



Rt Hon Liam Byrne MP
Chair of the Business and Trade Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Sent via email

30 January 2025

Dear Mr Byrne,

Thank you for inviting me to talk to you and members of the Committee about Deliveroo's self-employed rider model and the steps we have put in place to tackle illegal working on our platform.

I wanted to follow up with further detail on a couple of areas we touched on, given the necessary brevity of the session.

1. Improving the quality of self-employed work

As I sought to bring to life for the Committee, our riders are free to work when they want, wherever they want, and for however long they want - without needing any permission or approval from Deliveroo.

Such genuine flexibility is the reason that this form of work is so popular - we receive between 5,000 - 10,000 applications each week to become a Deliveroo rider, and have hundreds of thousands of applications on waiting lists - all against the background of one of the tightest labour markets in the UK's recent history.

Independent research and polling has also consistently shown that Deliveroo riders understand the trade-offs that flow from working in the genuinely self-employed gig economy, and that they are making informed and active choices about how and where to use their time.

But, as I said to the Committee, that doesn't mean there isn't a legitimate policy debate about the protections and benefits that the genuinely self-employed are entitled to.

We have led the way in raising standards in the gig economy, for example in offering riders free insurance for accidents; insurance-backed sick pay; and payouts on the birth of a child so that riders can spend time with their new families. We were also the first platform to voluntarily agree a partnership with GMB Union, including collective bargaining on pay, which should be the minimum standard for companies in the sector.

There is room to go further. You specifically asked how we might improve the Employment Rights Bill. We believe the Bill provides an opportunity to improve the quality and security of self-employed work, whether that's encouraging greater unionisation across the sector, or making it easier for companies like us to give more benefits and protections without restricting a rider's flexibility. We would be pleased to discuss our ideas further with you.

2. Tackling illegal work

The committee also rightly pushed me on the controls we are putting in place to prevent the abuse of the right of substitution by people without the right to work in the UK. I am sharing under separate cover a recent response to Minister Madders which sets out in detail our industry leading action in this area and our next steps. We would welcome the committee's support in ensuring there is a level playing field across the sector and that competitors are strengthening their controls.

In response to the specific question raised by the committee, we have off-boarded 105 Deliveroo riders since April 2024 due to their substitutes providing invalid right to work documents. To be clear, a substitute rider must have their right to work status verified before they can complete any orders with Deliveroo.

I would be pleased to discuss these issues with you further.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Bedford', with a stylized, cursive script.

Paul Bedford

Group Director, Policy and Sustainability, Deliveroo