

**Birmingham**

# About this guide

This guide is for schools support staff employed by the council – in community, community special, voluntary-controlled schools, maintained nursery schools and pupil referral units. It tells you why the Future Council Workforce Contract is being introduced and sets out what the proposals are.

The guide explains:

- who's affected
- what the proposals are
- what's happened so far
- what will happen next
- where to get 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 proposals cover three areas:**

## **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 by way of a new career and development offer
- 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 motor car purchase scheme

Further details of the full range of rewards and benefits that will be available to staff in schools will be available in due course.

## **What will happen next?**

Consultation with the trade unions will continue, and is expected to end around September. In addition to this, head teachers (or an appropriate nominated representative) will be holding staff consultation meetings to brief employees and to

## **Progress and next steps**

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.

### **A new contract of employment incorporating the proposals**

The council has to issue a new contract of employment to all employees that 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 S188 notice on the proposed changes – and all employees were told about this. In December 2015, the various Schools Forums were informed of the proposals and support staff in schools received letters in January and March 2016. Engagement events with schools support staff took place in May, and there have been regular ongoing meetings with the unions.

# Further information

## Where to go for more information

It is really important that you understand how you could be affected by these proposals – there are a number of ways you can find out more about the Future Council Workforce proposals and keep up-to-date:

- Read more and sign-up for email updates to your work or home email at:  
[Inline/workforce-contract](#) (if you have a council email address) or [birmingham.gov.uk/workforce-contract](#)
- Find answers to frequently asked questions at:  
[Inline/workforce-contract-FAQ](#) (if you have a council email address) or [birmingham.gov.uk/workforce-contract-FAQ](#)
- There's also information available on the Schools HR Portal, which your head teacher, or line manager can access – and they'll also get regular updates to pass on to staff.

## 'BMG's Promise' regarding c

Before an independent research company BMG is carrying out the survey. Your completed survey will go directly to BMG and they guarantee that your individual responses will only be seen by them (see the 'BMG Promise'). Birmingham City Council will be able to see what is said but not who has said it. So you can rest assured your comments will be anonymous.

## **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.

## **Why are Schools Support Staff affected by the proposals?**

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.

## **When will I be consulted?**

You will be briefed through the staff consultation meetings that will be held by your line manager. You'll also be given the opportunity to complete a survey on the proposals – which is enclosed with this guide.

