

SUBJECT: DISABILITY CONFIDENT EMPLOYER SCHEME

MEETING: PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 24th FEBRUARY 2026

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To provide the committee with an opportunity to examine the Disability Confident Level 2 Self-Assessment (Employer Evidence Template).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That members scrutinise the Disability Confident Level 2 Self-Assessment (Employer Evidence Template).

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Disability Confident is creating a movement of change, encouraging employers to think differently about disability and take action to improve how we recruit, retain and develop disabled people. Being Disability Confident is a unique opportunity to lead the way and show that we are a disability inclusive employer.
- 3.2 The Disability Confident scheme is designed as a continuous learning journey, encouraging employers to evolve and improve with every step. It's not about achieving a static level of the scheme; it's about embracing a mindset of growth and adaptation. Using the scheme resources, we are better equipped to nurture a workforce where every member feels valued and empowered to contribute their unique talents.
- 3.3 There are 3 levels:
- Disability Confident Committed (Level 1)
 - Disability Confident Employer (Level 2)
 - Disability Confident Leader (Level 3)

Membership for a Disability Confident Employer is for three years. We must complete each level before moving on to the next and we are encouraged to progress to Disability Confident Leader – Level 3 as soon as we are ready which will re-start the three-year membership period.

- 3.4 On the 14th May 2024 we were accepted as a Disability Confident Employer (Level 2). In signing up to be a Disability Confident Employer, we have agreed to carry out a self-assessment, testing ourselves against a set of statements about employing disabled people. This self-assessment sets a baseline, designed to enable us to focus on what we are doing well at this stage and what additional steps we may need to take to comply with the Level 2

criteria. During the three-year period, we review our self-assessment quarterly and add evidence to it.

3.5 The self-assessment is grouped into two themes:

- Theme 1 – Getting the right people for your business
- Theme 2 – Keeping and developing your people

Within the two themes, we need to provide evidence demonstrating how we are meeting the list of core actions. This will help us to identify areas where additional work is needed and assists us in planning how to address them. One activity per theme is the minimum requirement, but many Disability Confident employers undertake multiple activities to demonstrate their commitment to creating inclusive workplaces.

3.6 In our self-assessment (Employer Evidence Template), we have committed to the following:

- Actively attracting and recruiting disabled people to help fill opportunities (including jobs, apprenticeships, internships, work experience, etc.)
- Providing a fully inclusive and accessible recruitment process
- Offering an interview to disabled people who meet the minimum criteria for the job
- Being flexible when assessing people so disabled job applicants have the best opportunity to demonstrate that they can do the job
- Proactively offering and making reasonable adjustments as required
- Encouraging our suppliers and partner firms to be Disability Confident
- Ensuring employees have sufficient disability equality awareness training
- Providing work experience and apprenticeships
- Providing an environment that is inclusive and accessible for staff, clients and customer
- Supporting employees to manage their disabilities or health conditions
- Ensuring there are no barriers to the development and progression of disabled staff
- Ensuring managers are aware of how they can support staff who are sick or absent from work
- Valuing and listening to feedback from disabled staff
- Identifying and sharing good practice

3.7 Our top priorities at present are:

- Ensuring existing disabled colleagues have a voice and are supported through a Disability Colleague Network.
- Encouraging colleagues to undergo the training on the Social Model of Disability and Reasonable Adjustments in the Workplace on our E-Learning platform.
- Ensuring the recruitment process is accessible for all

3.8 Some achievements so far have been:

- Providing face to face training on the Social Model of Disability as well as making it available on Thingi together with Reasonable Adjustments in the Workplace
- Reviewing the accessibility at County Hall and ensuring it is accessible for all
- Setting up a Disabled Colleague Network where colleagues feel safe to talk, share information or raise issues

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

4.1 The updated actions within the Employer Evidence Template outline how we are addressing the criteria stipulated by the Disability Confident Employer status.

The Disability Confident Employer Self-Assessment is by its very nature a plan that is looking to address, mitigate and positively address identified issues for disabled employees and disabled applicants.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 5.1 The activity described in our self-assessment is a summary of all the initiatives we are undertaking to foster an inclusive workplace. It allows us to evaluate the progress we are making towards inclusivity and identify areas for improvement.

6. REASONS:

- 6.1 The Authority has committed to become a Disabled Confident Employer within its Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28. This status will end on 11th May 2027 when we would anticipate that the Authority will gain Disability Confident Leader (Level 3) status.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 The scheme can be afforded within the authority's existing budgets.

8. CONSULTEES:

- 8.1 The Accessibility Inclusion Group has been repurposed to evaluate and contribute to the self-assessment. The group includes colleagues from Human Resources, Equalities, Employment and Skills, Workforce Development and Disabled/Neurodiverse employees.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- 9.1 Disability Confident Level 2 Self-Assessment (Employer Evidence Template).

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