

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET23 March 2017Report by Deputy Chief ExecutiveTHE FAIR WORK FRAMEWORK**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to update members on the Fair Work Framework produced by the Fair Work Convention and to propose to assess our practice against the principles of fair work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that the Cabinet:
- (a) supports the Fair Work Framework and the Fair Work Principles; and
 - (b) delegates responsibility to the Deputy Chief Executive to work with the trade unions to assess our people practices against the Fair Work Principles.

BACKGROUND

3. The Fair Work Convention was established by the Scottish Government in 2015 following a recommendation of the Working Together Review which was completed the previous year. The Convention was remitted to drive forward the Fair Work agenda by producing a Fair Work Framework by the end of March 2016. The Convention has broad membership from across Scotland:

- Anne Douglas, FWC Co-Chair
- Linda Urquhart, FWC Co-Chair
- Grahame Smith, General Secretary, STUC
- Henry Simmons, Chief Executive, Alzheimer's Scotland
- John Reid, General Manager, Michelin Dundee
- Lilian Macer, Scottish Convener, Unison
- Professor Patricia Findlay, University of Strathclyde
- Mary Alexander, Deputy Regional Secretary - Scotland, Unite
- Bernadette Malone, Chief Executive, Perth & Kinross Council

4. The Framework is designed to guide workplace practice in order to drive forward fair work in Scotland. Fairness is at the heart of all the Council's practices however it is important that we assess our practice against the principles of fair work with a view to improving our understanding of fair work and our people practices, where appropriate.

5. The purpose of the Fair Work Framework is to build on work in this area by identifying the component parts of Fair Work and advising the Scottish Government on where it should prioritise activity. The Convention adopted an aspirational agenda that fair work becomes a hallmark of Scotland's workplaces and economy. It sets out a vision that **by 2025, people in Scotland will have a world-leading working life where fair work drives success, wellbeing and prosperity for individuals, businesses, organisations and society.**

6. The Framework sets out what is meant by fair work, why it is important, who can play a part in making Scotland a world leading nation in fair work and how this might be achieved. It also acknowledges that, given the broader economic context, there are challenges along the way. In essence, it –

- Articulates a practical blueprint for Fair Work which promotes a new type of dialogue between employers, employees and trade unions, public bodies and the Scottish Government.
- Supports the Scottish Government's objectives of increasing sustainable economic growth and reducing inequality through the promotion of greater diversity, innovation and equality in the workplace.
- Understands business challenges in adopting Fair Work principles and offers help to support a progressive change.

7. The Convention engaged with a wide range of stakeholders in developing the Framework for Fair Work. It took evidence from workers in small, medium and large employers, trade unions, a variety of representative trade and professional bodies, skills and economic development agencies and included the views from the private, public and third sectors across Scotland. It also drew on national and international research as well as examples of good practice.

8. The Fair Work Framework is the start of the journey to fairer work. The full Framework document is available on the [Fair Work Convention website](#).

FAIR WORK PRINCIPLES

9. Fair work is defined as work that offers effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment and respect; that balances the rights and responsibilities of employers and workers and that can generate benefits for individuals, organisations and society (Diagram 1).

Diagram 1: Five Dimensions of Fair Work



10. These five dimensions are important for two reasons:

- National and international research identifies good practice within each of the dimensions that can create positive outcomes for workers, employers and for society.
- Taken together, these dimensions have significant synergies. The dimensions can reinforce each other, creating a virtuous circle of practices, behaviours, attitudes and outcomes.

11. The evidence confirms that fair work can deliver clear benefits for individuals alongside higher productivity, performance and innovation for employers. In turn, these benefits influence economic prosperity and social wellbeing in Scotland.

12. The Convention invites everyone in the workplace to use the framework to guide practice and to assess whether current practice supports the ambition and can help deliver fair work. Approach and practices should be evaluated by employers working with employee representatives to evaluate their experience of work thus identifying areas where fairness may be enhanced.

13. The Council's approach to managing employees puts fairness at the heart of all we do and this is reflected through our Employee Code of Conduct and employment policies and procedures. Initial views indicate that the fair work principles are embedded within our practices.

14. It is proposed that working with our trade unions the council will assess our current people practices against the Fair Work Principles and identify any priority areas for development. This will be approached within normal business arrangements and awareness of Fair Work will be raised through communication with employees.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

15. There are no financial implications.

CONSULTATION

16. Initial discussions have taken place with the Trade Unions who welcome the Council's approach to Fair Work. The Trade Unions will be fully involved in taking forward any improvement actions agreed to improve fair work within the Council.

IMPLICATIONS

17. The proposals have been considered in respect of the Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) and this will be applicable as any proposed dialogue with trade unions is designed to enhance fair work which will support the council in fulfilling its statutory duties to eliminate inequality.

CONCLUSIONS

18. The Council's has fair working practices in place ensuring there is priority given to employee wellbeing, resilience and engagement.

19. The Fair Work Framework provides an opportunity to have a dialogue with trade union representatives on Fair Work. This will focus on what will make a positive difference to employees within the workplace to enhance capacity and strengthen the Council's ability to deliver the best possible services to the residents of East Renfrewshire.

RECOMMENDATIONS

20. It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- (a) supports the Fair Work Framework and the Fair Work Principles; and
- (b) delegates responsibility to the Deputy Chief Executive to work with the trade unions to assess our people practices against the Fair Work Principles.

REPORT AUTHOR

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23 March 2017

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Fair Work Convention website – www.fairworkconvention.scot
- Fair Work Framework 2016, Fair Work Convention.
- Working Together Review: Progressive Workplaces in Scotland, 2014