

## **Trade Union Bill**

### **Report by John Blair, Director, Resources**

#### **1 Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members with the response, dated 7 December 2015 from the UK Government Minister following a letter submitted to the UK Government as a result of a Council Motion on 22 September 2015.

#### **2 Background Information**

- 2.1** On 22 September 2015, the Council agreed to a motion moved by Councillor Pottinger and seconded by Councillor Russell with an amendment moved by Councillor Parry and seconded by Councillor Coventry as follows:

Council notes the Conservative Government has recently presented a Trade Union Bill that will restrict the ability of this council to engage in good industrial relations practices with our workforce and their representatives.

Council believes the collection of union dues through the check-off arrangement, from which the council receives income, is part of our collective and contractual arrangements with the trades unions and one which we will defend and support.

Council commits not to use agency staff to break or weaken industrial action and to continue to support arrangements that afford trade union representatives sufficient resources to enable them to carry out their functions to ensure the continuation of good industrial relations.

The Leader of the Council commits to writing to the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills stating Council's opposition to this Bill and our resolve not to co-operate with any attacks on facility time or check off, and to write to the First Minister calling on the Scottish Government to stand with other local authorities in opposing the proposals in this Bill.

Further, Midlothian Council agrees with the Scottish Government and the SNP MP's at Westminster that the only realistic way to prevent changes in the current bill would be to devolve powers over employment law to Scottish Parliament through the Scotland Bill.

**2.2** Following the Council meeting of 22 September 2015, a letter was submitted to the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills on 12 October 2015 stating the Council's opposition to the Trade Union Bill.

**2.3** A copy of the response from the Department for Business Innovation and Skills dated 7 December 2015 is attached to this report in Appendix 1 for consideration by Elected Members.

### **3 Report Implications**

#### **3.1 Resource**

There are no Resource implications as a result of the recommendation contained within this report.

#### **3.2 Risk**

There are no risk implications arising directly from this report.

#### **3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation**

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☐ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☒ None of the above

#### **3.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan**

Not applicable.

#### **3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes**

There is no impact on Performance Outcomes as a consequence of the recommendation contained within this report.

#### **3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach**

Not applicable.

### **3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders**

There are no Community or Other Stakeholder considerations as a consequence of the recommendation contained within this report.

### **3.8 Ensuring Equalities**

There are no Equalities issues as a consequence of the recommendation contained within this report.

### **3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development**

There are no Sustainable Development issues as a consequence of this report.

### **3.10 IT Issues**

There are no direct IT issues as a result of the recommendation in this report.

## **4 Recommendations**

Council is recommended to;

- (a) Consider the response from the Department for Business Innovation and Skills contained in Appendix 1 of this report.

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