

Working for you in Royal Bank of Scotland Group

NEWSLETTER • November 2011



LIVERPOOL, LEICESTER AND SOUTHAMPTON – JOB LOSSES & FUTURE WORK PLANS ANNOUNCED

Today the bank has announced changes to the alignment and mix of work that will be undertaken in future at Liverpool Wavertree, Leicester Bede House and Southampton Brunswick Gate. These announcements will also place around 80 staff at risk of redundancy and will see the work currently undertaken by the Retail Processing Operations (RPO) Teams migrate to other sites with the majority of staff being realigned to telephony/contact roles.

Background to Announcement & Rationale

Since the start of the bank's ongoing Strategic Review a staggering 22,500 UK jobs losses have been announced across the Group. Whilst the impact of today's announcements will ensure the future job security for the majority of staff at the impacted sites, around 80 job losses have been announced across the 3 sites. The work restructures being announced are very much brought about directly as a result of the wider Strategic Review with the bank in the process of aligning the type and mix of work undertaken at some of their remaining core operational Business Services centres. Today's announcement confirms the work realignment plans for Leicester and Southampton, as well as the future operating model for the Liverpool Wavertree site which was recently confirmed as in scope for future divestment to Santander.

Impact at Liverpool Wavertree Site

At the time of the announcement of 3500 job losses in Business Services in September 2010, the Wavertree site was earmarked for future closure. Subsequently in March of this year the site was confirmed as being part of the future divestment to Santander to support the 1.8 million personal customers whose accounts and business will transfer to Santander next year. At the time of this announcement, members will recall the newsletter issued by Unite welcoming the news as the trade union had vigorously challenged both RBS and Santander when they had advised originally that Business Services roles would be placed at risk of redundancy due to Santander not requiring

support staff.

Today's announcement confirms that the future of 257 permanent roles on site are now safe, in addition a number of agency roles will also continue. The majority of staff will see no real change in the short term to their day to day activity as they continue to undertake TBIS telephony roles. The key change is for those who currently work in Retail Processing operations (RPO) with the majority of staff now being required to undertake a telephony/contact role for which additional training will be provided. The RPO work will move from Wavertree during the first half of 2012 and will be migrated to Chatham and Bolton. Ahead of the divestment to Santander, the TBIS telephony work will transfer to Southampton and Leicester and it is anticipated that all staff will be fully trained to undertake Santander telephony work during the second half of 2012. It is also anticipated that in preparation for, and to support the future divestment, the site will need to operate on a 24/7 basis for a period; however this will be staffed by a small number of volunteers. Unite will also hold discussions with RBS and Santander next year regarding the wider transfer terms for all RBS staff who are in scope of future transfer and we will advise members in due course when we have further detail to share.

What is still unclear is how Santander's processing operations will be supported. It is known that Santander has other operations in the North West and other parts of the UK and during consultation we pressed RBS to seek clarity on this. This

question remains unanswered at the time of writing and we will continue to seek clarity from both RBS and Santander as the trade union are very aware that some members may ultimately wish the option to undertake a processing role. Santander will also be holding future Roadshows at all in scope sites, the detail of which will be shared with you at local level. We would encourage all members to go along and meet their soon to be new employer and to take the opportunity to pose any questions or seek clarity on any matters.

There are around 19 roles in total that will be placed at risk due to individuals never having undertaken contact work or being medically exempt. A small number of mail room roles are also at risk as this work will be supported from Bolton. The bank has committed to providing a role to any individual who wishes to remain on site as an alternative to redundancy. At risk RPO staff also have the option to move with the work to Chatham and Bolton if that is their preference at which time a number of enhanced redundancy mitigation measures may be available subject to meeting the qualifying criteria.

There are also 3 Central Team roles that will not form part of the future divestment and these roles will be moved to Manchester Hardman Boulevard. A further 16 staff undertaking support roles will also move work location. If any individuals have a concern about a work move then please speak to local management in the first instance, however Unite would not expect a situation where individuals were expected to incur additional travel or parking costs to move work location, or to be asked to undertake difficult journeys that were in excess of 40 miles or one hour travel from the home location.

Unite will be on site in Liverpool on Wednesday 7th December, further details will be provided by local management. Please come along and meet your Unite representatives on the day where we will be happy to answer your questions.

Impact at Leicester and Southampton

Welcome news was received again in March of this year that both sites would remain open following a period where they were under review. There are however around 60 roles across both sites that will be placed at risk either because individuals have never undertaken contact/telephony work, are medically exempt or work within the Reconciliations and Investigations Team, as the work in this team will be moving to Manchester. There are also a small number of Clerical B roles that do not exist in the new structure and again these roles are at risk.

