

Selected emails received by the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee as part of the inquiry into “the impact of coronavirus on businesses and workers”

I work at The Range, we've had no PPE, no hand sanitisers provided. No restrictions for customers and we've had people in buying new nets, curtains, paint and picture frames. Definitely not essential.

The only communication we've had from head office was an email saying they are looking into extra cleaning methods but will be staying open. Anyone who chooses to self isolate can do so for 2 weeks at SSP but is then expected back at work. No mention of help for vulnerable people and not even a thank you at the end.

Last week we had a freezer sent in and were instructed to plug it in straight away even though it is empty and hasn't ever had food in.

I work part time and my partner works full time at the same store, we had a letter saying we were key workers but my son's school refused it as we really aren't an essential store. Most of the essential items are out of stock now and we're selling more and more leisure items.

I am happy to keep working but I feel that better safety measures need to be put in place and non-essential items should not be sold. This would help to reduce the amount of customers just coming in for a look around and leave us able to help the customers with genuine needs.

I have seen the tweet from Rachel Reeves and wondered if you would be able to help. I work for Concentrix in [location redacted] which is an outsourcing company for HSBC. Despite many here being essential as they work on the phones, our team works on PPI refunds, simply doing calculations and sending letters out. This is clearly not essential or urgent work and is putting our health and those that we live with and the wider public at risk.

However, many on the phones are being sent home today with laptops and on full pay until ready to work, whereas we are being forced to stay in until they can source the laptops for us and confirm with HSBC that this can go ahead. This is despite the many times HSBC have emailed to state everyone should be working from home if possible. Concentrix are also advising us our only other option taking unpaid leave. Due to the fact that we do not speak to any members of public and we are not performing urgent work, surely they should not be keeping us in work?

In our part of the office, there is around 70 people in a small room, where only a normal amount of cleaning is happening, and people are travelling to the office from all around Manchester on public transport. They are also refusing to consider using the government programme which will pay 80% of our wage until it is at least sorted that we can work from home. It is in no way essential for us to be in work.

I work for Dexters Estate Agents who have insisted that we remain open and consider themselves 'key workers'. They continue to make their staff travel to offices, even though this involves using public transport and continue to go on viewings where sellers will allow them.

They have not offered support to vulnerable individuals including their pregnant staff and those staff that have been diagnosed with Coronavirus have gone home with colleagues continuing to work in the same office without cleaning taking place!

The staff in the offices are not social distancing and the premises aren't being sanitised. We have expressed our resentment at being forced to come to work and have been told to 'take sick days or holiday' to cover this period after these days have ran out they will pay us SSP. Dexters have released a statement to their staff proudly explaining that they aren't like other agents so will 'not follow in their footsteps'.

I wanted to report [name redacted] debt collection in Yorkshire is open as usual and telling staff that they are key workers so their kids can be at school.

Please help, it scares us all to be there. It is a call centre environment and social distancing is near impossible.

I am a Sky TV engineer and somehow my role has been classed as 'key'. Our forums have been full of engineers disputing this, asking where it leaves protection for us and our families against the virus.

On an average day, we visit around 7 homes per engineer to fit or service Sky TV, a luxury product not everyone is fortunate to own. We are usually in a customers home for an hour, sometimes more sometimes less. It is intrusive work really.

With a whole family home during a lockdown, it can be hard to ask them to keep their distance, especially for larger families in smaller homes. Customers also do not always respect our boundaries. We also have to touch a lot of things in the customers' homes, which more often than not are dirty.

Customers have also told us that they would lie about self-isolation or any symptoms they may have so they could get their Sky TV installed, and wouldn't be surprised if others didn't do the same. Many engineers have heard this. Especially since we have been so busy catching up with the Christmas backlog, people have been waiting for many weeks.

We have been sent some forms of PPE. We already have dust masks (impossible to wear for the whole duration of the job as they are difficult to breathe in), but they have sent us disposable gloves that are so ridiculously big I can't do my job wearing them. Only the larger men will be able to use them. A plastic strip thermometer you hold to your head that probably cost no more than 10 pence has been provided to us also, these aren't effective in the slightest and rarely work. Some engineers have been sent hand sanitizer but not all engineers. I never received mine. We cannot disinfect or wash our PPE such as ropes, straps and harnesses as this could affect the integrity of the fabric.

We are currently still operating for service calls for people who are having issues with their sky product. And this is only because we have kicked up a fuss on the forums. We are still going into many people's homes a day. Many of them high-risk or vulnerable. They may as well be out and socialising with each other.

