



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

Rt Hon John Whittingdale OBE MP
Minister of State for Media and Data
4th Floor
100 Parliament Street
London SW1A 2BQ

E: enquiries@dcms.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/dcms

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Rt Hon Ben Bradshaw MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Ben,

Thank you for your correspondence of 20 November, to the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP, on behalf of your constituent, about collective redundancy handling by BT Technology and its impacts on the workforce. I have been asked to reply on the department's behalf.

Thank you for raising these concerns. I 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.

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