



GMB

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Our Ref: NH/kh/ASDA/B&TSC

29 June 2023

Mr Darren Jones, MP
Chair
Business & Trades Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Sent by Email to: commonsbtc@parliament.uk

Dear Darren Jones MP,

ASDA EVIDENCE AT SELECT COMMITTEE SESSION ON 27TH JUNE 2023

GMB, the union for ASDA workers, is writing to you on behalf of our members in 39 ASDA stores across the South East - who are currently being asked to accept a 60p per hour pay cut.

ASDA has told these members if they do not accept the pay cut, the discredited practice of fire and rehire will be used to impose it.

During a Business and Trade Committee hearing on the 27 June 2023, ASDA's Chief Operating Officer, Kris Comerford, was asked a direct question by Ian Lavery, MP, in relation to ASDA's use of fire and rehire.

Mr Lavery asked if it was right that ASDA are using fire and rehire. Mr Comerford's response was "fire and rehire tactics are not something that ASDA employs - it absolutely isn't."

Mr Lavery asked again if ASDA was using fire and rehire tactics, Mr Comerford said 'absolutely not'.

I want to bring your attention to the business case for this consultation, which was first shared with GMB in February 2023.

The business case states: 'we may potentially serve notice to any remaining colleagues on their existing terms and conditions and offer to re - engage them immediately on the new terms and conditions, providing the relevant contractual notice. Those colleagues would not receive any compensatory payment'.

Mr Jones, if looks like a duck and quacks like a duck, it is normally a duck.

Cont/...

Subsequent comments made by ASDA following Mr Comerford's appearance at the hearing confirm the use of fire and rehire as part of this consultation process: *'should there be a decision to proceed with the proposal and should we not reach an agreement with you or with individual colleagues, we may be in a position where we dismiss and re-engage colleagues on new terms and conditions'*.

ASDA would be right to say they have not yet served formal notice to colleagues to terminate their contracts. They have not. They are, however, using 'fire and rehire tactics'. They are using the threat of fire and rehire (in their official documentation shared with the union and their colleagues) and the withholding of compensation if colleagues do not accept the 60p pay cut to attempt to enact these cuts.

ASDA have also used fire and rehire historically; this was last done in 2019 with the imposition of what was known as 'Contract 6'.

GMB's primary aim is to protect and improve the pay and conditions for our members. As retail workers in ASDA, our members are among the nation's pandemic heroes. They are low paid workers to whom we all owe a debt of gratitude, and yet they are some of the people in our country who have been hardest hit by the cost-of-living crisis.

It is deeply unfair for ASDA to cut their pay, even more so to use fire and rehire to achieve this. They deserve to be treated fairly.

I hope you can consider the points I have raised, and I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Houghton', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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