirement for additional support staff and that Liverpool is the chosen site. Unite will also continue to challenge RBS on the remaining roles that have been lost as a direct result of divestment activity.

In terms of Nottingham, Unite had urged RBS to seriously consider retaining the site as part of their future operating model and to consider all alternatives to closure. Whilst the continuation of the economic turmoil is concerning to all, nonetheless if there is any good news that can be gleaned from such a difficult current economic situation it is that the jobs of all staff on site are now safe, with a commitment from the Group to the long term future of the site. This commitment is equally applicable to Norwich where the unexpected up turn in the mortgage market is largely to thank for the future security of the site.

Unite have worked hard to fight for our members' jobs and today's news is therefore to be welcomed, we are only sorry that members, their families and the wider communities they serve have had to endure months of uncertainty.

UNITE Representatives

UNITE concluded negotiations with RBS in late 2010 on a new and improved UNITE Representatives Agreement. We are always seeking members to take on one of the four UNITE Representative roles, i.e. Workplace, Union Learning, Safety and Equality. Any UNITE members interested in finding out more about becoming a UNITE Representative please contact the UNITE RBS Helpline or e-mail rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org

UNITE RBS Updates & Update Your Details

If you would like to receive regular updates electronically from the union and have not already advised the union, please email from your preferred email address to rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org. It is also important that members ensure that their membership details are up to date and accurate, i.e. home address, workplace address, whether you are full time or part time etc. If you believe that your membership details are out of date, please also e-mail rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org with your updated details, alternatively you can contact your local District Office by phoning 0845 850 4242 or logging onto 'My UNITE' at the website www.unitetheunion.org where you can update your own details. If you are based at Liverpool Wavertree and wish to receive updates on the future divestment to Santander please email us at rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org

Not a Member?

Join UNITE's one and a half million members and have a voice on this and other issues, as well as receiving support, advice and representation for £11.48 a month for full time staff and £5.72 per month for part time staff working less than 21 hours a week. Membership forms can be obtained by phoning 0845 850 4242 or emailing rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org plus you can join on line at www.unitetheunion.org

Alison Maclean & Stuart Davies – Joint Lead Officers

Unite RBS Helpline – 0870 241 4425

www.unitetheunion.org