



An employer is talking about redundancies

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If an employer is thinking about redundancies they can expect GMB to hold them to account.

We will fight for every job and leave no stone unturned to protect the livelihoods of our members now and for future generations.

Here are some questions that we expect answers to:

What's the financial justification?

We expect to be brought into the inside of financial discussions and to be convinced of what the financial situation is. It's not enough to fob off our members with headline figures and no detail.

And we want the long term picture not just where we are now. All the long term economic predictions are for a full recovery from the economic effects of Coronavirus. It's a matter of when not if.

What's the business plan?

There will be no recovery without a strategy for recovery. And often if will be the shop floor workers who can best shape that strategy for it is they who know how the company really works.

GMB expects our members and reps to be at the heart of any recovery plan and to be fully consulted. Our members are worth more than battering down the hatches and managing decline.

Who bears the cost?

At a time of crisis, employers are quick to try and change workers' terms and conditions of employment but where else are they making savings?

GMB won't stand by and watch our members' pay and conditions be eroded whilst shareholders receive dividends and other unnecessary costs go unchecked.

At this time of crisis business cannot be about profit. Every effort, every sinew has to go towards saving jobs and protecting livelihoods – there will be plenty of time in the future for profit.

What's the long term payback?

If sacrifices are made by workers to safeguard the future of the company, how will this be recognised in a tangible way in the future?

Workers will be rightly sceptical of the offer jam tomorrow and it is right that GMB gets up front commitments to how members will be rewarded in the future.

GMB will not sit down and even consider any changes to terms and conditions until the employer can demonstrate that they have exhausted all alternative means of cost saving and protecting jobs.

We will think long and hard before going down the road of discussing changes to terms and



conditions and only on the basis that we have the support of our members.

GMB will ensure that:

1. These changes are genuinely unavoidable to save jobs
2. These changes are temporary and that there will be return to legacy T&Cs once the crisis is over

GMB will not stand by and allow employers to use the Coronavirus crisis to slash hard won pay and conditions. GMB expects:

Temporary Agreements are temporary

Any temporary agreement to change T&Cs to save jobs must be time bound with a clear date when it will end. GMB will not allow temporary changes to become permanent changes.

National Committee ownership and review

Any agreement needs to be owned by the NJC/NNC and be reviewed on a regular, agreed, basis. Such reviews are to ensure that it is being applied fairly across the business and also that it is delivering the desired effect (i.e. saving jobs).

Savings directed at saving jobs

Any savings made must go towards saving jobs and this be clear for everyone to see. It is not acceptable to use savings for other purposes or for workers to make sacrifices if jobs aren't saved.

Protect redundancy pay

If redundancies are unavoidable, there should be a commitment that redundancy pay will be paid at previously agreed rates and that it will be based on earnings before any changes to T&Cs were made.

The Government has introduced legislation to compel employers to pay redundancy pay based on substantive, pre-furlough pay. See button below:

GMB expects employers to honour existing redundancy agreements. Such agreements are reached in better times to offer protection to workers in less good times – it is not acceptable for an employer to argue that times aren't good as their excuse.

Guaranteed minimum levels of pay and working time



protection

Any temporary changes must not take any worker below a protected floor agreed by GMB.

And any temporary change to shift/rostering arrangements must not only be legally compliant but also factor in other worker welfare issues such as travel time, family commitments, etc.

Continuity of furlough

Whilst the Government's Job Retention Scheme remains in place it is not acceptable for employers to expect sacrifices from workers and at the same time make workers redundant rather than place them on furlough.

Any savings made by temporary work agreements should go towards meeting any employer costs of furlough.

Allow other work

When temporary agreements involve a voluntary reduction in hours, workers should be free to find work elsewhere to make up any lost wages.