

## Fair Work First Statement

This statement confirms North Ayrshire Council's commitment to ensuring fair working practices are in place in support of 'Fair Work First.'

Fair Work First is the Scottish Government's flagship policy for driving high quality and fair work across the labour market in Scotland by applying fair work criteria to grants, other funding and contracts being awarded by and across the public sector, where it is relevant to do so. Through this approach, the Scottish Government is asking employers to adopt fair working practices.

North Ayrshire Council is to be the place to live, learn, work, invest and visit. The Council recognises that work is an important part of adult life and is critical to our wellbeing and shaping how we live.

The Fair Work Convention's Framework defines Fair Work as work that offers effective voice, fulfilment, opportunity, respect and security. We believe Fair Work can boost creativity, realise untapped potential and increase productivity. We are committed to advancing the Fair Work criteria of:

- Providing effective channels for effective employee engagement.
- Investing in workforce development.
- Not using zero-hours contracts inappropriately.
- Taking action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace.
- Committing to paying the Real Living Wage.
- Offering flexible and family-friendly working practices for all workers from day one of employment; and
- Opposing the use of fire and rehire practice.

North Ayrshire Council is committed to advancing the Fair Work First criteria, specifically:

**1. We have an appropriate channel for effective employee voice which include:**

- Involving recognised trade unions in key governance and decision-making structures including local consultation forums
- Supporting staff voice through regular staff consultations and surveys
- Recognise Trade Unions across all employee groups
- Provide support for regular engagement between Trade Unions and their members
- Signposting staff to access Trade Union information
- Engage in constructive dialogue with employees and Trade Union representatives to address workplace issues and disputes
- Offer supportive contact with Line Managers
- Implement measures to support employees in the workplace and have a zero tolerance of bullying and other forms of abuse and harassment.

**2. We invest in workforce development:**

- North Ayrshire Council's Our People Connect People Strategy supports the delivery of the Council plan, its priorities and vision. Some priorities are outlined within the strategy – strengthening leadership across the council, transforming how we work, supporting our people to develop, perform and thrive as well as creating a great place to work.
- Whilst the Our People Connect strategy outlines our ambitions for our people, at the heart of all of this are our staff values. Our values of Focus, Passion and Inspiration are core in everything we do and how we do it. They are the foundation that our work is built on, and they are used to measure how well we do each day. They are what drives us to deliver the best services we can.
- In addition, there is an Employee Code of Conduct which sets out the standards expected from all employees who work within North Ayrshire Council.
- The Code Conduct provides expectations around behaviour and aims for an engaged and empowered workforce who embrace new ways of working and are committed to making a difference.
- We are committed to provide apprenticeships and other opportunities for young people.
- We operate a redeployment policy to provide continuous employment.



- We provide a wide range of learning opportunities for all Council employees.
- Formal and informal learning is offered and encouraged across the workforce, relating to specific roles as well as wider development.
- We provide training for employees to become Wellbeing Warriors and volunteer to offer a confidential listening ear to other employees in times of vulnerability.
- Staff surveys on health, safety and wellbeing matters are conducted to inform policy priorities and development

### **3. We do not use zero-hours contracts inappropriately:**

- North Ayrshire Council uses a range of casual worker contracts with varying terminology, for example casual, bank or supply staff. Casual worker contracts remain a critical operational requirement for North Ayrshire Council, given the need to provide key services to our customers and communities, and to respond to fluctuating and unexpected demands. At the same time, it is understood that there is a responsibility to treat casual workers fairly and responsibly in how casual worker contracts are used in practice. When used responsibly, casual worker contracts can provide flexibility that works for both the Council and individual worker in accordance with our agreed protocol
- We do not use supply and casual contracts to fill longer-term vacancies
- We have a clear policy allowing workers to move from a supply/casual contract to a temporary contract where a longer-term need for the work has been identified

### **4. We take action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace:**

- Our equality outcomes support key actions to ensure we continue to understand any perceived barriers to employment with the Council and address these
- We gather data to understand our workforce diversity and pay gap information
- We support flexible working across the Council, offering a wide range of flexible working patterns. We offer many employees the opportunity to adopt a Flexible Workstyle, a blend of working from home and working in a council building
- We are a Disability Confident Leader (level 3) promoting inclusion and access to all within the council, encouraging the employment and retention of disabled people and those with health conditions through our commitment to:
  - Provide an inclusive and accessible recruitment process
  - Communicate vacancies



- Offer an interview to disabled applicants who meet the minimum essential criteria of the role profile
- Provide reasonable adjustments
- Support existing employees
- In addition, the Council will act as a champion within North Ayrshire's local and business community to promote and support businesses to adopt a similar approach to disabilities
- We are a Carer Positive Exemplary Employer showing our commitment to a working environment where carers are valued and supported
- We are approved and committed to deliver the young person's guarantee
- We recognise our role as a Corporate Parent and support Care Experienced Young people into employment
- We took the Pregnancy Loss Pledge and offered Parental Bereavement Leave, committing to support employees through miscarriage at any stage of gestation
- We have a range of guides to support employees: Disability, Mental Health, Menopause, Pregnancy Loss, Endometriosis, Cancer, Gambling, Domestic Abuse

## **5. We commit to paying the Real Living Wage:**

- We are an accredited Living Wage employer
- We have a dedicated Fair Work service to support employers in Ayrshire region to implement fair working practices
- We support Community Wealth Building and have a Strategy to deliver CWB in all aspects of Council service delivery

## **6. We offer flexible and family-friendly working practices for all workers from day one of employment, these include:**

- Part-time and term-time working arrangements
- Carers Policy
- Job Share Policy
- Time off for Dependents
- Parental Leave
- Neonatal Leave
- Parental Bereavement Leave (including those who have a miscarriage and partners)
- Career Break
- Compassionate and other special leave
- Time off for voluntary and other public duties
- Buying Annual Leave
- Annual and Special Leave
- Workstyles, work life balance, and flexible working



## 7. We oppose the use of fire and rehire practice:

- We only consider effecting change where there is a legitimate business need
- We strive to achieve change through agreement
- We are committed to working with our Trade Unions partners to ensure there is effective consultation and negotiation relating to change

The Fair Work First criteria are also referenced in our procurement contracts and grant award processes, to encourage third-party providers to adopt positive fair work practices. Where relevant and proportionate to do so, this may factor into the tender evaluation process and is subject to monitoring through contract management/service level agreements.

This has been developed in consultation with Trade Unions who pledge their support to Fair Work, further information is available on Connects on support offered by these Trade Unions:



[UNISON Further Information](#)

[GMB Further Information](#)

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Marie Burns'.

31 May 2024

Councillor Marie Burns

Leader of North Ayrshire Council



North Ayrshire Council  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath