



Birmingham Business Charter News

November 2015 - Issue 4

Increase in the Living Wage

It was announced on 2 November 2015 that the UK's voluntary living wage, as published by the Living Wage Foundation campaign group, is to be increased by 40p an hour.

The new rate will rise to **£8.25 per hour**, from its current £7.85. (£9.40 London weighting)

As Charter signatories you have committed to pay the Living Wage and as such will be required to implement the new rate. Employers have six months to implement the new pay level.

Dis-ABILITY – Work placement opportunities

“Sammey was my first non-hearing work experience student and I really do feel that we made a difference” – Lourell Harris,

Birmingham City Council, Corporate Strategy

Work placement opportunities for young people are difficult enough to secure at the best of times. Imagine how much more challenging it can be if they have a learning or physical disability.

Birmingham City Council is keen to pilot an initiative to provide meaningful workforce engagement experiences for young people aged 15-25 with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities (SEN/D). The aims of the pilot are:

- To develop opportunities that will assist towards potential employment outcomes
- To provide and support skills development which will measure the likelihood of good employment outcomes in the future
- To provide local evidence of what is effective from the point of view of the young people, their carers' and placement providers

So how can you, our Business Charter Signatories help? During January and March 2016 we are looking to offer:

- ✓ 20 work experience placements – 10 days duration
- ✓ 30 taster days - 2 days duration

We hope to be able to offer a range of alternative placements, to ensure these young people have a broad view of potential future careers available to them. The **City Council** will be offering a significant number of placements, but would very much encourage you to pledge your support to this worthwhile pilot project.

To confirm a pledge, arrange a meeting or to seek further information, please contact Zoe Bignell, tel: 0121 675 6367, email

zoe.bignell@birmingham.gov.uk. Placement pledges will need to be received no later than Friday **27 November 2015**.

Local businesses benefit from the City Council's Print contract

When Birmingham City Council procured its printing needs from a managing agent CDS, they stipulated that 100% of the work has to be subcontracted to companies within 30 miles of Birmingham. 53 local companies have received subcontracts through this arrangement. Furthermore, 19 of these companies have won business other than the City Council business through their relationship with CDS totalling £250,000.

Employer Convention

Thanks to those who attended the employer convention event on 16th October at Highbury Hall. We received pledges of 25 jobs and apprenticeships and 75 workplacements. Colleagues will be in touch to follow these pledges up.

Sustainability Forum

The next Sustainability Forum will be taking place on Friday 13 November from 18.00 – 20.45 in the Banqueting Suite at the Council House.

Birmingham has just achieved Fairtrade City Status for a 10th year and to mark this prestigious achievement the theme of the Sustainability Forum will be Fairtrade. We'll be looking at:

- Whether Fairtrade has peaked
- How fair is Fairtrade
- Free Trade vs Fairtrade

The evening will also include an inspirational schools debate featuring Sixth Form students from Holyhead School Handsworth where the topic up for formal discussion is **"This House believes that the best route to Fair Trade is Free Trade"**.

Come along and enjoy the lively debate and have your say on where Fairtrade in the city should go next.

We particularly want to attract businesses to attend this event and encourage them to become Fairtrade Employers and Fairtrade Flagship Employers, so please distribute this information around your contacts and networks.

To book a place or an exhibition space contact: sustainabilityteam@birmingham.gov.uk or Tel: 0121 464 9166. More information is available on the Making Birmingham Greener website: <http://www.makingbirminghamgreener.com/2015/sustainability-forum-13-11-15/>

Light refreshments will be available from 18.00.

Corporate Volunteering Programme

Just over a year ago Birmingham Museums Trust set up a Corporate Volunteering programme. We have since had fantastic groups of people come from both local and national companies to help us

with all manner of tasks – from conservation cleaning the castle walls at Weoley Castle Ruins, to gardening at Blakesley Hall.

We would like to give a big thank you to all the organisations who have supported us over the last year; Cadbury, Lloyds, Turner and Townsend, SITA UK, EE and Interserve to name just a few.

If you'd like to organise a corporate volunteering day just take a look at our website for more details <http://www.birminghammuseums.org.uk/volunteering/corporate-volunteering>

These days are a great chance to give something back to the local community, get out of the office and tackle a big project as a team!

CSR City and Make the Grade Birmingham

Greg Lowson, Director of CSR City would like to invite you to the official launch of CSR City and Make the Grade Birmingham, which seeks to bring an exciting new education business programme to Birmingham to better equip the city's young people for work. The launch is taking place on **Thursday November 19th, 2015** at the Skills Show, NEC, Birmingham. The guest speaker will be Claudia Harris, CEO The Careers & Enterprise Company.

We have arranged for attendees to have a VIP tour of the show prior to the launch event, the format for the afternoon is as follows:

14.00 – 14.15 Registration & refreshments

14.15 (prompt) VIP tour (optional)

15.15 – 16.00 CSR City and 'Make the Grade' Birmingham launch – Spotlight stage

16.00 - 16.30 Refreshments & networking

As places are limited please RSVP to

lucy.hardman@aheadpartnership.org.uk by 5pm Thursday 12th November 2015.

If you are unable to attend, but would like to know more about how you could get involved with CSR City and the 'Make the Grade' Birmingham programme please contact 0121 607 1808.

Celebrating success at the 6th Charter Award Ceremony

On 2 October 2015, our 6th Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility Award Ceremony was held. The event was hosted by one of our Charter accredited businesses, Pinset Masons.

27 organisations were formally presented with their Charter certificates by Councillor Stewart Stacey Cabinet Member for Commissioning, Contracting and Improvement

The award ceremonies are in recognition of Charter accredited organisations efforts in maximising social value through the charter's six principles and setting a standard for ethical business practices for all other companies to aspire to.

Also at the event Greg Lawson, Director of CSR City and Head of Pinsent Masons Birmingham Office, explained to the audience about the Corporate Social Responsibility programme for promoting Birmingham as “the CSR City”

For further information on CSR City please email: rokneddin.shariat@birmingham.gov.uk

The next Charter Award Ceremony will be held in January 2016. Please look out for your email invitation.

Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility Award Ceremony 2 October 2015



To view all photographs of the event please go to www.finditinbirmingham.com/charter