

Adam Pestell and Samantha Exton
Royal Mail
185 Farringdon Road
London
EC1A 1AA

Our Ref: DB16348

2 April 2026

Dear Adam and Samantha,

Re: Public Meeting, Wednesday 1 April 2026

Thank you for your time on Wednesday 1 April attending my Public Meeting to hear from Southend West and Leigh residents about the issues they have been facing with the level of service from Royal Mail. I appreciate both of your efforts in coming along and being the public face of Royal Mail at what is undoubtedly a difficult time across the country.

As the Member of Parliament for Southend West and Leigh, it is my responsibility and privilege to be the voices of all those who live here and to fight for them where they need me to. Since June of last year, around 70 individual cases have been opened in my office to support individuals struggling with an erratic, inadequate, or unreliable postal service. You heard from a number of them directly on Wednesday, and many more sent their apologies and concerns directly to me.

I have become increasingly concerned at the levels of incongruency between the concerns being raised to me and the responses received by Royal Mail seeking to address these concerns. Unfortunately, this incongruency was further reflected by some of the comments from yourselves at the public meeting. Despite repeated assurances from Royal Mail that the "service is slowly improving" and that "NHS letters are being delivered as priority", I want to make it abundantly clear: this is not correct. Too many people have been in touch clearly demonstrating the opposite for us to be certain that these assurances, whilst I am sure have been given in good faith, do not reflect the reality experienced by so many across Southend and other areas.

Whilst NHS letters absolutely must be prioritised, I do question the logic and merits of a system that has both failed to prioritise them effectively for my constituents and also left important legal, financial, and personal documentation languishing for days or weeks before being delivered. As you heard personally, this has led to attempted fraud of bank cards, missed NHS appointments, delayed legal deadlines, and other distressing and concerning situations. I would also like to stress the fact that the quoted delivery frequency of First Class letters daily, Second Class letters every other day, and Economy letters every five days is not reflected in the lived experiences of many. Acknowledging and appreciating these points is crucial in getting the next steps right for all involved.

Moving forward, I concur with your comments at the end of the meeting that the service has failed and must be fixed quickly. I also agree that the model has to be reconsidered from all angles rather than simply tweaked or adjusted as initially suggested. Nevertheless, this must not be undertaken without transparency and accountability; these USO changes were forced upon Southend residents without prior warning, explanation, or preparation, which has caused considerable harm, upset, and frustration to many, including postal workers.

Constituency Office:

Email – david.burtonsampson.mp@parliament.uk
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In acknowledgement of your keenness to see this resolved and improved as soon as possible, will you commit to providing regular weekly updates over the coming months and providing a stated timeframe within the next seven days demonstrating how we will see a rapid and demonstrable improvement in the postal service? This will ensure that my constituents are kept up to date but are also able to hold this service accountable themselves.

Will you also further demonstrate that the statutory delivery obligations are being met, and effectively escalate and rectify any examples wherein they are unmet?

Finally, will you both commit to meeting with me and other senior Royal Mail figures in the very near future to provide a comprehensive update on these efforts? It is important for me that I remain fully involved as we work together to get Southend the postal service it deserves.

Thank you again for your time and commitment, which did not go unnoticed. For transparency, I will be sending this letter along to the Minister of Small Business and Economic Transformation also so that the Government remain fully aware of my constituents' difficulties as well as sharing with my constituents via email and social media.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Burton-Sampson MP
Member of Parliament for Southend West and Leigh