

Your weekly update of the key topics making the headlines.

Based around the seven characteristics of the Good Employment Charter

## 16 FEBRUARY – 20 FEBRUARY 2026

### PAY

#### [TUC: Gender pay gap 'will not close until 2056' - Personnel Today](#)

Personnel Today

The gender pay gap in the UK ... Why advertise with us? EVENTS & PRODUCTS. The Personnel Today Awards · The RAD Awards · Employee Benefits Live

#### [NatWest boosts CEO pay and lifts staff bonuses - HR Magazine](#)

HR Magazine

... while the staff bonus pool increased by 10.8%. NatWest · CEO pay · staff bonuses. Further reading. Employee benefits · Thames Water pauses bonuses ...

#### [Households living below a Minimum Income Standard: 2008–2024](#)

Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Over 25 million people (25.3 million) in the UK were living below MIS in 2023/24. ... However, this is set against a background of real-terms pay cuts ...

### ENGAGEMENT AND VOICE

#### [Strikes averted as Manchester Bee Network staff agree pay deal - BBC](#)

BBC

4 hours ago. Share. Save. Richard BakerNorth West ... The deal also promises an hourly £15 rate for all staff and more flexible working conditions for " ...

#### [PCS ballots DfE members over office closures and job cuts | Public and Commercial Services Union](#)

PCS

... flexible working arrangements that could protect jobs. DfE plans to ... PCS offices around the UK · Join · PCS Digital · Join · PCS Digital.

### RECRUITMENT

#### [Fix Auto launches 'Class of 2026' apprentice programme - Motor Trade News](#)

Motor Trade News

"Fix Auto UK's Class of 2026 Apprentice Programme demonstrates the network's ongoing investment in skills development, local employment and the future ...

#### [Jet2 colleagues join new aviation apprenticeship](#)

Jet2 plc

... UK's largest tour operator joined a trailblazing group to amend the ... Recruitment Fair, and holding inspirational career talks at schools and colleges

## [Bupa to train 900 'future focused specialists' as part of industry leading apprenticeship scheme](#)

Onrec

... Related News. 13 Feb 2026; |; News archive · UK businesses in survival mode as 52% of leaders say short-term ...

## [Students deliver AI, automation and digital tools to Greater Manchester manufacturers](#)

Marketing Stockport

While the programme is focused on skills development and technology adoption, early employment outcomes are beginning to emerge, with two interns ...

## [West of England approves investment to boost youth training and employment](#)

Public Sector Executive

The combined authority has confirmed that in 2026/27, the Youth Guarantee Trailblazer aims to support 730 young people, including 360 through the VCSE ...

## [Employment Rights Act is already putting the brakes on hiring, CIPD warns](#)

Workplace Insight

The findings come from the CIPD's latest Labour Market Outlook, based on a survey of more than 2,000 UK employers. It reports that overall hiring ...

## [New employer grant to boost quality in early years education - WiredGov](#)

WiredGov

These degree apprenticeships give early years staff the chance to build skilled, well-paid and rewarding careers while continuing to do the vital work ...

## [UK unemployment rate rises to 5.2%, the highest level in nearly five years - The Guardian](#)

The Guardian

UK unemployment rate rises to 5.2%, the highest level in nearly five years · Economics · UK unemployment and employment statistics · Office for National ...

## [Two-week fast track to a government job: The Civil Service Masterclass that's transforming lives](#)

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

... secure good jobs and build long-term careers. term careers. "We are ... Vote of confidence in UK as Singaporean firm moves HQ to Liverpool.

## [Mobile Jobcentres hit the road in six new areas to deliver employment support - GOV.UK](#)

GOV.UK

... England and Wales as part of major employment reforms. ... Bolton has one of the highest inactivity rates in the North West, at 29.2% compared to the ...

## [United Utilities set to host online careers recruitment event - Water Magazine](#)

Water Magazine

United Utilities, the only North West FTSE 100 company, is one of the largest employers in the region with 7,000 staff. The company says that new ...

## [East Midlands authority sets out workforce and skills agenda for employers](#)

East Midlands Business Link

... Employment Charter. Together, these programmes aim to link skills development to investment, infrastructure, and job quality. Delivery will be

## [UK's First Construction Disability Inclusion Academy to be Launched at New Velindre Cancer Centre](#)

Business News Wales

The Disability Inclusion Academy is the first trainee scheme that Sacyr UK is rolling out at the nVCC project to help with career pathways for those

### [Law firm introduces AI chatbot for job interviews - Personnel Today](#)

Personnel Today

He has ventured beyond the HR realm to work as a freelance writer and production editor in sectors including travel (The Guardian), aviation (Flight ...

## PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

### [Inside RoSPA's new OSH Skills Commission launch at the House of Lords - WiredGov](#)

WiredGov

With mental health, workplace culture and psychological safety now integral to OSH, professionals need new tools and new training to meet rising ...

### [Brewdog staff 'fear for jobs' after potential sale announced - Personnel Today](#)

Personnel Today

Payroll Specialist. Ashley Kate HR. Tottenham, England; Up to £35000 per annum. Payroll Advisor | Tottenham | Hybrid: 4 days ...

### [Lloyds to 'learn lessons' from using employees' bank data - Personnel Today](#)

Personnel Today

General Data Protection Regulation Collective bargaining Financial services Latest News Trade unions ... The data was subsequently presented to union ...

### [Beauty Bay seeks rescue as website shuts down](#)

TheIndustry.beauty

The filing provides the Manchester-based business with a temporary 10-day legal protection period, preventing creditors from taking action while ...

### [Retailers in UK plan to cut staff hours and jobs amid rising employment costs - The Guardian](#)

The Guardian

Almost two-thirds (61%) of finance bosses at retail companies said they planned to reduce working hours or cut overtime, according to the latest ...

### [North West pioneers place-based cross-sector leadership programme | Civil Service](#)

GOV.UK

... Manchester. This year-long programme aims to deliver results rooted in ... great place to work, A Modern Civil Service, Health & Wellbeing.

### [ATS Euromaster to wind down UK operations with more than 700 jobs at risk](#)

AM-online

ATS Euromaster said a further 703 employees would be placed at risk of redundancy across its Aston-based head office, call centre and remaining 103

### [Retraining scheme launched for Mossmorran workers - The Business Desk](#)

The Business Desk

About 350 staff are at risk of redundancy following Exxon's closure of the plant earlier this month. This new first step will be matched to job ...

### [Dundee Uni reopens voluntary redundancies in bid to cut further 180 roles - STV News](#)

STV News - STV Player

... redundancy. Union members have staged 26 walkouts in response in just 15 months, as the threat of compulsory redundancies hung over staff. The

## [Accenture links promotion prospects to employees' use of AI - Personnel Today](#)

Personnel Today

Accenture, the world's largest consultancy firm, has linked use of artificial intelligence at work to internal promotions.

## [Microsoft error sees confidential emails exposed to AI tool Copilot - DIGIT](#)

DIGIT

However, a recent issue resulted in the tool surfacing information to some enterprise users from messages stored in their drafts and sent email ...

## **HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

### [Pregnant women feel unsafe at work despite legal protections, says UNISON - IER](#)

IER

... poor employment practice. "We call upon employers and the government to ensure that the law is complied with, and that maternity pay is updated as

### [City of London Corporation roundtable - Trust in employers central to UK financial inclusion drive](#)

The Phoenix Newspaper UK

The Policy Liaison Group on Workplace Wellbeing was recently invited to the Guildhall by the City of London Corporation to share insights and ...

### [Combined initiative launches to transform mental health across UK music ecosystem](#)

Music Week

This season can be especially demanding for freelance professionals in the live music sector, who may experience reduced work opportunities during ...

### [RoSPA is convening leading OSH professionals to tackle workplace skills challenges - FMJ](#)

FMJ

... UK. The ... Together, we have an opportunity to future-proof OSH skills, support national productivity, and build a safer, stronger workforce."

### [Babcock introduces paid premature baby leave for UK staff - UK Defence Journal](#)

UK Defence Journal

... Employer with Heart Charter in partnership with The Smallest Things charity, the company stated. The new policy will provide additional paid leave ...

### [New GoVo platform aims to unlock unused UK volunteer hours](#)

IT Brief UK - Technology news for CIOs & IT decision-makers

... workplace volunteering time across the UK by connecting ... An AI chatbot provides user support, with access to customer support when needed.

## **GENERAL**

### [Businesses urged to "lock the door" on cyber criminals as new government campaign launches](#)

GOV.UK

New campaign supports business owners to protect themselves against cyber threats to safeguard jobs and growth. Cyber threats cost UK businesses ...

### [Creative businesses to benefit from government finance package - WiredGov](#)

WiredGov

... funding programmes, to finance for SMEs to grow and scale in the UK. The bank is also convening key sector stakeholders – including small creative ...

## Greater Manchester businesses invited to have say on local transport to 2050

The Business Desk

Businesses across Greater Manchester are being encouraged to have ... The UKWest MidlandsEast MidlandsNorth WestYorkshireSouth WestScotland Close ...

## ABOUT THE GREATER MANCHESTER GOOD EMPLOYMENT CHARTER

The Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter is a voluntary membership and assessment scheme which has been created to improve employment standards across all GM employers, regardless of size, sector or geography. Organisations within the private, public and third sectors are welcome to join the movement.

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