Employment practices review

From:
Sent: 03 May 2017 00:28
To: Employment practices review
Subject: self employment and the minimum wage (or not; for many of them.)

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear Matthew Taylor,

I listened with great interest to a programme on Radio 4 last week to which you contributed; hence my letter to you.

I am self employed and have been since I was 18 (now 57)

Just over 18 months ago I started trading with a manufacturing business around birch tree products made sustainably from a wild environment. (Exmoor)

The business is doing well and made a profit of £1498.00 in its first year - not including any kind of salary - just paying back startup costs and developing new products.

I have help for several hours a week from a local young adult with mental health issues, who seems to be benefiting from working with me and I hope to employ some local people a bit further down the line. Contributing to the local community is part of my business ethos.

Whilst in government David Cameron decreed that all self employed people earn the minimum wage or more and various results followed this in April 2016.

One of which was that West Somerset Council decided (discretionarily not mandatorily) not to give any council tax relief to the self employed for having lower earnings - because the government states that we all earn the minimum wage or above and therefore are not entitled to any relief or benefit.

I have been prosecuted and investigated for fraud (finally dropped) and am now facing new prosecution because I cannot pay my full council tax of around £1500 per annum. I haven't earned the money to pay it and my accounts that have been audited by a chartered accountant show that I am no where near earning the minimum wage at present. A new manufacturing business is not likely to be making much money in the first few years of trading.

My weekly allowance for personal items and food is £15.

There must be thousands of people who are self employed and their business is not yet paying them an hourly rate of the minimum wage or above and if they are unfortunate enough to have property in an area whose council has decided to make the discretionary ruling not to give any council tax relief; they are probably being hounded as I am and suffering the stressful consequences which make it all more difficult.

I am making a contribution of £25 - 30 per month towards my council tax of £1500 but the Revenues Dept., will not accept my offer because they say it is not

enough and do not seem interested in the fact that I cannot pay for a tax levied on a minimum wage earner when it is not applicable .It is a 40 mile round trip
to the food bank which is not really an option for me so I wild forage and grow what I can to eat.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts if you have time to consider the matter.

If you are visiting West Somerset or Taunton Deane during your consultation exercise for Theresa May area I would like to attend
one of your hearings.

Many thanks,

Yours sincerely,

Contact details:

This email has been scanned by the Symantec Email Security.cloud service.
For more information please visit http://www.symanteccloud.com