

## PART A

**Report to:** Cabinet  
**Date of meeting:** 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016  
**Report of:** HR Business Partner (Organisational Development)  
**Title:** Investors in People – Gold Assessment (2016)

### 1.0 **Summary**

- 1.1 This report acknowledges the Council's success in achieving the Gold Standard by the internationally recognised body Investors in People.
- 1.2 This is an important milestone for the Council when put into perspective that only 3% of 14, 000 organisations in over 75 countries accredited with the Investors in People have achieved the Gold Award. This places Watford Borough Council within a group of only 420 organisations internationally with a Gold Award.
- 1.3 As a testament to the Council's continuous improvement the assessor noted that 'Watford Borough Council has embarked on a serious improvement journey over the last three years and their capacity for sustainable improvement is remarkable. The organisation has become a beacon of good practice with strong people and business processes'.

### 2.0 **Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the key findings of the report and the successes identified below
- 2.2 That Cabinet approves the suggested recommendations from the assessor as part of the Council's continuous improvement plan and to maintain the Gold Standard, including the following:
- 2.3 Review how we work competencies
- 2.4 Raise awareness of new service plans
- 2.5 Review career development options, talent management, succession planning
- 2.6 Consider tour of Watford for new starters
- 2.7 Invite unions to induction

- 2.8 Embed and develop employee council. (Terms of reference)
- 2.9 Provide policy updates
- 2.10 Embed new CSR, engagement, rewards, health & wellbeing strategies
- 2.11 Enhance hot desking, homeworking, digitalization and IT capability (this forms part of the Council's Digital Watford agenda)

Some of recommendations are already being implemented or are part of the wider Watford Borough Council Corporate Plan.

**Contact Officer:**

For further information on this report please contact:

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**Report approved by:**

Cathy Watson, Head of Human Resources

### 3.0 Detailed Proposal

#### Background

- 3.1 The Investors in People accreditation remains the standard for people management, helping organisations to lead, support and manage people well for sustainable results, maximizing performance and delivering excellence.
- 3.2 Watford Borough Council was awarded a Bronze Standard in July 2013, the assessor was impressed with the Council's people management practices and recommended the Council get reassessed for Silver.
- 3.3 In July 2014 the Council were awarded the Silver Standard. As part of the assessment process, organisations are assessed every three years to ensure they still meet the evidence requirements. The Council was reassessed in July 2016 and were awarded a Gold Standard.
- 3.4 This award recognises that not only is the Council an excellent employer of choice but also acknowledges the Council's strong commitment towards corporate social responsibilities in supporting local businesses, taking on apprentices and offering work experience placements for students and the unemployed.

3.5 The assessment involved interviewing 32 staff across the Council, during this time the assessor noted several common themes including; the Council being a good place to work, in fact many staff confirmed that this was the best job they have had or best employer they have worked for, that we are a listening & learning organisation building capacity & staff capability and described our leadership as being the best it's ever been at Watford Borough Council.

3.6 The assessor's report also included several positive observations:

*'This is without doubt a progressive and bold organisation, staff are responsive and receptive to change, and they are supported in many ways to give their very best. They punch well above their weight and staff recognise what a great place it is to work'.*

*The Council continue to realign services breaking down barriers, improving team spirit and collective contribution. A no blame culture prevails.*

*Job satisfaction levels are high despite increasing workloads because of sound leadership, effective management support, effective performance review and increasing levels of accountability and staff empowerment'.*

#### 4.0 **Implications**

##### 4.1 **Financial**

4.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that there are no financial implications in this report.

##### 4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that there are no legal implications in this report.

##### 4.3 **Equalities**

4.3.1 As part of the Investors in People Assessment, one of the framework indicators the Council scored highly in 'strategies for managing people are designed to promote equality of opportunity in the development of the organisation's people'.

The assessor was satisfied that the Council values people's differences and is effective in promoting equality and managing diversity in the workplace.

##### 4.4 **Potential Risks:** none

**4.5 Staffing**

- 4.5.1 This achievement is significant and sets Watford Borough Council out as an 'employer of choice', with such positive people management strategies facilitating the retention and recruitment of top quality employees.

**4.6 Accommodation**

- 4.6.1 There are no accommodation implications.

**4.7 Community Safety**

- 4.7.1 There are no community safety implications.

**4.8 Sustainability**

- 4.8.1 The Council is required to complete an 18-month continuous improvement review to ensure we are implementing agreed actions and continue to utilise the Investors in People framework to its fullest. This review will take place from January 2018.
- 4.8.2 In June 2019 the Council is scheduled for its three-yearly assessment, a report will be submitted to the Leadership Team to determine if the Council should continue with its Investors in People accreditation.

**Appendices:** None

**Background Papers:** There are none

**File Reference:** None