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pay, pensions and
employment solutions

Alan Martin
Employment Relations Directorate
DBERR
Rm 4104, 1 Victoria Street
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18 November 2008

Dear Mr Martin

Re Consultation on implementing the recommendations of Imelda Walsh's independent review

This letter sets out the response of LGE to the above consultation.

Local Government Employers (LGE) was created by the Local Government Association on 3 April 2006. LGE works with local authorities, regional employers and other bodies to lead and create solutions on pay, pensions and the employment contract, to ensure the provision of excellent and affordable local services. Working in consultation with, and on behalf of local authorities, regional employers and other stakeholders, the LGE also represents local government employer interests on pay, pensions and employment issues. There are 410 authorities employing over two million people in England and Wales.

Question 1

Having regard to the existing guidance and templates available on the Business Link website and to any particular characteristics of parents of children aged 16 and under, what more do you think that the Government can do to assist business, particularly small business in implementing flexible working arrangements?

LGE response

The particular needs and characteristics of parents of children aged 16 and under will be very diverse. However, providing further case studies based on different size and type of organisation or service provision showing how the needs of employees and employers can be accommodated in a mutually satisfactory way should be helpful in demonstrating that different ways of working can be implemented and be successful.

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Managing Director Jan Parkinson

Question 2

Would you agree that it is sensible to remove the obligation for employers to send a formal letter whenever they approve an employee's request to change their working pattern? Please outline your reasons for why you think this.

LGE response

On balance, we consider that there would be little benefit in removing the obligation. Although providing written confirmation to an employee of a change in the employee's working hours, working pattern or place of work is one extra administrative task, the limited burden this creates is outweighed by the fact that it provides clarity regarding the position of the employer and employee and therefore providing such a letter would always be recommended. Notification of such changes would have to be provided within a month in any case, to comply with the employer's obligations under the provisions on the statement of written particulars.

Question 3

Please consider the partial Impact Assessment (attached at Annex D): we would welcome any comments on its analysis of costs and benefits (see pages 17-21, pages 26-34 & page 39), a key element of which is the analysis that the deregulatory measure would lead to a 65% reduction of the administrative burden associated with this particular information obligation.

LGE response

We have no comments in response to this question.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the consultation. If you have any queries regarding the response, please contact Samantha Lawrence at the LGE on 0207 7187 7323 or by email samantha.lawrence@lge.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Joan Seaton

Head of Employment Relations, LGE