

BT 2.1% opening pay offer rejected

BT rejected the CWU's claim for 7% as "impractical and unsustainable" and tabled an offer of 2.1% at negotiations yesterday. In response the CWU rejected the offer as totally unacceptable and a failure by the Company to recognise the dedication, determination, talent and ingenuity of its employees.

BT has argued that it needs to continue to cut its cost base in order to sustain growth, but the CWU pointed to the very strong third quarter results announced last week, and rejected the offer as "totally inadequate". The inflation rate stands at 4.2% and the CWU team made clear that our members expect a real increase in their pay and must be able to maintain and improve the value of their salaries.

BT claimed that if the Union wants more money for our members, that we will have to accept a link to Performance, but the Union's negotiating team have flatly rejected any attempt by the company to introduce Performance Related Pay.

BT also argued that our members are well paid in comparison to the market but the Union pointed out the excellent contribution that our members have made to the continuing and growing success of the Company and the stresses many of our members feel when faced with increasing bills and interest rates.

Deputy General Secretary Jeannie Drake, leading the negotiations, pointed out to BT the apparent contradiction in their position. CWU members have made a huge contribution to BT's strong performance over the year and they should be recognised and rewarded for that contribution. BT in response to the Company's recent results has declared to the City and the shareholders that it is another strong set of results, that the Company's strategy is delivering and the positive trends are gathering momentum. That the growth in both profit and revenue reflects continued strong growth in new wave services and a robust defence of traditional businesses, underpinned by growth in active consumer customers. The Company cannot now turn about face and tell its employees that the real value of their pay has to be cut.

This offer of 2.1% is totally inadequate and does not recognise or reward our member's contribution. There is no prospect of a negotiated settlement unless there is a major improvement in the offer made by the Company.

Negotiations continue and further pay bulletins will be issued as meetings take place.

REWARD OUR CONTRIBUTION!

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