

All Steel Noticeboard

Last update: 18 May 2023

Latest Bulletins

Noticeboard Bulletin - 18-05-2023

Posted on: 18 May 2023

Dear GMB Member,

British Steel Pay Claim 2023

On Monday 15 May, The National Trade Union Steel Co-ordinating Committee presented the pay claim for 2023 for all employees working at British Steel.

This gave us the opportunity to stress the difficulties our members are facing with the increasing cost of food, gas, electricity, mortgages and rent. Now more than ever, we need to see a significant increase to your wages.

Unfortunately, British Steel is facing its own challenges and they have been hit with significant losses due to the volatility around ore prices, increased energy costs and more.

Their initial response was that they could not afford any increase to pay at this current time - this of course is totally unacceptable. The Committee made this clear to the company and GMB and our Joint Trade Unions will not sit by and watch our members struggle with the cost-of-living crisis. Furthermore, since Jingye acquired British Steel, we had 2 years of wage stagnation, followed by a small increase of 2% in pay, and 2% your pension in 2022, which falls extremely short when looked at over a 3 year period.

GMB and our Joint Trade Unions have now set the date for a further meeting on Friday 9 June and together we have made it clear that we will not accept a response of "no offer at present".



You and your colleagues are vital to the success of British Steel, and without you Jingye could not continue to operate, especially when stability returns to the steel industry.

I will of course keep you informed of how things progress.

In solidarity,

Charlotte Brumpton-Childs

GMB National Officer

Noticeboard Bulletin - 14-04-2023



Posted on: 14 April 2023

Dear GMB Member,

Liberty Speciality Steel Pay Talks Update

I am writing to update you on the pay talks taking place with Liberty Speciality Steel. GMB and our Joint Trade Unions have submitted pay claims to cover the period April 2022 – April 2023 and April 2023 – April 2024.

We have had 2 meetings with the business and we have arrived at the below offer:

PERIOD	PROPOSAL	DETAIL
April 2022 – March 2023	1.5% from 1st April 2023	Effective from 1st April 2023. The original position of being unable to afford to back date remains unchanged.
April 2023 – March 2024	2% to cover full year	Payable once restart SBC and Thrybergh Mill, due to the significant funding this requires. This will not be withheld beyond December 23, and will be backdated to 1 April 23.
April 2024 – March 2025	2.5% to cover full year	Guaranteed increase from 1st April 2024.



Your representatives have made it clear to the business that this offer falls far short of members expectations. GMB and our Joint Trade Unions have now exhausted this stage of the negotiation process and have no choice but to issue a failure to agree.

The next step is to convene a meeting with Tocher Ozcan as the final point of escalation. GMB and our Joint Trade Unions have written to the business and asked for this to be arranged as soon as possible.

I will update you again following this meeting, thank you for your patience during this difficult process.

In solidarity,

Charlotte Brumpton-Childs

GMB National Officer

Scunthorpe Coke Ovens Consultation



Posted on: 15 March 2023

I am getting in touch to update you on our talks with British Steel regarding the future of the Scunthorpe site.

Last Friday (10 March), we had our second Collective Consultation meeting where we confronted the company on its plan to close the coke ovens in May / June 2023 and potential redundancies.

In this meeting, all three steel unions were united in our strong opposition to the closure of the coke ovens. We have rigorously challenged the company on its plans and maintained that every avenue for retaining the coke ovens in Scunthorpe must be explored.

At the same time, we have made it completely clear to British Steel that we will not accept any hard redundancies. We issued an unambiguous warning that if the company will attempt to enforce any redundancies, we will not hesitate to use every tool at our disposal to stop such plans.

It is our firm belief that there is a sufficient number of available vacancies across the site to offer redeployment to all those who seek to stay with the company. The fact that the company currently relies heavily on staff working overtime illustrates this point. We have also demanded that the company will look at vacancies across all sites.

The company representatives in the meeting have listened to us carefully and engaged constructively,



we look forward to continuing in this spirit in our next consultation meeting which will take place on Thursday, 30th March 2023.

I will write to you with a further update after the next meeting.

These are challenging times, but your union will do everything possible to protect your job and our industry.

In solidarity,

Charlotte Brumpton-Childs
GMB National Officers

Urgent News For GMB Members In Liberty Steel



Posted on: 11 February 2022

Please see statement below from the national joint steel trade unions (GMB, Community & Unite) Steel Committee, in response to reports of HMRC [issuing a winding-up petition against the Speciality Steels division of Liberty Steel](#).

Ross Murdoch - GMB National Officer

JOINT UNION STATEMENT

“This action by HMRC threatens thousands of jobs and is a devastating blow to our members and their families. Liberty Steel is a strategically important business, crucial to delivering net zero, and under no circumstances can our plants be allowed to close. The trade unions call on GFG and HMRC to get back round the table and hammer out a deal that provides space for the company to refinance. The best route to protect jobs and repay HMRC and other creditors would be to enable the business to continue to trade.

