

Rajesh Nair
Chief Executive
Tata Steel UK

19 March 2024

Dear Rajesh

Morfa Coke Ovens

I am writing regarding Tata Steel UK's **announcement** about the cessation of operations at Morfa Coke Ovens from Wednesday 20 March "as a result of significantly deteriorating operational stability". As part of the Committee's ongoing work on the future of Welsh steel I would like to seek some further detail and clarifications from you. Please can you respond to the following points?

- The press reports around 200 workers will be affected. Is that number correct? Can you tell us whether the workforce employed in the coking ovens and adjoining By-Products plant will be redeployed to other roles, and whether there will be scope for them to be employed to decommission the coke ovens?
- Can you confirm that Tata will now import coke to support blast furnace 5, and if so how long do you anticipate importing coke for? How do you expect this development to impact on the operation of blast furnace 5?
- Can you confirm your expected timescales for ceasing operations at the By-Products plant which adjoins the coking ovens?
- The unions have said that while they were aware the coking ovens were in a state of disrepair, Tata had not indicated in recent discussions that they were at risk of imminent closure. Unite also **claims** that Tata had recently "told the unions that it hoped to increase their capacity in the near future". How would you respond to these points?
- Tata has said the coke ovens will close due to concerns around their operational stability. Can you tell us what role health and safety considerations played in your decision to close the coking ovens, following these being **raised** by the unions at the Committee's meeting on 29 February?



- How would you respond to the **comments** by the Unite union in our evidence session with them on 29 February that "it's been the lack of investment, over the last 15 years, in the coke ovens that has led it to deteriorate to the situation it is"?

I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Kind regards,



Paul Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

CC:

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English