



Sharon Hodgson MP

Suite 1 and 1A,
Vermont House,
Concord, Washington,
Tyne & Wear NE37 2SQ
Tel. (0191) 417 2000
hodgsons@parliament.uk

Philip Jansen
Chief Executive
BT Group plc
BT Centre
81 Newgate Street
London
EC1A 7AJ

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Dear Philip,

I hope this letter finds you well.

I am writing to you to express my support for members of the Communication Workers Union (CWU) in BT, EE and Openreach, who I understand are currently facing a significant threat to their working future.

At what is a time of great economic uncertainty and anxiety for many people, I am concerned that BT group is going ahead with a major reorganisation of the business. This includes plans for the closure of many sites, a potential removal of voluntarism when leaving the business, a piecemeal approach to the closures which reduces the chances of redeployment, undermining and ignoring CWU agreements that protect member pensions and voluntary redundancy terms, and reducing the pay and terms and conditions for multiple roles and grades.

Members of the CWU are key workers who have played a pivotal role in keeping our country going throughout the pandemic, including enabling people to work from home and keeping families and communities connected. The changes outlined above are simply no way to treat people who we have all relied on.

The CWU have made their position clear, and it is one I support. They are campaigning to increase job security and maximise the number of UK direct labour jobs in BT. They are aiming to agree a centrally coordinated response to redeployment across the UK, to create a pathway that allows retraining and reskilling, in advance of any redundancy announcements.

They are campaigning to maintain decent pay, terms and conditions, for all BT employees, by ensuring a fair grading, pay and reward structure, in addition to the creation of a fair and enhanced voluntary redundancy package. They also want to see the legally binding element of the pension's agreement reinstated and the use of contractors and offshore work reduced, so as to maximise employment for UK BT employees.

I would appreciate it if you were able to provide a response to the concerns outlined in this letter, and explain what steps you are taking to ensure CWU members are treated with the dignity and respect that they deserve.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Sharon Hodgson MP

Member of Parliament for Washington & Sunderland West

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