



Response to Request for Information

Reference FOI 0216103
Date 18 February 2016

Goodyear Closure

Request:

I would be grateful if you would treat this correspondence as a formal request for disclosure of the following information, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("Fol").

Description of information sought:

Can the council please provide copies of all correspondence between Goodyear, MPs, unions and Parliament over the closure of Goodyear's only manufacturing plant in Wolverhampton? An email search of "Goodyear" and "Goodyear closure" should suffice, but I would also like anything held in a trash can or recycling bin that should be disclosed and copies of any written correspondence.

If you have any concerns about revealing third party data, please redact the documents. Please bear in mind redaction costs do not count towards costs consideration of replying to an FOI request.

If you have any concerns about commercial interests, please bear in mind the closure has already begun on a phased basis and there is a significant public interest in the inquiry – given that the closure prompted hundreds of job losses in the city, Wolverhampton North East MP Emma Reynolds called for the government to help and also put money towards the cost of a review of the plant's viability after closure plans were announced and the council has seen fit to establish a taskforce to help affected workers.

[In response to your request, please find our response below:](#)

MEDIA RELEASE

Emergency meeting to discuss Goodyear crisis

Released: FRIDAY JUNE 26, 2015

Wolverhampton City Council has today begun plans for a Goodyear taskforce to help employees who are expected to lose their jobs after the iconic city employer announced plans to close its plant.

Goodyear yesterday revealed it intended to shut its Stafford Road site and end its 88-year association with Wolverhampton.

This morning the Council, MP Emma Reynolds, Job Centre Plus, Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, and Local Enterprise Partnership, held an emergency meeting at Wolverhampton Civic Centre.

While encouraging Goodyear to explore other options that mean it can stay in the city, a potential taskforce is being lined up to put in place practical measures for those facing the threat of redundancy, should it be required.

Councillor Roger Lawrence, Leader of the Council, said: "We cannot stress enough how much we hope Goodyear reconsider this proposal to close the factory.

"Goodyear has been in the city for decades and there are many families who have been left shocked and devastated by this news.

"Should the worst happen we must find a way forward for those affected by the proposed closure in January 2017.

"A taskforce would provide practical support to those facing redundancy and help them find new opportunities in the city, where a number of companies are growing thanks to our regeneration efforts, which are starting to bear fruit."

Wolverhampton North East MP Emma Reynolds added: "I called for an urgent meeting with Goodyear and I met with the senior management yesterday afternoon. I urged them to reconsider their decision. I have spoken both to trade union representatives and some Goodyear workers. I understand that the factory is both highly productive and profitable.

"The announcement came as a shock and is a bitter blow for the company's employees, their families and our city. Their workers are highly skilled, hardworking and committed. The factory's industrial relations have been exemplary even during the recession when employees worked shorter hours to help the company.

"We hope there might still be a possibility the company will reconsider its decision and we will be working with both the company's management and trade unions to find a way forward.

"In the meantime, should redundancies happen, we are working towards establishing a support taskforce – and we would also encourage Goodyear to be part of that."

Notes to editors:

1/ For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact Oliver Bhurrut, Communications Officer, on 01902 551220 or email oliver.bhurrut@wolverhampton.gov.uk.

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Councillor Roger Lawrence

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labourleadersoffice@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Wolverhampton
City Council



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Councillor Roger Lawrence
Leader of the Council
Labour Councillor for: St Peter's Ward

Civic Centre
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Wolverhampton WV1 1SH
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Website www.wolverhampton.gov.uk

29th June 2015

Dear Mr Fric,

Goodyear proposals for the Wolverhampton plant

The proposals announced yesterday will have a devastating impact on the 330 employees potentially affected and no doubt on other businesses and people across our City. To that end I would strongly urge you to fully explore all other options which may safeguard the future of the Goodyear facility in the City.

In Wolverhampton we have a strong track record of working with existing and new businesses to secure their future in the City, specifically in accessing external funding support. The Council would be happy to support the company to fully explore any such options to ensure all potential funding opportunities have been exhausted in pursuit of retaining Goodyear in Wolverhampton.

