



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

Matt Warman MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for
Digital Infrastructure
4th Floor
100 Parliament Street
London SW1A 2BQ

E: enquiries@dcms.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/dcms

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Rosie Cooper MP
rosie@rosiecooper.net

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Dear Rosie,

Thank you for your correspondence of 24 August, to the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP, on behalf of your constituent, Mr Carl Webb, the North West Regional Secretary at the Communications Workers Union (CWU), about collective redundancy handling by BT Technology and its impacts on the workforce. I am replying as the minister responsible for this policy area and I apologise for the delay.

I would like to thank Mr Webb for raising these concerns, and will set out the requirements for consultation, the options where employees feel that they have not been met, and help available for those staff that are made redundant.

Employers have a statutory duty to inform and consult employee representatives over proposed collective redundancies. When a company has failed to adequately consult its employees before making them redundant, it may be possible to apply to an Employment Tribunal for a Protective Award. This is a punitive measure against the company and further information on what the government can pay is available on GOV.UK at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/explaining-your-protective-award/explaining-your-protective-award>. Often the employment tribunal ruling will only confirm the protective award made but where the judgment indicates that there has been a breach this will be reviewed to assess whether further action is warranted.

Throughout the redundancy process employers still have obligations to their employees and should be thinking about the help they can offer. Firstly, employees with 2 years' service under notice of redundancy have the right to reasonable paid time off to look for a new job or arrange training. The Department for Work and Pensions stands ready to support anyone affected by this situation, with a Rapid Response Service (RRS) offer. This is a service designed to give support and advice to employers and their employees when faced with redundancy. This service is co-ordinated nationally by the National Employer and Partnership Team (NEPT) and is managed by Jobcentre Plus. Delivery partners include The National Careers Service, local training providers, employers, HMRC, Money Advice Service and the skills bodies in England.

I hope that this information is helpful.

With best wishes,

Matt Warman MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Digital Infrastructure

