

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING 6TH MARCH 2017

03/17 Question from Councillor A A Chaudhry

Can the Deputy Leader confirm that there are no ESBC and its contractors' employees on zero hour contracts?

Response by the Deputy Leader (Cultural Services)

There are a number of 'casuals' employed by ESBC, currently 174 individuals are engaged on 'as required contracts'. These members of staff are predominately employed in the leisure area, with the largest number employed as leisure attendants, swimming teachers and sports development coaches. A full list of the casual roles at ESBC is shown below. Use of zero hours contracts allow the organisation to respond quickly to apply resources efficiently according to business and customer needs. Some of the casuals work rarely i.e. they are students who return back to East Staffordshire during holiday periods to work on the school holiday programmes. Others work more regularly e.g. Centre attendants at the Leisure Centres but with irregular hours according to both business need and personal availability e.g. students who may be at College/school during the day; others have more regular patterns according to coaching/class/events timetabling but do not work all year round. It is also worth noting that many contracted staff are also 'multi posted' so they may have a contract of employment to work as an attendant but also cover other roles such as swimming teaching, fitness instructing or reception on a casual basis. Unlike some 'zero hours' employees in other organisations, our casuals are able to enjoy most of the benefits of being an ESBC employee, including access to an appraisal each year, the ability to join the LGPS and paid holidays (based on average hours worked). It is common practice in the leisure industry for individuals to be employed as casuals, as these arrangements suit both the employer and employee well.

A random selection of our contractors have been approached and this exercise has shown that none of these staff are employed on zero hours contracts.

2ND HALF TUTOR

ACTIVE ADULTS TUTOR - CRAFT

CAS DUTY SUPERVISOR- CIVIC

CAS FITNESS ROOM INSTRUCTOR

CASUAL ADMINISTRATION - MAYORS

CASUAL AEROBICS INSTRUCTOR

CASUAL ASST COACH LEVEL 1

CASUAL CATERING ASSISTANT

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CASUAL CENTRE ATTENDANT
CASUAL CHAUFFEUR/ATTENDANT
CASUAL CLERICAL - ELECTIONS
CASUAL CRECHE ASSISTANT
CASUAL CRECHE SUPERVISOR
CASUAL DANCE TUTOR
CASUAL FITNESS INSTRUCTOR
CASUAL GYMNASTICS COACH
CASUAL MLC COACH
CASUAL MULTIMEDIA PROJECT OFFICER
CASUAL RECEPTIONIST
CASUAL RLSS POOL ASSESSOR
CASUAL SLC ASSISTANT COACH
CASUAL SLC COACH
CASUAL SPORTS ASSISTANT
CASUAL SPORTS LEADER
CASUAL SWIMMING INSTRUCTOR
CASUAL ULC COACH
CASUAL WORKSHOP ASST TUTOR
CASUAL WORKSHOP TUTOR
CEMETERY ORGANIST
CHAUFFEUR/ATTENDANT/MACEBEARER

04/17 **Question from Councillor A A Chaudhry**

The Leisure Pass Scheme is available for people in receipt of a range of benefits. However this facility has been withdrawn for people on working tax credits. Could the Deputy Leader reconsider and re-instate the Leisure Pass Scheme for people in receipt of working tax credits?

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Response by the Deputy Leader (Cultural Services)

The Leisure Pass Scheme provides 'reduced entry' charges for residents in receipt of the following benefits:

- Registered disabled, PiP at higher level, receiving incapacity benefit, employment support allowance, disability working allowance, disability living allowance.
- Carers Allowance (evidence award letter required), a person caring for individuals claiming the above benefits will be entitled to full use of the Leisure Pass at any time.
- Housing Benefit, job seekers allowance, receiving income support, receiving reduced council tax and dependents of the latter (evidence via awards letter required)
- Full time student, 17 years old undertaking more than 8 hours core studies per week. (evidence from school needed)
- Foreign student, 17 years old undertaking more than 8 hours core studies per week. Out of borough £5 fee will apply. (evidence from place of study needed)
- Work based learning 'Non-employed only': Letter from employer/learning provider.
- Group Passes (for day centres and special schools) please ask at reception.

The decision to amend the qualifying benefits and remove Working Tax Credits from the qualifying list was made in response to ongoing difficulties in securing proof of qualification. The leisure pass is valid for a period of 6 months. Receptionists at all issuing centres (MLC, ULC, SLC) had significant difficulties in getting the necessary proof that claimants were still in receipt of the benefit at the time of application. In order to overcome this issue, WTC was replaced with TWO other benefits; Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction. Both of these can be easily checked internally through our own Revs and Benefits teams if need be AND given the threshold for qualification for WTC was under £15,000, claimants are highly likely to qualify for either of the benefits that replaced WTC (or indeed one of the other qualifying criteria). The use of these types of benefit as qualifying criteria are better suited to targeting the Borough's lower paid residents. It should be acknowledged that this change occurred in March 2015 under the previous (Labour led) administration. The Leisure Pass scheme is always kept under review.