

REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR – CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEES

DISABILITY CONFIDENT LEADER ACCREDITATION

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Elected Members with the outcome of the Council's submission to the Department of Work and Pensions to gain Disability Confident Leader accreditation and to seek their support and agreement to ongoing actions to ensure the Council's participation in the scheme delivers genuine engagement and support for current and future employees who may have or become disabled in the course of their employment.

Information

2. Members received a report to Personnel Committee in May 2019 advising of the Council's accreditation as a Disability Confident Employer, the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) employer standard relating to the employment of people with disabilities. It was agreed that we would continue to work towards the highest level of accreditation, Disability Confident Leader.
3. It is considered important to demonstrate active commitment to becoming a recognised Disability Confident Leader to provide a focus for further development of the existing range of activities, procedures, provisions and guidance available to support the Council's managers to recruit, develop and retain people with disabilities. This level of accreditation also requires the Council to demonstrate leadership to external communities, partners and businesses and the attached submission seeks to reflect this commitment.
4. Members have previously provided their support for the work towards accreditation which is an important part of our submission as it demonstrates that the political leadership of the Council is fully supportive of the actions being taken.
5. I am delighted to report that the Council received confirmation on 27 September that we have been successful in securing the Disability Confident Leader accreditation. A copy of the certificate received is attached at Appendix 1.
6. In September, it was reported to Personnel Committee that we have joined the Business Disability Forum (BDF), a not-for-profit registered charity. Membership provides the Council with pragmatic support, expertise, advice and training and networking opportunities. The BDF promotes best practice and work with organisations to set and influence policy so that it benefits both organisations and disabled people. We will continue to develop our relationship with the BDF to ensure we deliver on the commitments made in our accreditation submission.

Other Options Considered

7. The Disability Confident standard is a nationally recognised accreditation which allows employers to demonstrate their commitment to becoming fully inclusive and which goes beyond the basic statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010. As such, no other options were considered.

Reasons for Recommendations

8. The Council seeks to support and enable its workforce and the achievement of Disability Confident Leader accreditation demonstrates real commitment to our existing workforce in attracting and retaining talented individuals and highlights the Council's community leadership role as being an exemplar employer in relation to the employment of people with disabilities. This is also a mechanism to tap into wider resources at a time when it is recognised there are significant recruitment challenges across a number of sectors.

Statutory and Policy Implications

9. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Data Protection and Information Governance

10. There are no data protection or GDPR issues arising from this report as all the information contained is generic and cannot be attributed to individual employees.

Financial Implications

11. There are no direct financial implications arising from the content of this report as there is no charge made for Disability Confident Leader accreditation and any costs arising from completing the identified actions will be met from existing service budgets.

Human Resources Implications

12. The Council recognises that its most valuable asset is its employees and seeks to demonstrate its commitment to attracting and retaining people from all communities. We want to provide opportunities to support and enable people with disabilities to access employment with the Council and show that we are committed to genuine inclusivity through a range of identified actions contained in the validation template.

Public Sector Equality Duty Implications

13. The attainment of Disability Confident Leader accreditation demonstrates our ongoing commitment to meeting and wherever possible exceeding the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 1) Agree to continue their support for the identified actions to maintain our position as a Disability Confident Leader.
- 2) Acknowledge and congratulate colleagues in the HR, Workforce & Organisational Development Team, the Disabled Employee Support Network and all those who contributed to providing the evidence submitted to the Department of Work and Pensions to be considered as part of the accreditation process.

Marjorie Toward
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Chief Executives Department

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (EKH 13/10/2021)

14. The proposals in this report fall within the remit of Personnel Committee.

Finance Comments (SES 13/10/2021)

15. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

HR Comments (JP 20/10/2021)

16. The Council recognises the contribution of all its employees, the ongoing benefits to service users, stakeholders and employees of recruiting and maintaining a diverse and inclusive workforce.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All