Issues that have been brought up in team forums have been told to instead of use the forum speak to our team manager (instead of addressing the issues). Our team managers can't really do much.

Sky have said that we are key workers because we provide information and contact. You cannot contact anyone via your sky box. We cannot install sky if a customer does not already have a TV. All

sky customers have access to Sky Go where you can watch the channels online. There is freeview, internet services etc available. We are not internet or phone line engineers where we can remotely fix a job, we have to be in the customers home. PPE (what little we received especially) can only help so much.

Basically, most us engineers feel we are endangering ourselves for the profits of Sky. They have told us they are financially stable, they still receive monthly subscriptions from MILLIONS of customers. It is not cheap, and it is not a necessity, it is purely a luxury. The company always tells us how our safety is paramount, but they have not been putting this into practise at this time. Many of our engineers would be classed in the high risk category, or have family members/people they share a household with in that category.

The big question on a lot of our minds is, we can't we visit our own families, so why are we being asked to visit other people's for the sake of entertainment? Michael Gove himself said on Good Morning Britain "You should not be visiting people's homes..... if you have a problem with your sky box you should not be calling a technician out in order to deal with that"

Really hoping you can help us. A lot of us are too scared to say something because of the backlash it may cause.

I work for Barclaycard in a call centre in [location redacted] our work is solely collecting money of people who have arrears on their credit card. They are insisting our work is essential and making people come in. People with children are being told to use the schools open for key workers, which is putting an additional strain on the schools and teachers.

Anyone who phones up and says a member of their family is sick with virus symptoms are not given any assurances that they wont be penalised if they stay off and self isolate so they are coming into work. Call centres in general are a hotbed for disease as people share desks.

If someone wants to pay their credit card they can do it online. If they can't afford to pay they could put an automated message on the telephone system and on the Barclaycard website to tell them the provisions that will be made. But they are adamant they want us in to collect money.

I am currently employed by Wetherspoons, but the company have left their staff in a very uncertain situation in terms of their wages.

Although I work full time (around 37/39 hours), I have received no confirmation of whether I will be paid 80% of my average earnings, or 80% of my contracted hours (12 hours). We've had no assurances of when we'll be paid, and Tim Martin (Chairman) has said he intends not to pay staff until the government grant is given to businesses, which means no further pay after Friday until the end of April.

Considering his share in the company is worth approx £500 million, he could easily afford to look after his staff if he chose to, and is probably one of the better placed employers to do so within the pub trade.

The situation also makes applying for services such as universal credit difficult as employees are unsure of what information to include.

We urge that he pays staff 80% of their average earnings (not their guaranteed minimum hours), and stop treating them as disposable commodities. Wetherspoons should follow government advice and continue paying their employees until they receive the grant, and not tell furloughed staff to just 'go to Tesco' like they have done.

Tim Martin is throwing his toys out the pram due to Boris Johnson enforcing pub closures, and to put the livelihoods of over 40,000 employees in jeopardy over this is nothing short of greed.

I work for Sports Direct and as you probably seen all over the news and media, they originally proposed for us to stay open. Their justification for this was because we sell "essential gym equipment". In their original email to staff they encouraged us to support their decision as they believed that by helping people to exercise, it would also help their mental health.

After a high volume of media backlash, Sports Direct then decided to close stores. Although, they've left out one important detail of this. They are forcing management to work in stores (my particular store has 5 members of management) daily to complete redundant tasks such as price changes and valuations. This is under the justification that we are "essential workers". They have given us the option to go home and not work, but they won't pay us a penny.

We now have the choice to either protect our families or feed our families. A choice that should never be put upon us.

Myself and my colleagues are frightened about what's going to happen going forward and the uncertainty will undoubtedly cause major problems with our mental health - the key factor they were using as justification to keep stores open.

I work in BT call centre, I work in the sales/retention department, and we have been advised that we are key workers (because we work in a call centre), due to the updates from the government, however I am unsure whether sales/retention can be deemed as a key worker.

It's just more people in one call centre, shoved in like sardines, possibly infecting or spreading covid-19, or symptoms to the people who work in the centre that take the 999 calls.

There has been a lot of queries within the business in regards to this, and we really need more clarification whether we are key workers or not, as these parts of the business can easily close and free more room in the centres for social distancing for key worker teams, such as faults/repairs.

We have not had any option to work from home either.