

Inverclyde Task Force Meeting

Scottish Government produced notes

(n.b. Inverclyde Council produce minutes for this meeting but they aren't shared until the days before the next meeting. These notes are taken as a record of proceedings to assist Scottish Government officials)

Agenda

Item	Description	
1.	Welcome / Apologies	Councillor Stephen McCabe
2.	[REDACTED]	Councillor Stephen McCabe
3.	[REDACTED]	Stuart Jamieson
4.	[REDACTED]	Stuart Jamieson
5.	Jobs Update / EE	Stuart Jamieson
6.	[REDACTED]	Stuart Jamieson
7.	[REDACTED]	Stuart Jamieson
8.	[REDACTED]	Louise Long
9.	[REDACTED]	Louise Long

1. Welcome and Apologies

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED] Separate Task Force meeting required on EE
- [REDACTED] Separate EE meeting within 2 weeks.

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED][REDACTED]>
Sent: 07 May 2024 13:00
To: '[REDACTED]'; [REDACTED]
Cc: Stuart Jamieson; [REDACTED]
Subject:EE Sub Group Meeting - 08.05.24
Attachments: EE Sub Group - Agenda - 08.05.24.docx; EE Sub Group - Minutes - 15.03.24.doc

Classification : Official

Dear All,

Please find attached agenda for the EE Sub Group meeting tomorrow afternoon. I also attach a copy of the minutes from the previous meeting held on 15th March 2024.

Regards,

[REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

Secretary to Corporate Directors
Inverclyde Council

Tel: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]@inverclyde.gov.uk

Inverclyde Council website – www.inverclyde.gov.uk
Inverclyde on Twitter – twitter.com/inverclyde

Inverclyde Council - Best Government Services Employer in the UK 2016 – Bloomberg Business Best Employer Awards 2016

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**EE Sub Group Meeting
Wednesday 08 May 2024 at 2.00 pm
Microsoft Teams
Agenda**

Item	Description	
1.	Welcome / Apologies	Stuart Jamieson
2.	Minutes of Previous Meeting (15 March 2024)	All
3.	Update on retention request	Stuart Jamieson
4.	Update on engagement with EE on employee negotiations	EE
5.	Update on Building	Stuart Jamieson
6.	Next Steps	All

**Minutes of the meeting of the
EE Sub Group
Friday 15 March 2024 at 9.00 am
Via Microsoft Teams**

PRESENT

Louise Long	Chief Executive
Stuart Jamieson	Director – Environment & Regeneration – Inverclyde Council (Chair)
[REDACTED]	Head of Regeneration, Planning and Public Protection
[REDACTED]	Specialist, Business Response Team – Scottish Enterprise
[REDACTED]	Senior Account Manager – Scottish Enterprise
[REDACTED]	Head of Operations – Skills Development Scotland
[REDACTED]	Business Briefing Unit – Scottish Government
[REDACTED]	Business Briefing Unit – Scottish Government
[REDACTED]	Glasgow City Region Lead – Scottish Government

ACTION

1. Welcome, Apologies & Introductions

Stuart Jamieson welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

2. Current Position

Stuart advised of the loss of 455 BT / EE jobs from their Greenock site – employees are not being made redundant but are being relocated to Glasgow. This follows on from jobs losses at Amazon, Berry, Webhelp, Wilko and the relocation of 200 IBM jobs from Greenock to Glasgow. In total, there is a loss of 1,200 jobs from the Inverclyde area.

Stuart advised that MSPs, Scottish Government and Inverclyde Council have all written to BT / EE to advise of their concerns in relation to the impact on Inverclyde's economy on the closure of the Greenock site.

Stuart indicated that the Leader of the Council, Councillor Stephen McCabe, has written to Allison Kirkby, Chief Executive of the BT Group, requesting a meeting and offering a joint package of support to reverse the decision to leave Greenock. It was noted that BT / EE have a site in Glasgow and they have invested significantly in a new site in Dundee. Louise advised that she has also written to Allison Kirkby to request details of their selection criteria to close the Greenock site. [REDACTED] confirmed that the Minister has also written to BT / EE again asking for engagement to take place.

It was noted that as the BT / EE building is now 25 years old, and this was part of the rationale to move jobs to Glasgow. [REDACTED] highlighted that at one point there were 1,100 jobs based in Greenock which has decreased to the current 455 jobs, so the building is significantly too large for its current workforce. It was noted that the building does need significant investment moving forward. Stuart advised that the building is leased from Propco (Greenock).

3. Options going forward

[REDACTED] advised that on a call with ministers and CWU, the trade union picked up on what could happen to the building going forward. The site could be used for reshoring jobs as it is unlikely that BT / EE will reverse their decision.

It was agreed that, at this time, it is too early to progress any further as there currently aren't any specifics.