Our experts have advised us that with the right framework of support Liberty Steel can have a sustainable future. The government has an important role to play in providing that framework and must take urgent action to address our unaffordable energy prices. GFG is



the owner and we hold them accountable for their actions, but as we have always said government must be ready to step in should that be required.”

2021 Bulletins

Noticeboard Bulletin - 22-12-2021



Posted on: 22 December 2021

NTUSCC statement on Liberty Steel, 22nd December 2021

We are writing at the end of what has been an exceptionally challenging and unprecedented year for our members across Liberty Steel.

Since the collapse of Greensill in March the future of our businesses has been shrouded in uncertainty, and we know how stressful this period has been for our members and their families. What you have done to keep the businesses going throughout 2021 has been nothing short of incredible. Our members couldn't have worked harder, been more committed or shown more loyalty to this company, and GFG must reciprocate by securing the future of our jobs and our businesses.

The unions are in continual dialogue with senior representatives of GFG and Liberty Steel, raising your concerns, representing your interests, and holding management to account. There's no doubt our businesses need serious investment to succeed, and refinancing the UK is essential for delivering that investment and a long-term sustainable future. Senior management tell us that refinancing the UK is now the number one priority for the Group, and at this point they are very hopeful the process will succeed.

When GFG recently announced the £50m cash injection for the UK, the unions welcomed the news as an important signal and step in the right direction. We know of course that much more will be required, but the £50m provided some much-needed confidence that GFG is committed to supporting the business through to a successful refinancing. However as we know the restart of steelmaking and production has been challenging, mainly due to the Government's continued failure to protect our industry from astronomical electricity prices. We were reassured, therefore, when GFG told us the Group is ready to make further support available as required.



We wish you and your families all the best for the festive period, and hope you will be able to enjoy some well-deserved rest. There's no doubt 2022 is going to be full of challenges for our members across Liberty Steel, but we know that by standing and working together we can find a way through.

[View pdf copy](#)

In solidarity

Ross Murdoch

GMB National Officer

Noticeboard Bulletin - 15-10-2021



Posted on: 15 October 2021

Dear GMB member,

Please follow the link to see an open letter to the Prime Minister from the joint steel trade unions via the National Trade Union Steel Coordinating Committee (NTUSCC).

[Open Letter](#)

In solidarity

Ross Murdoch

GMB National Officer

Statement From The National Trade Union Steel Coordinating Committee



Posted on: 12 October 2021

As you may know yesterday, 10th October, GFG confirmed they will inject £50 million into LSUK to restart steelmaking and support production across the businesses.



For months the unions have been pressing GFG to deliver the support we need. There's no doubt this announcement was well overdue, but it's an important step in the right direction and demonstrates that GFG can raise funds for LSUK. Huge challenges remain, and £50m is nowhere near enough to safeguard the long-term future of our businesses, but the cash injection should give us some much-needed breathing space.

Clearly the announcement raises many questions. We will want to know how and where the money is going to be spent, and crucially what does the announcement mean for our members at SSUK. As we have said from the outset the future of every one of our businesses must be assured, and as part of that the steel supply chain for Stocksbridge must be secured. That is why the unions are seeking an urgent meeting with Sanjeev Gupta, so he can address our questions and tell us how he intends to deliver a sustainable future for the businesses.

There's no doubt this £50 million injection represents a big statement from GFG. We are now looking to the Government to play their part, and act now to protect our industry from the consequences of soaring energy prices.

We will keep you updated.

In unity,

Roy Rickhuss CBE – General Secretary Community Chair, NTUSCC

Ross Murdoch – GMB National Officer

Harish Patel – Unite National Officer

Alun Davies – Community National Officer

Statement From The National Trade Union Steel Coordinating Committee: Meeting With Senior Management And End Of Furlough.



Posted on: 22 September 2021

Last week the National Union Steel Coordinating Committee met again with senior representatives of GFG and LSUK.

We know the pressure you are under and our message to management was clear; enough is enough – you must deliver and bring the uncertainty to a conclusion.



As a top priority the workforce needs to know they're getting paid. On this matter, and on the most immediate concern that you will have, the company has confirmed your September pay is secure. They also reiterated that they will continue to comply with their legal obligations to you.

Management advised that the refinancing of the Australian businesses had been delayed, again. A month ago we were told that refinancing would conclude imminently, and that this could enable support to be provided to the UK.

The continued and repeated delays and missed deadlines have stretched our patience to the limit, and this was forcefully articulated to management. We all know we can't go on like this and a solution needs to be implemented.

Management said that while the delays were regretful they are confident the Australian refinancing is almost there. However the delays means that plans to restart steelmaking have had to be revised, and it is now likely a reduced workload will continue into October.