In the event, following the consultation period, the Company proceeds with the closure option I note your stated commitment to do everything you can to support all employees who are affected. Consequently I would request that you and your advisors prioritise an urgent meeting with the City Council to discuss how we might jointly plan to support those affected, the Council's Strategic Director for Place Tim Johnson will be leading the Council's activity with regard to Goodyear and it would be helpful if a meeting could be quickly arranged. Tim can be contacted on 010902 555400 or tim.johnson@wolverhampton.gov.uk

In the meantime it would be helpful if you could provide information on the profile of the workforce affected, including postcodes of where they reside, and any details of the specific support the company is planning to offer employees, this will help inform the Council and its partners in putting together a specific support package.

The City Council remains committed to working with the company to finding a solution to the current situation which would result in Goodyear remaining in the City, if this is not possible we need to work quickly and constructively to put in place a tangible plan of action to ensure each and every one of the employees affected is supported to access an alternative future opportunity.

I trust you will give this matter your urgent attention to ensure that whatever can be done to mitigate the devastating impact of these proposals is actually undertaken.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Lawrence', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Roger Lawrence
Leader of Wolverhampton City Council

James Cunningham

From: Tim Johnson <Tim.Johnson@wolverhampton.gov.uk>
Sent: 08 July 2015 17:12
To: Councillor Roger Lawrence; Councillor John Reynolds; Councillor Peter Bilson
Cc: Keren Jones; Oliver Bhurru; Keith Ireland; James Cunningham
Subject: PROTECT - Goodyear update

Leader

Jim and I met with Nichola Ellis from Goodyear this morning. It was a productive and positive meeting. They reiterated that they are in a legal consultation period and were keen not to compromise this, but accepted that planning privately for the worst cases scenario was sensible, but their public stance will be entirely focussed on the consultation process, much as ours will be hoping the plant remains open.

They shared some high level info, in confidence with us, on the profile of the workforce which showed that of the 330 employees 224 are over the age of 50 with 56 employees aged over 60. They currently only have 3 apprentices who finish in August. We agreed to discuss further their individual positions with a view to trying to identify new opportunities for them if they do not stay with Goodyear at their remaining service operations based at Fort Dunlop.

They anticipate the consultation period with affected employees will actually conclude in October, allowing for the summer shutdown, and they will share detailed information of those employees who are seeking new opportunities then who have chosen not to retire, including their place of residence. It is anticipated many employees due to their age will actually choose to retire and therefore the actual number of employees seeking new opportunities could be significantly lower than the headline 330. Clearly we don't know how many will be resident in the City. Encouragingly they have had a number of companies contact them with potential job opportunities and they aim to review these with appropriate employees in October. They also will need to retain a workforce on site until Jan'17 although they don't know exact numbers yet.

We discussed the support the company is planning to offer employees in the event the plant closes - although this is still developing in consultation with the TU's. The Company are keen to join our 'Taskforce' so we have single package of support for affected employees In the likely event the plant closes .

We agreed to meet again in August and will share/discuss our evolving work on the support programme we are developing with various partners for affected Goodyear employees.

It was also acknowledged that you may wish to meet with Eric Frich the MD at some point, although it was felt there is not much new information to add right now.

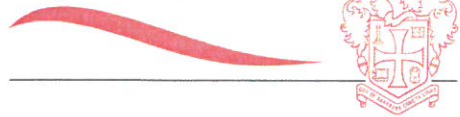
Hope this is helpful update.

Tim

Sent from [Outlook](#)

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MEDIA RELEASE

COUNCIL AND PARTNERS CONTINUE GOODYEAR FIGHT

Released: Thursday, July 23, 2015

Wolverhampton City Council, MPs and trade unions are continuing their fight to persuade Goodyear not to close its Stafford Road plant – while also working closely with the company to secure the future of those workers threatened with redundancy.

Council representatives have met with Goodyear senior management to help smooth the way forward for employees who may lose their jobs at the iconic city employer.

The council is putting together proposals to establish a Goodyear Taskforce aimed at supporting staff affected by the potential closure of the 88-year-old site, following discussions with MP Emma Reynolds, Job Centre Plus, Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, and Local Enterprise Partnership.