[REDACTED] indicated that the home working option could be encouraged to enable employees to remain in Inverclyde. It was noted that BT / EE have a hybrid working model for employees – 3 days working from home and 2 days working from the office. It was also noted that BT / EE are offering 2 years paid travel expenses for those employees relocating to Glasgow. [REDACTED] highlighted that many employees will be unable to work from home and Stuart indicated that many of the employees will be unable to travel to Glasgow due to caring / childcare commitments.

[REDACTED] advised that PACE support will be available if there are any redundancies (with individuals being tracked). [REDACTED] has indicated that Skills Development Scotland will provide support to any individual who is looking for a change of direction. [REDACTED] highlighted that BT / EE are not currently looking at redundancies only the relocation of employees.

It was noted that the BT / EE consultation exercise is currently ongoing.

Stuart asked if there is anything that can be progressed collectively by inward investment by the UK and Scottish Governments – can special measures be put in place to make Inverclyde more attractive? [REDACTED] advised of the investment opportunity fund which could be a possibility for the site if there is a broader ambition. [REDACTED] confirmed that [REDACTED] is progressing Inverclyde's ask to the Government for funding.

4. Next Steps

The following next steps were agreed:

- Approach BT / EE to request further information in relation to the workforce and the building. SJ
- [REDACTED] advised he will liaise with colleagues on who will be the Scottish Enterprise representative for this group going forward. [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED] advised he is meeting with the Scotland Office next week and will raise items discussed today. [REDACTED]
- Further meeting of the group to be diarised.
- Any updates to be forwarded to group members ahead of the next meeting of the group. [REDACTED]
All

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 May 2024 11:33
To: Director of Economic Development; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: BT/EE Sub-Group Meeting - 8 May 2024 - Readout

Colin, [REDACTED]

A short note of the BT/EE Sub-Group call on 8 May.

- Nick Speed of BT had agreed to attend but was unable to make the date/time. He had asked for the call to be moved to the following week but Inverclyde Council were keen for the call to happen before the next Inverclyde Task Force Meeting.
- Inverclyde Council acknowledged with disappointment that BT would not change its decision with regard to moving its operation to Glasgow.
- SDS gave an update its meeting with BT on consultation with staff who had concerns about moving. 12 staff had already agreed to leave the company (BT has subsequently written to SG to indicate that it has opened a voluntary redundancy programme for some staff at Greenock).
- Inverclyde Council had been informed by BT's landlord that 6 years were left on the lease at the Inverclyde site which IC felt cast doubt on costs being the driver for the move to Glasgow.
- The UKG Levelling Up representative asked what work had been done with other large employers in the area who may be making redundancies. IC said it had been concentrating on BT/EE and had yet to address this.
- The next meeting is due to take place on 12 June.

[REDACTED]

Business Briefing Unit
Strategic Commercial Assets Division
Directorate for Economic Development
Scottish Government
[REDACTED], 5 Atlantic Quay
Glasgow, G2 8LU
Mobile [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 February 2024 17:18

To: Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy

Cc: DL for Business Briefing Unit Submissions Group; [REDACTED] [REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk; pressoffice@scotent.co.uk; Communications Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy; Adam Reid[REDACTED]Anne-Marie Martin[REDACTED]

Subject:OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL

Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy

EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC), GREENOCK, INVERCLYDE, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

Purpose

1. To provide you with an update following the announcement yesterday (08 Feb) that EE Ltd (which is part of the BT Group PLC) informed staff in Greenock, Inverclyde, of their plans to close the Greenock call centre and relocate staff to their central Glasgow site by 30 November 2024. This follows a previous decision by EE's parent company, BT Group PLC, to close sites in Alness, which resulted in circa 100 redundancies.

Priority

2. Routine – Staff have been informed and the decision has been reported in multiple media outlets. A question was raised at FMQ's yesterday (08 February) by Stuart McMillan MSP (SNP).

Background

3. EE Ltd is a mobile network operator and internet service provider and was acquired by BT in 2015. BT Group PLC is a British multinational telecommunications holding company headquartered in London, England. It has operations in around 180 countries.

4. BT PLC is going through a transformation programme to modernise offices and reduce footprint. The company entered into consultation with employees on 08 February regarding potential closure of the EE Greenock contact centre, which has 442 permanent and 13 agency employees. The proposal outlines plans to transfer staff to Alexander Bain House in Glasgow.

Nick Speed, Head of Nations & Regions, Policy and Public Affairs, BT Group Corporate Affairs, wrote to local elected representatives and the Cabinet Secretary on 08 February. This mirrors their decision to close their sites in Alness, in that BT cited their modernisation programme as well as the need for substantial investment to bring the Greenock location up to standard as the reason for this decision.

5. In the letter BT has said that it will offer a range of support options, including paying Additional Travel Costs for a 2-year period and employing a specialist outplacement service to support those that cannot travel to secure new roles outside BT Group in addition to paying enhanced severance terms.

Closure of the Alness sites

6. In November 2023 the BT sites in Alness were earmarked for closure by the BT Group as part of a modernisation programme started of its office estate and consolidation into a smaller number of buildings. The outcome of the consultation was that 96% of the 102 staff accepted voluntary redundancy terms, with 6-10 staff undertaking individual consultations.

