

Fair Work First

Fair Work First is the Scottish Government's flagship policy for driving high quality and fair work, and workforce diversity across the labour market in Scotland by applying fair work criteria to grants, other funding and public contracts being awarded by and across the public sector, where it is relevant to do so.

The Comhairle is committed to implementing a 'Fair Work First' approach by ensuring we have fair working practices in place.

We have appropriate channels for effective employee voice

- We work with Recognised Trade Unions through the Joint Consultative Committee and the Local Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff.
- We engage with recognised trade unions in key governance, policy and decision-making processes.
- We provide paid and unpaid facility time to support trade union activities.
- We engage in constructive dialogues for collective bargaining.
- We engage in constructive dialogue to address workplace issues.
- We make reasonable facilities available to Trade Union representatives to enable them to carry out their duties efficiently and communicate effectively with their members.
- We carry out regular staff surveys and communicate the results and proposed actions.
- We have a staff suggestion scheme available to all employees.
- We have formal and informal employee engagement through a variety of communication channels as well as development discussions with individuals and teams.

We invest in workforce development

- All staff have access to learning and development opportunities identified through performance appraisals.
- We encourage, support and provide opportunities to undertake formal and informal training.
- We host an internal website providing training guidance and materials.
- Our Workforce Plan outlines the programme of work the council will undertake to deliver our strategic priorities.
- Our Values framework helps shape our engagement with each other and the citizens of the Western Isles.
- Our Code of Conduct helps set 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 and work placements.
- We engage with government-funded programmes to support local employability.
- We encourage mentoring and continuous learning throughout the employment journey.

- Our Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Employee Assistance Programme promote and support the physical, mental and financial wellbeing of our employees.
- We offer regular equality and diversity training.
- We support opportunities for our workforce to learn new skills by promoting secondment opportunities where possible.
- We have workforce development plans in place.

We do not use zero hours contracts inappropriately

- Supply and casual employees are only engaged when there is no reasonable alternative. Supply and casual employees are not required to accept work when offered.
- Where appropriate we will use fixed-term contracts rather than supply or casual contracts.

We take action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace

- We have an Equal Opportunities Statement and Respect at Work policy which is reviewed regularly.
- We use data to understand our workforce diversity and pay gap position. We report and publish equality monitoring data annually and an Equality Pay Audit biennially.
- We have a flexible working policy and home working policy in place.
- We support care experienced young people into employment.
- We are an accredited Disability Confident employer.

We pay the Real Living Wage

- We are an accredited Living Wage Employer and pay all employees, including those under 18, the real living wage.

We offer flexible and family friendly working practices

- We support flexible working across the organisation and offer a range of working patterns.
- We have a range of policies and procedures that support family friendly working practices. This includes policies on Flexible Working, Maternity, Paternity, Shared Parental and Adoption Leave. Additionally, we have a Special Leave Policy which offers both paid and unpaid leave to support employees during occasions such as times of bereavement, family emergencies, time off for dependents and time off for voluntary and other public duties.

We oppose the inappropriate use of fire and rehire practices

- We consider effecting change only where there is a legitimate business need.
- We are committed to working with our employees and Trade Union partners to carry out meaningful consultation when changing term and conditions.