

**Norman Lamb MP**

Minister for Employment Relations,  
Consumer and Postal Affairs

Tracey Crouch MP  
Chatham and Aylesford  
House Of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Our Ref: 299092

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Dear Tracey,

Thank you for your letter of 28 May, which details your concerns over the proposed closure of the Insolvency Service office in Medway which is currently subject to an ongoing public consultation.

In respect of the concerns you have raised regarding the proposed closure I would stress that no final decision has been made as yet. The Medway public consultation seeks views on the potential impact of the proposed closure, and your comments are welcome and will be taken into account before any final determination is made.

In reviewing its estate, The Service has looked at those locations where the projected numbers of face to face interactions are relatively low and where it is considered that a merger with an adjacent office or offices would still result in reasonable journey times for those who are required to attend for interview. This review identified the potential merger of Medway and Canterbury as being appropriate, with potential interviewees being absorbed into offices in Canterbury (Whitstable), Croydon, Brighton and London.

The Service is seeking to balance the respective needs of individuals and the costs of providing access. The current geographic footprint of The Service means that individuals may already have sizeable travel journeys to its offices across England and Wales and The Service is seeking to balance what may be a reasonable journey expectation, across all its offices, and the marginal levels of individuals that this may impact upon.

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It is perhaps worth reiterating that the great majority of bankrupts are now dealt with at a distance and are not required to attend for face to face interview. In addition, where bankrupts or company officers involved in compulsory liquidations are required to attend at The Service's offices for interview, the significant majority do so on just one occasion.

Where there are valid exceptional reasons which result in individuals being unable to attend our offices, when required for interview, then alternatives will be considered, including interviews at third party locations.

In conclusion I would reiterate that a final decision has not yet been taken with regards to the proposed closure of Medway, and your comments have been forwarded to The Insolvency Service and will be taken into account when considering that decision.

Yours,



**NORMAN LAMB**