7. PACE provided support through webinars, 1-2-1 support and employability guidance for the affected staff. HIE also provided support through engagement with LHH Penna (BT's outplacement provider) and referring local businesses to LHH Penna's Digital Talent Exchange, which performed a matching service between affected staff and recruiting businesses.

Previous Ministerial Engagement

8. The former Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy engaged with: BT Group on 21 December 2023 to explore options to retain the jobs in Alness. BT advised that they remained committed to their decision, proposing exit from Alness by 29 February 2024; and CWU (Communication Workers Union) on 14 December 2023

SE Engagement

10. Whilst EE Ltd is not account managed by SE, the parent company BT Group PLC is. However, the contact centre in Greenock has not been part of discussions with BT since it was de-segmented in November 2020.

Next Steps

11. SE has requested a meeting with BT to better understand the situation, the group's future plans and to understand what support would be appropriate. SE have invited Inverclyde Council to join that call.

12. PACE stands ready to support the affected individuals.

13. The Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade is due to meet with the Inverclyde Taskforce later this month, where this issue is likely to be raised. You may wish to speak to BT in advance of this Taskforce meeting.

Recommendation

13. To note the current risk to jobs at EE Ltd in Greenock and agree to a virtual meeting with BT to discuss this decision. The BBU will be happy to arrange the call and keep you updated on developments.

Media Lines*

The Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy said:

"This will be an anxious time for employees at EE in Greenock and for their families. Scottish Enterprise is speaking to EE to seek clarity on its plans.

"The Scottish Government and its agencies are committed to working with Inverclyde Council to stimulate economic growth in the area. Ministers participate in the work of the Inverclyde Task Force to examine new ways of enabling a successful and sustainable wellbeing economy, and the Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade will meet the Task Force again later this month."

Background

If any EE employees face redundancy, the Scottish Government will provide support through our initiative for responding to redundancy situations, Partnership Action for Continuing Employment, PACE.

END

*These lines have been cleared and issued in response to a media enquiry earlier today.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

Business Briefing Unit

Strategic Commercial Assets Division

Scottish Government

OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL

Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy

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Background

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END

*These lines have been cleared and issued in response to a media enquiry earlier today.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

Business Briefing Unit
Strategic Commercial Assets Division
Scottish Government

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade
Sent: 15 April 2024 17:33
To: [REDACTED]; Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

Hi [REDACTED]

Apologies for the delay.

Mr Lochhead is content to clear the note of the meeting and for this to be issued – can you send us the eRDM link for our records?

Thanks

[REDACTED]

Private Secretary

Office of Richard Lochhead MSP, Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade

MinisterSBITT@gov.scot

St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | T: 0131 [REDACTED] | [REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>
Sent: Monday, April 15, 2024 12:49 PM
To: Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade <MinisterSBITT@gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

Good afternoon

Further to the emails below, please could you advise if the Minister is content to clear the attached readout of his call with EE/BT Group on 19 February?

Apologies for chasing, as I understand that the Minister has been extremely busy. Given the duration since the call took place, and if the Minister is unable to clear the attached note at this time, could you advise if the Minister would instead be amenable to the note being issued without Ministerial clearance?

Best regards,
[REDACTED]
Business Briefing Unit
Strategic Commercial Assets Division
Scottish Government

From: **[REDACTED]**
Sent: Wednesday, March 27, 2024 11:40 AM
To: Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade <MinisterSBITT@gov.scot>
Cc: **[REDACTED]** <**[REDACTED]**@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

Good morning **[REDACTED]**

Wanted to chase up on the clearance of the call note for the Minister's call with BT Group on 19 February. I've attached the note again for ease.

Grateful if you could ensure that **[REDACTED]** is copied to your response as I will be off on leave shortly.

Best regards,
[REDACTED]
Business Briefing Unit
Strategic Commercial Assets Division
Scottish Government

From: **[REDACTED]** <**[REDACTED]**@gov.scot>
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2024 9:30 AM
To: Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade <MinisterSBITT@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

Thank you **[REDACTED]**, much appreciated

Best regards,
[REDACTED]
Business Briefing Unit
Strategic Commercial Assets Division
Scottish Government

From: **[REDACTED]** <**[REDACTED]**@gov.scot> On Behalf Of Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 5:10 PM
To: **[REDACTED]** <**[REDACTED]**@gov.scot>; Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade <MinisterSBITT@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

Hi [REDACTED]

Apologies for the delay, this is still with the Minister. We will aim to get this cleared as quickly as possible.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

Deputy Private Secretary to Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade – Richard Lochhead MSP

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From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Sent: Tuesday, March 12, 2024 3:54 PM

To: Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade <MinisterSBITT@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

Hi [REDACTED]

Just wanted to follow up on the clearance of the attached note. Conscious that it nearly a month since the meeting itself, so would be good to get it issued soon, if possible.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

Business Briefing Unit

Strategic Commercial Assets Division

Scottish Government

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 10:18 AM

To: Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade <MinisterSBITT@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

Thank you [REDACTED]

No deadline per se, just wanted to check that I've not missed the response somehow.

