



David Littleproud MP

Federal Member for Maranoa

Media statement

March 27, 2017

The Commonwealth Bank to abandon Blackall as another big bank walks away from bush communities

TAKE your business elsewhere: That's Maranoa MP David Littleproud's angry message to customers as the Commonwealth Bank abandons the Blackall community with its shock decision to pull services from the remote community.

"This lack of transparency is disgusting. Customers should move their business elsewhere because big banks are not supporting us and our rural communities as this closure will result in four local job losses in a region hard-hit by prolonged drought," Mr Littleproud said.

"I believe rural communities are entitled to know the trigger point that kicked off this closure or – at least – be given the opportunity to support an underutilised service."

The Commonwealth Bank is not alone in its bush abandonment as ANZ, Suncorp, Bank of Queensland and Heritage Bank have all recently shut services in bush communities.

"These banks are blaming declining customer numbers and the rise of internet banking for closure decisions but when I challenged them to release customer usage data, all but the Commonwealth Bank and ANZ refused," Mr Littleproud said.

"It seems big banks are only in it for profits, not people. They're abandoning communities in our hour of need, especially in the case of the Blackall-Tambo region as they've struggled through drought but cluster fencing – as a result of Federal Coalition Government investment – has seen a resurgence of the sheep industry and optimism is coming back.

"There was no warning branches were in danger of closing – banks just send out a letter or are outed on social media, with little-to-no consultation with the community or customers.

"This inability to be open, honest and transparent means these banks have something to hide and are choosing profits over people by abandoning rural communities in my electorate."

–ENDS–

FACT BOX: Banks abandoning the bush – recent closure announcements in Maranoa

Commonwealth Bank: Will shut its Blackall branch in June.

ANZ: Will shut its Stanthorpe branch on April 24, 2018 and will turn the Chinchilla branch into a 'business centre' from April 27. Announced it would shut the Jandowae branch last year, even though its patronage was six-times higher than the national average.

Suncorp Bank: Branches in St George, Kingaroy, Miles, Goondiwindi and Stanthorpe last year. Refused to reveal customer usage rates.

Bank of Queensland: Closed its Miles branch last year. Refused to reveal customer usage rates.

Heritage Bank: Last year closed 26 mini branches, would not reveal all locations to Mr Littleproud. Refused to reveal customer usage rates.

–ENDS–

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