

Support for the Employment Rights Bill – Motion as adjusted approved.

15 Councillor Carson, seconded by Councillor Rankin, moved that:-

"Council welcomes the UK Labour Government's introduction of the Employment Rights Bill to Parliament in October 2024. This landmark legislation represents a significant step forward in strengthening workplace protections and promoting fairness, dignity, and security for workers across the United Kingdom.

Council recognises that, for over a decade, workers have faced increasing job insecurity, stagnating wages, and weakened rights. The Employment Rights Bill provides a comprehensive framework to address these challenges, enhancing justice and protection for all workers.

Council notes the following transformative measures introduced by the Employment Rights Bill:

1. Ending Exploitative Practices

- **Ban on Exploitative Zero-Hours Contracts:** Guarantees the offer of predictable, regular hours for millions of workers.
- **Minimum Notice for Shift Changes:** Requires employers to provide reasonable notice of shifts and changes to shifts.

2. Promoting Work-Life Balance

- **Enhanced Right to Flexible Working:** Establishes flexibility as a default right for all employees from day one.
- **Enhanced Parental Rights:** Extends parental leave and pay entitlements, supporting working families.

3. Strengthening Job Security

- **Protection Against Unfair Dismissal:** Expands workers' ability to challenge unfair treatment.
- **Protections for Pregnant Workers:** Strengthens rights during and after pregnancy to prevent workplace discrimination.

4. Empowering Workers

- **Improved Trade Union Rights.**
- **Right to Redress:** Provides workers with clearer avenues to seek justice for workplace grievances.

Council believes that this Bill will deliver greater job security, fairer wages, support for families, and a more inclusive and empowered workforce.

Council further notes that Glasgow's workforce will particularly benefit from this legislation, as many workers in the city are employed in insecure, low-paid roles that lack adequate protection under current laws.

Council believes that the Employment Rights Bill is a vital step towards building a fairer economy and improving the lives of workers throughout the UK, addressing inequalities, raising living standards, and creating a modern, dignified workplace for all.

Council resolves to:

1. Welcome the UK Labour Government's Employment Rights Bill and its potential to transform workplace rights.
2. Encourage local employers to prepare for these changes and align their practices with the Bill's principles.
3. Collaborate with trade unions and worker organisations to raise awareness of the Bill's benefits among Glasgow's workforce.
4. Urge the Scottish Government to support the principles of the Employment Rights Bill and work with the UK Government to ensure its successful implementation."

Councillor Leinster, seconded by Councillor Casey moved as an amendment that:-

After 'Council welcomes the UK Labour Government's introduction of the Employment Rights Bill to Parliament in October 2024.'

Delete all and replace with:

"Council believes that if the proposals within the Bill become law this will be an important step forward in reversing the roll-back of workers rights which took place under the previous UK Conservative Government.

However, Council notes with concern the words of trade union officials such as Unite general secretary Sharon Graham who has said that while the Bill is "a significant step forward", it "stops short of making work pay".

Council believes that this will be exacerbated by the UK Government's lowering of the threshold and increase in the rates of National Insurance Employer Contributions which the Office for Budget Responsibility and other experts have stated is likely to be passed onto workers through lower wages, redundancies and fewer workers being hired.

Council regrets that the UK Labour Government's continued support of Brexit, against the will of the citizens of Glasgow and Scotland, removes the minimum base line for workers' rights, meaning that there is no limit to the rights that can be removed by future UK Governments.

Council further regrets that the devolution of employment law to the Scottish Parliament was blocked by the Labour Party through the Smith Commission, effectively condemning Scottish workers to a further decade of Conservative attacks on their rights.

Council reaffirms its commitment to the devolution of employment law to the Scottish Parliament as a means of guaranteeing the rights of Glaswegian workers,

ending the back and forth of Labour and Conservative Governments at Westminster playing politics with what should be fundamental rights.”

Councillor Hutchison, seconded by Councillor Gallagher, moved as an amendment that:-

In paragraph 1, remove “Labour” from between “UK” and “Government”.

After paragraph 10 ending “...dignified workplace for all.”, insert 2 additional new paragraphs:

“Council believes that the UK can and should go further with this bill, specifically that they should fund local authorities to make the transfer to a four day work week. Council also understands a four day work week as a 20% reduction in hours with no reduction in pay, not to be confused with compression of hours.