With the legal consultation process currently underway Goodyear's senior management have indicated they are willing to join a potential taskforce to co-ordinate a single package of support for affected employees in the event the plant closure goes ahead.

Councillor Roger Lawrence, Leader of the Council, said: "Our recent meeting with Goodyear was extremely useful and it is vital we keep the lines of communication open with them.

"We still hope they will reverse their decision but, if the worst happens, knowing the company are willing to be part of a potential taskforce will be beneficial in ensuring we provide the best practical support to those facing redundancy and will help in finding them new opportunities in the city."

The council will meet with Goodyear again next month to discuss progress; and key partners are set to reconvene in September to consider the taskforce proposals.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1/ For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact Oliver Bhurru, Communications Officer, on 01902 551220 or email oliver.bhurru@wolverhampton.gov.uk.

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**Goodyear Task Force – 2 September 2015 3pm Boardroom 2nd Floor
Wolverhampton Civic Centre**

Agenda

1. Introductions and welcome – Cllr Roger Lawrence, Leader of Council
2. Feedback on Discussions with Government and Trade Unions – Emma Reynolds MP
3. Goodyear Management Update – Nichola Ellis, Comms and Rachel Ridgill, HR
4. Potential Action Plan – Tim Johnson – City of Wolverhampton
5. Next Steps – All
6. Frequency of meetings

Jim Cunningham



Actions From Goodyear Task Force Meeting 2 September

Membership: Unite officials had requested that they be part of the Task Force moving forward. This was in line with the approach taken with similar Task Force responses in the past. It was agreed that Unite be invited to participate from the next meeting.

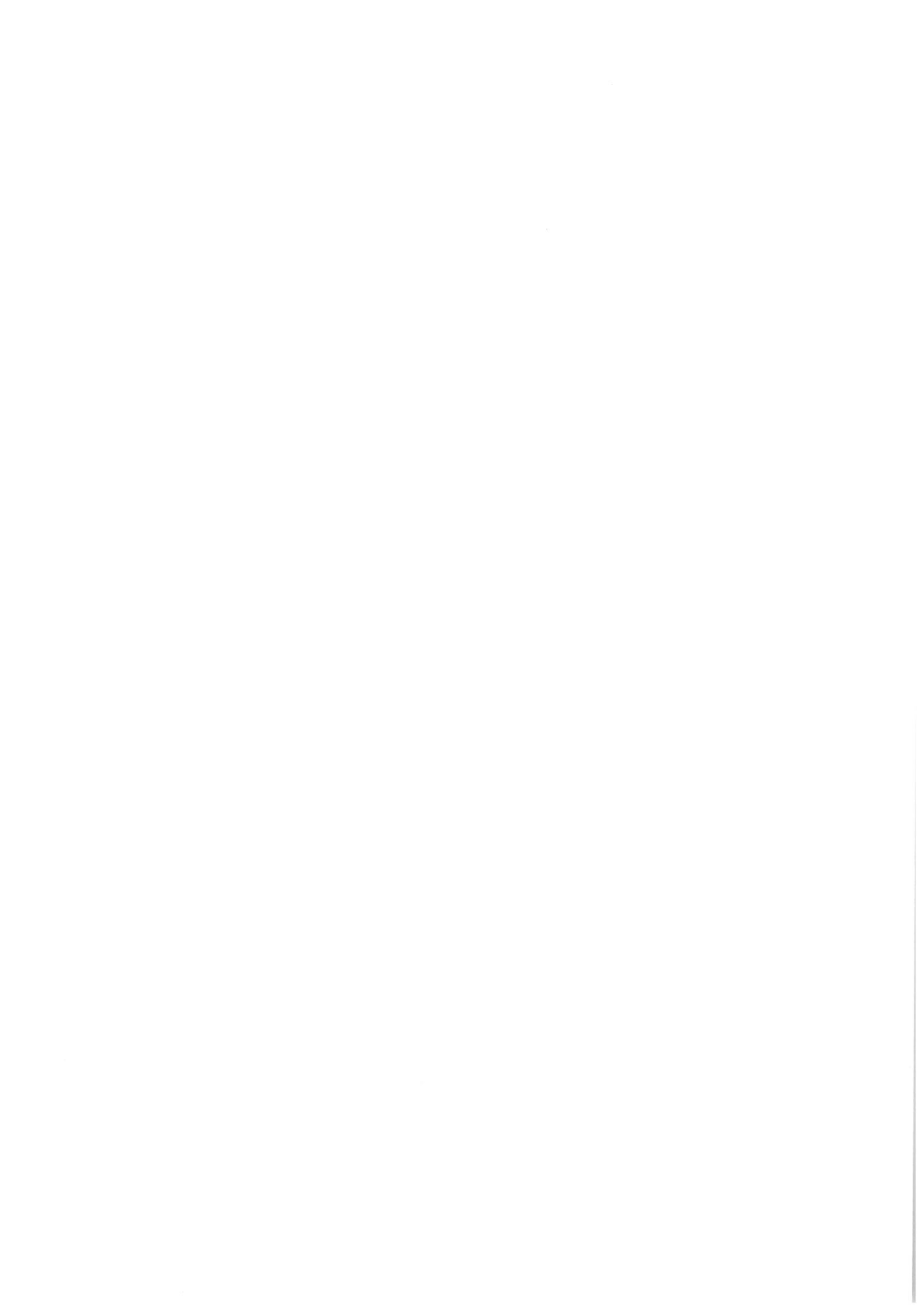
The College has been invited but has yet to attend. Invite will be extended to next meeting.