As you may know the governments 'furlough' scheme, which has been used across LSUK to support wages since the start of the pandemic, ends on 30th September. Therefore, to protect you and your earnings, your union representatives have been in discussions with LSUK management to develop new arrangements to replace furlough.

The Unions have now secured a national agreement, which will cover all LSUK employees within the collective bargaining arrangements for the period of October. Under the terms of agreement notice can be given for employees to remain at home, or work reduced hours, paid at 80% of their normal pay (using the same calculation as was applied during furlough).

The agreement also enables employees who want to be off, with a guarantee they will not be called in at short notice, to request that time off in one week blocks. In these circumstances employees will receive 65% of their normal pay.

The Unions consider this agreement to be a good deal for our members, which will support jobs and pay for the month of October. LSUK management will provide further details of the agreement, and any requirement to extend these short-term working arrangements beyond October would be subject to a joint review.

There's no doubt the situation continues to be extraordinarily difficult; we don't like it any more than you do but we must stick to it. However, rest assured we are holding management's feet to the fire, and hold Sanjeev Gupta fully accountable for this promises to safeguard our jobs and secure the future of all our businesses.

We will update you when there are new developments.



In unity,

Ross Murdoch – GMB National Officer

Harish Patel – Unite National Officer

Alun Davies – Community National Officer

Noticeboard Bulletin – 18-08-2021



Posted on: 18 August 2021

Dear GMB member,

Further to meetings this week between the steel trade unions and Liberty/GFG, please see a statement below from the joint National Trade Union Steel Coordinating Committee (NTUSCC)

NTUSCC statement on Liberty Steel, 18th August 2021

On 30th June we advised that Liberty had agreed to submit their business plans to our experts, the Syndex consultancy, for detailed independent analysis. Syndex have now completed their work and we are writing to summarise the position.

Syndex has expressed satisfaction with the level of transparency of the company, which has been based on a total open book approach, the limit being the refinancing which is being dealt with directly by GFG.

Overall Syndex believe that Liberty's strategy is credible, and they support the transformation plans to become a commodity 'green steel' player in both long and flat products, on the basis the investment plan can be delivered. In fact, driving volume and focussing on commodities was a strategy Syndex were advocating the business follow five years ago.

Syndex are more cautious on the plans for Stocksbridge and Brinsworth. They found the strategy and investment plans for Stocksbridge to be sound, with the potential to support the development of a successful speciality-focussed business. However, Syndex have concerns about the timeline for any divestment, and consider that Stocksbridge should not be sold until a long-term steel supply chain can be arranged.

On Brinsworth, Syndex highlighted the danger that the business may not fit into the strategy of a new owner of Stocksbridge. Syndex did not have access to details of the carve out of Stocksbridge and



Brinsworth, as this is not yet available, and recommended further analysis be undertaken of the situation post-separation.

Syndex has provided the NTUSCC with a summary version of the business plans and details of the funding requirements for each business. If fully implemented Syndex believe the plans should allow LSUK to recover and be fully sustainable. Nevertheless, Syndex has emphasised both the short-term challenges and the need for financial support in the future.

On 16th August the NTUSCC met with senior representatives of GFG and LSUK to discuss Syndex's report.

We told management that, while we acknowledge the conclusions of Syndex on LSUK's strategy, the plans mean nothing unless the cash injection needed now, to keep the businesses operating in the short term, is forthcoming.

Moreover, the workforce needs to see light at the end of the tunnel, and that means ramping up production at both Rotherham and Stocksbridge at the earliest opportunity. As we have said from the outset the future of every one of our businesses must be assured.

Management responded by noting the refinancing of the Australian businesses was expected to conclude imminently and that this could enable support to be provided to the UK.

We forcefully made the case that the supply chain for Stocksbridge must be secured, and that further analysis of the carve out of Stocksbridge and Brinsworth was needed. While management has previously committed to a sales process, the points raised about elements of that process were acknowledged.

When asked about the commitments, financial and otherwise, that the business has to you and other employees, management reiterated that they would continue to comply with relevant legal obligations.

Clearly these are the most challenging of times, and as every day goes by the situation appears to get ever more serious. Working under these conditions of extreme uncertainty for so long inevitably takes its toll, and we'd like to pay tribute to all our members that have kept this company going.

There are no easy solutions, but the unions continue to believe securing the refinancing of LSUK would represent the best outcome for our members across the businesses.

We are working hard behind the scenes on your behalf, and we will keep you updated.

In unity,

Roy Rickhuss - Community General Secretary

Alun Davies - Community National Organiser



Liberty Steel



Posted on: 26 July 2021

Statement from the National Trade Union Steel Coordinating Committee

Dear GMB Member,

On the 23rd July the National Trade Union Steel Coordinating Committee met with a senior management delegation including GFG Chief Transformation Officer Jeff Kabel, LSUK CEO Roy Chowdhury, LSUK CFO Anton Krull, LSUK HR Director Mick Hood, and GFG Head of External Affairs Jo Milligan.

