

A Fair Work Charter for West Yorkshire

Public Consultation
Spring 2022

An introduction by West Yorkshire Mayor Tracy Brabin

During the course of the pandemic, our business, public servants, and civil society – with its army of inspiring volunteers – have pulled together magnificently to deliver essential services to our most vulnerable communities and residents.

While many of the health challenges and uncertainties caused by the pandemic remain with us, once again with thanks to our creative, dynamic and resilient businesses, the region's economy is making a much faster recovery than many had predicted.

The world has never been changed in so many ways, including the world of work.

So we can't simply return to 'business as usual' before the pandemic, too many people in our communities experience poverty, of which one cause is a lack of good, well paid job opportunities. I am deeply committed to ensuring that the economic recovery is, above all, fair and just. Everyone in West Yorkshire must be given the chance to contribute towards region's growth and to share in its success.

That's why, last summer in Bradford, I announced my ambition to develop a Fair Work Charter. This will require a clear public commitment to be made by the region's employers to do as much as they practically can to provide Fair Work for all the people and communities of West Yorkshire.

I got started straight away by setting up a Steering Group of regional business, public sector, trade union and civil society leaders and experts. Their task is to help me create a meaningful Charter, relevant to employers of all shapes and sizes – from our smallest micro businesses employing a handful of staff to the largest corporate organisation employing hundreds, or even thousands of workers.

Now I want to hear your views on how this ambition can be achieved. Through this public consultation, I am determined to hear from as many of the region's 54,000 employers, 1 million workers, and our communities and stakeholders, as possible.

This is your opportunity, not just to help shape the terms of a Charter, but to be in at the start of a new movement to ensure that all work provided in our great region is Fair Work.



The West Yorkshire Region

West Yorkshire is a region of networked cities and towns, with strong local identities. It covers the local authority districts of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield.

The region benefits from a highly diverse population with many ethnicities, age groups, backgrounds and lifestyles represented. Our population is projected to grow by 8% to more than 2.5 million people by 2043.

Our economy is powered by around 95,000 businesses and organisations, operating across all sectors. West Yorkshire is:

- The UK's Leading Regional Hub for banking, legal and professional services

- An international leader in digital technology, healthcare innovation, advanced manufacturing, and engineering

Also, West Yorkshire has a Civil Society sector made up of 5,200 registered independent, self-directed organisations employing the full-time equivalent of nearly 30,000 people and 121,000 regular volunteers



Employment in West Yorkshire

There are over 95,000* registered businesses in West Yorkshire, of which 54,000 are estimated to be employers.

94% of employers are defined as micro and small in terms of workforce size (between 1 and 49 employees), and collectively they employ around a third of total employees

Medium-sized employers (with 50 – 249 employees) account for 16% of employees, and 6% of employers

Nearly half of employees are employed in the largest organisations (with over 250 employees), but they represent just 1% of employers

Employer size bands	Numbers of employers	Total number of employees
No employees	41,200	-
Micro and small (1 – 49 employees)	50,900	342,000
Medium (50 –249 employees)	3,000	150,000
Large (250+ employees)	400	461,000
TOTALS:	95,500	954,000

**Note: Registered businesses (local units) only.*

Numbers may not appear to sum correctly due to rounding.

Source: Estimates based on Inter Departmental Business Register

The challenges

West Yorkshire has many outstanding strengths and assets – from our thriving and creative industries to our diverse third sector. However, the reality is that our region is not as productive as it should be and **Fair Work** is not yet accessible for all.

These are some of the reasons why:

- Too many people are working in poor quality jobs
- Too many people are not paid enough to make ends meet
- There are big pay gaps between groups of workers
- Too many people are suffering from poor mental health
- Too many working age people are not in work

Mayor Tracy Brabin is committed to the challenge of building an economy in which all our diverse communities and groups and employers can contribute towards – and benefit from – exceptional growth.

The opportunity

Despite the challenges, there is some encouraging evidence that making work fairer for everyone will also boost productivity, and business success.

We know that:

- **Increasing worker pay at the lower end of the labour market – and narrowing pay gaps – can help increase productivity**
- **Addressing poor physical and mental health in our working population can also help (ill health accounts for some 30% of the north / south productivity gap)**
- **Actively increasing workplace diversity can further improve productivity**
- **Helping to reduce the number of working aged people developing long-term health conditions can decrease rates of economic inactivity**
- **Fair employment practices are highly influential in decisions made by employees, job seekers, consumers, funders, investors, and commissioners**

Public Consultation

By signing up to the Fair Work Charter for West Yorkshire our region's employers will be making a clear commitment to a range of good employment practices that actively tackle the significant disparities which are standing in the way of 'levelling-up' our region. And in doing so Mayor Tracy Brabin can give those leading and aspiring employers the public recognition, and support and encouragement they deserve for their effort in providing Fair Work.