Goodyear Update: Goodyear reported that the consultation period was progressing and was due to conclude by September 25th. The company had agreed to support the Trade Union with an independent review of the Company's Business Case for Closure.

Emma Reynolds urged the company to extend the timeline for the review. The company's position is that they are committed to a 45 day consultation period and are accommodating the Review within this period.

Action Plan Development : Jim Cunningham presented a draft template for an Action Plan for the Task Force. It was clear that a detailed action Plan would be dependent on the outcome of the Consultation period and that further discussion would take place at the next meeting when outcomes and timelines will be clearer

Jim Cunningham



MEDIA RELEASE

Council hosts crucial meeting with Goodyear and key partners

Released: Thursday September 3, 2015

City of Wolverhampton Council representatives, MP Emma Reynolds and key partners yesterday met with senior Goodyear management to discuss the future of the tyre manufacturer's Stafford Road plant and its workers.

The group hopes the iconic city employer will reverse its decision to close the 88-year-old site or find an alternative operator to take it on.

In the meantime, work also continues to secure the future of those workers threatened with redundancy.

The council has put forward an action plan for a potential 'Goodyear Taskforce' to co-ordinate a single package of support for affected employees in the event the plant closure goes ahead.

MP Emma Reynolds and representatives from the Council, Goodyear, Job Centre Plus, Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, Local Enterprise Partnership, Black Country Chamber of Commerce, Black Country Consortium, and UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) sat around the table at the Civic Centre yesterday to agree to their part in a taskforce.

The same figures will meet again next month to discuss how to move forward following the outcome of the workers' legal consultation process, which ends on September 23.

At this point workers' union Unite will also be invited to join the discussions.

Councillor John Reynolds, Cabinet Member for City Economy, said: "Yesterday's meeting helped clarify what is required of everyone involved after exploring in detail the possible outcomes of the Stafford Road plant and its workers.

"Goodyear are in no doubt of our desire to keep the plant open, but should the worst happen, it is good to know they are on the same page as us when it comes to securing the best future possible for each individual worker."

Wolverhampton North East MP Emma Reynolds added: "I am continuing to urge Goodyear to reverse their decision to propose closure of the factory in Wolverhampton.

"I am pleased that the company recently agreed to my request and that of Unite to commission an independent review of their business case.

"If however the company goes ahead with their proposals for closure, the taskforce will work tirelessly to ensure all Goodyear's employees affected would have all possible support to move on to alternative employment."

