

Appointment of a Disability Champion

22 May 2023

Report of the Senior Manager, Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the remit of the Disability Champion and, if appropriate, to make an appointment at this meeting for the four years 2023/4to 2026/7.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That Council considers the remit of the Disability Champion and appoints a non-Cabinet Councillor to the role for the four year term 2023/24 to 2026/27.**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In response to a motion on notice at Council meeting on 13 November 2019, Council resolved:

- (1) This Council believes it can better support and improve the services provided by this Council for people with disabilities and their families by re-instating the role of 'Champion for the Disabled' and renaming it 'Disability Champion.'
- (2) Council will establish the 'Disability Champion' role and the role holder will work with the portfolio holder for Communities & Social Justice and support the Lancaster City Council Wellbeing Advisory Group in its exploration of wellbeing and social justice issues in the district. The new 'Disability Champion' role will be filled by nomination and voting at the next Council meeting on the 18 December 2019.

(Minute 82 refers.)

- 1.2 Council, at its meeting held on 18 May 2020, considered the appointment of a Disability Champion. It was reported that the role was specifically to work with the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Social Justice, and support the Lancaster City Council Wellbeing Advisory Group in its exploration of wellbeing and social justice issues in the district. Council resolved to appoint to the position and that the term of office of the Disability Champion be amended to match the term of office of the Veterans' (now "Armed Forces") Champion.

2.0 Remit of the role

- 2.1 The role was created to work with the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Social Justice and the Wellbeing Advisory Group. Portfolio holders/portfolio names and Advisory Groups have changed over time, therefore the role outline needs to be re-considered if an appointment is to be made at this meeting Council should specify the remit of the role and whether nominations should be limited to non-Cabinet Members only (as is the case for the Armed Forces Champion). This could be as simple as “A non-Cabinet appointment to help promote equality and rights for people with disabilities” and/or to “A non-Cabinet appointment to work with the appropriate Portfolio Holder and any appropriate Advisory Group.”
- 2.2 For clarity, the role has never included taking on administrative work for individual residents with disabilities, assisting them to fill in PIP forms, etc. Champions can signpost anyone who asks for this level of help to Citizens Advice or other agencies who can assist. If Council does consider this should be undertaken by the Council’s disability Champion, it should be included in the remit of the role.
- 2.3 Any appointment will be for a four year term 2023/24 to 2025/27, in accordance with a Council resolution made on 18 May 2020 (minute 14 refers)

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 Council is asked to consider the remit of the Disability Champion and, if appropriate, make an appointment for the four year term ending in May 2027. The role of Champion attracts a small allowance which depends on how many Champions the Council appoints. With two Champions currently (the Disability Champion and Champion for the Armed Forces) the allowance is £250 each Champion per annum.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Climate Change, Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

To help to promote equality and rights for people with disabilities.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications as a result of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications as a direct result of this report. Each Champion receives a small allowance to cover expenses incurred as part of their role. This is met from within existing budget for Councillors allowances.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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