

Walsall retailer banned from running companies

Rebecca Simmons was a director of Tia-Bella Limited, trading from premises in Queen Street, Wolverhampton.

The company, a specialty balloon and gifts retailer, was incorporated in March 2019 but just over 2 years later in July 2021, Tia-Bella entered into creditors voluntary liquidation. Tia-Bella's insolvency, however, triggered further enquiries from the Insolvency Service.

Investigators discovered that Rebecca Simmons had applied for a bounce back loan in May 2020, a loan from the government to support viable businesses during the pandemic, but received funds far greater than what Tia-Bella was entitled to.

Rebecca Simmons had exaggerated the company's turnover claiming it to be £180,000 and received a £45,000 loan.

But investigators uncovered that based on available records, Tia-Bella's annual turnover was a maximum of £1,300. This meant Tia-Bella was not entitled to even the minimum bounce back loan of £2,000.

Further enquiries uncovered that in the space of 2 months, Rebecca Simmons caused the company to make payments worth just over £31,000, including a £10,000 directors' loans, £10,000 towards a company car, and £10,000 worth of repayments of deposits incurred before the pandemic.

Rebecca Simmons was unable to provide supporting documents, which left investigators unable to confirm whether the £45,000 bounce back loan benefited the business or not.

On 4 August 2022, the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy accepted a 9-year disqualification undertaking from Rebecca Simmons after she did not dispute that she caused Tia-Bella Limited to apply for a government-backed Bounce Back Loan the company was not entitled to.

Effective from 25 August, Rebecca Simmons is banned from directly, or indirectly, becoming involved in the promotion, formation or management of a company, without the permission of the court.

Tia-Bella's Liquidator is considering the bounce back loan and recovery of funds.

Lawrence Zussman, Deputy Head of Insolvent Investigations, said:

Bounce back loans were issued by the government to help viable businesses during the pandemic. Not only did Rebecca Simmons grossly exaggerate the company's turnover to secure a loan she

shouldn't have got a single penny of, Rebecca Simmons went onto use the funds on activities she couldn't even justify as benefitting Tia-Bella.

Rebecca Simmons conduct fell extremely short of the standards required of a company director and has been removed from the corporate arena for a significant amount of time. Her 9-year ban should serve as a clear warning that if you abuse government support, we will use our full powers to bring you to account.

Rebecca Simmons is from Walsall and her date of birth is May 1990.

Tia-Bella Limited (Company Reg no. 11914869).

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings. Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#)

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