ENDS

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**Goodyear Task Force –8 October 2015 3pm Boardroom 2nd Floor
Wolverhampton Civic Centre**

Agenda

1. Introductions and welcome – Cllr Roger Lawrence, Leader of Council
2. Action Points from 2 September (Attached)
3. Goodyear Mgt Update – Nichola Ellis and Rachel Ridgill, Goodyear
4. Trade Union update – Gerard Coyne, Unite
5. Development of Action Plan – Tim Johnson/ Jim Cunningham – City of
Wolverhampton Council (Draft Attached)

6. Next Steps – All

7. Date of next meeting

Jim Cunningham



Goodyear Task Force Action Plan October 2015

This paper is designed to allow the Task Force to consider options based on two potential outcomes:

- Retention of all or part of the existing production activity by Goodyear or another operator
- Plant closure

Reversal of decision or an alternative operator.

If another operator expresses an interest in taking over all or part of the existing operations the Task Force expectation is that BIS and if relevant UKTI would work to maximise Government support for the new operator.

Closure

Additionally and in the event of a closure decision it is also anticipated that BIS and UKTI would work with local partners and the site owners to seek an ongoing employment use for the site.

If the decision is made to close the plant, an action plan to support the workforce needs to be developed and the following information would be required from Goodyear:

1 What is the company is planning to offer to those affected by redundancy?

As part of their commitment to their staff and wider corporate social responsibility, Goodyear will provide support for staff they put at risk of redundancy. Based on previous experience employers typically provide:

- career transition advice
- staff time off to train, work on their CV and secure alternative employment.
- out-placement support, training grants and financial advice.

In the event of closure it is essential that we fully understand the Goodyear offer and when can that be shared? This would be required to determine that Task Force support is clearly additional

2 Timescales

Clarification of precise timescales is required.

3 Workforce needs assessment

Clarification of the specific support needs of the members of the workforce affected, according to the skills levels and any special circumstances they face.

Any information on the training and support staff are requesting?

The full age and residency profile of the staff at risk of redundancy.

Depending on the age structure, ascertain what proportion are likely to consider early retirement?

What job types are undertaken by the staff at risk?

4 Locality impact

Determine how many of the staff at risk live in the Wolverhampton area?

What impact will the closure have on other local businesses

For skilled engineering staff, the Task Force would identify similar roles in the locality they could undertake to avoid a talent drain.

5 Outline action plan

Goodyear employees affected by redundancy could be provided with a range of support by the Task Force partners.

- The creation of a one- stop employment and skills Advice Centre to provide a tailored employee support package which could include:
- Financial and benefit advice.
- Impartial advice and guidance about all the prospective pathways to future careers e.g. information about growth industries and job opportunities.
- Skills analysis
- Training to develop new skills e.g. vocational training such as trade skills.
- CV preparation and interview training.
- Job Fairs to help workers to find new employment with local businesses that are recruiting. Over 30 unemployed people have recently found jobs at Jaguar Land Rover.
- Support to become self-employed or to set up a business.
- Counselling to come to terms with redundancy.



MEDIA RELEASE

Goodyear Taskforce start putting action plan in place to help workers

Released: Friday October 9, 2015

City of Wolverhampton Council bosses, MP Emma Reynolds, Unite and key partners today (Thursday) met with senior Goodyear management to put in place an action plan to support the workers set to lose their jobs at the tyre manufacturer's Stafford Road plant.

The taskforce had hoped to persuade Goodyear to find a way to keep the 88-year-old site open.

But the firm earlier this week confirmed a phased closure from December 2015, with production at the plant ending in January 2017.

Goodyear has yet to reach an agreement with Unite on the redundancy settlement for those affected by this decision.

In the meantime, the taskforce will work together on delivering recruitment and retraining support, as well as careers guidance, interview skills preparation and pension planning.

The taskforce will also have an input into a Goodyear jobs fair during the week commencing November 23 for those facing unemployment in December.

Councillor John Reynolds, Cabinet Member for City Economy, said: "Confirmation earlier this week of Goodyear's Stafford Road plant closure is a serious blow.

"Our thoughts, as they have been all the way through this process, are with the workers affected and their families.

"While Goodyear and the Union are still negotiating settlement figures, the taskforce recognises it can now start putting into place effective measures to help those affected by the decision.

"It is crucial there is a co-ordinated approach to providing a one-stop shop for the workers affected to seek advice and support on their futures.

"Goodyear has chosen to end their long association with the city but we must remember there are reasons for optimism as well with a number of major employers moving to the area in recent times, such as Jaguar Land Rover and Wiggle.