Council also believes that the UK Government should scrap poor legislation introduced by their predecessors, namely the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023 and the Trade Union Act 2016.”

In the list of resolutions, in point one, remove “Labour” from between “UK” and “Government”.

Add additional point five in list of resolutions, to read:

“5. Write to the UK Government to ask for their assurances that they are looking to scrap aforementioned poor trade union legislation, and for their view on a real four day work week.”

During the debate Councillor Carson, Councillor Leinster and Councillor Hutchison, with the agreement of their seconders, agreed to combine their motion and amendments resulting in the following adjusted motion:-

“Council welcomes the UK Government’s introduction of the Employment Rights Bill to Parliament in October 2024. This landmark legislation represents a significant step forward in strengthening workplace protections and promoting fairness, dignity, and security for workers across the United Kingdom.

Council recognises that, for over a decade, workers have faced increasing job insecurity, stagnating wages, and weakened rights - exacerbated by 14 years of financial and social misrule by the UK Conservative Government. The Employment Rights Bill provides a comprehensive framework to address these challenges, enhancing justice and protection for all workers.

Council notes the following transformative measures introduced by the Employment Rights Bill:

1. Ending Exploitative Practices

- Ban on Exploitative Zero-Hours Contracts: Guarantees the offer of predictable, regular hours for millions of workers.
- Minimum Notice for Shift Changes: Requires employers to provide reasonable notice of shifts and changes to shifts.

2. Promoting Work-Life Balance

- Enhanced Right to Flexible Working: Establishes flexibility as a default right for all employees from day one.
- Enhanced Parental Rights: Extends parental leave and pay entitlements, supporting working families.

3. Strengthening Job Security

- Protection Against Unfair Dismissal: Expands workers' ability to challenge unfair treatment.
- Protections for Pregnant Workers: Strengthens rights during and after pregnancy to prevent workplace discrimination.

4. Empowering Worker

- Improved Trade Union Rights.
- Right to Redress: Provides workers with clearer avenues to seek justice for workplace grievances.

Council believes that this Bill will deliver greater job security, fairer wages, support for families, and a more inclusive and empowered workforce.

Council further notes that Glasgow's workforce will particularly benefit from this legislation, as many workers in the city are employed in insecure, low-paid roles that lack adequate protection under current laws.

Council believes that the Employment Rights Bill is a vital step towards building a fairer economy and improving the lives of workers throughout the UK, addressing inequalities, raising living standards, and creating a modern, dignified workplace for all. However, Council acknowledges that this is but a first step in the long struggle for equality and justice for working people and recognises the calls from trade unions that the UK Government should go further.

Council believes that working people should be protected at every possible level of governing institutions, and still believes in the positive values inherent in the European Social Charter, as related to rights for working people, as essential values that should also be reflected throughout UK and Scottish institutions.

Council acknowledges that there are specific employment challenges relevant to the individual nations of the UK and believes that these need tailored approaches as appropriate to their relevant legislative body. This is particularly true in Scotland where for too long we have registered as the zero-hours contract capital of the UK.

Council therefore believes that the devolution of Employment Law to Scotland is an essential element in protecting and enhancing workers' rights in Glasgow and the rest of Scotland.

Council also acknowledges that working people in Britain today require a much fairer outcome in relation to balancing work and life.

Council therefore believes that that the UK and Scottish Governments should help pursue and promote 4-day work weeks (understood as a 20% reduction in hours without reduction in pay) as a positive model of employment in local Government and beyond, but without impacting on jobs, terms and conditions and service delivery.

Council resolves to:

1. Welcome the UK Government's Employment Rights Bill and its potential to transform workplace rights.
2. Encourage local employers to prepare for these changes and align their practices with the Bill's principles.
3. Collaborate with trade unions and worker organisations to raise awareness of the Bill's benefits among Glasgow's workforce.
4. Urge the Scottish Government to support the principles of the Employment Rights Bill and work with the UK Government to ensure its successful implementation.
5. Welcome the UK Government's commitment to repeal the 2016 Trade Union Act and the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act 2023 as contained within the legislation."

The motion, as adjusted, was unanimously approved.