

STRICTLY EMBARGOED TO 0001 ON THURSDAY 31 DECEMBER 2020

## Rogue employers named and shamed for failing to pay minimum wage

- 139 companies, including major household names, have short-changed their employees and have been fined
- Offending firms failed to pay £6.7m to their workers, in a completely unacceptable breach of employment law
- Business Minister [REDACTED] says the list should be a “wake-up call” to rogue bosses, as department relaunches naming scheme after two-year pause

Almost 140 companies, including some of the UK’s biggest household names, are being named and shamed today for failing to pay their workers the minimum wage.

Investigated between 2016 and 2018, the 139 named companies failed to pay £6.7m to over 95,000 workers in total, in a flagrant breach of employment law. The offending companies range in size from small businesses to large multinationals who employ thousands of people across the UK.

Preserving and enforcing workers’ rights is a priority for this Government. While the vast majority of businesses follow the law and uphold workers’ rights, the publication of the list is intended to serve as a warning to rogue employers that the Government will take action against those who fail to pay their employees properly.

This is the first time the Government has named and shamed companies for failing to pay National Minimum Wage since 2018, following reforms to the process to ensure only the worst offenders are targeted.

**Business Minister [REDACTED] said:** “Paying the minimum wage is not optional, it is the law. It is never acceptable for any employer to short-change their workers, but it is especially disappointing to see huge household names who absolutely should know better on this list.”

“This should serve as a wake-up call to named employers and a reminder to everyone of the importance of paying workers what they are legally entitled to.”

“Make no mistake, those who fail to follow minimum wage rules will be caught out and made to pay up.”

One of the main causes of minimum wage breaches was low-paid employees being made to cover work costs, which would eat into their pay packet, such as paying for uniform, training or parking fees.

Also, some employers failed to raise employees’ pay after they had a birthday which should have moved them into a different National Minimum Wage bracket.

Employers who pay workers less than the minimum wage have to pay back arrears of wages to the worker at current minimum wage rates. They also face hefty financial penalties of up to 200% of arrears - capped at £10,000 per worker - which are paid to the Government. Each of the companies named today have paid back their workers, and were forced to pay financial penalties.

While not all breaches of minimum wage rules are intentional, it is the responsibility of all employers to ensure they are following the law. With this round, we are also publishing a