

# BRIEFING

## SUPPORTING EMPLOYEES: WORK THAT WORKS

The cost-of-living crisis is challenging people as never before. Business in the Community (BITC) has reached out to its members to understand how businesses can support their employees. We have identified a number of clear actions employers can take. This briefing focuses on flexible work that works.

### How businesses can support employees during the cost-of-living crisis

The cost-of-living crisis is complex, but employers can help. BITC consulted members to create a [Cost-of-Living Action Plan](#) which identifies three actions businesses can take now to support their employees:

- Pay the Real Living Wage to employees and contractors.
- Ensure employees have the option to work flexibly.
- Target support towards your lower income and vulnerable employees using workforce data and employee engagement.

### How employers can offer flexibility and shape work that works

- Offer flexibility from day one on the job, including how, where and when people work and including the full range of types of flexibility! [BITC's research](#) shows this will help shape work that works for your employees and allow you to respond effectively to fast-changing employee and business needs.
- Move employees who are in precarious contract types<sup>ii</sup> on to better paid and protected contracts. e.g., moving employees off zero-hours contracts will enhance benefits and wellbeing. Make sure

AT BITC MEMBER THE FINANCIAL SERVICES COMPENSATION SCHEME (FSCS), ALL JOBS CAN BE CARRIED OUT FLEXIBLY – AT HOME, IN CONDENSED HOURS, OR WITH FLEXIBLE START AND LEAVE TIMES.

- temporary workers can access their benefits too. [BITC's research](#) found that less than one in ten people on temporary, minimum or zero-hours contracts could move to better terms.
- Help employees create work that allows them to balance work with caring responsibilities. To [Support Carers in the Work Place](#), start by collating data and insight and using this to set goals that can be measured. In line with BITC's [Who Cares?](#) report, begin by considering caring the norm, not the exception and work to foster a culture that supports men to care by targeting men for flexible working. BITC's [Equal Lives research](#) found that working flexibly is the policy both men and women find most important for balancing work and care.



- Create work that balances with wellbeing. [BITC's Your Job Can be Good for You report](#) shows how to co-create work good for wellbeing, with flexibility as a top employee priority. BITC's [Menopause toolkit](#) shows how awareness-raising, workplace adjustments, flexible working and the right policies and procedures can support those transitioning through menopause and stop them giving up work as a result of their symptoms. [BITC's research](#) found that employees who cannot co-create good, flexible work with their employer are more likely to experience poor mental health.

**RHA WALES TREATS ALL EMPLOYEES EQUALLY TO ENSURE THE MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY AND BALANCE IN THEIR WORK AND HOME LIFE. AS SUCH, MOVING TO A NEW FLEXIBLE WORKING OFFER WHICH INCLUDES NINE-DAY FORTNIGHTS AND NO CORE HOURS OF WORK.**

### Further BITC resources

[BITC's 'Who Cares?' campaign](#) links you to resources to support working carers, both parents and those caring for the sick and elderly.

[BITC's Inclusive Remote Working toolkit](#) identifies actions you can take to create inclusive home-based, hybrid and office-based ways of working.

[BITC's website](#) links you to all our resources and information on how to [join us](#).

## BITC COST OF LIVING ACTION PLAN

The BITC Cost-of-Living Action Plan sets out a series of business actions, tested with our members. This briefing has focused on the second action to support employees: Ensure employees have the option to work flexibly. You can find briefings on the other actions via the [BITC Cost-of-Living Hub](#).

The infographic consists of four panels, each with a title and a list of three actions:

- SUPPORTING EMPLOYEES**
  - 1. Pay the Real Living Wage to employees and contractors
  - 2. Ensure employees have the option to work flexibly
  - 3. Target support towards your lower income and vulnerable employees using workforce data and employee engagement
- SUPPORTING CUSTOMERS**
  - 1. Understand the needs of your lower income and vulnerable customers, and how the cost-of-living crisis will impact them
  - 2. Provide products and services that are genuinely affordable to increase choice for lower income consumers
  - 3. Innovate to deliver affordable and sustainable products and services
- SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES**
  - 1. Promote employee volunteering with schools and front-line organisations in local communities
  - 2. Share goods and equipment with community organisations that are working with lower income and vulnerable people
  - 3. Provide funding for your community partners that is simple to access, and increase support where possible
- SUPPORTING SUPPLIERS**
  - 1. Ensure prompt and fair payment to your suppliers
  - 2. Support your supply chain to reduce their energy and resource use
  - 3. Purchase goods and services which are more energy and resource efficient

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- find out more about our [cost-of-living](#) work
- [learn more about our advisory services](#)
- [join us for one of our upcoming events](#)
- tell us [your feedback](#)



Talk to one of our expert team today to learn how membership of BITC can help you take your responsible business journey further and drive lasting global change.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>i</sup> GOV.UK 'Flexible Working' <https://www.gov.uk/flexible-working>

<sup>ii</sup> TUC (2018) 'Living on the Edge: Experiencing workplace insecurity in the UK' <https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/living-edge-0>