To make all this possible **we are very keen to hear the views of business from all sectors, and all size bands, and from all our communities and groups, including those voices that are seldom heard.** By responding to this consultation and bringing together all those different views we can make sure that the Charter is:

- Designed to be ambitious in terms of clearly setting out the Mayor's expectations for Fair Work
- Practically achievable by all our region's employers and of tangible benefit to them, not just those in specific sectors / large employers
- Of clear benefit and value to all, including our most disadvantaged communities and groups.

Charter development

The Mayor has brought together a **Steering Group** of leaders and experts from across the public, private and third sectors to lead on the development of the Charter and who are supporting this consultation.

These representatives cover a broad range of interests including employees, employers of all sizes from micro to bid corporate enterprises, and specific interest groups including public health, faith and ethics, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I), and best employment practices

They have identified 5 key aspects of what an employer needs to offer in terms of Fair Work:

- Opportunity
- Security
- Wellbeing
- Employee Voice
- Fulfilment

Now we want to know what do these aspects mean in practice? How can they deliver tangible benefits?
Do they work different in different types or sizes of organisation?

Key aspects of Fair Work

Opportunity	Inclusive pathways into employment and career progression	Inclusive recruitment practices	Flexible working arrangements – wherever, whenever, and however possible	
Security	Fair pay	Fair working conditions	Guaranteed hours	Safe working environments, free from violence, bullying, discrimination, harassment and victimisation
Wellbeing	Workplaces that foster good physical and mental health		Support for wider aspects of wellbeing, including personal financial health	
Employee Voice	Inclusive consultation and engagement with staff at all levels	Opportunities for all employees to contribute to decision making	Where requested by employees, recognition and support for Trade Unions	Recognition of staff representative forums / networks
Fulfilment	Learning and development opportunities for everyone	Regular and meaningful performance management		Opportunities to support Civil Society

portunity – what it means and could look like

Inclusive pathways into employment and career progression	Inclusive recruitment practices	Flexible working arrangements – where, whenever, and however possible
<p>Opening our recruitment channels to reach under-represented groups e.g., via school and community outreach programmes, such as the Schools Partnership Team</p>	<p>Anonymised recruitment procedures</p>	<p>Providing flexible employment wherever possible, including:</p>
<p>Starting inclusive pathways into employment through creating apprenticeships, paid internships, and work experience opportunities</p>	<p>Positive Action in making appointments which is taken to address under-representation in the workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where people work – e.g., agile working, working from home, hybrid working
<p>Building a diverse talent 'pipeline' into leadership positions e.g., through mentoring, coaching, and skills training and development</p>	<p>Actively supporting inclusive campaigns and standards e.g., Disability Confident scheme accreditation (or equivalent); supporting the Ban the Box campaign (removing criminal record tick boxes from application forms); signing the Armed Forces Covenant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When people work – e.g., flexible start/finish times, compressed hours, adopting relevant schemes such as the Carer's Passport scheme
<p>Actively supporting relevant campaigns, such as Change the Race Ratio and seeking support</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How much people work – e.g., part-time, job share, unpaid leave

Security – what it means and could look like

Fair Pay	Fair working conditions	Guaranteed hours	Safe working environments from violence, bullying, discrimination, harassment, victimisation
<p>all employees at least the Real Living Wage</p> <p>in place for paying apprentices the Real Living Wage</p> <p>sound commitment to pay contracted employees at least the Real Living Wage</p> <p>employers (employing over 250) who are required by law to report on gender and pay gaps would similarly identify – where appropriate - address ethnicity and pay gaps by:</p> <p>publishing if there are such pay gaps</p> <p>with an annual report on any pay gaps, setting in place pathways/action plans for addressing identified gaps</p> <p>pay for all staff from day 1 at 100% of their contracted pay, for as long as possible</p>	<p>Minimise the number of non-standard employment contracts unless specifically requested by workforce/applicants e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - temporary / agency where there is an opportunity to make roles permanent - zero-hours and self-employed contracts - payment of staff by the minute/task <p>A timebound plan for driving wider adoption of standard employment contracts through procurement/purchasing</p>	<p>A guaranteed minimum number of hours of at least 16 hours per week, including those who are paid hourly</p> <p>Where an employer is offering hours to an hourly-paid worker, they give four-weeks' notice of the times that they will work (to aid household planning) and commit to pay people for those hours in the event of cancellation. This does not preclude an employer offering staff hours in addition to their contracted hours with less than four-weeks' notice.</p>	<p>Have accessible, trusted and responsive ways of dealing with employee grievances and disciplinary issues</p> <p>Support initiatives and campaigns to educate, celebrate and inform, such as the West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership's Root Out Racism campaign</p>

