

Dorset firm REIDsteel says CBI misconduct claims were 'shocking' – and that it almost quit the organisation

A Dorset firm has revealed it had thought to “break all ties” with the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), following allegations of workplace misconduct at the employers' organisation.

The boss of structural engineering business REIDsteel Simon Boyd, who is a founding member of the CBI's manufacturing council, has condemned the “shocking” reports of “unacceptable behaviour” at the lobby group.

It comes after the [CBI sacked its director-general Tony Danker with immediate effect](#) on Tuesday (April 11), following an independent investigation into Mr Danker's conduct. Three other CBI employees are now also suspended pending further investigation into a number of ongoing allegations.

The CBI, which represents 190,000 businesses across the country, also this week confirmed its former chief economist, Rain Newton-Smith, had been appointed to replace Mr Danker.

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In a statement on Friday (April 14) Mr Boyd said the reports of misconduct were “shocking and of deep concern to us.”

He added: “It is emphatically at odds with what REIDsteel stands for as a company where values of respect and inclusivity for everyone are non-negotiable. Our initial reaction was to break all ties with the CBI, both in terms of

our company membership and in my role as a founder member of its manufacturing council.”



Simon Boyd, managing director of REIDsteel.

(Image: Paul Collins/Deep South Media)

The managing director of the Christchurch-based firm went on to say it had been “re-assured” by “immediate and decisive” action taken by Ms Newton-Smith and CBI president Brian McBride, following the conclusion of the investigation by employment law firm Fox Williams.

Mr Boyd said: “They have spoken to us and given us confidence that they are committed and able to tackle the very serious issues at hand. Had they not already taken firm action and given such assurances, we would have withdrawn our membership.

“For now we have been given enough encouragement to reserve judgement and see how the situation develops. I hope they are able to restore trust and confidence in the CBI while eliminating every trace of unacceptable behaviour and practices where it may exist within the organisation.”

When approached for comment on the statement from REIDsteel, a CBI spokesperson told *BusinessLive* : “We are deeply proud to represent over 190,000 businesses in the UK and acutely aware of the responsibilities of that role. We recognise that we need to be better and do better for our members and we will now work tirelessly to ensure that under new leadership and with a commitment to build a modern, inclusive culture, the CBI can and will resume its vital work of supporting British business. We hope that our members will be part of that journey with us.”

Earlier this week the CBI apologised for making “serious failings” and said it would cooperate fully with any police investigations, as Fox Williams continues with the next phase of its inquiry.

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