

No: 310/20

11th June 2020

TO: ALL BRANCHES

Dear Colleagues,

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) – CWU MEETINGS/EVENTS – UPDATE

Branches will recall the contents of LTB 128/20 issued on the 17th March 2020 outlining our position on the above.

Months on from that LTB we have revisited its contents in light, particularly, of the announcements made by Government regarding what some call the easing of lockdown.

We are not debating here the merits or otherwise of the Governments approach it is simply that the Government have made some changes to their initial advice and we have to take a view around how this may or may not impact our initial announcement.

In considering this issue we also sought the views of both the Industrial Departments and in particular whether the major employers have made substantial changes to their previous positions, particularly in the area of travel.

What has to guide our approach on this issue is the view that what matters most is still the health and wellbeing of our members and representatives. By this we mean we should not be instructing, asking or suggesting that our representatives take any unnecessary risks.

In making that point we are then led to the conclusion that the advice contained in LTB 128/20 still applies, as follows this means the cancellation of:

- NEC and Industrial Executive meetings and associated subcommittee and industrial business meetings.
- All CWU schools/training and CWU organised events.
- Branch Annual General meetings/Membership meetings.
- All Regional meetings.

It also means a continuation of the following:

- Implement an avoidance of all non-essential travel policy within the CWU.

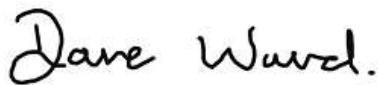
In relation to the final bullet point above, we do understand that there may be some extreme emergency situations that could require a rep to attend a meeting of some sort. Our advice would be that in such circumstances the use of public transport should be avoided and that if attendance at a meeting in an emergency situation is required, then social distancing (2 metres) must apply at all times and PPE would have to be provided and used. Again we make these points because the safety of our representatives and members is the key issue at this time.

However, it is important to remember that CWU Representatives are not CWU employees, they are employed by other companies, BT, Capita, EE, o2, POL, Royal Mail Group, Santander and so on. As a result, their employer could well have issued strong guidance or rules that they expect all employees to follow in response to this pandemic. It is not our intention to issue advice that puts our representatives in conflict with their employer on this matter, hence the advice contained herein.

Separately we are also in discussion with the trade union representatives of our employees regarding the opportunity of a return to work at 150 The Broadway for a very small number of staff. These discussions are at an early stage and further details on this will be shared once those discussions have concluded but we wish to be clear, any small scale opening of work areas at 150 The Broadway will be for employees i.e. staff of the CWU only. Our duty of care to them as their employer dictates that visitors to the building be they either CWU Representatives, members or from external companies is not being considered as part of these discussions.

Any comments or questions on the above should be addressed to Tony Kearns at sdgs@cwu.org.

Yours sincerely,



Dave Ward
General Secretary



Tony Kearns
Senior Deputy General Secretary