

Exploring a Living Wage

Council notes:

- A 'living wage' was first established in the UK in 2001
- It has political support from the leaders of the Labour Party and Conservative Party
- Many large private sector employers such as Holiday Inn, Barclays and KPMG are accredited Living Wage employers, reflecting best practice in the private sector
- Currently the living wage rate is £7.20 per hour outside of London and £8.30 within London. The rate for outside London is calculated using incomes and prices data on a system developed and maintained by the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University
- According to charity Barnardo's and over 58 per cent of children who live in poverty in the UK have at least one parent in paid work
- Local authorities such as Preston and Oxford have incorporated living wage clauses within their public sector procurement strategies
- The Living Wage Foundation estimates over 10,000 families have been helped out of working poverty across the UK as a result of a living wage

Council believes:

- Torbay Council has a duty to be a good employer, and live up to the obligation we set ourselves in the Inclusion Charter which affirms our duty to reduce disadvantage and poverty
- The procurement strategy of Torbay Council can influence and encourage behaviour in the private sector, ensuring that our partners uphold the same commitment to equality as we do
- Many people are unaware how many workers employed by Torbay Council are paid below the living wage; according to a Freedom of Information Request to the Council, 125 Torbay Council workers are earning less than the Living Wage
- There is a strong case for exploring the viability and benefits of Torbay Council becoming a living wage employer

Council requests the Mayor:

- To perform an audit of Torbay Council workers to establish how many are currently paid less than the living wage and to break down these findings by gender, ethnicity and disability
- To meet with the Living Wage Foundation, trade unions and other stakeholders to discuss the merits of a living wage

Proposed by Councillor Cowell
Seconded by Councillor Ellery