

Lloyds plans to close the Shandwick Place branch of the Bank of Scotland criticised

Deidre Brock MP has criticised Lloyds Group for using a survey of bank use carried out during the Covid-19 lockdown in 2020 to justify its planned closure of the Bank of Scotland branch on Shandwick Place in Edinburgh.

Lloyds Banking Group, which owns Bank of Scotland, has revealed plans to shut 19 branches across Scotland between June and September, including the Shandwick Place branch on 13 July. In total, the branches are thought to employ 124 people.

According to Which?, 54% (554) of the 1019 bank branches existing in Scotland in 2015 will have shut by early this year, with Scotland suffering the highest proportion of closures of any UK region. The Access to Cash Review highlighted that the UK is not ready to go cashless, and that 17% of the UK population would struggle to cope in a cashless society.

The Edinburgh North and Leith MP sits on the Scottish Affairs Committee, which has investigated the growing number of bank closures and the ongoing importance of access to cash in Scotland.

Commenting on the planned closure, Ms Brock said: “I have written to Lloyds Group asking them for a full explanation of their decision to close the Bank of Scotland branch on Shandwick Place.

“In particular I seek urgent clarification on what consultation has taken place with staff and what new roles, if any, they have been offered.

“It is extremely disappointing Lloyds have used customer data from during the Covid-19 pandemic – when the bank was shut for long periods during lockdown – to justify its decision.

“The news will be particularly concerning for my elderly and less mobile constituents, and for business and community groups who rely on this local banking facility.

“The UK government has made promises to legislate to ensure access to cash but aren’t treating this issue with the urgency needed.”