Bakkavor Noticeboard

Last update: **7 May 2020**

Food and Drink Industry Demand

Noticeboard Bulletin - 07-05-2020

Posted on: 7 May 2020

GMB has thousands of members at Bakkavor London Meals, Bakkavor Pizza, Caledonian and Tilmanstone Salads sites, and we are calling on Bakkavor to lift its standards and establish a common approach to the following three issues.

Bakkavor made £69M profit last year and claims to its investors that it is *"responding to the impact of COVID-19 from a position of strength."* and that they *"will continue to prioritise our employees in their roles as key workers".*

GMB CLAIM 1 – KEY WORKERS DESERVE FULL SICK PAY

Bakkavor made £69M profit last year but despite this won't pay members full pay, from day 1 of any CV19 related absence, with many workers across the Company only being paid £94 a week if absent due to Covid 19.

This policy not only puts profits ahead of its workforce, it risks creating a situation where members who cannot afford to be off work, feel forced to come in when they could be contagious, and therefore risk spreading the virus.

Bakkavor calls its workforce key workers, but actions speak louder than words so GMB is calling on Bakkavor to pay full pay from day 1 to any worker absent due to Covid 19.

GMB CLAIM 2 – FURLOUGH

Government guidance is clear that Companies can use the Job Retention Scheme, or 'furlough', to stand down workers in certain situations. At the moment the Company is treating workers differently between sites which is unnecessary and unacceptable.

GMB is calling on the Company to treat all its key workers equally, by furloughing workers on full pay who are:

- 'Highly vulnerable' and have been advised by the NHS to 'shield' for 12 weeks;
- 'Vulnerable' with underlying conditions that mean Covid 19 is a greater threat to their health than the majority of the workforce and;
- Required to stay at home to care for a family member, or because they cannot risk passing on the virus to a family who is 'shielding'.

GMB CLAIM 3 – UNION ENGAGEMENT

GMB is calling on the Company to work constructively with GMB across all our sites.

Our experience so far in the food industry is that where Companies are working jointly and respecting the local trade unions, then there is a greater degree of success in overcoming issues relating to Covid 19, particularly social distancing measures.

If the Company is serious about prioritising key workers then it must work constructively with their union, GMB, now and into the future.

NEXT STEPS

GMB will be writing to the Bakkavor Group Director of HR, Donna Maria-Lee with our claims on behalf of members.

We will also circulate a petition both in hard copy and online so that members can endorse the claim and send a message to the Company about stepping up to the plate.

Please share this bulletin with colleagues so that everyone can recognise the work GMB members are putting in to ensure we raise standards across the Company.

Yours in union,

GMB

London, Scotland and Southern Regions, National Office