

Birmingham

Abonhi guide

This guide tells you why the Future Council Workforce Contract is being introduced and sets out what the proposals are.

The guide explains :

who affected

what the proposals are

what has happened so far

what will happen next

where to go for more information

It also includes explanations of terms and abbreviations, and gives the answers to frequently asked questions.



Over the next four years, the council must save around £250 million – on top of the £560 million we've already saved over the past five years. The scale of this challenge means we need to rethink our role. We will need to become a different type of employer, with a different type of workforce – one that's more agile and flexible. In the 2016+ budget consultation document we set out a number of proposals for how we believe we can address this challenge. We grouped these proposals around six broad themes – including one for our workforce.

The workforce proposal covers three areas :

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What are the revised proposals for Future Council Workforce Contract?

Following a series of engagement events – with a mixture of council-wide employees, plus head teachers, school governors, support staff and consultation with the trade unions – the council has listened to your views and the proposals have been revised as follows:

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Whilst the council might not be able to offer its employees a job for life, staff will have access to a good rewards and benefits package which will include:

- the opportunity to develop a strong skills and experience portfolio via a new career and development 'offer'. This will include managing employee talent and creating career pathways. Where appropriate, there will be greater investment in management and leadership capability
- the ability to achieve greater work/life balance – by giving employees more control over their work, and where and when it's done. This means harnessing the potential of IT – making sure the council values results and outcomes
- access to an employee benefits package with plans to extend the salary sacrifice scheme beyond childcare vouchers and travel to potentially include mobile phone contracts and a car purchase scheme. This includes an opportunity to buy additional annual leave under a salary sacrifice scheme
- support for employees facing job changes or losses, enabling them to face the future with confidence and dignity

Further details on the proposals – plus the answers to frequently asked questions – are available. Please see the 'Where to go for more information' section of this guide.

Progress and next steps

A new contract of employment incorporating the proposal

The council has to issue a new contract of employment to all employees which reflects the changes to terms and conditions – whether they are directly affected by the changes or not. The new contract will include the final package of rewards and benefits available to staff.

What has happened so far?

On 9 December 2015, the council issued a Section 188 notice on the proposed changes – and all employees were told about this. Since then, there have been regular updates on the proposals via Your Weekly News, Inline and on the council's Birmingham.gov.uk website. Engagement events to get your views and ideas have also taken place between February and May this year and there have been regular ongoing consultation meetings with the unions.

What will happen next?

Consultation with the trade unions will continue, and is expected to end around September. In addition to this, line managers (or an appropriate nominated representative) will be holding staff consultation meetings to brief employees and to ask for their views about the revised proposals. There may also be individual consultation meetings with employees who will be affected by a large number of the proposed changes. Details will be made available as soon as possible.

Once the consultation with the trade unions, and council colleagues including schools support staff, is completed, the council's proposals – together with those from the trade unions and individual consultation – will be presented for consideration and a decision by councillors.

Subject to approval and/or reaching an agreement with the trade unions, it is anticipated that a revised contract of employment incorporating the approved proposals will be implemented in July 2017 for wider council employees and in January 2018 for support staff in schools.

Further information

What is a Section 188 notice?

A Section 188 notice is written information on an employer's proposals affecting employees and it is required under Section 188 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (TULR(C)A) 1992). It is issued to the trade unions to mark the start of formal consultation on issues affecting employees.

What are School Support Staff affected by the proposal?

The council is the employer for support staff in schools who are employed on NJC terms and conditions (specifically, in community, community special and voluntary controlled schools, maintained nursery schools and pupil referral units). Their terms and conditions must be identical to those of wider council employees, to ensure all employees are treated fairly and consistently.

