



PRESS RELEASE

UNION SUPPORTS COUNCIL MOTION ON REMPLOY

The North East's biggest general trade union today welcomed a motion that was tabled at a full council meeting at the end of July.

The minutes of the North Tyneside Council meeting of the 28 July 2011, show that an urgent motion, tabled by the North Tyneside Council Labour Group in support of disabled workers at Remploy, was approved.

The GMB Union said that the Report into the future of Remploy appeared to be heavily biased against provision of employment by Remploy, in so doing breaking an historic link that goes back to the end of the Second World War.

In addition the GMB maintains that the Report Author, Liz Sayce, has previous form on her pronouncements about Remploy and that she has a vested interest in seeing Remploy close, given that she is the Chief Executive of the Royal Association for Disability Rights (RADAR) a competing organisation to Remploy.

The Union says that removing work from Remploy and the failure in helping the Company with procurement, as well as trying to do more within the public and private sectors to help bring work to Remploy, will mean that disabled people will be left to the voluntary sector and organisations like RADAR, which simply do not have the capacity to deliver.

GMB Northern Regional Organiser Val Scott said:

"Our members in Remploy tell us that senior management historically have had little empathy with disabled workers. However that is no reason to throw the baby out with the bathwater. The Sayce report reeks of vested interests against Remploy. It is high time that a proper investigation is made into safeguarding Remploy's viability moving forward. Much more work needs to be done in trying to encourage public and private sector organisations to buy from Remploy. Yet again vested interests such as the Sayce Report are written for a Government that places pure shareholder value above shared values."

The GMB says that the Sayce Report, hot on the heels of recent comments by Conservative MPs about disabled people being able to work for less than the minimum wage, shows the culture around current thinking within the ruling Coalition in Parliament.

Ms Scott said:

"Liz Sayce and the Coalition Government just don't get it. Disabled workers in Remploy produce highly valuable and cost effective products. The fact that we have people who want to reduce the role of the state, base their thinking around price only and what's in it for shareholders says it all. GMB members in Remploy deserve better and it is to the credit of North Tyneside's Labour Group that they have sought to stand up for disabled people in a way that the Sayce Report simply fails to do".

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