Best regards,
[REDACTED]
Business Briefing Unit
Strategic Commercial Assets Division
Scottish Government

From: **[REDACTED]** <**[REDACTED]**@gov.scot> On Behalf Of Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 10:16 AM
To: **[REDACTED]** <**[REDACTED]**@gov.scot>; Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade <MinisterSBITT@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

Hi **[REDACTED]**,

This is still with the Minister. Is there a deadline you're working to? Noted you are waiting to share with wider copy list.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

Deputy Private Secretary to Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade – Richard Lochhead MSP
The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | E: MinisterSBITT@gov.scot | T: **[REDACTED]**

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From: **[REDACTED]** <**[REDACTED]**@gov.scot>
Sent: Friday, March 1, 2024 10:04 AM
To: Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade <MinisterSBITT@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

Good morning

Just wanted to check in and see if the attached meeting note of the Minister's call with BT Group regarding EE Greenock has been cleared by the Minister – apologies if I've missed the response.

Best regards,
[REDACTED]
Business Briefing Unit

Strategic Commercial Assets Division
Scottish Government

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>
Sent: Tuesday, February 20, 2024 4:37 PM
To: Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade <MinisterSBITT@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

Good afternoon

Please find attached a draft readout of the call with BT Group yesterday regarding EE Greenock. Grateful for the Minister's clearance before I share with the wider copy list.

Best regards,
[REDACTED]
Business Briefing Unit
Strategic Commercial Assets Division
Scottish Government

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot> On Behalf Of Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade
Sent: Monday, February 19, 2024 10:37 AM
To: Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade <MinisterSBITT@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy <CabSecWENZE@gov.scot>
Cc: DL for Business Briefing Unit Submissions Group <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk; pressoffice@scotent.co.uk; Communications Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy <CommunicationsWellbeingEconomyFairWorkandenergy@gov.scot>; Adam Reid <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Anne-Marie Martin <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

Morning,

As discussed on teams Mr Lochhead is content for the meeting to remain at 11:30.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

Deputy Private Secretary to Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade – Richard Lochhead MSP

The Scottish Government | St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | E: MinisterSBITT@gov.scot | T: [REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot> On Behalf Of Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade

Sent: Monday, February 19, 2024 9:32 AM

To: Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade <MinisterSBITT@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy <CabSecWENZE@gov.scot>

Cc: DL for Business Briefing Unit Submissions Group <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; pressoffice@scotent.co.uk; Communications Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy <CommunicationsWellbeingEconomyFairWorkandenergy@gov.scot>; Adam Reid <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Anne-Marie Martin <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

Importance: High

Morning All,

Mr Lochhead has asked if we can push the call back to 12 noon? Grateful if this can be put to BT.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

Deputy Private Secretary to Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade – Richard Lochhead MSP

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From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot> On Behalf Of Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade
Sent: Friday, February 16, 2024 1:57 PM
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade <MinisterSBITT@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy <CabSecWENZE@gov.scot>
Cc: DL for Business Briefing Unit Submissions Group <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk; pressoffice@scotent.co.uk; Communications Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy <CommunicationsWellbeingEconomyFairWorkandenergy@gov.scot>; Adam Reid <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Anne-Marie Martin <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

Great, thanks [REDACTED].

I have sent on invite. Please find teams link below which can be shared with those attending from BT. Grateful if briefing can be with PO by 16:00 if possible so we can send to the Minister before COP today.

Microsoft Teams meeting
Join on your computer, mobile app or room device
[Click here to join the meeting](#)
Meeting ID: [REDACTED]
Passcode: [REDACTED]
[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)
SCOTS Connect - Please note - You must have the explicit permission of the organiser to record this meeting and its attendees, using any technology.
[Learn more](#) | [Help](#) | [Meeting options](#)

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot> On Behalf Of Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade

Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 11:57 AM

To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy <CabSecWENZE@gov.scot>

Cc: DL for Business Briefing Unit Submissions Group <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk; pressoffice@scotent.co.uk; Communications Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy <CommunicationsWellbeingEconomyFairWorkandenergy@gov.scot>; Adam Reid <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Anne-Marie Martin <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW

Hi [REDACTED],

Mr Lochhead has fed back that he agrees it would helpful if the Cab Sec spoke to BT prior to the forthcoming meeting.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

Deputy Private Secretary to Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade – Richard Lochhead MSP

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 April 2024 09:04
To: Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade
Cc: Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work; First Minister; Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy; DL for Business Briefing Unit Submissions Group; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk; pressoffice@scotent.co.uk; zzzCommunications Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy; Adam Reid; [REDACTED] Anne-Marie Martin; [REDACTED]
Subject: READOUT - 19 FEB 2024 : OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - CALL WITH EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK

NOTE OF CALL WITH BT GROUP REGARDING EE GREENOCK, INVERCLYDE
19 FEBRUARY 2024 – 11:30 – 12:00

Participants

Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade
Nick Speed – BT Group, Head of Nations & Regions, Policy and Public Affairs
Anthony Cass - BT Group, Contact Centre Sales Director
[REDACTED] – SG PACE
[REDACTED] – Scottish Enterprise
[REDACTED] – Scottish Enterprise
[REDACTED] – SG BBU
[REDACTED] – SG BBU

Mr Lochhead thanked Mr Speed and Mr Cass for taking the call, and expressed concern about the announcement of the proposed closure of the EE Greenock contact centre. The Minister made clear the impact on the workers and local economy, and expressed specific concern for staff that are unable to commute to Glasgow. The Minister urged BT Group to keep all options on the table including maintaining a presence in Greenock. The Minister made clear that he wants BT to remain in dialogue with all stakeholders, including engaging with the Inverclyde Taskforce.

Nick Speed and Anthony Cass made the following points:

BT want to ensure there is on-going engagement with Ministers and local stakeholders, and noted a number of conversations with local elected representatives already.

EE Greenock is one of the larger sites affected, but the decision has been made as part of BT's Better Workplaces programme, which is UK wide.

It would be too costly to invest in the Greenock site and provide the same environment and conditions they can offer staff in other locations.

Their timetable would see people moving by September 2024, with the office closing in November 2024 which enables staff plenty of time to consider their options.

They are offering staff 'trial runs' to Glasgow to understand the commute and their preferences.

The new office is close to Glasgow Central, and BT is also looking at car parking with discounted rates near the office.

For staff that do relocate they are offering enhanced travel costs (where additional costs compared to current commute are covered) for 2 years.

BT think that only a small percentage of staff fall outwith their parameters for reasonable distance to travel based on a postcode search of staff domiciles. The consultation will ensure this is accurate based on all factors.

BT confirmed that redundancy would be offered if an individual is regarded as being outwith reasonable travel distance, but employees that are within the distance that choose to not relocate will not be offered redundancy.

BT reported mixed reactions from staff, with a 25% positive response, 25% unsure, and 50% concerned. They are focussing heavily on supporting the 50% that are concerned discussing issues such as costs, shift patterns and working from home.

They are willing to consider all options to ensure that as many staff can continue to work for EE, including hybrid working and compressed hours.

They reiterated BT's commitment to their hybrid working model, and confirmed that full working from home would not be possible. BT also consider that hybrid working will mean that the local economy will be less impacted.

Staff that are unable to relocate will be supported to look at alternative options and BT welcome engagement from SG agencies in supporting this activity.

Their Transformation programme is a 5 year programme started in 2019. Whilst it has experienced delays, it is not far off completion, so they do not expect many more redundancy/relocation announcements.

With any further announcements they will ensure that political stakeholders are made aware at the same time as staff.

BT acknowledged that there had been requests for them to reconsider the decision and would be relaying these requests to senior management but stressed that they felt the proposals were in the long-term interests of colleagues.

The Minister reiterated the impact on the local community, urged BT Group to continue to consider all options (including remaining in Greenock), and asked BT Group to remain engaged with all relevant stakeholders. The Minister thanked BT Group for taking the time to speak and ended the call.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

Business Briefing Unit

Strategic Commercial Assets Division

Scottish Government

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 23 February 2024 12:44

To: Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy

Cc: DL for Business Briefing Unit Submissions Group; [REDACTED] [REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk; pressoffice@scotent.co.uk; Communications Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy; Adam Reid[REDACTED]Anne-Marie Martin[REDACTED]

Subject:OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW - ADVICE ON STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Attachments: Special EE Taskforce meeting; Mairi McAllan MSP.pdf; RE: General Oral PQ - S6O-03149 - 12pm Tuesday

Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy

We made you aware on 9 February of the proposal by BT Group to relocate its Greenock call centre, which employs around 450 people, and relocate the work to Glasgow. Since then, the Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade met with the company on 19 February to discuss this decision.

You have received correspondence on the subject from local MSPs and from the leader of Inverclyde Council who are seeking meetings to discuss the company's decision. Officials have also received a request from Inverclyde Council for yourself and Mr Lochhead to attend a "Special EE Taskforce Meeting" on either 4 or 8 March. The letter and email from the council are attached for reference. Neil Bibby MSP has tabled a question to be raised at General PQs next Thursday which is also attached.

Mr Lochhead attended the Inverclyde Taskforce meeting on 20 February where officials in attendance reported that there is an expectation that SG should provide direct assistance to keep EE in Inverclyde. On their call with Mr Lochhead on 19 February, BT signalled that, while it was careful to respect the consultation period, it would be very unlikely that it would reconsider its decision. We will also reach out to the relevant union (CWU) to obtain an appropriate contact for you to have a call with. We would suggest that given the update from BT regarding the likely outcome, it would be helpful to speak with the union. We will advise your PO accordingly, once we have these details.

Our proposed approach is that you agree to meet with the council but widen out to other stakeholders (elected reps including the local and list MSPs and the MP), thereby maximising your time by taking a partnership approach to discuss the concerns raised by various interested parties. We expect at this meeting there will be a financial ask of the Scottish Government to help keep the EE operation in Greenock (as noted in the attached letter from the Council).

Our briefing for this call will advise that any proposed further activity on EE is led by the Council under the remit of the current Inverclyde Taskforce which aligns with the correspondence from the Council. This was the case when a similar sub-group was undertaken, without ministerial representation, following the announcement of the closure of the Gourrock Amazon site. There is no merit in setting up another group as the current membership would be key to any considerations for the local economy. The membership of the Taskforce includes Scottish Government; Inverclyde Council; UK Government; SDS; FSB; Inverclyde Chamber of Commerce; Riverside Inverclyde and local MSPs.

We are aware that there is a separate request for you to meet stakeholders to discuss the Inverclyde economy linked to Ferguson Marine so a clear distinction would need to be made between the two meetings.

I would be grateful if you could indicate if you are content with this approach. It would be helpful if a date and time for a call could be confirmed in advance of General PQs on Thursday 29 February so that it can be referenced if necessary.

[REDACTED]

Business Briefing Unit

Strategic Commercial Assets Division

Directorate for Economic Development

Scottish Government

[REDACTED], 5 Atlantic Quay

Glasgow, G2 8LU

Mobile **[REDACTED]**

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy
Sent: 28 February 2024 09:19
To: [REDACTED]; Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy; Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work
Cc: DL for Business Briefing Unit Submissions Group; [REDACTED] [REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk; pressoffice@scotent.co.uk; Communications Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy; Adam Reid[REDACTED] Anne-Marie Martin[REDACTED]
Subject:RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450 JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW - ADVICE ON STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

This email is for the official record and confirms a Ministerial Decision. This email must be placed in the official record (eRDM) by your team in line with SG records management policy.

Hi [REDACTED]

Ms McAllan has commented that Ms Martin should lead on this. The Cab Sec is very happy for Ms Martin to update her on this issue as it develops and her proposed approach. This aligns with Ms Martin's Fairwork and PACE responsibilities – and allows Ms McAllan to keep separate, the issue of FMPG and economic impacts around this.

Grateful if all correspondence in relation to this can be sent straight to Ms Martin for future consideration, including MiCase and PQs.

Copying to [REDACTED] who is already aware.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Deputy Private Secretary
Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy
CabSecWENZE@gov.scot

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>
Sent: Friday, February 23, 2024 12:44 PM
To: Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy <CabSecWENZE@gov.scot>
Cc: DL for Business Briefing Unit Submissions Group <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; pressoffice@scotent.co.uk; Communications Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy <CommunicationsWellbeingEconomyFairWorkandenergy@gov.scot>; Adam Reid <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]

<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]
<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Anne-Marie Martin <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]
<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]
<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]
<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]
<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED]
<[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Subject: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK, RELOCATION OF 450
JOBS FROM GREENOCK TO GLASGOW - ADVICE ON STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy

We made you aware on 9 February of the proposal by BT Group to relocate its Greenock call centre, which employs around 450 people, and relocate the work to Glasgow. Since then, the Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade met with the company on 19 February to discuss this decision.

You have received correspondence on the subject from local MSPs and from the leader of Inverclyde Council who are seeking meetings to discuss the company's decision. Officials have also received a request from Inverclyde Council for yourself and Mr Lochhead to attend a "Special EE Taskforce Meeting" on either 4 or 8 March. The letter and email from the council are attached for reference. Neil Bibby MSP has tabled a question to be raised at General PQs next Thursday which is also attached.

Mr Lochhead attended the Inverclyde Taskforce meeting on 20 February where officials in attendance reported that there is an expectation that SG should provide direct assistance to keep EE in Inverclyde. On their call with Mr Lochhead on 19 February, BT signalled that, while it was careful to respect the consultation period, it would be very unlikely that it would reconsider its decision. We will also reach out to the relevant union (CWU) to obtain an appropriate contact for you to have a call with. We would suggest that given the update from BT regarding the likely outcome, it would be helpful to speak with the union. We will advise your PO accordingly, once we have these details.

Our proposed approach is that you agree to meet with the council but widen out to other stakeholders (elected reps including the local and list MSPs and the MP), thereby maximising your time by taking a partnership approach to discuss the concerns raised by various interested parties. We expect at this meeting there will be a financial ask of the Scottish Government to help keep the EE operation in Greenock (as noted in the attached letter from the Council).

Our briefing for this call will advise that any proposed further activity on EE is led by the Council under the remit of the current Inverclyde Taskforce which aligns with the correspondence from the Council. This was the case when a similar sub-group was undertaken, without ministerial representation, following the announcement of the closure of the Gourrock Amazon site. There is no merit in setting up another group as the current membership would be key to any considerations for the local economy. The membership of the Taskforce includes Scottish Government; Inverclyde Council; UK Government; SDS; FSB; Inverclyde Chamber of Commerce; Riverside Inverclyde and local MSPs.

We are aware that there is a separate request for you to meet stakeholders to discuss the Inverclyde economy linked to Ferguson Marine so a clear distinction would need to be made between the two meetings.

I would be grateful if you could indicate if you are content with this approach. It would be helpful if a date and time for a call could be confirmed in advance of General PQs on Thursday 29 February so that it can be referenced if necessary.

[REDACTED]

Business Briefing Unit

Strategic Commercial Assets Division

Directorate for Economic Development

Scottish Government

[REDACTED] 5 Atlantic Quay

Glasgow, G2 8LU

Mobile **[REDACTED]**

From: **[REDACTED]** on behalf of Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work
Sent: 11 March 2024 17:17
To: **[REDACTED]**; Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work
Subject: RE: CLEARANCE: Note of call with Elected Reps regarding EE Greenock

Hi **[REDACTED]**,

Ms Martin is content to clear the note – can you send an eRDM link for our records.

I will save as a PDF and issue to those in attendance.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

Private Secretary to Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work – Gillian Martin MSP
The Scottish Government
St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG
T: 0131 **[REDACTED]** | M: **[REDACTED]** | Email: MinisterEJTFW@gov.scot

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From: **[REDACTED]** <**[REDACTED]**@gov.scot>
Sent: Friday, March 8, 2024 3:57 PM
To: Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work <MinisterEJTFW@gov.scot>
Subject: CLEARANCE: Note of call with Elected Reps regarding EE Greenock

Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work/PO

Please find attached a draft note of the call yesterday (07 March) with Elected Reps regarding EE Greenock for the Minister's clearance before issue to the wider copy list.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

Business Briefing Unit
Strategic Commercial Assets Division
Scottish Government

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 15 March 2024 10:01

To: Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work

Cc: Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade; Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy; DL for Business Briefing Unit Submissions Group; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk; pressoffice@scotent.co.uk; Communications Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy; Adam Reid[REDACTED]Anne-Marie Martin[REDACTED]

Subject:OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK - NOTE OF CWU CALL - 13 March 2024

Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work/PO

NOTE OF CALL WITH COMMUNICATION WORKERS UNION (CWU) REGARDING EE GREENOCK,
WEDNESDAY 13 MARCH 2024 – 12:15 – 12:30

Participants

Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work

[REDACTED] – CWU Regional Secretary

[REDACTED] – CWU National Officer

[REDACTED] – Scottish Enterprise

[REDACTED] – SG, Business Briefing Unit (BBU)

[REDACTED] – SG Business Briefing Unit (BBU)

The Minister thanked attendees for joining the call, and expressed concern regarding the proposed closure of the EE Greenock site and the impact this will have on the affected workers. The Minister advised of their correspondence with BT Group urging them to reconsider their decision, and noted that both the Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade, and Inverclyde Council have asked the same of BT. The Minister acknowledged that BT Group has confirmed their commitment to the decision and advised of the work Inverclyde Taskforce will be doing to explore options. The Minister asked CWU to outline their engagement with BT, what concerns workers have, and how maximising continued employment with EE Ltd can be supported.

Attendees made the following points

BT have been working to consolidate and improve their estate through two programmes; Better Workplaces and the Blue Fin scheme.

The decision to close the Greenock Contact Centre falls under Better Workplace programme, which is primarily focussed on trying to offer relocation rather than redundancy and entitles staff to Group terms, which includes travel cost supplements, etc.

There are concerns around the two year limit to travel cost supplements, given the pay scales staff are on and how impractical full relocation to Glasgow would be for most staff after this time period.

There are also concern around travels times for those living further away from Glasgow, as even staff who are within BT's reasonable travel time may find their journeys exceed these times in real terms due to timing of public transport and likelihood of delays. This in turn could lead to issues with attendance.

BT Group's firm commitment to their current working from home policy may exacerbate this, and also prove too inflexible for those with caring responsibilities.

Matching current staff roles to those available in Glasgow may also prove challenging.

The workforce at EE Greenock tends to be older, long-term employees. Many have cited the reason for having continued to work for EE for so long as being location which results in a good work life balance. Whilst many would prefer to stay in Greenock, there is a lack of jobs in the area.

It is felt that there is an apathy in staff as a result of the decision and that the majority of the workforce has already made up their mind.

There are concern over the utilisation of the old site, but there is a potential for the building to be upgraded.

It was suggested that BT Group could onshore other BT roles to utilise the site, as there would not be capacity at their Glasgow location if the proposed relocation of EE Contact Centre staff is completed as planned.

It was noted that any intervention would need to ensure that BT Group's decision involved a commitment to staying in Greenock/Inverclyde for the long term.

There is an available workforce in Inverclyde.