The meeting was convened at the request of the NTUSCC, because time is running out and we know our members are seriously concerned about the future.

The company provided an update on efforts to refinance the UK operations, and stressed that everything is being done to reach agreement with Credit Suisse and other creditors, which would make it possible to bring new money in to LSUK. To secure a refinancing the creditors need to believe the plans for LSUK are going to deliver a sustainable future, as must the unions, and our experts Syndex continue to analyse the company's proposals on our behalf.

However, the NTUSCC told the company we cannot wait for this refinancing process to conclude – we need to act now. We must see an injection of cash into the UK, and if GIG cannot raise the funds then we believe Mr Gupta should put his hand in his pocket to give us the cash we need to keep the businesses going. It is unacceptable that at a time when the market is booming, and we should be making money hand over fist, that we are not producing and letting others reap the rewards.

We all know this company faces huge challenges and the continued uncertainty inevitably leads to worry and speculation. First and foremost you need to know that next month you're going to get paid. This is a point we forcefully argued, and we confirm the company has committed to comply with their relevant legal obligations.

The company provided an update on the potential sale of Stocksbridge and the downstream operations, which remains at an early stage. The NTUSCC reinforced our requirement for the company to act as a responsible seller, to fully engage the unions in the process and to do whatever it takes to ensure those



businesses have a secure future long-term. We also urged the company to keep all options on the table, including retaining the businesses as part of LSUK, as we believe this could be the best outcome for our members and the company.

These are extremely challenging times, and we will keep you updated as to further developments. Unfortunately under these extraordinary circumstances there are often more questions than answers, but rest assured the unions are working hard always representing your interests.

In solidarity

Ross Murdoch

GMB National Officer

Dated: 30 June 2021

Liberty Steel

Statement from the National Trade Union Steel Coordinating Committee

Dear GMB Member,

As we know Liberty have announced plans to sell Stocksbridge and its downstream operations and focus on developing an integrated business fed by a 2 million tonnes facility in Rotherham. We also know that Liberty have been drawing up detailed plans on the future for all the UK businesses, and to secure a refinancing they will need to persuade the creditors that their plans are credible.

However, the unions have been clear that liberty must first convince the workforce that their plans will secure jobs and the future of every UK site. We've all heard Sanjeev Gupta promising that none of our plants will close on his watch – and we will hold him to this commitment.

Ever since Greensill collapsed the unions have been pushing the company to be completely transparent on the situation, and to work with us on solutions to the serious challenges we face. Then when the sale of Stocksbridge was announced we told Liberty they must act as a responsible seller and run an open sales process in full consultation with the unions.

We can now advise we've secured an agreement with liberty which means the company will submit their business plans to the union's external experts, the Syndex consultancy, for detailed analysis. This crucial work will take place over the coming weeks and Syndex will tell us whether the plans stack up and what they mean for the workforce.

This is an important development and we are pleased that liberty has recognised the value of submitting their plans for independent review. The last few months have been full of worry and



uncertainty for the workforce and we all have many unanswered questions. While we do not have answers today, we now have a process to channel our questions and pursue our concerns.

Rest assured, if we believe Liberty's plans fall short the unions will be representing our members' interests and vigorously challenging the company. We will keep you updated with regards to further developments.

Stay safe!

Ross Murdoch

GMB National Officer

Dated: June 2021

Liberty Steel

Statement from the National Trade Union Steel Coordinating Committee

Dear GMB Member,

Responding to the news that Liberty Steel Group intends to sell the Stocksbridge and its downstream plants, the narrow strip mill at Brinsworth and Performance Steels at West Bromwich, a spokesperson for the National Trade Union Steel Coordinating Committee said:

"Stocksbridge and its downstream plants are strategically important business vital to our country's defence, energy and aerospace sectors. The future for these businesses must be secured and the trade unions will hold Sanjeev Gupta to his promise that none of our steel plants will close on his watch.

Liberty must act as a responsible seller and run a transparent sales process which fully engages the trade unions. We will expect to meet any potential buyer to scrutinise their plans and test their commitment to the workforce and our industry.

Whilst we are encouraged that Liberty and Credit Suisse appear to be making progress on the refinancing we urgently need a solution to inject cash in to the UK."

Stay safe!

Ross Murdoch

GMB National Officer

Dated: 20 May 2021



UK Steel Safeguards

Letter from the joint National Trade Union Steel Coordinating Committee (NTUSCC) to the Secretary of State for International Trade.

