

14 April 2024

The Rt Hon. Liam Byrne MP
Chair
Business and Trade Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA



GMB Union
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Dear Liam

I write on behalf of GMB Union regarding our ongoing dispute with Bidfood.

As you are aware, earlier this year Bidfood unilaterally terminated its collective bargaining agreement with both GMB and Unite the Union, which had been in place for over thirty years. We appreciate the committee's correspondence with the company, setting out several legitimate concerns and questions on behalf of our members.

As we have previously stated, the timing of Bidfood's action is especially troubling, as it coincides with the progress of the Employment Rights Bill through parliament. Trade Union recognition should be a fundamental right, not a privilege. Because of the company's regressive action, GMB and Unite are now undertaking a lengthy and bureaucratic process with the Central Arbitration Committee (CAC) to re-establish recognition to defend our members interests.

While the Government continues its plans to make work pay and deliver on the manifesto commitment to secure a new deal for working people, it is unacceptable that businesses like Bidfood can treat their workers and trade unions with such contempt while avoiding scrutiny.

I would therefore urge you to call upon Bidfood and its wider group to provide further evidence, including oral evidence, to the committee as you consider the Government's response to your report on the Employment Rights Bill.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Houghton', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Nadine Houghton
GMB National Officer