

Scottish hit back at RBS name change

[Greig Cameron](#), Scottish Business Editor
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Royal Bank of Scotland's headquarters are at Gogar, to the west of Edinburgh, and the bank says it will stay there



Royal Bank of Scotland will lose thousand of customers in Scotland because of the re-naming of the business as Natwest Group, critics north of the border said yesterday.

Social media was particularly partisan after the announcement of the name change, with customers suggesting that they would close their accounts even though the RBS brand would remain in place on high street banks in Scotland.

RBS has already promised that no staff will be moving out of Scotland as a result of the change, with its headquarters and registered office remaining in Edinburgh.

However, Paul Monaghan, a former SNP MP, said: “This seems like a very poor decision that will cost the Royal Bank of Scotland thousands of customers and many jobs across Scotland. The problems at RBS relate to poor leadership, poor customer service and low morale among its much undervalued and loyal staff — not its name.”

Ian Fraser, author of *Shredded: Inside RBS, The Bank That Broke Britain*, said that the bank’s centre of power had long been in London and that the change of the parent company name was confirmation of this.

He pointed out that the idea of rebranding has been talked about several times since the financial crisis of 2008, and added: “A significant minority of people, particularly those who felt mis-treated, will be quite happy to see the back of it.”

Malcolm Cannon, national director of the Institute of Directors Scotland, believes that there will be a limited impact on Scottish businesses and consumers.

He said: “Given that the rebranding will not extend to the services that customers are provided with at branch or account management level, business leaders will see little change to their relationship with the bank, which is important.

“The other announcements made by Alison Rose [chief executive] appeared to be progressive and for now it’s vital that the bank takes a ‘business as usual’ approach in order not to cause any additional uncertainty to business leaders.”

Alison Rose will save about £1,000 a month in income tax by basing herself in England rather than Scotland.

Traditionally, the chief executive of Royal Bank of Scotland has been based in Edinburgh, even if much of the day job has taken place in London. Ms Rose’s decision to base the job in the City means that she will not have to pay the greater rates of income tax levied on higher earners north of the border.

Ms Rose earns too much to qualify for the personal allowance, but assuming her £1.1 million salary is taxed at normal rates she would face £480,000 in income tax while resident in England. If she were to be classed as a Scottish taxpayer, her income tax bill would be more than £492,000.