

Window cleaning boss banned after failing to account for £1.7m

Nicola Bentley (39), from Oxted, Surrey, was the sole director of Stephenson's (National Window Cleaning) Ltd and has now been disqualified from being a company director for 7 years. Her ban is effective from 31 December 2020.

The company was incorporated in January 2017 and provided window cleaning services, predominantly for bookmakers.

The window cleaners traded for 2 years but in January 2019 entered into creditors voluntary liquidation and Nicola Bentley's conduct was referred to the Insolvency Service for further investigations.

The Insolvency Service found that from February 2018 until the company went into liquidation, Nicola Bentley's company had spent almost £1.7 million.

Nicola Bentley, however, failed to preserve accounting records and investigators could not determine if the amount was for legitimate business expenditure.

The investigation discovered that almost £640,000 had been transferred out of the company bank account to three unknown bank accounts. Nicola Bentley had also failed to keep any records that could identify the source of almost £1.7 million paid into the company bank account and whether it was legitimate business income.

From June 2017 to January 2019, the window cleaning company failed to pay all its tax obligations, with more than £405,000 being owed. Despite more than £2.1 million being paid out of the company bank account, only £1,000 was paid to the tax authorities in relation to its increasing VAT debt.

On 10 December the Secretary of State accepted an undertaking from Nicola Bentley after she did not dispute that she failed to keep sufficient accounting records and did not settle the company's tax liabilities.

Nicola Bentley is now banned from being a director of a company or, whether directly or indirectly, be concerned or take part in the promotion, formation or management of a company unless she has leave of the court

Lawrence Zussman, Deputy Head of Insolvent Investigations, said:

Maintaining company records is a statutory requirement for every business but despite millions passing through Nicola Bentley's company bank account, she failed to provide information about her income and expenditure. The company owed a significant amount of tax yet paid only a minimal amount towards its tax obligations.

Nicola Bentley totally disregarded her responsibilities as a director of Stephenson's and has now been banned from the business environment for seven years.

Nicola Bentley's date of birth is November 1981.

Stephenson's (National Window Cleaning) Ltd (Company Reg no. 10553769).

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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