

**Councillor Chris Read – Leader of the Council**

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**Please Contact:**  
Councillor Chris Read

8<sup>th</sup> October 2025

Councillor Simon Ball  
Elected Member

Via email: [simon.ball@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:simon.ball@rotherham.gov.uk)

Dear Councillor Ball,

**Question raised at Council – Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

At Council on 10<sup>th</sup> September, you asked how much money Liberty Steel owed in Business Rates and whether this had been written off. You also asked what had happened to what you described as the quarterly meetings with Liberty and its predecessors.

On the latter point, my understanding is that there were never quarterly meetings between the Council and Liberty, although there have at times been meetings at officer level. As the business has declined and restructuring proposals came forward these had come to a natural end, but I can confirm that subsequent conversations with officers have taken place when the business has been willing to share information.

On the former point, it is important to note that business rates collected are split between an amount retained by the Council 49%, 1% to South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue and 50% that is paid over to Government. If the debt is not paid and needs to be written off, the cost of this is also split in the same way.

I am informed that the total outstanding balance of business rates liability for Speciality Steel up to the 21<sup>st</sup> August 2025, the date a winding up order was made against them, was as follows:

	<b>RMBC</b>	<b>SYFRS</b>	<b>Gov't</b>	<b>Total</b>
23/24	£144,142.81	£2,941.69	£147,084.50	£294,169.00
24/25	£1,383,184.86	£28,228.26	£1,411,413.13	£2,822,826.25
25/26	£546,908.48	£11,161.40	£558,069.88	£1,116,139.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,074,236.15</b>	<b>£42,331.35</b>	<b>£2,116,567.50</b>	<b>£4,233,135.00</b>

On the advice of the Council's external legal advisors £3,055,125.26 of the 2023/24 and 2024/25 outstanding balance was written off as irrecoverable at the end of the 2024/25 financial year. The Council is able to reverse these write off amounts if there is possibility of further recovery.

Despite that write off, a claim is to be submitted to the administrators for the full balance of £4,233,135.00 as outlined above. At this stage it is too early to know whether we will receive a dividend from this claim or whether, ultimately, the full balance will need to be written off.

From the date the winding up order was issued against the company and while ever the property is occupied, business rates liability falls on the liquidator.

Finally I should note that business rates demand notices equating to an additional £1,752,811.30 for the period 21<sup>st</sup> August 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 were issued on the 16<sup>th</sup> September 2025. It is expected these will be paid in full, though there is uncertainty as to how the liquidators will operate and for how long.

Yours sincerely



**Councillor Chris Read**  
**Leader of Rotherham Council**