Wellbeing – what it means and could look like

Workplaces that foster good physical and mental health	Support for wider aspects of wellbeing, including personal financial health
<p>Occupational health which prevents and improves physical and mental health, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Providing workers with access to relevant support services, such as an Employee Assistance ProgrammeProviding staff training to increase awareness of how to improve physical and mental health, and reduce any stigmaSupporting practical initiatives, such as putting in place Mental Health First Aiders	<p>Providing resource and support to help with money management and future planning, such as by working with the Money and Pensions Service</p>
	<p>Promoting and signposting employees to local support services e.g., Credit Unions and Citizens Advice & Law Centres and a wealth of voluntary / community organisations providing support</p>
<p>Creating active / less sedentary workplaces e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide travel planning advice to promote more active commuting, encouraging using public transport, walking and cyclingEncourage workers, offering online exercises classesEncouraging physically active meetings where possible, either standing or walking	<p>Provision of other financial benefits e.g., personal loans, cycle to work schemes, specialist financial planning advice, season ticket / travel card loans etc.</p>

Employee Voice – what it means and could look like

Effective consultation and engagement with staff at all levels	Opportunities for all employees to contribute to decision making	Where requested by employees, recognition and support for Trade Unions
<p>Managers consult, engage, and communicate with employees on key proposed changes, such as workload, working, shift patterns and times, anti-racism, working times, and pay premiums</p>	<p>Demonstrating how employee voice has been heard in decision making e.g., representation on committees/boards e.g., Trade Union, Staff network representation etc.</p>	<p>Awareness of opportunity for Trade Union representation, membership and awareness raised for new staff (e.g., as part of induction programme)</p>
<p>Clear mechanisms of follow up and response 'what you said, we did' and 'if not, why not'</p>	<p>Staff Surveys e.g., 'Pulse' checks on key issues</p>	<p>Collective bargaining on pay and conditions recognised</p>
	<p>A commitment to list and consider perspectives e.g., sex, LGBTQ+, race, faith/belief, disability, unpaid carers, young people etc.</p>	<p>Appropriate and adequate time off and facilities for duties, training and activities</p>

filment – what it means and could look like

Structure approach to the learning and development opportunities for everyone	Regular and meaningful performance management	Opportunities to support Civil Society
<p>the provision of continuous learning and development opportunities</p> <p>and deliver training and development</p> <p>usion e.g., Equality, Diversity &</p> <p>n (ED&I), ESOL Learning, digital literacy,</p> <p>usive leadership and</p> <p>ement development (e.g., through reverse-</p> <p>ng)</p> <p>g opportunities for all managers</p> <p>supervisors in people</p> <p>ement including leadership development and</p> <p>management</p>	<p>Employees engaged in regular (at least twice per year) 1:1 conversations with their managers / supervisors, to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - staff feel they belong, invested in, and developed - there is an opportunity for wider conversations e.g., around mental health, and their distinctive needs 	<p>Consider requests from employees which promote Civil Society e.g.,:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - working time flexibilities accommodate prayer time and re holidays - enable volunteering e.g., volunteering leave and promote based Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV) to all people your workforce, including via local initiatives such as Raising Bar <p>Provision of other in-kind support to specific third sector organisations e.g., the free or low-cost use of facilities and services, pro bono advice and technical expertise such as occupational health, and the provision of free goods such as surplus consumables</p> <p>Plan for increasing support for Social Enterprise e.g., % of and services spend</p>

Public Consultation

You can participate in the public consultation by any of the following:

• Online yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/FWC our dedicated website where you can:

- Complete our survey
- Ask a question using the Q&A function – and see existing answers in our FAQs

Email: yourvoice@westyorks-ca.gov.uk

Telephone: 0113 245 7676 (Metroline)

In writing to: Freepost CONSULTATION TEAM (WYCA) *no stamp required*

If you are a member of a group and would like the opportunity to discuss the Fair Work Charter at a meeting or workshop, please let us know by email: yourvoice@westyorks-ca.gov.uk and we will get in contact to see how we can support.

We are providing these materials in different formats to support the accessibility of our consultation. Please get in contact by email: yourvoice@westyorks-ca.gov.uk if you require copies in different formats.

Have your say:

yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/FWC

Thank you

