

Iceland

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Our Ref MCW/KRW
28th April 2020

Sent by Email

[REDACTED]
National Minimum Wage
Specialist Enforcement Team
Individuals & Small Business Compliance
ISBC
HM Revenue & Customs
Queensway House
East Kilbride G79 1AA

Dear [REDACTED]

Your email of this morning to [REDACTED] has been escalated to me, and I can only say that I am totally shocked and amazed that you felt it appropriate to send it to us under the current conditions.

I don't know what planet you and your colleagues are living on, but in case you hadn't noticed here on Earth we are in the midst of an unprecedented global crisis. Iceland currently has 3,000 staff off sick on full pay. We have a further 1,200 vulnerable staff taking 12 weeks leave on full pay. We have borne an additional £20m of Covid-related costs. Some 200 of our town centre and shopping centre stores are currently losing money because sales have dropped by 50% owing to the collapse in consumer footfall in these areas. We employ 800 people in our head office, with an average of just 20 turning up for work every day.

I also chair and co-own a chain of 45 restaurants that has 1,200 staff furloughed, and we are still waiting for HMRC to send us the promised 80% salary contribution.

I think you and your team would be far better employed helping furlough payments to come through, instead of spending your time harassing companies that are hard at work feeding the nation on an absolutely ridiculous technicality.

I think you should be ashamed of yourself in continuing to pursue this matter and I am sure the media will be interested to learn about HMRC's sense of priorities in the midst of this crisis. I will not hesitate to draw it to their attention in the absence of a firm commitment to drop this matter for good.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Sir Malcolm Walker
Founder and Executive Chairman

[REDACTED]