9 June 2025

To: The Chair, Eastend Homes Board

By email

Dear Ms Bateson,

OPEN LETTER TO THE BOARD OF EASTEND HOMES

Reorganisation of the Housing, Business Support, Asset Management, Lettings and Performance Review Teams

INTRODUCTION

We write to request an intervention from the Board following the refusal of Senior management and Human Resources officers to meet with the Trade Unions to discuss member concerns about the conduct of this reorganisation consultation.

This is a hard-hitting reorganisation proposal that could see seventeen of our members made redundant and/or downgraded in the middle of cost-of-living crisis. Cutting so many jobs will inevitably detrimentally impact on the service that residents receive.

It is reasonable to expect that the consultation is conducted in accordance with the Eastend Homes (EEH) Redundancy and Redeployment Policy ('the Policy'), they are treated with respect, all steps are taken to mitigate compulsory redundancies, and that the consultation is genuine and meaningful.

Unfortunately, this has not been the case. The consultation has been very poorly handled, is flawed, lacks transparency and the policy has not been followed in relation to multiple elements.

The claims made by senior leadership/HR that the consultation is being conducted in a manner that is 'transparent' and 'genuine' is rejected as a false narrative. In fact, the reality is that the consultation is being handled in a way that is just the opposite.

The core matters of complaint are set out below.

MATTERS OF COMPLAINT

On the 27 May 2025 at 14:58 our members received an invite to attend a meeting on the 28 May. At that meeting they were told about the reorganisation proposal and that this would be

the start of the formal consultation. They were eventually given access to the paperwork 48 hours later.

This revealed that senior leadership/HR had no interest in running a genuine and meaningful consultation and would be managing the consultation in a way that disregarded many essential elements of the Policy.

i. Draft Job Descriptions

The Policy states:

> 6.1 As part of the consultation process draft job descriptions for proposed posts will be produced and during the consultation process comments and suggested changes will be encouraged from staff on the content of the draft job descriptions.
>
> 6.2 Draft job descriptions will be evaluated and will have an indicative grade on them.
>
> 6.3 At the end of consultation period final job descriptions will be issued and these will include confirmed grades.
>
> 6.4 All job descriptions will be evaluated in accordance with the GLPC job evaluation scheme.

Despite the consultation initially running until the 27 June and that they are supposedly being consulted on the content of the draft job descriptions until that date, they were also instructed to submit expressions of interest by the 6 June and told they would be interviewed for these jobs over the 10 – 12 June, ***in the middle of the consultation period and before theoretically the content of the job descriptions had even been finalised***.

The draft job descriptions released initially did not have an indicative grade/salary on them. It is plainly not possible for a consultation to be genuine and meaningful if staff are being interviewed to assess their suitability for a job description that is still being consulted on and is in draft form while the consultation is happening. Draft job descriptions for some roles were still missing well into the consultation.

Following a complaint from Trade Unions the indicative grades were eventually released. Shockingly, this detailed that if they survived the selection, many staff would be subject to a downgrade, with there being no clarity about pay protection. There was no mention of this at the consultation launch meeting.

ii. Content of Draft Job Descriptions

Our members have many concerns about the content of the draft job descriptions and want to be able to use the consultation period to best effect in terms of giving feedback about much needed amendments before they are finalised.

An employer who is pushing ahead in the consultation period to interview for jobs cannot hope to be considered as holding a 'genuine' consultation where feedback is taken and considered before final decisions are made and job descriptions finalised.

The HR email in response to a complaint from UNISON, revealed *that '…interviews will form part of the selection process* ***but are not the sole factor***'. Trade Unions and staff have not been told what these 'other factors' are. The lack of transparency is troubling and unfair.

iii. Failure to Produce Assimilation Lists.

The Policy states:

> **5. Assimilation claims**
>
> 5.1 In drawing up assimilation lists, substantive job descriptions will be considered to identify what claim or type of claim an employee has in the proposed structure.
>
> 5.2 An employee may be identified as having either a direct claim, a potential claim or in some cases no claim at all to a post in the proposed structure.

No assimilation lists have been produced, in breach of the procedure, and instead staff are being subjected to some kind of 'free for all' where anyone can apply for any of the jobs regardless of their current post or salary.