The RT Hon Elizabeth Truss MP
Secretary of State for International Trade
Department of International Trade

Dear Secretary of State,

UK Steel Safeguards

We write regarding the proposal that was announced yesterday to slash the crucial steel safeguards, which threatens thousands of jobs and puts the future of our industry at risk. This government has had plenty of warm words for steelworkers but now it's come to the crunch it seems we're being thrown under the bus, left to the mercy of a catastrophic surge of cheap foreign imports.

This decision endangers our industry's fragile recovery from COVID-19 and has profound implications. We appeal to you, in the strongest terms, to intervene and confirm the extension of all our steel safeguards, and in doing so demonstrate that this government is on the side of steelworkers and our industrial communities.

The EU introduced the Steel Safeguards in July 2018 due to global overcapacity and the threat of trade diversion resulting from the US Section 232 steel tariffs, and in a climate of growing nationalist and protectionist sentiment worldwide. These were compelling reasons then and are even more so today.

There is no doubt our industry can have a bright future at the core of a low carbon economy, but this will require decisive government action to enable our steelworkers to compete on a level playing field. Extending the steel safeguards is an absolutely vital part of this. It should be inconceivable that our government, which is committed to building back better and greener, would choose to leave our industry unprotected and vulnerable when the EU and the US are maintaining their own defences.

As representatives of workers in various steel consuming manufacturing sectors, including engineering and construction, we have a responsibility to take an holistic view of the safeguards measures and the balance of interests of our members. In this context we are firmly of the view that the negative impacts on the steel sector of allowing the measures to expire would wholly outweigh the potential impacts on steel consuming sectors of extending the measures.

Conversely, a unilateral removal of our measures would have a devastating impact on steel production and jobs in the UK. Our steel industry directly employs more than 32,000 workers, and twice as many again in the supply chain and local communities. Steel jobs are high quality jobs with good terms and



conditions, each of which can pay 50% more than the regional average. These steel jobs drive and sustain local economies, and are the foundation of the supply chain for other strategically important sectors including automotive, aerospace, construction and defence.

The steel industry is concentrated in areas of the country where employment opportunities can otherwise be limited, including the North East, Yorkshire and Humberside and South Wales. Every year the industry provides hundreds of young people with apprenticeships, quality training and career pathways, and is a vital source of private sector investment. Steel is, in short, of critical importance to steel communities, local and regional economies, and our national manufacturing base, and has a crucial role to play supporting our future as an independent nation.

It must also be recognised that a sustainable domestic steel industry is vital to achieving our climate change objectives. In the coming years rebuilding our economy and developing the industries of the future, like offshore wind and electric vehicles, is going to require millions of tonnes of steel. There are huge opportunities ahead for our industry, but realising those will require the commitment of all stakeholders. Either we make the steels here, with all the jobs and prosperity that can bring, or we import them from countries that are not subject to the same environmental standards.

We believe the case for extending all the steel safeguards is overwhelming, and that continuing to protect our industry from threats related to global overcapacity is vital for the steel sector, for the environment, for jobs and for industrial communities across the UK. Furthermore we consider this to be the first test of this government's commitment to our steel industry post-Brexit, and you must not fail it. Many steelworkers put their trust in the Tories but taking away our safeguards would betray them and make a mockery of your levelling up agenda.

Britain needs its steel, and this shocking proposal to slash our steel safeguards has disastrous implications for our industry and our steel communities. We urge you, on behalf of the many thousands of steelworkers that we represent, to put this right and avoid making what would be a historic mistake.

Ross Murdoch National Officer GMB

Roy Rickhuss CBE General Secretary Community Chair, NTUSCC

Harish Patel National Officer Unite

Dated: 31 March 2021

Liberty Steel/GFG

Dear GMB Member,



Further to the joint statement from the National Trade Union Steel Co-ordinating Committee (NTUSCC) earlier in March and the endless media reporting, I thought it was timely to provide an update.

GMB is aware that many of you receive regular internal updates from your employer and we are aware of the recent Podcast from Sanjeev Gupta. It is also likely you will be aware of the media reporting of a request from the group to the UK Government for a reported bailout of £170m, which was rejected.

GMB has now met numerous times with Kwasi Kwarteng the Secretary of State for Business (BEIS) and his team and continued to press for a stronger commitment, in that, should GFG fail to secure the required finance (Plan A), that there is a robust Plan B to protect jobs. In response to numerous questions recently, including an urgent question raised in Parliament, the Prime Minister said **“we will do everything we can to ensure that we continue with British jobs producing British steel”**. We have subsequent to this pushed the Business Secretary for a stronger commitment specific to Liberty Steel in the UK should Plan A fail to materialise. Whilst understandably he cannot at this stage effectively write a ‘blank cheque’ guarantee, he has stated that all options remain on the table for Liberty Steel and did not rule out the possibility of the government taking Liberty Steel into public ownership.

There are of course numerous stages to go through before we get close to such a position. Whilst Mr Gupta is still saying he is confident he can secure the necessary monies to re-finance the business, we are in effect in a stand-off position until this unravels itself one way or another. Therefore, whilst this stand-off position remains, any commitments, other than the broad messages of support, remains hypothetical, as the Government cannot intervene at this stage. The reluctance by the government to bail out GFG given the company structure, was perhaps understandable. We would not expect this to have been done unconditionally. Whether there is potential for it to be done on a conditional type basis is unclear at this stage, but whilst talks also continue between the company/group and the Government, it is at least possible. Of course, GMB and its sister steel trade unions desired outcome is that Plan A works.

As well as these Liberty Steel specific talks with Government, GMB also meets regularly with the Business department pressing for a strong and sustainable wider steel industry, which as a foundation industry can play its part in rebuilding the UK economy post Covid 19 and post Brexit, as well as delivering the UK’s climate objectives. This country needs its steel to rebuild our economy, so we will continue to press the Government specifically to save Liberty Steel jobs in the UK and to ensure the highest priority is given to the wider UK steel industry.

We will keep you updated on developments.

Stay safe!

Ross Murdoch

GMB National Officer



Dated: 11 March 2021

Dear GMB Member,

After further national and local meetings, please see joint NTUSCC message below that is going to all three steel trade unions membership.

Statement from the National Trade Union Steel Co-ordinating Committee in response to the Greensill insolvency news

The events and media speculation of recent days have been extremely concerning to all of us.

We have been working hard to clarify what Greensill's insolvency means for our members across Liberty Steel, but at this stage there are more questions than answers. Clearly the company has challenges managing cash, and we know that furlough will be utilised across the businesses.

On Tuesday we met with Sanjeev Gupta to seek assurances on behalf of our members, and to request full transparency on the financial position. The meeting was constructive, and we recognise Mr Gupta has a plan to raise cash and secure a refinancing of the debt.

However, as we told Mr Gupta, our priority is to protect jobs and secure the future of all the assets, and to this end all options must be considered. We believe that Government has a moral and economic responsibility to support us, and must take an active role to facilitate a solution.

Liberty Steel is a strategic business and a low-carbon steelmaker vital to a greener future. No other UK company can make the specialist steels we do, and the future must be secured to prevent the UK having to rely on high-carbon imports from countries playing by different rules.

Earlier this week the French Government said whatever happens they will stand behind Liberty Steel's industrial sites and employees. We are calling on our Government to confirm the same commitment and assure us that they are ready to stand behind the British workforce and assets.

These are challenging times, and we are committed to working with the company and all stakeholders to protect jobs and find a way through this difficult period.

We will keep you updated.

Stay safe!

Ross Murdoch

GMB National Officer



Dated: 9 March 2021

Dear GMB Member,

In response to extensive media speculation about the future of Liberty Steel/GFG Group, primarily over its biggest lender Greensill Capital reportedly now expected to go into administration and that the fallout from this, again reportedly, stating the Liberty/GFG Group is on the brink of collapse, GMB and its sister steel trade unions met with the Company owner Sanjeev Gupta and his senior Global and UK leadership team on 9 March 2021 to discuss this extremely worrying situation. After this meeting the three steel trade unions put together a joint statement via the UK Steel Committee, which is below. There are likely to be further communications after the meeting with Lay Representatives across the business.

Statement from the National Trade Union Steel Coordinating Committee

“Meeting with Sanjeev Gupta 9th March

The news that Greensill has filed for administration, and the speculation about what this means for Liberty Steel, is extremely concerning to the unions and the workforce.

This morning the steel unions – Community, Unite and GMB – met with Sanjeev Gupta to seek assurances on behalf of our members, and to request full transparency on the challenges facing Liberty Steel. The meeting was positive and constructive, and it is clear Mr Gupta intends to secure a refinancing of the debt to provide the business with the necessary liquidity going forward. We recognise Mr Gupta’s desire to see Liberty Steel succeed, and recognise also his personal contribution in giving distressed UK steel assets a new lease of life.

The unions have told Mr Gupta our priority is to secure the future of all Liberty Steel’s UK assets, and to this end all options should be considered. Liberty Steel is a strategic business for the UK, producing high-quality steels for sectors of the economy including defence, energy, aerospace and engineering. Liberty Steel is also a low-carbon steelmaker, and the assets must be central to any strategy to decarbonise our steel industry.

Last week the Business Secretary, Kwasi Kwarteng, convened a meeting of the Steel Council to bring new focus on supporting our sector to decarbonise. We have been encouraged by government’s commitment to taking on this challenge, and the growing consensus that to build back better and greener we need a strong and sustainable steel industry. No other UK company can produce the specialist steels made by Liberty’s UK operations, and so a future must be found to prevent us having to rely on high-carbon imports from countries that don’t play by the same rules.

