

No. 115/2020

12th March 2020

Dear Colleague

BT Technology – Better Workplace - Location Strategy

As part of the Better Workplace Programme, BT Technology have made an announcement today on their future location strategy which will be phased in over the next 4 years.

Future Locations of Technology

Technology is currently dispersed across nearly 400 locations and they have informed the CWU that it is their aspiration to consolidate in **6 Technology UK Hubs** and **7 Specialist Buildings** over the next 4 years as follows:

Technology UK Hubs

- **Ipswich, Bristol, Birmingham, Belfast, Manchester, London**

Technology Specialist Buildings

- **Sheffield** – CSOC and support
- **Madley** – UK international satellite gateway
- **Borehamwood** – Test Centre
- **BT Tower** – Broadcast – Media
- **Goonhilly** – subsea cable termination
- **Penzance** – subsea cable termination
- **Bude** – subsea cable termination

As a result of this announcement the CWU has written a formal letter to Mark Murphy, HR Director stating that the plans in their present format are not acceptable as the impact will be devastating on a significant number of our members and their families, potentially putting livelihoods at risk with no viable alternative employment.

The CWU has reminded Technology that it is the policy of the union to oppose compulsory redundancies and we currently have a legally binding agreement that covers BT redundancy arrangements for CWU grades that forms part of the Pension and Pay Agreement 2018. Annex 2.

The CWU would expect Technology to adhere to all aspects of that agreement with particular reference to the paragraph entitled **Considerations prior to redundancy**, which states that before formalising any proposals that include potential redundancies, both BT and CWU will jointly aim to resolve any identified surplus staff by:

- Setting out and reviewing the business case for change.
- Redeployment.
- Retraining and Reskilling.
- Onshoring.
- Recruitment slowdown and freezes.
- Contractor and agency displacement.
- Rebalancing workloads.

- Control of overtime.
- Voluntary paid leavers.

In the past the CWU and Technology have worked together to avoid redundancies and conflict, however, these plans are a massive challenge to that relationship.

The fact that Technology has made this announcement on their location strategy, in isolation of other CFU's is not helpful, as this is not a message that can be delivered by one CFU without understanding what is happening in other parts of BT.

We would like to have the opportunity to shape and influence these plans and have therefore requested an urgent meeting so that we can discuss a way forward.

The CWU believes this is a very serious situation with huge implications for our members, we understand that there will be significant concern amongst the membership and at this point not many answers to allay their fears.

We will continue to keep all branches updated and this issue will be subject to discussion at the forthcoming Branch Forum arranged for 17th & 18th March at Aston University, Birmingham.

Yours sincerely

Sally Bridge
Assistant Secretary.