"These companies bring with them a number of job opportunities which the highly-skilled Goodyear workforce may be able to take on."

Wolverhampton North East MP Emma Reynolds added: "The confirmation that Goodyear is to go ahead with closures is a bitter blow for the workers, their families and for our city.

"The taskforce must ensure that every employee is given the best support, help and training possible so that they can move into another job."

The taskforce includes Council bosses, MP Emma Reynolds and representatives from Goodyear, Unite, Job Centre Plus, Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, Local Enterprise Partnership, Black Country Chamber of Commerce, Black Country Consortium, UK Trade & Investment (UKTI), National Careers Service and City of Wolverhampton College.

Any parties interested in contributing to the November jobs fair should make contact with Goodyear Dunlop HR department via email sarah.smith@goodyear.com.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1/ For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact Oliver Bhurrut, Communications Officer, on 01902 551220 or email oliver.bhurrut@wolverhampton.gov.uk.

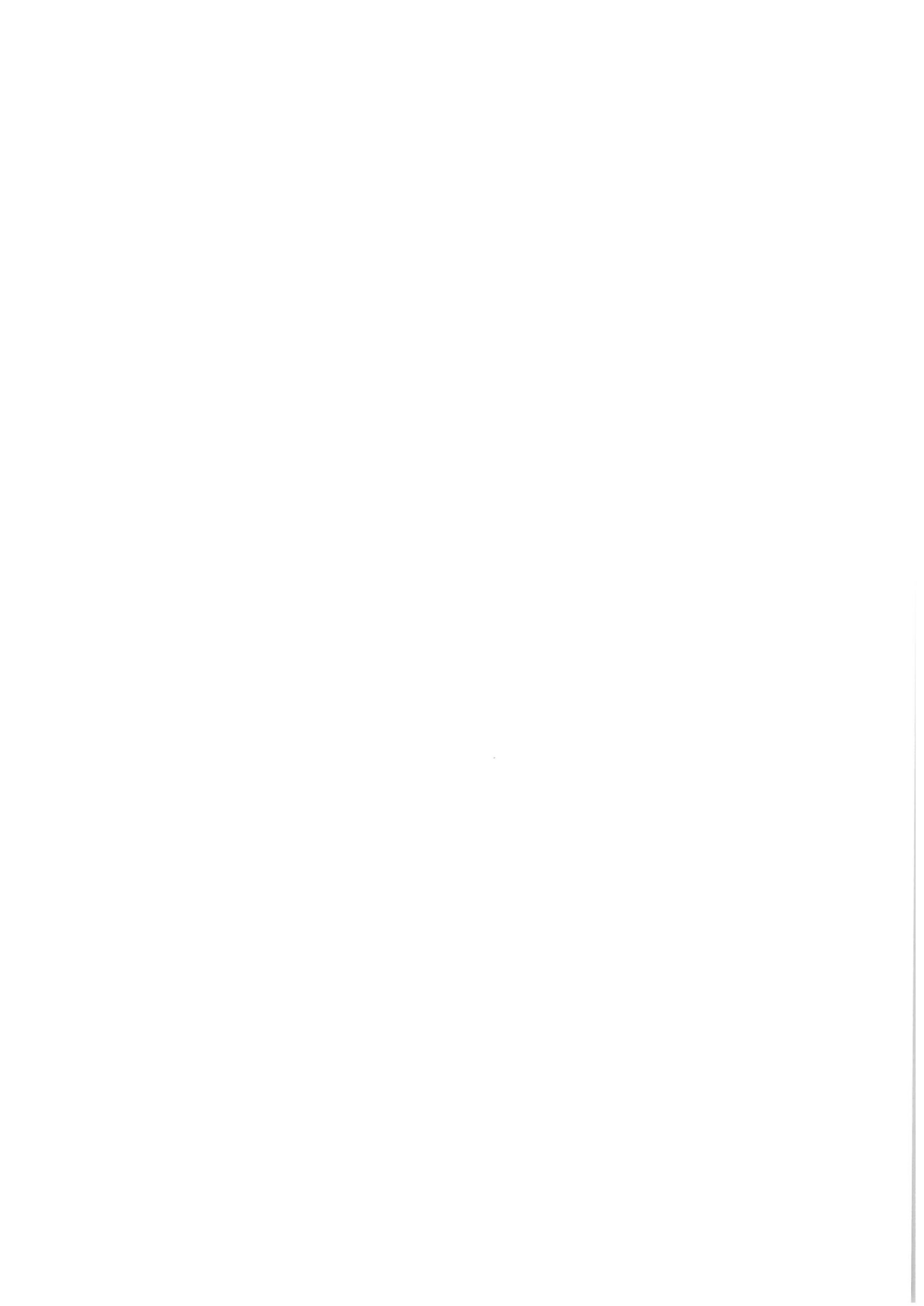
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**Goodyear Task Force – 10th December 2015 3pm Committee Room 2, 3rd Floor
Wolverhampton Civic Centre**

