

Strikes loom at whisky giant



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Workers at whisky giant Chivas Brothers have overwhelmingly backed strike action after pay talks collapsed.

Around 800 members of GMB Scotland and sister unions will walk out before Christmas after a formal ballot backed industrial action.

The strikes in December could disrupt orders to shops, hotels and bars over the festive period with workers preparing to strike in bottling halls in the weeks running up to Christmas.

The action comes after the company behind global brands including Chivas Regal, Glenlivet, Ballantine's and Royal Salute refused to revise a pay offer of 6.4% despite surging sales.



GMB Scotland revealed the results of the strike ballot today with 89% support for action after an earlier consultative vote revealed overwhelming levels of support for action as Chivas and French parent company, Pernod Ricard, record unprecedented sales.

The Ricard family, owners of the multinational which produces other well-known brands including Absolut vodka, Martell cognac, and Mumm champagne, is worth an estimated £5.8billion.



David Hume, GMB Scotland organiser, said:

“After a year when household bills rose again and again our members have made clear they will not accept a pay rise that is, in reality, a pay cut.

“It would be unacceptable at any time but the company’s owners celebrating some of the highest ever sales only add insult to injury.

“Huge profits are built on the shoulders of our members and they deserve to be paid fairly and receive an offer that recognises the value of their work.”

Chivas employs around 1,600 workers in Scotland, including at the Kilmalid bottling hall, in Dumbarton, Strathclyde Grain Distillery, Glenlivet Distillery and other sites in Speyside, Clydebank and Ayrshire.

The company will now be given two weeks’ notice of strike dates just months after Chivas reported a 17% increase in net sales, taking total sales to a 10-year high with sales surging by 30% in international markets.



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Member requiring help?

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