

Get Britain Working- [Amendment](#)

Moved by: Councillor Lewis Quigg

Seconded by: Councillor Dave Arnott

This Council notes the publication of the Get Britain Working White Paper which signals a cross-Government approach to building an economy where everyone can have the opportunity of secure, rewarding and fulfilling work.

This Council further notes that Get Oldham Working has been providing support for employees, employers and those seeking employment since 2013 and has created almost 20,000 opportunities including filling 12,000 jobs, nearly 2,000 apprenticeships and 400 traineeships plus helping just under 1,800 residents into work experience placements. This Council supports the approach laid out in the White Paper which will provide:

- support for people to get back into work if they are outside the workforce (and help to stay in employment if they have a health condition)
- access to training, an apprenticeship, or help to find work for young people (including help to avoid losing touch with the workforce at a young age)
- help for people to get a job, upskill, and get on in their career, whether they are unemployed or in employment, alongside clear obligations on people to take up support and do in return everything they can to work
- support for employers to recruit, retain and develop staff

This Council welcomes the joined-up proposals including investing in the NHS to get people treated more quickly, expansion of mental health support and setting up a Jobs and Careers Service (replacing JobCentre +) with the focus on supporting people back into work by providing a personalised service. Every 18-to-21-year old in England will have access to an apprenticeship, quality training and education opportunities or help to find a job under a new 'Youth Guarantee'. The Connect to Work scheme will provide voluntary employment offers to people with disabilities, health conditions or complex barriers to work.

This Council looks forward to the outcome of the Independent Review to better support employers to take on, and keep in work, people with disabilities.

This Council believes that the experience of Get Oldham Working and the Greater Manchester Live Well programme means Oldham is well placed to make the most of these opportunities, in particular the investment from the Greater Manchester trailblazer to mobilise local work, health and skills support.

This Council notes in particular:

1. That the threshold on employee earnings at which National Insurance (NI) applies will drop from £9,100 to £5,000.
2. That the NI rate will increase from 13.8% to 15%.
3. That for many businesses, these new NI requirements represent a big increase in costs. Employers will have to pay an additional £770 in NI contributions for each

minimum wage worker, or an extra £900 for each employee on median earnings, adding up quickly for businesses.

4. That for some employers impacted by NI increases, salary sacrifice has become an essential tool for cost-saving and can provide much-needed relief. By allowing employees to divert part of their salary into their workplace pension, employers reduce the salary on which they pay NI – an effective way to manage payroll costs while also demonstrating a commitment to employee financial wellbeing.
5. That the 75% discount on business rates, due to expire in April 2025, will be replaced by a discount of 40%, up to a maximum of £110,000. It still means that many businesses will see their business rates more than double. Adding another pressure on employers and discouraging them from hiring new staff.
6. That the Office for Budget Responsibility, the UK's official economic forecaster, said it assumed "most" of the increased National Insurance cost would be passed on to workers and consumers from employers through lower wages and higher prices.
7. The comments by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research noted that the NI hike would "reduce job creation," contributing to rising joblessness over the next few years.
8. The Chief Business Economist and an executive director at S&P Global Market Intelligence said: "Firms are responding to the increase in national insurance contributions and new regulations around staffing with a marked pull-back in hiring, causing employment to fall in December 2024 at the fastest rate since the global financial crisis in 2009 if the pandemic is excluded. While the December 2024 PMI is indicative of the economy, which more or less stalled in the fourth quarter, the loss of confidence and increased culling of jobs hints at worse to come as we head into the new year."

This Council resolves to:

1. ~~Organise a Get Britain Working summit in as soon as practicable to brief partners on the White Paper and to work through the opportunities from the Labour Government's investment, including the trailblazer, to design a Get Britain Working Plan for Oldham.~~
2. Review the impact of Get Oldham Working and consider how Get Britain Working can enhance our local offer building on the good links with 800 local employers, integrated and personalised advice, guidance and skills support and mental health therapy already available.
3. Do everything possible to ensure Oldham residents benefit from the opportunities offered by Get Britain Working, including ensuring that our young people make the most of the 'Youth Guarantee'
4. Instruct officers to compile a report on the economic, employment, and financial impact the Employee National Insurance increase will have on private sector and third sector businesses within the Oldham Metropolitan Borough which will be presented at the next full Council meeting.
5. Create an Oldham board of trade with its own elected Chairman and board, with the purpose of increasing foreign direct investment to Oldham. With quarterly meetings and reports issued accordingly, which are then presented at every Council meeting where appropriate.

6. Provide a quarterly report (delivered electronically) to members on economic inactivity and business activity by ward.
7. That this Council will immediately instruct the relevant officers to:
 - a. Type up a letter within 14 working days of this meeting which condemns the recent budget announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer which increases National Insurance (NI) for employers.
 - b. That on the 15th working day that a draft copy is circulated to the group leaders for oversight.
 - c. That on the 16th working day a final draft of the letter condemning the NI increase for employers is signed by the Leader of the Council and emailed by the Acting Chief Executive no less than 24 hours after signing the letter to the offices of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.
 - d. That a reply from the offices of the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be published at the next or closet available full Council meeting.

Get Britain Working- Amendment to the motion- AS READ

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