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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>14 November 2017</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Head of Organisational Development, Human Resources &amp; Communications</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>HR/33/17/BMcQ</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Alex Hughes OD Team Leader</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712845</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Disability Confident – Level 3 Leader Status</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members that Inverclyde Council has been awarded Disability Confident Leader Status. A previous report had been submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee on 9 August 2016 seeking approval for the Council to register its interest in the Disability Confident Scheme.

## **2.0 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Inverclyde Council became on 28 September 2017 only the second local authority in Scotland to achieve leadership status in the scheme for employers to recruit and retain disabled people. The Period of the award is 28 September 2017 to 24 September 2020.
- 2.2 To attain Level 3 Status the Council undertook and completed the Disability Confident self-assessment and accreditation scheme; is taking all of the core actions to be a Disability Confident employer; is offering at least one action to get the right people for our business and at least one action to keep and develop our people. This scheme replaces the 'Double Tick' scheme which the Council was a member of.
- 2.3 The Disability Confident Scheme aims to challenge attitudes, remove barriers and improve opportunities to disabled people and those with long-term health conditions. By achieving Disability Confident Leader status the Council has been recognised for acting as a champion within the Inverclyde business and local communities.
- 2.4 The Council already met many of the criteria to obtain Level 3 Status and some examples of the actions/provisions already applied by the Council and additional actions that were required are included at paragraph 4.4 and 4.5 of this report.
- 2.5 There are also two outstanding actions that we have committed to:
- the first is the Equality Working Group are reviewing and will set up a disabled staff forum
  - the second is to promote as part of our communication strategy, that we are a disability confident employer on all of our communications mechanisms including social media

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of the report and support ongoing measures to promote and raise awareness of the scheme.

**Steven McNab**  
**Head of OD,HR & Communications**

## 4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 A letter was received by the Chief Executive on 11 April 2016 providing information on the Disability Confident scheme. A report was then submitted to the Policy & Resources Committee on 9 August 2016 seeking approval for the Council to register its interest in the Disability Confident Scheme.
- 4.2 The Council was a member of the 'Double Tick' scheme and the Disability Confident Scheme replaces this with a self-assessment and accreditation scheme which has different levels.
- 4.3 The Council registered on the Disability Confident Website and undertook the self-assessment and validation process and became on 28 September 2017 only the second local authority in Scotland to achieve leadership status in the scheme for employers to recruit and retain disabled people. The Period of the award is 28 September 2017 to 24 September 2020. By achieving Disability Confident Leader status the Council has been recognised for acting as a champion within the Inverclyde business and local communities.
- 4.4 **Current Actions/Provisions – examples are undernoted:**

- We welcome applications from disabled applicants and provided proof this is embedded in all our processes. We use Access to Work as required for additional support for disabled candidates/employees.
- HR provides support to our managers proactively, not just policies and R&S training. The training gives practical examples of reasonable adjustments. We provide paid employment, apprentices and work experience etc.
- Equalities are covered initially at induction then ongoing to support users, customers and clients. We have training covering equality, dyslexia, moving and handling, autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, visual impairment, sign language etc.
- Our adverts show we are a disability confident employer. A specialist firm with disabled employees is used to test the recruitment portal. We follow the W3C's Web Accessibility Initiative's Guidelines. We link with local colleges and organisations and offer work placements leading to employment for disabled people.
- We promote a culture of being disability confident to ensure employees can feel safe to disclose disability or long term health conditions and we will meet to discuss support and/or reasonable adjustments. We make adjustments such as additional time to complete an assessment, using a computer, changing location, assistance dog to be in attendance, purple paper using Open Dyslexic font, resources printed out in larger fonts etc.
- We redesign jobs where the candidate/employee is affected by the nature of their impairment to remove that barrier.
- Occupational Health provides counselling and physiotherapy. We train on the Stress, Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy; the Council recently retained its Gold Healthy Working Lives Status (HWL).
- As part of HWL we tie into health events such as Autism Awareness, Mental Health, and Suicide Prevention Week etc.
- Health & Safety have a library of material, guidance, policies and training on health conditions and mental health.
- We provide placements/experience for disabled students/applicants.
- A member of staff spoke at the employers section at a recent DWP Jobs Fair on how employment had helped him since being diagnosed with depression and dyslexia and how the support from the Council enabled him to return to work:

*An employee had been living with depression for nearly 10 years and had also suffered problems with employers because of dyslexia. After being signed-off from a previous job the employee found support through the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) and Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership. This led to classes*

*with Inverclyde Council's Community Learning & Development and a qualification as a Classroom Support Assistant. The employee now works for Inverclyde Council.*

*The employee said: "I have now been placed in a high school and the satisfaction that I get from being able to let a child who may have a learning difficulty to understand something – and to see the smile on their face – is brilliant."*

- 4.5 The Council already met Level 2 through its double tick status and the activities it currently engaged in. To attain Level 3 the Council had to become a Leader with 2 additional elements: - an outside challenge requiring external validation and encouraging other local organisations, suppliers etc. to become disability confident, provide mentoring to these groups, speaking about disability confident at business events and to local/national media, hosting disability events and meetings etc.
- 4.6 There are two actions outstanding that we are committed to do. The first is the Equality Working Group are reviewing and will set up a disabled staff forum (they are going to review the NHS model). The second is now we have Disability Confident Leader status we have to continue to help promote and raise awareness of the scheme. As part of the communication strategy we will promote we are a disability confident employer on all of our communications mechanisms including social media (facebook and twitter etc.). Corporate Communications will arrange to have messages posted to the front page of the Council website in the features section throughout the year on a cycle, messages posted on the plasma screens and published in at least one edition of Inview newspaper and Insider (the internal news bulletin).
- 4.7 More information on the Disability Confident Scheme can be found at the following links: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/disability-confident-how-to-sign-up-to-the-employer-scheme>  
Info on Level 3 – Leader: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/disability-confident-how-to-sign-up-to-the-employer-scheme#level-3-disability-confident-leader>

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

### 5.1 Financial Implications - One off Costs

Cost centre	Budget heading	Budget year	Proposed spend this report	Virement from	Other comments
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

### Financial Implications - Annually Recurring Costs/(Savings)

Cost centre	Budget heading	With effect from	Annual net impact	Virement from (if applicable)	Other comments
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

- 5.2 Human Resources: There is no further impact on human resources with achieving level 3 – disability leader.
- 5.3 Legal: N/A
- 5.4 Equalities: Achieving level 3 – disability leader will have a positive impact for disabled candidates and employees.
- 5.5 Repopulation: N/A

## **6.0 CONSULTATION**

6.1 There was no requirement to consult on the contents of this report.

## **7.0 CONCLUSIONS**

7.1 The Policy and Resources Committee is asked to note the contents of the report and support ongoing measures to promote and raise awareness of the scheme.

## **8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8.1 N/A