

# **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Personnel Committee**

**November 2024**

**Head of People & Organisational Development – Sheenagh Rees**

### **Matter for Information**

#### **Wards Affected:**

All Wards

#### **Employers for Carers, Carer Confident Benchmark Scheme**

##### **1. Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to update members in relation to Neath Port Talbot Borough Council successfully being awarded the Employers for Carer's, Carer Confident Scheme, benchmark of Level 2 (Accomplished).

##### **2. Executive Summary**

In 2022, Members approved the Council's Employers for Carers (EfC) subscription membership.

Membership to EfC has enabled us to implement carer confident work practices. As a member we have had access to a toolkit to support employees who are carers, so that their skills and experience can be retained within the organisation.

Officers across People & Organisational Development have used the membership to help us build on creating a positive and inclusive workplace for all employees – including the growing numbers who are, or will become, carers. The evidence we have been able to demonstrate because of this, allowed us to apply to the Benchmarking Scheme which

has resulted in Neath Port Talbot Council becoming a Carer Confident Accomplished Employer

### **3. Background information**

A carer is someone who provides unpaid care by looking after an older, disabled or seriously ill family member, partner, or friend.

Carers Wales is part of Carers UK - the UK's only national membership charity for unpaid carers. Founded nearly 60 years ago, their mission is to make life better for carers, by giving expert information, advice and assistance and ensuring that employers have the support to retain and empower employees with caring responsibilities.

Carers Wales are passionate about promoting the rights of carers in work and encouraging employers to develop and implement policies and practices that support carers to enter and remain in the workplace and to have the opportunity to thrive in their role.

Membership of Employers for Carers includes our own personalised digitalised online platform. It contains useful practical guides, e-learning and toolkits to support carers and line managers, best practice examples, templates, sample policies and case studies; all designed to help build our strategy around supporting working carers. The platform is co-branded to reflect NPT's corporate identity and is available in English and Welsh.

We have received training sessions to raise awareness to employees about carers in the workplace, training for HR Officers and line managers on how to support carers, sessions for carers signposting them to information, advice and assistance and support to establish a Workplace Champions Network. We also receive a range of promotional materials to help promote membership, available in English and Welsh, along with use of EfC logo on job adverts, website, intranets, email footers, etc.

The Council's Future of Work Strategic Workforce Plan 2022 - 2027 includes priorities to develop actions to help us retain talent, develop an inclusive workplace, where employees feel valued and motivated, as well as supporting the health and well-being of our employees.

Membership of EfC enabled us to apply to become a Carer Confident Employer.

#### **4. The Employers for Carers, Carers Confident Benchmarking Scheme**

**Carer Confident, the Employers for Carers Benchmarking Scheme:** supports employers to build a positive and inclusive workplace for employees who are, or will become, carers and to make the most of the talents that carers can bring to the workplace.

Carer Confident employers recognise the importance of retaining valued employees, reducing absence and unnecessary recruitment costs, and increasing resilience, engagement, and productivity.

#### **The cost of not supporting working carers:**

The number of working carers will increase as the population ages and people live longer with disability. To recruit and retrain a new employee cost on average the same cost of a year's annual wage of that role. Carers (if unsupported) are working below their potential, reducing hours, or giving up opportunities for promotion. Carers are twice as likely to suffer from stress (if unsupported) – it's the key reason carers give up work or reduce their hours of working.

The Benchmarking Scheme has three levels designed to support throughout the journey towards building a positive and inclusive workplace for all employees who are, or who will become, carers. The scheme has been designed to be progressive, starting at Level 1: Active, then moving to Level 2: Accomplished, and finally on to Level 3: Ambassador.

To achieve Level 2, we have been able to demonstrate that the Council:

- Has a process and support in place to help carers identify themselves in the workplace.
- Includes carers in the development of policies and guidance, and processes to support carers within the workplace.
- Has well documented policies and guidance in place which cover caring and carers.

- Provides a range of practical support for carers in the workplace.
- Communicates support available for carers throughout the organisation.
- Enables carers to feel comfortable in accessing available support both from within and outside the organisation.

**Evidence submitted of activity to date included:**

- Chief Executive video promoting support for unpaid carers and the Employers for Carer's membership.
- Carers Wales Award - Home Care were successful in securing the Line Manager recognition award for the ongoing support provided to employees at the Carers Wales' Carers Week Awards.
- Presentations to employees, Accountable Managers, Cabinet, HR & Trade Union Colleagues, LLAN Head teacher group.
- Carers Staff Survey.
- Campaign to recruit Carers Champions.
- Drop-in sessions for Carers Rights Day 2022/23 and planned session for 2024.
- Developed Viva Engage Carers Channel, weekly promotions of self-awareness and support materials.
- EfC included in the on boarding and induction for new starters.

The Certificate now recognises Neath Port Talbot Council as a Carer Confident Accomplished Employer.

The Carer Confident Employer logo can now be used to promote externally both in English and Welsh.

The Council will be added to the Carer Confident employer list on the EfC website and publicised that we are a Carer Confident Accomplished employer in their monthly e-bulletin and via EfC LinkedIn page.

**5. Financial impact**

The fee per level of Carer Confident is £500 and included:

- access to web-based materials for assessment process, Telephone support
- Assessment of evidence and written feedback report,
- An award certificate and achieved Carer Confident level logo

This will be funded from within the allocated budget.

## **6. Integrated impact assessment**

There is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment as this report is for monitoring / information purposes.

## **7. Workforce impacts**

The intention behind the Carer Confident is to have a positive impact on staff who are, or will become, carers and to build a supportive and inclusive workplace to make the most of the talents that carers can bring to the workplace. Trade unions are supporting the initiative and are key members of the project team established to deliver the scheme.

## **8. Legal impacts**

No implications

## **9. Risk Management impacts**

No impact.

## **10. Crime and Disorder Impacts**

No impact.

## **11. Counter Terrorism Impacts**

No impact.

## **12. Consultation**

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item.

## **13. Recommendations:**

That Members NOTE the information provided in relation to Neath Port Talbot Borough Council successfully being awarded the Employers for Carer's, Carer Confident Scheme, benchmark Level 2: Accomplished.

### **For Information Only**

## **14. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Certificate of Achievement

## **15. Officer contacts**

Sheenagh Rees, Head of People & OD, [s.rees5@npt.gov.uk](mailto:s.rees5@npt.gov.uk)

Lynne Doyle, Corporate Learning, Training & Development Manager (project lead), [l.doyle@npt.gov.uk](mailto:l.doyle@npt.gov.uk)