

Call for council to intervene as the last bank in Tranent is set to close

Anger over the decision from RBS to close its Tranent branch this summer – seven years after it closed its branch in neighbouring Prestonpans

The Royal Bank of Scotland's announcement that it will close its branch in Tranent this summer means the town will be left with no bank, sparking calls for the local authority to step in.

It has angered hundreds of local residents who have signed a petition demanding a rethink by the banking giant.

A motion, which is being put to East Lothian Councillors next week describes the decision by RBS to move out of Tranent as 'appalling'.

The motion, from Labour councillors in the council's administration, calls for the Chief Executive of the local authority and Council Leader to meet with the heads of the bank to "express this council's extreme concern at their decision, and to explore other options with Royal Bank of Scotland for keeping the branch open and ensure we retain access to banking services locally".

And it points out many people in Prestonpans had moved their account to the Tranent branch after the bank closed in their town.

Councillors will be asked to support the motion at next week's meeting which says: "Council is appalled that the Royal Bank

of Scotland has chosen this course of action in closing the last remaining bank in this community with no consultation or discussion.

“This is seven years after the Royal Bank of Scotland closed its branch in Prestonpans, leaving that community without a bank, and transferring accounts to Tranent.

“Council is deeply concerned that due consideration has not been given to the disproportionate impact on older people, those with disabilities, and those who rely on others to support them with local banking, and for whom a call centre or digital banking will not meet their needs.”

The Royal Bank of Scotland announced it would be closing the Tranent branch after saying footfall had fallen 70% in the bank since 2019 with an average of 37 customers using it on a regular basis in 2021.

The branch is due to close on July 27.

East Lothian MSP Martin Whitfield launched a petition on change.org calling for the branch to be kept open which has received more than 630 signatures.

It can be viewed here
www.change.org/p/stop-the-closure-of-the-rbs-tranent-branch

by Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter

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