Given the strategic importance of Liberty’s steel operations, and their fundamental importance to delivering the UK’s climate objectives, we believe government must take an active role to facilitate a comprehensive solution that safeguards the future and protect jobs. Following today’s meeting we will



meet with our senior representatives from across Liberty Steel UK, and therefore at this stage will be making no further comment.”

Stay safe!

Ross Murdoch

GMB National Officer

Dated: 12 February 2021

Trade Union Statement in Support of the Extension of the UK Steel Safeguards

About the Steel Unions and this statement:

Dear GMB Member,

The workforce of the UK’s steel sector is represented by the three ‘steel unions’, Community, GMB, and Unite. The three unions work closely together to advocate the views of steel workers right across the country, with a primary aim of ensuring a positive and sustainable future for our members, and their families and communities. A critical component of this is delivering the best possible business environment for steel companies to operate and prosper in. With the UK now having full control of its own trade policy, an increasingly important element of this is ensuring a global level playing field for industry through the effective and legitimate use of trade remedies measures.

The following statement represents the views of our collective steel sector memberships with regards to the transition review into the UK’s Steel Safeguard Measures.

Steel Safeguards:

Collectively, we strongly believe the UK’s Steel Safeguards must be maintained and extended beyond 30th June 2021, and that failure to do so would be a disaster for the industry, for the environment, for jobs and for steel communities across the UK.

The EU introduced the Steel Safeguards in July 2018 due to global overcapacity and the threat of trade diversion resulting from the US Section 232 steel tariffs, and in a climate of growing nationalist and protectionist sentiment worldwide. These were compelling reasons then and are even more so today, because the pandemic has devastated global steel demand which means our industry is in a hugely vulnerable state and at increased risk of import surges.

At this critical time for our industry it’s crucial an extension of the Safeguards is provided, so we can be sure of protections against serious injury (not least reductions in production, sales and investment), crucial to the sector’s recovery from the impacts of COVID-19, and so we can continue to adapt to



changing trade flows and growing international competition. It is, in our view, inconceivable, that a government committed to supporting British industry and building back better and greener would choose to leave our steel sector unprotected, when it is increasingly likely that the EU and the US will maintain their own defences. A decision to unilaterally drop our Safeguards would lead to the resumption of the increase in imports seen prior to the introduction of the EU measures.

We know that EU member states are pushing hard for an extension of the EU Safeguards, and they are supported by our trade union colleagues across the European steel sector. The European trade union federation for steelworkers, IndustriaALL Europe, is currently lobbying the Commission not only to confirm an extension of the Safeguards, but also to increase their scope and retain them for an indefinite period of time.

We firmly believe that our steel industry can have a bright and prosperous future, but this will require decisive action from government to enable us to compete on a level playing field. Extending the Steel Safeguards is vital if we are to compete, and we consider there should be no doubt that taking this crucial action is in the UK's wider economic and public interest.

Indeed as representatives of workers in various steel consuming manufacturing sectors, including engineering and construction, we have a responsibility to take an holistic view of the safeguards measures and the balance of interests of our members. In this context we are firmly of the view that the negative impacts on the steel sector of allowing the measures to expire would wholly outweigh the potential impacts on steel consuming sectors of extending the measures. We understand the tariff free quotas allow for significantly higher than historic levels of imports to enter the UK tariff free, and that there is significant additional steelmaking capacity in the UK. In these circumstances it would only be if imports were to grow significantly higher than historic levels that any tariffs would apply – and even here the impact on prices and overall manufacturing costs would be negligible.

Conversely, a unilateral removal of the measures would have a devastating impact on steel production and jobs in the UK. Our steel industry directly employs more than 32,000 workers, and twice as many again in the supply chain and local communities. Steel jobs are high quality jobs with good terms and conditions, each of which can pay 50% more than the regional average. These steel jobs drive and sustain local economies, and are the foundation of the supply chain for other strategically important sectors including automotive, aerospace, construction and defence.

The steel industry is concentrated in areas of the country where employment opportunities can otherwise be limited, including the North East, Yorkshire and Humberside and South Wales. Every year the industry provides hundreds of young people with apprenticeships, quality training and career pathways, and is a vital source of private sector investment.

Steel is, in short, of critical importance to steel communities, local and regional economies, and our national manufacturing base, and has a crucial role to play in advancing the government's levelling up agenda. It's also important to reflect upon the costs of inaction, and we need look no further than the



collapse of the SSI steelworks in 2015 when thousands of jobs were lost overnight and the impacts are still being felt throughout the community.

