

Perth & Kinross Council - Fair Work First Statement

Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) recognises the effort, commitment and passion of our employees for public service as well as their ideas and willingness to embrace new ways of working. In 2016 the Council as an employer made a commitment to the Fair Work Framework to support our engagement with our employees.

Fair Work First is the Scottish Government's flagship policy for driving high quality and fair work across the labour market in Scotland. It builds on the Fair Work Framework by adding to the initial criteria and 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 enhanced fair working practices.

Perth & Kinross Council, with the agreement and support of our trade union representatives, is committed to continue to advance the Fair Work First criteria as follows:

1. PKC provides Appropriate Channels for Effective Voice

- We recognise trade unions across all employee groups and encourage membership.
- We engage with recognised trade unions in key governance and decision-making, and consultation for policy development through mechanisms including the Employees Joint Consultative Committee and Joint Negotiating Committee for Teachers.
- We provide facility time to support trade union engagement initiatives.
- We engage in constructive dialogue for collective bargaining.
- We engage in constructive dialogue and address workplace issues and disputes.
- We have zero tolerance for bullying and/or harassment, backed up by guidance and policy.
- We carry out regular surveys to understand the views of our workforce including surveys to gather thoughts on Fair Work.
- We provide regular opportunities for engagement with senior management, promoting a culture of openness and transparency.
- We have formal and informal employee engagement through a variety of communication channels.

- We encourage regular communication within teams, especially where remote/hybrid working is being adopted.
- We have several networks in place to support and involve specific employee groups e.g. the disABILITY, Belong and LGBTQI+ staff networks.

2. PKC Invests in Workforce Development

- Our Workforce Plan outlines the programme of work the council will undertake to deliver our [strategic priorities](#) as set out in the Corporate Plan 2022 – 2027.
- Our organisational values – Ambition, Compassion and Integrity, were developed with our staff and apply to everyone, influencing the way we work with each other and with partners and the communities we serve.
- Our organisational values are the drivers of our [behaviours](#) as an organisation and our Code of Conduct sets out how all employees are expected to behave at work, creating a better working environment for all.
- We actively provide opportunities for developing the young workforce through apprenticeships, traineeships and work experience and are an accredited Young Persons Guarantee Employer.
- We engage with government-funded programmes to support local employability.
- We encourage mentoring and continuous learning at every stage of the employment journey.
- We encourage, support and provide opportunities to undertake formal and informal training, both generic and specific to workforce areas.
- Our health and wellbeing guidance and employee assistance programme promotes the physical, mental and financial wellbeing of our workforce.
- We provide equality and diversity training to all.
- We create opportunities for our workforce to learn new skills by promoting secondment and volunteering opportunities within and out with the Council.

3. PKC have No Inappropriate Use of Zero Hours Contracts

- Supply and casual contracts are only used when there is no alternative. Workers on these contracts are not obliged to accept work when offered.
- We do not use supply and casual contracts to fill longer term vacancies.

- Where possible we will use an open-ended or fixed-term contract rather than a supply or casual contract.

4. PKC take Action to Tackle the Gender Pay Gap and Create a More Diverse and Inclusive Workplace

- Equalities reporting demonstrates our commitment to tackling the gender pay gap and understanding and addressing other perceived barriers to employment with the council.
- We support flexible working across the council through our flexible working framework and offer many employees the opportunity to adopt an agile workstyle, a blend of working from home and working in a council building.
- We are a Carer Positive employer and have a Carers support group in place.
- We recognise our role as a Corporate Parent. We support care experienced young people into employment.
- We are a Disability Confident employer, encouraging the employment and retention of disabled people and those with health conditions through reasonable adjustments and secure links with external organisations.
- This accreditation also recognises our commitment to positive action in the recruitment and employment of people with disabilities. We guarantee an interview to any applicant applying through the **Guaranteed Job Interview Scheme** who has a disability and can offer the skills and experience we consider essential for the job.
- We are a signatory to the Armed Force Covenant.
- We continue to extend our range of policies and guidance to support attendance and work-life balance, including menopause and transgender guidance.

5. PKC pay the Real Living Wage

- We meet the specified criteria and are an accredited Living Wage employer.
- We regularly review our pay structures and universal application of the Real Living Wage for apprentices will be implemented from 1/4/24.
- We are committed to making Perth and Kinross a Living Wage region.

6. PKC offer Flexible and Family Friendly Working Practices For All Workers from Day One of Employment

- We currently offer a range of working practices and policies to support our employees manage their work and home life commitments, many from day one of employment. These include;
 - i. Flexible and hybrid working
 - ii. Part time and term time working
 - iii. Carers and Compassionate Leave
 - iv. Job Share
 - v. Parental, Neonatal and Parental Bereavement Leave
 - vi. Career Break
 - vii. Time off for voluntary/public duties
- Flexible and family friendly options are available at all levels in the organisation and for all staff – not just women or mothers, and to encourage partners to share caring responsibilities.
- Flexible working can be offered as a temporary arrangement to accommodate particular circumstances, with review points agreed at the outset by the employer and the worker.

7. We Oppose the use of Fire and Rehire Practice

- We only consider effecting change in this way where there is a legitimate business need and only after a failure to agree through consultation with Trade Unions and using the agreed Framework for Managing Workforce Change.
- We strive to achieve change through agreement.
- We are committed to working with our Trade Union partners to ensure there is effective consultation relating to change.

Fair Work criteria is incorporated within our Procurement contracts and Grant Award Processes. In procurement the Council expects suppliers to commit to progressing towards adopting the Fair Work First criteria in the delivery of contracts and they are asked to describe and demonstrate how they will do this for workers (including any agency or sub-contractor workers) including current and planned actions. Awards are subject to monitoring through contract management and service level agreements.

We remain committed to working with staff, their trade union representatives and others to advance fair work practices.

December 2023