



PRESS RELEASE

150 MAINTENANCE WORKERS TO BE CONTRACTED OUT

A major Trade Union has today denounced a Housing Company over proposals to externalise its Maintenance Services to a Contractor.

Home Group North West inherited Copeland Borough Council's housing stock in 2003 and Copeland Homes was formed. Two years ago Copeland Homes was assimilated into Homes parent business.

The GMB Trade Union in the Northern Region won recognition at Home Group North West in 2007. This week Home Group have announced to its direct workforce that as of October 2011, Home will be transferring its Maintenance Services to a Contractor.

The tender process has already started and will be completed during July. The intention is to transfer all its maintenance service employees to the successful contractor.

GMB Regional Organiser Kevin Young said:

“We will be approaching Copeland Borough Council in the coming weeks to explore ways of protecting jobs and ways of maintaining standards of service. It has to be said that we have major concerns about this whole process. Service standards could deteriorate under a new contractor from the current level provided by Homes Group’s Repairs and Maintenance Teams”.

The GMB said that it also has major concerns with housing policy direction over many years as there has been a steady erosion of local democratic engagement and accountability as successive governments have looked to home ownership, private and social rent as a panacea for the UK’s housing problems. The GMB said that this ignores another key part of the housing market, the council housing sector and said that this policy has led to many problems in urban and rural communities, with local people not being able to afford housing rents or mortgages.

Mr. Young said:

“We view this transfer as a further move in the wrong direction. Local Councillors need to know that it is local people who live and work in Copeland who will suffer for this crazy shift in policy by the Home Group in externalising 150 jobs. If this goes ahead, most probably it will be Directors and Shareholders outside of the Borough with little affinity for Copeland that will benefit”.

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