



Chris Heaton-Harris
Member of Parliament for Daventry
House of Commons, London SW1A
0AA
Tel: 020 7219 7048

March 2021

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about possible redundancies.

I am aware that there have been reports of several businesses and industry sectors considering making large numbers of staff redundant. I appreciate that many businesses have been significantly affected by the Covid-19 outbreak, including those operating in the hospitality, leisure, entertainment, culture, travel, retail and transport sectors. I sympathise with anyone who is facing redundancy during the pandemic. Redundancy is never an easy process to go through, and it is important that those who have been made redundant are aware of their rights.

A Private Members' Bill has been introduced by Gavin Newlands MP which seeks to prevent businesses from adopting "fire and rehire" tactics. The Second Reading of the Bill is scheduled to take place on a date to be announced. Although I appreciate your strength of feeling, I do not support the Bill, as ultimately terms and conditions of employment are a matter for employers and employees.

Companies should behave responsibly and there is already recourse for those who feel they have been treated unfairly. If an employee feels they have been dismissed unfairly, they should first check their rights before they consider taking their case to an employment tribunal. Further details about this can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/redundancy-your-rights>

While employers and employees must be given the flexibility to arrange the terms and conditions of employment, the Government expects all employers to treat their workers fairly and in the spirit of partnership. I strongly condemn the use of 'fire and rehire' as a negotiating tactic.

During this difficult time, it is only right that employers should act responsibly and therefore only use the Job Retention Scheme to protect jobs. I understand that the Government is urging employers not to use the Job Retention Scheme irresponsibly and thereby to make someone redundant on less favourable terms than they would otherwise have received.

To better understand the issues in relation to fire and rehire, the Government is working with ACAS, the arbitration service, and bringing together a number of roundtables with businesses, employee representatives and other bodies to discuss the issues in more detail. Part of this discussion will include examining evidence of how fire and rehire has been used in practice. The Government will continue to stand behind workers and to stop unscrupulous practices where they occur.



Chris Heaton-Harris
Member of Parliament for Daventry
House of Commons, London SW1A
0AA
Tel: 020 7219 7048

I know Ministers continue to engage with businesses and stakeholders to inform them as to what support is available during the pandemic. This has also enabled the Government to be kept fully aware of the latest developments and issues facing businesses and to understand where additional policy measures could address specific industry issues.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris'.

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY