
Downsizing deals - Steel unions meeting on Corus progress

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It is reported that unions representing the 1,600 steel workers facing redundancy at Teesside Cast Products will meet on Monday to discuss industrial action.

The National Steel Coordinating Committee will discuss on Monday the progress made by Corus in negotiating a deal with what are believed to be three live bids, including a group of investors based in the North East.

The NTUSCC comprises representatives from across Corus and from all the representative trade unions including majority union Community, Unite, the GMB and UCATT.

The group of four steel unions issued a statement saying they gave the Redcar company's owner Corus until the start of next week to open what it described as good faith negotiations with potential buyers for the plant.

They will meet to decide whether or not to ballot for industrial action in support of TCP which is being mothballed by its owners following the loss of major contracts last year and the failure so far to find a buyer for either the plant or its products.

Unions have also become increasingly frustrated by Corus chief executive Kirby Adams, who also came in for heavy criticism by MPs on the North East regional committee of inquiry into the steel crisis or being elusive and uncooperative - a charge denied by TCP managing director Jon Bolton.

Mr Michael Leahy Community Union general secretary said "Time is running out for Teesside, yet Corus seem to continue to just defend their decision to mothball. Despite close to 1,600 redundancies and the loss of key skills which will cripple the potential for future growth in the industry, Corus seem to simply be going through the motions. Community Union is again calling upon Corus to demonstrate good faith negotiations with the interested parties to keep Teesside a going concern. The lack of action from Corus is a deliberate slap in the face to every loyal and dedicated steel worker across the country. Reluctantly, Community and the other trade unions will continue to explore the potential for 'last resort' industrial action."

(Sourced from www.nebusiness.co.uk)

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