

Taskforce to support Tesco workers meets for first time

Tesco announced last month that it planned to close its Customer Contact Centre in Llanishen, Cardiff with the potential loss of 1100 jobs.

In response, Economy Secretary, Ken Skates pledged to establish a Taskforce to ensure that workers affected by this news could access the very best support.

And today the Economy Secretary chaired the very first meeting of the Taskforce and was joined by the Minister for Skills and Science, Julie James, representatives of Careers Wales, the Welsh Contact Centre Forum, DWP, Public Health Wales, Trade Unions and Welsh Government officials to discuss the practical support that could be given to workers to mitigate the impact of this decision.

Ken Skates said:

“News of Tesco’s proposal to close its Llanishen contact centre has come as a devastating blow and our priority now must be to support those workers affected.

“I am confident that the establishment of a Taskforce – which is a tried and tested approach and was hugely helpful in assisting workers affected by the Murco closure in Pembrokeshire – will enable us to pool our resources and provide first class support to the 1100 Tesco staff who face losing their jobs.

“I am pleased to welcome a range of partners to today’s meeting. Collectively we will do all we can to support affected worker to find new employment, to retrain and upskill, and to access any health and well being support they need. This will include reaching out to local employers and examining how we can assist them with their recruitment.

“Let’s not forget these are highly skilled and award winning workers. This Taskforce is committed to working collectively to ensure that the impact of Tesco’s decision on those workers’ lives is kept to an absolute minimum.”

At the meeting, Taskforce delegates agreed to establish four work streams to help provide targeted and effective support.

The Training and Skills work stream will look at the skills needs of staff facing redundancy and will include representatives from USDAW, Careers Wales and Jobcentre Plus.

The Business Support work stream will look at the skills and recruitment needs of employers and consider support that can be given to encourage them to employ displaced Tesco employees. This work stream will include representation from Business Wales, the Welsh Contact Centre Forum and Welsh Government officials.

The Health work stream will gather and share information on the personal support available to workers and their families and ensure that such support is accessible. It will include representatives from Public Health Wales and USDAW.

Finally the Research work stream will look at the key risks and trends in the call centre sector including the impact of technological developments . It will be co-ordinated by the Welsh Government's Knowledge and Analytical Services.