Recent research published by Community found that only two thirds of SSI workers that lost their job were able to find new full-time work, and 18% took two years to secure any employment. Furthermore four in five workers reported earnings of £30,000 a year or more while employed at SSI, whereas just over one in three did so for their new jobs. It is not surprising therefore, that many workers reported that the closure of the steelworks had led to serious financial stress, with some even losing their family homes. Workers also reported a deterioration in their physical and/or mental health, relationship breakdowns, and a loss of identity as the heart was ripped out of their communities. Despite the tens of millions committed by government to retraining and job support schemes, a lesson from SSI is that when a steel business closes those high quality jobs are not easily replaced, and the knock on impacts can be devastating in communities that can least afford them.

It must also be recognised that a sustainable domestic steel industry is vital to achieving our climate change objectives. In the coming years rebuilding our economy and developing the industries of the future, like offshore wind and electric vehicles, are going to require millions of tonnes of steel. There are huge opportunities ahead for our industry, but realising those will require the commitment of all stakeholders. Either we make the steels here, with all the jobs and prosperity that can bring, or we import them from countries like China that are not subject to the same environmental standards.

We submit that the case for an extension of the Steel Safeguards is clear, and that continuing to protect our industry from threats related to global overcapacity is vital for the environment, for the steel sector, for jobs and for industrial communities across the UK. These considerations are of such importance that they must far outweigh any potential marginal negative impacts to steel consumers elsewhere in the economy.

Alasdair McDiarmid, Operations Director, Community

Harish Patel, National Officer, Unite

Ross Murdoch, National Officer, GMB

2020 Bulletins

Noticeboard Bulletin - 09-07-2020



Posted on: 9 July 2020

Dear GMB Member,

As the steel unions, we have just launched a new campaign for the future of our industry – Britain, we need our steel.

Our industry may be smaller than it was but it's as important now as it's ever been. More important even, because rebuilding our economy and delivering the Government's infrastructure programme is going to require millions of tonnes of steel.

We know that if the Government's plans to build, build, build are to successfully revive the country and secure jobs then they must use our steel.

As steelworkers we are the guardians of our industry. Now, we must harness our passion for this industry to show people in every corner of the country how important it is to our future.

How to support the campaign

[Sign the petition](#)

[Read the joint press release](#)

All Steel Members Joint National Trade Union Coordinating Committee (NSTUCC)



Posted on: 7 April 2020

Dear GMB Member,

There can be no doubt that the current crisis poses a threat to the steel industry in this country. In many cases order books have fallen off a cliff and it will be months before normal conditions return.

We know that steel is a strategic foundation industry that underpins critical sectors of our economy. Steelworkers are resilient and we have been through crises before; it is imperative that our industry survives this latest threat to our livelihoods and our communities.



During this crisis nothing is more important than the health and safety of our members and their families. That is why it is vital steel businesses follow all the government guidance relating to social distancing and other safety measures, which are based on the expert medical and scientific advice to keep people safe.

The unions are working closely with employers to ensure government guidance is adhered to. Everyone, including trade union members, has a vital role to play to help maintain social distancing and good hygiene practice.

It is vital that steel businesses demonstrate sites are safe to remain open. This must mean working with trade unions at site-level to ensure provision of PPE and other safety equipment, and to consider altering working practices such as staggering break times and split shifts.

In recent weeks the messages from government have caused some confusion, and we need to see a much clearer message about the importance of steel and how our vital manufacturing industry will be supported during and after this crisis. The guidance may change but currently the government says manufacturing businesses can remain open provided that social distancing guidelines are followed, and employees work from home where possible.

If the government guidelines are not followed to union-recognised standards then steel producers cannot continue to operate, and if steelmaking stops we know there could be serious consequences for the future. This is why any reports of failure to comply with the guidance are taken extremely seriously, so if you have health and safety concerns please raise them through your shop stewards and branches.

For those steel businesses suffering due to a big drop in orders, or which have to reduce operations to protect employee health, the government has announced the 'Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme', providing earnings protection of up to 80% for employees who are 'furloughed,' meaning temporarily laid-off but kept on the books. This is subject to a monthly cap of £2,500 per employee and is initially running for 3 months from 1st March 2020.

The trade unions believe this scheme represents a vital safety net; however, businesses must work with the unions to protect wages above and beyond this 80% capped safety net. The steel unions already had discussions with a number of steel companies about the Scheme and we are working hard to ensure the best outcomes for our members.

We recognise also that responding to the crisis is likely to have an impact on steel contractors, and we will hold steel companies accountable for contractors treating their workforce in the proper way.

The unions campaigned for the Scheme and we welcome it as it can save jobs. However, we believe the Scheme can be developed and improved. As we said directly to the Steel Minister Nadhim Zahawi earlier this week, the Scheme needs to be more flexible and allow for rotation. This is important for reasons of



fairness and to keep the workforce fresh with skills maintained ready for when normal conditions resume. At this difficult time please stay safe and look out for one another.

Ross Murdoch, GMB National Officer

Harish Patel, Unite National Officer

Roy Rickhuss, CBE Chair, NTUSCC

