



Subject:	Good Jobs Charter Initial Consultation – Draft Response
Date:	19 th June 2026
Reporting Officer:	John Tully, Director of City & Organisational Strategy Damien Martin, Director of Place & Economy
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Restricted Reports	
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Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
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1.1	The purpose of this report is to bring to Members attention the initial consultation on the Good Jobs Charter that will inform the Department for Economy’s final policy position and to consider the proposed approach to responding, attached as correspondence at Appendix 1. Parties may also wish to make their own Party submissions to this consultation.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note the initial consultation on the characteristics and options for a Good Employment Charter and closing date of 31 July 2026. - Consider and agree the proposed response.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Members will be aware that the Department for Economy is consulting on the nature of the Good Employment and the factors that are considered to form a good job, based on the Carnegie Job Quality Measures , in order to help increase the number of good jobs in the economy. The consultation survey can is available at CLICK HERE , with a closing date of 31 July 2026.
3.2	This initial consultation and survey will be used by a Charter co-design group to shape the Good Jobs Charter which will then be subject to further consultation. The Co-design group is still to be established; however, it will include employer and trade union representative bodies along with subject matter experts.
3.3	<p>In addition to views on the factors that make up a good job, initial views are being sought on three options for the Good Jobs Charter:</p> <p>Option 1: A Labour Relations Agency light-touch, best practice guide to Good Jobs - Based on the Carnegie Job Quality Measures this could take the form of a simple guide for employees and employers identifying a list of indicators of ‘good’ employment factors, where employers offering several of those elements could legitimately identify the job as ‘good’.</p> <p>Option 2: A Specific Code of Practice for Good Jobs – Whilst not legislation, a code of practice would carry more weight than a light-touch guide and could be taken account of in tribunals as a potential indicator of acceptable or unacceptable behaviour.</p> <p>Option 3: A Formally Assessed Good Jobs Charter – a more formal, structured charter scheme focused on good jobs, the most advanced example being the Greater Manchester Good Jobs Charter.</p> <p>Draft Response</p>

3.4	<p>The draft correspondence (Appendix 1) proposed for submission in response to the consultation refers to the Council's response to the Good Jobs Employment Bill agreed by SP&R Committee in September 2024 and the Belfast Business Promise in setting out the Council's position on the principles and standards that employers would be expected to meet to deliver on good jobs. It also notes that the Belfast Business Promise goes beyond 'good jobs' to support more inclusive practices taking account of climate/environmental commitments, encouraging social value procurement and support for the local economy as well as inclusive recruitment practices and pathways to employments/progression.</p>
3.5	<p>In March 2026, the Committee agreed to the transition of the Belfast Business Promise from a full validation and assessment model towards a Good Practice Plus model with the aim of supporting the ambitions to scale and sustain the initiative while also providing assurance. There is a prime opportunity to share direct experience and learning from the Belfast Business Promise development and delivery to promote good jobs and inclusive growth in order to practically inform the design of the regional charter.</p>
3.6	<p>Through the BBP Network and community of organisations there is an opportunity for the Department for Economy to engage more widely and directly with this network. As noted in the Council's response to the Good Employment Rights Bill, Council Officers have worked with the Labour Relations Agency (a BBP Partner and adviser) in their efforts to support good employment in shaping the development of the regional charter to ensure it aligns and supports the Belfast Business Promise.</p>
3.7	<p>The key points included in the draft response are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="271 1344 1530 1590">i. The Council welcomes the co-design approach proposed and the inclusion of employer and trade union representative bodies as well as subject matter experts. We would recommend the inclusion of those with direct experience of developing and delivering similar schemes, including Belfast City Council, in terms of the challenges and opportunities presented in the local context.<li data-bbox="271 1590 1530 1904">ii. Early consideration to be given to the preparatory work to be undertaken with businesses and support provided to ensure that they understand requirements associated with the Charter options. This is reinforced by the current challenges facing the local economy and businesses, particularly small businesses. We would also urge consideration to be given to third-sector organisations who form an important part of the employer base.<li data-bbox="271 1904 1530 2060">iii. The business base is dominated by micro/small businesses (87% of businesses in Belfast have fewer than 50 employees, with the majority of those businesses employing less than 20 employees). Whilst not all aspects of the Good Employment Bill will be

	<p>mandatory for micro businesses, the options for a Good Employment Charter should consider whether a proportional or scaled approach is adopted to requirements, according to size of the business and number of employees. Clarity and guidance will also be needed as to whether the good job characteristics are considered mandatory and the extent to which each of the Charter options would be applicable to all employers. This will also be important factor in determining the resources and delivery of the scheme.</p> <p>iv. We recognise that some sectors have a reputation of not providing 'good employment' or quality work and tend to be lower paid sectors, such as hospitality and tourism, social care, retail and transport. There are also examples of a few employers in these sectors who are meeting the standards set out in the Belfast Business Promise and we would encourage consideration to be given as to whether a sectoral approach would help to support good jobs.</p> <p>v. In addition, reviews of best practice of other charter schemes highlight the importance of the reputational impact as being a key benefit for employers and helping to secure buy-in and support. This reinforces the importance of factoring in mechanisms to provide assurance and monitoring to ensure that the preferred approach is helping to deliver good jobs and that employment practices are improving.</p> <p>vi. We would emphasise the importance of the role of the public sector in demonstrating leadership through integrating the charter and good jobs within the public sector's additional levers to support the adoption of good jobs and employment practices, such as through the procurement and commissioning power of the public sector and social value procurement to deliver community benefits and good jobs. Belfast City Council has included reference to the Belfast Business Promise within its procurement process to encourage our suppliers to adopt more inclusive practices.</p> <p>vii. The Belfast Business Promise pledges and associated commitments set out the Council's view of good practice in delivering inclusive growth, including good jobs that pay fairly and provide secure contracts.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> There are no financial / resources considerations.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> None attached to this report.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices - Documents Attached</p>
	<p>Appendix 1 – Draft correspondence in response to the Good Jobs Charter</p> <p>Appendix 2 – DfE Initial Consultation and Survey on the Good Jobs Charter</p>