The Minister acknowledged the points made by the CWU and reiterated her concerns around the impact of workers who will struggle to find a way to balance the demands of work and life due to the extra pressures relocation to Glasgow will create.

The Minister thanked attendees for taking the time to speak and ended the call.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

Business Briefing Unit

Strategic Commercial Assets Division

Scottish Government

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 April 2024 16:08
To: First Minister; Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work
Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy; Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade; DL for Business Briefing Unit Submissions Group; [REDACTED] [REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk; pressoffice@scotent.co.uk; zzzCommunications Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy; Adam Reid[REDACTED]Anne-Marie Martin;[REDACTED]
Subject:RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK
Attachments: FINAL - EE Greenock - FM letter to Allison Kirkby.docx; FW: EE Call Centre (Case Ref: NB4453MM)

First Minister
Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work

EE – CLOSURE OF GREENOCK SITE – LETTER FROM NEIL BIBBY MSP TO THE FIRST MINISTER

Neil Bibby MSP wrote to you on 9 April requesting that you write to Allison Kirkby, Chief Executive of BT Group to ask that she engage with the sub group of the Inverclyde Task Force dedicated to EE's decision to close its site in Greenock and transfer the 450 staff employed there to Alexander Bain House in Glasgow (email attached for reference.

The Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade spoke with Nick Speed, BT's Head of Nations and Regions about this decision on 19 February and the Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work has written to Mr Speed on three occasions. In his most recent response Mr Speed was clear that BT intends to proceed with the transfer of staff to Glasgow.

The Leader of Inverclyde Council wrote to Ms Martin on 26 March to request that you or the Cabinet Secretary write to BT and urge them to reconsider this decision. Following consultation with SpAds, it was agreed that Ms Martin would write to Cllr McCabe explaining that she had responsibility for engagement with BT on this matter and that this engagement was being taken forward with the full support of FM and the Cabinet Secretary.

However, in light of this latest letter from Neil Bibby, it is possible that there will be further requests of you to write to BT. Given this possibility, we have again consulted with SpAds and concluded that we should recommend that you write to Allison Kirkby and urge her to engage with the sub-group. A draft letter is attached for your consideration.

Email for issue: [REDACTED]@bt.com

Best regards,
[REDACTED]
Business Briefing Unit
Strategic Commercial Assets Division
Scottish Government

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2024 3:21 PM
To: Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work <MinisterEJTFW@gov.scot>; First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy <CabSecWENZE@gov.scot>

Cc: Minister for Small Business, Innovation, Tourism and Trade <MinisterSBITT@gov.scot>; DL for Business Briefing Unit Submissions Group <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@scotent.co.uk>; pressoffice@scotent.co.uk; Communications Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy <CommunicationsWellbeingEconomyFairWorkandenergy@gov.scot>; Adam Reid <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; Anne-Marie Martin <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gov.scot>

Subject: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: COMMERCIAL - EE LTD (BT GROUP PLC) GREENOCK

Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work

PO First Minister and Cabinet Secretary – To note this update and the request from Inverclyde Council to escalate the engagement to Cab Sec and FM. Officials recommend that ministerial engagement remains with the Minister for Energy, Just Transition and Fair Work as outlined below. Please note the ongoing engagement and proposed letters (see attached) for issue to both BT Group and Inverclyde Council from Ms Martin. SpAds have confirmed they are happy with this approach.

EE GREENOCK – LATEST CORRESPONDENCE FROM BT AND REQUEST FROM INVERCLYDE COUNCIL

Latest Position

Nick Speed, Head of Nations and Regions at BT, in his 15 March response to your most recent letter to him, reaffirmed BT's decision to relocate to Glasgow and also declined your request that the company engage with the Inverclyde Task Force's EE Sub-Group (see attached).

With Private Office agreement, BBU shared these letters with Councillor Stephen McCabe, Leader of Inverclyde Council who responded to officials expressing his disappointment at BT's reply and requesting that there should now be engagement from either the First Minister or the Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Net Zero and Energy encouraging BT to engage with the Sub-Group.

Next Steps

It is very unlikely that FM or Cabinet Secretary intervention would change BT's position on this matter, with the decision being taken as part of a 5 year UK-wide programme to consolidate their office spaces, which began in 2019. In his letter of 15 March, Nick Speed also pointed out that the building in Greenock, which is not owned by BT, would require major investment to bring it in line with BT's standard for office accommodation.

Officials would suggest that ministerial engagement remains with yourself given BT's commitment to move the Greenock operation to Glasgow. Therefore, it would be helpful to suggest to the Council that engagement going forward with the company should focus on the welfare of staff affected and ensuring that BT fully support any staff affected by the move.

Draft letters to Nick Speed, making this request, and to Cllr McCabe, outlining the latest position, are enclosed for your clearance and issue.

Recommendation

That you note this update, and clear and issue the draft letters.

The First Minister and Cabinet Secretary's Private Offices are asked to note the request made by Cllr McCabe.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

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