Agenda

1. Introductions and welcome – Cllr John Reynolds
2. Action Points from 8th October
3. Goodyear Mgt Update – Rachel Ridgill and Kate Macnamara
 - Union negotiations
 - Job Fair 25th November
 - Next Steps
4. Trade Union update – Andy Taylor, Unite
5. Action Plan – All but led by Tim Johnson/ Jim Cunningham – City of Wolverhampton Council
6. Next Steps
7. Dates of future meetings

Jim Cunningham



Action Notes from Goodyear Taskforce Meeting 10 December

Goodyear Update

The company has now reached settlement arrangements with the Trade Unions

The company had also offered a £500 training bursary but this has been rejected by the workforce in favour of these funds being part of the overall settlement.

1-1 consultations with employees started w/c 15th November.

Some staff have already gained new employment and volunteered for early release.

The first wave of redundancies is planned for December.

The Support Offer

In addition to support from Goodyear, this first wave of workers will now be offered recruitment and retraining support, as well as careers guidance, interview skills preparation and pension planning as a single package of support from Taskforce partners such as the City of Wolverhampton Council's Skills and Employment staff, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Job Centre Plus, and City of Wolverhampton College.

DWP will coordinate this support and will align it to the support being offered to those affected by other redundancies across the area such as Caparo

After December, further phases of redundancies are likely in April, June and September. Some staff will be retained until June 2017 when the site will be decommissioned.

Recruitment Event

The November Jobs Fair co-ordinated by Goodyear with help from Taskforce partners presented around 150 job opportunities for the departing Goodyear workers.

Way Forward

It was agreed that the Taskforce members would continue to work together to support the workforce as described above. There was no need for the Taskforce to meet as a Group in the meantime. This would be reviewed in liaison with partners.

Jim Cunningham



MEDIA RELEASE

Final plans made to help workers in first wave of Goodyear redundancies

Released: Friday December 11 2015

Final plans were yesterday put in place at the latest meeting of the Goodyear Taskforce to help those workers facing redundancy at the end of this month.

The tyre manufacturer announced in June the phased closure of its Stafford Road plant with the loss of 330 jobs.

The first wave of workers leaving consists of those who have taken voluntary redundancy.

They will now be offered recruitment and retraining support, as well as careers guidance, interview skills preparation and pension planning as a single package of support from Taskforce partners such as the City of Wolverhampton Council's Skills and Employment staff, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Job Centre Plus, and City of Wolverhampton College.

A November Jobs Fair co-ordinated by Goodyear with help from Taskforce partners presented around 150 job opportunities for the departing Goodyear workers.

Councillor John Reynolds, City of Wolverhampton Council Cabinet Member for City Economy, said: "This is clearly a distressing time for the workers set to leave Goodyear.

"But the aim of the Taskforce from the beginning has been to ease their burden and help them get back into work as soon as possible.

"It is crucial there is a co-ordinated approach to providing a one-stop shop for the workers affected to seek advice and support on their futures.

"There are reasons for optimism with a number of major employers moving to the area in recent times, such as Jaguar Land Rover and Wiggle.

"And last month's Jobs Fair shows there are a number of job opportunities in Wolverhampton which the highly-skilled Goodyear workforce may be able to take on."

Production at the plant will end in January 2017, with more redundancies to be phased throughout next year, while further Jobs Fairs will be organised.

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