

Glenn Chester

29/01/2010 16:51

To: Mike Wilcox/e/POSTOFFICE@POSTOFFICE

cc: John Breeden/e/POSTOFFICE@POSTOFFICE

Subject: Notification of Suspension - Mr Michael Rudkin (Ibstock Post Office 223 217)

Mike

As discussed, following irregularities revealed at an audit of Ibstock branch today, I have issued Mr Mike Rudkin, Subpostmaster, with a precautionary suspension. At audit the following concerns were identified:-

1. National Lottery monies owing to the Post Office were not being paid into the Post Office from the retail side on a regular basis. At audit, £2447.00 of National lottery sales were outstanding. The Subpmr produced £3k of monies to the auditor to correct this error

2. BB stock unit was £4k down. The Subpmr stated that he had completed a transfer of the £4k from EE to BB stock on Wednesday night but the money had 'unfortunately' not been physically transferred into the stock unit.

The Subpmr states that this was due to ill health on Wednesday/Thursday. The money was produced by the Subpmr from the main official safe along with some paperwork that he had found at the bottom of the safe. The auditing officer suspects that the £4k was introduced into the stock by the Subpmr but is unable to prove this. It is interesting to note that the notes were to the value of £3860.00 and were in a paper bag. This begs the question, why weren't the notes in either EE stock or BB stock units?

The aforementioned audit had been requested after we received a number of xxxxxxx calls from xxxxxxxxxx, wishing to raise xxxxxxx concerns over a number of irregular practices xxxxxx believed were occurring at the branch. The first contact request came via xxxxxxx. This was made by XXXXXXX xxxxxxx on 11.01.10. The e-mail message that we received from xxxxxxxxxx was as follows:-

TEL NUMBER LEFT--XXXXXXXXX COULD MR WILLIAMS CONTACT XXXXXX XXXXIS XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX IBSTOCK 2232170 XXXE AND XXXXX WOULD LIKE A MEETING WITH HIM AS MR RUDKIN THE POSTMASTER IS MAKING FALSE CASH DECLARATIONS

xxxxXXXXX requested to speak with Paul Williams (Contract Manager) who dealt with the original disciplinary case involving Mr Rudkin and his wife. As that case had been concluded from the

contractual side, I rang XXXXXXXX on either 14/15th January 2010 to introduce myself and discuss xxxxxconcerns. XXXXXXXX was concerned that approx £1350 of lottery monies had not been paid into the counter from the retail side and that Mr Rudkin was transferring sums of money between stock units when in fact no money

was actually being transferred. XXXXXXXX was concerned that Mr Rudkin was doing this to conceal the true level of cash on hand and XXXX was worried that he was inflating the cash on hand to hide the shortage. XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX were extremely concerned that XXXXXXXX XXX in xxxxx wrong-doing XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX - hence the reason for taking the difficult decision to raise XXXXX concerns with Post Office Ltd. I informed XXXXXXX that I took XXX concerns seriously and recognised that it was not an easy decision on XXXX part to contact the Post Office. I informed XXX that I would make further enquiries into XXXXX concerns and thanked XXXX for raising them with me. I received a second call from xxxxxxxx on 19.01.10 (apologies telephone number not know) XXXXXXX re-iterated the concerns put forward by XXXXXXX, in that XXXX believed the cash at the branch was being inflated to cover a shortage and the lottery monies had not been paid over. In addition to this, XXXXX informed me that the atmosphere at the branch was taking its toll on the health XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX having trouble sleeping and being constantly worried about the situation XXXXXXXXXXX, Subsequent enquiries were made with Glenys Devlin, Accounting Team in Chesterfield to see if she could identify any areas of concern at the branch. Nothing untoward was identified. However, noting the concerns of XXXXXXXXXXX a special audit was requested on 20.01.10.

I received another call from XXXXXXX on my mobile on 27.01.10 asking if I could give XXXXX a call and up-date XXXXX on the latest situation. I spoke with XXXX on th 27.01.10 and XXXXX informed me that one of the stock units was £4k short and there was approximately £2k of lottery monies outstanding. XXXXXXX informed me that XXXX thought Mr Rudkin was in financial difficulties, as XXXXXXX had seen a letter from a financing company and was concerned that he was trying to secure the necessary finance to make good the losses before the branch received it's Horizon on-line migration visit - As part of the new installation of Horizon software, all branches will have their cash holdings checked. XXXXXXXXXXX again expressed XXXX concerns that the health of the XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX was being adversely affected and asked when some action was going to be taken. I informed XXXXX that I had requested a special audit at the branch but could not disclose the date of when that audit would be taking place. I again emphasised the fact that I took xxxxxx concerns seriously and thanked xxxxx for taking the time to give me a call.

As the audit has only taken place today, I've not had chance to speak with XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. I am therefore unable to confirm whether they will be prepared to sign a statement confirming the aforementioned. Noting the previous irregularities at this branch, I would have expected the branch to be run perfectly. I am therefore very concerned with the findings reported at audit today and noting the fact that XXXXXXX have taken the xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx in reporting the Subpmr, I would be very grateful if you could please give consideration to looking into this case further.

Many thanks.

Regards

Glenn

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