The impact of today's announcement at Leicester and Southampton is primarily around the type and mix of work that will be undertaken on both sites. It has been confirmed that RPO work will move to Chatham from May 2012 and both centres will become TBIS customer contact centres, with the

majority of staff being realigned to contact/telephony work. Additional TBIS work will come into the sites to offset the RPO work moves to Chatham.

Managing Reductions, Achieving the Changes to Roles and Next Steps

All those at risk will have the opportunity to opt for VR/VER or redeployment. The nature of these announcements culminating in the migration and absorption of work to retained sites means that all at risk staff will find themselves displaced outright. If you do not wish to apply for VR/VER, then Unite will support you through the redeployment process. The bank will advise further of the specific impact on your role during one to one meetings. The VR/VER window for all staff will be open for a period of 2 weeks post employee communications, following which the bank will engage further with Unite on the outcomes.

The bank has confirmed that there is enough work on all sites for those at risk who are seeking redeployment, including telephony and customer care roles for those in Leicester and Southampton. It is recognised that it is unlikely that at risk staff in Southampton and Leicester will wish to move work location to continue with RPO work, however this option is available.

Unite has also agreed a number of additional redundancy mitigation measures to further reduce the potential for CRs, full detail of these measures were previously provided to members in a separate Unite newsletter, can be viewed at www.unitetheunion.org and are also available on the bank's Strategic Review website. These improved measures will also be provided to at risk employees in their Employee Communication pack and should be discussed in detail with line management in the first instance. For those interested in moving work location, they may be eligible for a £5000 lump sum payment and payment of additional travel costs. If any members decide to relocate permanently they may be eligible for relocation assistance subject to meeting the necessary payment criteria for all support measures.

The bank believes that for those being realigned to telephony/contact roles, these roles represent suitable alternative employment in terms of skills, salary level and location of new roles. There will be no substantive changes to terms and conditions, however it is expected that members may be asked with 12 weeks notice to alter working patterns as they move into a telephony/contact role and for some there will be a change from a discretionary to an incentive bonus scheme. The bank has committed to resourcing alternative working patterns on a voluntary basis wherever possible and Unite has stressed the importance of taking into account personal circumstances.

The bank, whilst recognising that some training will be required for those moving into telephony/contact roles, also believes that

changes to roles will be achieved with very little training in line with their assertions that the roles are suitable for all impacted staff. The bank has committed to supporting members through any training plans which will be sequenced in line with the movement of work with individuals moving to new roles on a phased basis.

Unite Comment

The decision to retain the Liverpool, Leicester and Southampton sites has saved in the region of 1000 jobs. It is also worth considering the negative impact the closure of these sites would have had on the local communities concerned, which is sadly all too real in other locations where sites are closing. It is for these reasons that Unite broadly support the bank's plans to realign the majority of staff to telephony/contact roles and in doing so minimise the number of staff who are placed at risk of redundancy.

Members and all staff in Business Services have endured a significant period of change and uncertainty which has already resulted in the closure of a number of the bank's operational centres and the migration and absorption of work to key retained sites. Of the 80 roles that are at risk as a result of today's announcements, many are the lowest paid Clerical staff who continue to pay the price for the bank's failures.

The trade union also recognises that many members may have concerns over the impact on their current roles and for those in Liverpool there will be many additional unanswered questions about potential changes as a result of the future divestment to Santander. Unite are also acutely aware that in Quarter 1 of this year members were aligned to discrete processing or contact roles and many of those who remained in processing roles chose to do so as they did not wish to undertake telephony/contact work. The bank assert that this has been reflected in the numbers who are exempt from this work and that no one who is medically exempt or who has never been trained in a telephony/contact role will be asked to undertake this work.

Unite's key concern is both ensuring that those seeking redeployment are fully supported and ensuring that new roles including work content and any changes to working patterns are genuinely suitable for all, having taken into account personal circumstances. It is therefore vitally important that you make your views known both to the bank and to Unite. In the first instance if you have any questions or concerns regarding these latest announcements they should be directed to your Line Manager; however in the event that this proves

unsatisfactory or the query remains unresolved please contact your local Workplace Rep, the Unite RBS Helpline on **0870 241 4425** or email rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org

Unite has also stressed to the bank that we have real concerns for those members who are left behind to drive the bank's recovery. The trade union are in ongoing dialogue with the bank and during 2012 we want to focus our agenda more proactively on making RBS a better place to work for our members across the Group. In this regard if members have any feedback either positive or negative on the bank's changing operating model, then please contact either your local Workplace Representative, the Unite RBS Helpline or email rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org.

Unite Representatives

Last year Unite signed a new and improved Unite Representative agreement with the Group and 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 email rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org

Unite Updates & Update Your Details

If you would like to receive regular updates electronically from the union please email from your preferred email address to rbsinfo@unitetheunion.org

It is also important that members ensure that your 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.

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