

GREATER MANCHESTER GOOD EMPLOYMENT CHARTER

Report of the Director of Development and Regeneration

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides information about the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter initiative (the Charter) and Stockport's performance on getting local businesses to sign up initially as supporters and then moving on to achieving full membership.
- 1.2 Information about the role of the Charter in Stockport's Economic Plan is also provided along with Stockport data about the businesses taking part and comparative data on performance in other GM local authority areas.

2. Background and context of the GM Good Employment Charter

- 2.1 The Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter is a voluntary membership and assessment scheme for employers, which aims to raise employment standards across Greater Manchester, for all organisations of any size, sector or geography.
- 2.2 The Charter has two tiers:
 1. Supporters – Employers that support the aims of the Charter and have made a commitment to improving practice in all characteristics of good employment.
 2. Members – Employers that have made the Supporter commitment and meet the more specific and evidence-based membership criteria for assessment in all characteristics of the Charter.
- 2.3 The seven key characteristics of Good Employment are;
 - Secure Work – The importance of having clarity on hours worked and security of income for employees.
 - Pay – Greater Manchester being a Living Wage Region, supporting a decent standard of living through progressing to payment of Real Living Wage.
 - Recruitment – Being transparent, fair and inclusive to engage diversity and talent from all communities.
 - Health & Wellbeing – Supporting an active lifestyle in work for physical and mental wellbeing, and supporting mental wellbeing for employees, leading to reduced sickness absence.
 - Flexible Work – Opportunities to work in ways to support work and life balance.

- Engagement & Voice – A staff voice to shape the organisation, e.g., Trade Unions and other opportunities for employee engagement.
- People Management – Fair and inclusive workplaces and investing in workforce development and training, in particular opportunities for upskilling staff.

2.4 The Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter is managed and supported by a Delivery Team based within the GM Growth Company, which includes undertaking assessment of membership applications, organising peer support networks for employers, providing support resources, and highlighting the powerful case studies of good employment found around Greater Manchester.

3. Stockport Economic Plan, Performance and Comparative Data

3.1 Promoting the GM Good Employment Charter to Stockport businesses for them to become supporters and, ultimately, members is a key objective in the Stockport Economic Plan under the Fair and Inclusive pillar. The aim is to have at least 500 Stockport businesses signed up as supporters or members by 2030.

3.2 Becoming a supporter or member of the Charter is a proxy indicator for good work, and the link to paying the Real Living Wage is a means to increase the standard of living and wellbeing for residents in Stockport.

3.3 Delivery of the objectives in the Economic Plan is under governance by the Stockport Economic Alliance, with monitoring and oversight through the Council's Economy, Regeneration & Climate Change Scrutiny Committee. The Stockport Economic Alliance are fully committed to promoting and Charter to Stockport businesses and to supporting the achievement of the ambition to have 500 businesses signed up.

3.4 The latest data for progress with recruiting supporters and members in Stockport's business base is summarised below (full data is in appendix 1):

	Apr 23	Jun 23	Sep 23
Businesses in Stockport engaged	55	60	62
Members	6	8	10
Supporters	49	52	52

3.5 This is a good start on engaging and recruiting Stockport businesses to get involved with the Charter. The Council has provided support and resources through officers in the Economy, Work and Skills team and the Fair and Inclusive team to help businesses to understand the Charter and to complete the associated applications and paperwork.

- 3.6 The Council is leading the way by having achieved full membership status. The Council also organised a Stockport Employers Event, held during GM Good Employment Charter Week earlier this year, to launch a campaign to get more Charter Supporters & Real Living Wage employers – 40 attended.
- 3.7 Officers from the Economy, Work and Skills team are promoting Charter membership to businesses at every opportunity to encourage and support them to get involved and to sign up. The Charter will be promoted to all businesses attending the next Climate Action Business Forum and the Stockport Digital Network where over 100 businesses will be attending. Officers are also promoting the Charter during individual meetings with businesses to provide business support and advice.
- 3.8 The latest available data for take up of the GM Good Employment Charter by business as either a supporter or a full member is shown below (anonymised for areas outside of Stockport):

LA Area	Registered Supporter	Approved Member	Total	Rank
A	33	11	44	5
B	17	4	21	8
C	57	9	66	2
D	15	2	17	10
E	25	3	28	7
F	223	39	262	1
Stockport	52	10	62	3
G	16	2	18	9
H	41	7	48	4
I	22	8	30	6

- 3.9 Stockport is performing relatively well compared to other GM local authority areas, however our ambition is that far more of the 13,000 business in our local base will get involved in supporting the Charter and ultimately progress to full membership. The Council is ambitious for Stockport's activity on the Charter to be better than just outperforming the lowest performing areas, and so activity will focus on achieving the highest levels of performance amongst our peer local authority areas.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The GM Good Employment Charter is an important initiative to be supported and implemented in Stockport.
- 4.2 Increasing the number of Stockport businesses supporting the Charter, and becoming full members of it, is a key objective in the Stockport Economic Plan and a means to increasing the amount of good quality, well-paid work available to residents. This can only improve our local economy and its productivity.
- 4.3 There are some challenges for businesses to achieve the standards required by the charter, particularly when faced with the difficult economic conditions following the pandemic and the impact of the increase in the cost of living and rising inflation. However, offering good employment is a way of recruiting and retaining high calibre workforce, and anecdotal evidence from those employers that have achieved the Charter suggests that the investment is more than returned to the business in increased productivity and profit.
- 4.4 The Scrutiny Committee are recommended to continue to support and endorse the work of the Economic Plan and the ambition to have at least 500 businesses engaged with the Charter as either supporters or members by 2030.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are none.

Anyone wishing to inspect the above background papers or requiring further information should contact Richard Mortimer on telephone number Tel: 0161 474 3864 or alternatively email richard.mortimer@stockport.gov.uk