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Dear Caroline

Thank you for your letter of 13 January, regarding the Government's enforcement of the National Minimum Wage (NMW).

While we do not discuss individual cases, HMRC always investigates businesses where it believes they are not paying the NMW, which includes following up every complaint it receives from a worker. HMRC also acts on information from a range of sources, including third parties and from its own proactive work to gather intelligence.

Where a company is not paying the NMW, HMRC has a proven track record for taking firm action and will continue to do so. From April to November 2015, it took action against 557 businesses, clawing back over £8 million for 46,000 workers who had been illegally underpaid. Where an employer has broken the rules, they must make good the wages they have underpaid, pay a penalty of 100% of the wages underpaid, and may be named publicly by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. In September last year, the Prime Minister announced that the penalties for underpayment of the NMW would rise to 200% from April 2016.

I hope this helps.

Nick Boles

NICK BOLES MP