# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Tata Steel UK Ltd** |
| **DATE** | **25 April 2024** |
| **BY** | **Jeremy Miles MS, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language** |

Tata Steel has today announced its rejection of the multi-union report commissioned by the UK Steel Committee. This news is dreadful news for the unions and the dedicated and loyal workforce who have worked hard to develop an alternative proposal for the future of the Port Talbot plant and its downstream sites.

It is difficult to overstate what the steel industry means to communities across Wales. The proposed ending of blast furnace steel production at Port Talbot is a very sad day for Wales and will inevitably add to the anxiety of employees and their families are feeling, as well as those in local communities and the wider supply chain.

Despite Tata recognising it as a credible piece of work, it is extremely disappointing that the recommendations from the multi-union report prepared by Syndex on the transition to lower-carbon steelmaking at Port Talbot have not been taken up.

Ministers have consistently raised our concerns about the speed of the proposed transition. The consultation between the Tata and unions should have been an opportunity to secure a longer, fairer transition that minimised job losses. We believe a better deal for steel and the workforce could and should be struck, between Tata and UK Government.

It is imperative that Tata seeks to avoid compulsory redundancies within its loyal workforce at all costs and we will be seeking this reassurance. In light of today’s decision Tata must offer the best possible deal to their workforce including action around skills recognition and development.

There is also an urgent need for Tata to provide detail and timings of the impact on its workforce and its supply chain to ensure that Welsh Government and our partners can provide them with the best possible support. This will include the provision of tailored support for skills and training to enable them to plan for a positive future.

We are concerned about the impact this decision will have on output volumes across all Tata sites in Wales not only on Port Talbot but the downstream plants. We need to see a clear vision from the company that will involve significant investment in all sites including Port Talbot and Llanwern and one that continues to harness the innovation within our universities.

Steel will be a major part in our economic future and is a critical material in our efforts to reach net zero. From electric vehicles to offshore wind turbines, steel is the thread that will run through the economy of today and tomorrow. The Welsh Government believes there is viable future for steelmaking in Wales that is good for green growth and essential to our collective security.

We recognise the devastating nature of today’s news for all those impacted. We will continue to work with the Tata Transition Board to act swiftly in providing support for the workers, families, businesses and communities who are affected by Tata’s transition, whilst also looking to the medium and longer term to ensure a positive future for the region.