

Scottish Affairs Committee

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From the Chair, Pete Wishart MP

Steve Barclay MP
Economic Secretary to the Treasury
HM Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road
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20 December 2017

Dear Steve

RBS branch closures

Thank you for your letter of 19 December declining the Scottish Affairs Committee's invitation to give evidence on RBS's decision to close a significant proportion of their bank branches in Scotland.

I am disappointed that you are not willing to appear before the Committee to discuss these closures. I think your comments would have been helpful to the Committee and the public at large, especially given the large stake that the Government still holds in the RBS Group. While I acknowledge the Government's position is that it does not intervene in these commercial decisions, that in itself is a policy decision and it would be helpful to discuss this position with you.

There are also several related issues about accessing financial services where the Committee would benefit from hearing from a Government Minister. These include: the Access to Banking Standard, the coverage of the ATM network, the coverage of the Post Office network (including the statutory access criteria) and the Scottish Government's proposals for a guaranteed minimum level of service provision for essential banking services. These are issues that the Committee may well comment on in any Report it publishes on the closures, and it would be unfortunate if we have to do so without hearing from the UK Government.

I hope that you will reconsider this decision.



Pete Wishart
Chair, Scottish Affairs Committee.