



Zero Hours Contracts

Recommendation

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The Cabinet Member for Commissioning, Contracting & Improvement is currently reviewing the Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility (originally approved in April 2013). One of the issues under consideration is whether there is a need or a desire to include standards or principles on the use of zero hours contracts.
- 1.2 At the start of the municipal year, members of the Corporate Resources O&S Committee agreed to set up a small sub-group to consider this issue and report back to the Cabinet Member. This group, consisting of Cllrs Waseem Zaffar, Randal Brew and Tristan Chatfield, met in October with officers to discuss the issues. This note sets out their recommendation to the Cabinet Member, Commissioning, Contracting & Improvement.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the City Council and partners work towards implementing the following:
 - Improved rights for zero-hours contract workers and others on casual contracts, including:
 - A right for all workers to receive a written statement on the first day of employment setting out terms and conditions, including possible hours of work;
 - Rights for all workers to notice before work is allocated or cancelled and to be paid for transport costs and lost earnings where a shift is cancelled at short notice.
 - A right for those workers who work regular hours to a fixed-hours contract reflecting their normal hours. Those whose work is irregular or intermittent should be paid an allowance rewarding the flexibility they provide employers.
 - All workers to benefit from the same employment rights, including statutory redundancy pay, protection from unfair dismissal and family friendly rights. To this end, employment status law should be modernised, putting an end to the current two tier workforce.¹

3 Next Steps

- 3.1 The city council already has the following arrangements in place for casual workers:

¹ The wording is based on that proposed by the TUC in *The Decent Jobs Deficit The human cost of zero hours working in the UK*, January 2015



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- A written statement of terms from the first day of work for the council
- A framework to enable an assessment as to whether casual workers who have been working a regular pattern of working and meet other specified criteria have accrued employment rights
- Casuals undertaking roles that are the same as those undertaken by council employees receive the same rate of pay
- Casual workers are under no obligation to accept any offer of work and are free to pick and choose.

3.2 The Committee recommends that this work continues, and that the Cabinet Member works with partners to implement the recommendations with partners and contractors.

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