The FAQs given to staff as part of the consultation pack states that**: – '*you are encouraged to apply for available roles including your own or a suitable alternative'*.**

Our members have not even been giving assimilation rights to jobs that EEH considers to be their 'own'. Colleagues who may not have a direct/partial match to a job are being rights to apply for it alongside colleagues who do.

It is incumbent on the employer to produce matching lists and to put forward what is a suitable alternative based on each individual's circumstances/current job. The way this is being handled is not appropriate and enhances the risk of compulsory redundancy instead of mitigating it.

iv. Salary downgrades

When the indicative grades were finally released part way into the consultation, staff were shocked to discover that if successful in obtaining one of the new jobs, many of them would be subjected to significant salary downgrades, with there being no clarity about pay protection.

They have many concerns about the content of the job descriptions, believe many are inadequate, omit important duties and responsibilities; and some actually increase responsibilities whilst reducing salary.

They are concerned that there is no offer of pay protection and that the method of selection being used ('the free for all' approach) is being adopted to ensure they do not benefit from pay protection.

v. Other

HR produced documents for individuals connected to this consultation which had numerous basic errors such as length of service and even the incorrect spelling of names in some cases. This had led to a lack of confidence in HR. This reveals a lack of attention to essential detail and lack of professionalism. We can provide more specific examples.

We note that on the 4th June staff received an email stating that the job application deadlines had been extended to the 12th of June and the consultation by one week until the 4th of July.

This is no way addresses our members' concerns, and if anything reveals that senior management/HR are continuing to ignore the issues as set out in this complaint - as they are already aware of them because they have been raised by our Trade Unions, with no positive effect.

CONCLUSION

i. It is not reasonable for EEH to disregard the core elements of the relevant procedure in conducting this consultation.

ii. It is not reasonable to expect staff to **be interviewed during the consultation** period on draft job descriptions still technically being consulted on.

iii. It is not reasonable for there to be a selection process using 'other factors' which have not been disclosed.

iv. It is not reasonable for EEH to fail to provide assimilation lists detailing assimilation rights and an analysis of suitable alternative employment based on individual factors/current jobs.

v. It is not reasonable to attempt to downgrade staff with no confirmation of pay protection arrangements.

vi. It is not reasonable for EEH to disregard the basic requirements of a consultation, which is to canvas for feedback, consider it - whilst at the very same time attempting to fast track/confirm people into the new jobs in the middle of a consultation.

vii. It is surprising that we need to point this out. Senior leadership/HR are claiming that the consultation is 'genuine'. It isn't - and we reasonably demand that our members are treated better and with respect.

OUTCOME SOUGHT

It is disappointing that EEH senior management are refusing to meet with Trade Union representatives. Whilst EEH may be an employer that does not recognise unions for collective bargaining, there is nothing to stop your senior leadership team from meeting with us.

This is a serious situation which has the potential to trigger a Trade Dispute. For this reason, we would urge EEH to engage in dialogue with us at the earliest possible opportunity.

We are requesting an urgent meeting with the Board to discuss these concerns. In the interim we are requesting that the Board intervene to:

i. Halt the consultation and then restart it only after all the required paperwork and assimilation lists have been produced. This should include a full business case setting out the detailed financial basis for the reorganisation and an Equality Impact Assessment, as well as comprehensive assimilation lists.

ii. Withdraw the instruction to staff to submit applications for jobs and to be interviewed for roles whilst the consultation is still happening needs to be immediately withdrawn/halted.

iii. Release to the Trade unions and staff the indicative GLPC job evaluation scores sheets that have been produced so far for all the draft job descriptions and provide information on the arrangements for the TU side scoring exercise to take place (as is required under the GLPC Job Evaluation Scheme).

Please note that our members are not able to engage in individual 1:1 meetings with senior management/HR about the matters collectively raised in this letter or in relation to collective Grievances that have been submitted.

We look forward to your earliest response.

Yours Sincerely,

Kerie Anne	Abdirahman Ali	Kate Jenkins
Branch Secretary	Branch Secretary	Branch Secretary
Tower Hamlets UNISON	Tower Hamlets UNITE	Tower Hamlets GMB