

Recruitment and Selection Procedure



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Purpose	To provide a fair and lawful framework to guide and support managers to make effective recruitment and selection decisions that help the council to deliver its corporate priorities.		

This procedure links to:

- Redeployment Procedure
- Disclosure and Barring Procedure
- Information Governance Policy
- Equality and Diversity Protocol
- Probation Procedure
- Recruitment and Selection Toolkit
- Job Evaluation and Grading Procedure
- Organisational Change Management Procedure
- Code of Conduct

This list is not exhaustive.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This procedure sets out standards, which facilitate and promote effective and fair recruitment and selection practices, comply with employment legislation and demonstrate best practice. This procedure should be read in conjunction with the council's Recruitment and Selection Toolkit, accessible on the HR intranet pages.
- 1.2 The council is committed to equality and diversity and recognises the benefits of promoting equality of opportunity and of having a diverse workforce that represents the community it serves. This procedure aims to promote equality and diversity and avoid any unlawful discrimination based on protected characteristics, as defined in the Equality Act (2010).
- 1.3 The council supports and promotes disability schemes e.g. Disability Confident and will ensure that any reasonable adjustments are accommodated to support people with disabilities or long-term health conditions.
- 1.4 When recruiting, selecting and appointing employees, the council will ensure safeguarding the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is at the heart of its practices. To this end, the council will implement **Safer Recruitment** practices to identify, deter and reject those unsuitable for working with these groups, including a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and/or a Barred List check for all eligible posts.

2.0 Scope of the procedure

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all council employees with the exception of:
 - a) school-based employees who are directly employed by the school where the governing body has delegated authority;
 - b) agency workers;
 - c) the engagement of consultants;
 - d) the Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Assistant Directors or equivalent Deputy Chief Officers for whom other arrangements apply (refer to the council's Officer Employment Rules).

3.0 Responsibilities

- 3.1 Managers will:
 - ensure that this procedure is implemented in accordance with the council's Equality and Diversity Protocol;
 - follow any applicable vacancy management protocols in place at the time.
 - wherever possible, ensure that the council's e-recruitment solution is used for all recruitment;
 - ensure they have the appropriate authority to recruit to a vacancy as determined locally within service areas;

- review job descriptions and employee specifications to ensure that they are up to date, fit for purpose and have been through job evaluation prior to advertisement;
- ensure a planned approach towards managing the process, taking responsibility for all stages of recruitment and selection activity e.g. creating an advert, short listing, interviewing and assessment methodology, deciding to appoint and giving feedback, chasing outstanding pre-employment checks and ensuring all documentation (manual/electronic) complies with personnel file records maintenance;
- ensure that all pre-employment checks have been completed prior to agreeing a start date with the employee; and
- ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for the induction of new employees.

3.2 ED/AD/Head of Service will:

- promote the use of the council's e-recruitment solution for all recruitment across the council;
- ensure that all recruitment within their service areas complies with this procedure and is conducted in accordance with the council's Equality and Diversity Protocol;
- ensure managers within the service area are aware of their obligation to familiarise themselves with and follow this procedure; and
- ensure managers within their service areas are appropriately trained in accordance with this procedure.

3.3 Human Resources will:

- monitor and review this procedure ensuring that it is legislatively compliant and fit for purpose;
- provide advice and guidance to managers in relation to this procedure.
- ensure that appropriate training is made available to managers;
- ensure all employees are issued with an up to date terms and conditions of employment document in accordance with employment law; and
- set up personnel files for new starters (to include all relevant documents received from the recruiting manager).

4.0 Principles

- 4.1 The council is committed to ensuring that assessment and selection are objective, that all candidates are measured against the same set of pre-determined, specific, job relevant criteria and that all appointments are based on merit.
- 4.2 All involved in the recruitment process, including recruiting managers, panel members and support staff, must take due care and consideration in the appropriate handling of confidential and sensitive information to which they will have access during and after the process, in accordance with the council's Information Governance Policy.

- 4.3 The recruitment and selection panel will consist of a minimum of two people. Wherever possible, consideration should be given to the diversity representation of the panel.
- 4.4 At least one member of the panel must have completed the council's recruitment and selection training and ideally this should be refreshed every 5 years.
- 4.5 Recruiting managers or panel members who are involved in any stage of a recruitment and selection process where it comes to light they have a relationship (defined as relative or friend) to any job applicants must declare the relationship in writing and must not continue to be involved in the recruitment process. Refer to the council's Code of Conduct.

5.0 Acting up and secondments

- 5.1 When recruiting to an acting up or secondment vacancy, managers can open up the application process to a natural deputy, or a group of staff who have the required skills, knowledge and experience in the first instance prior to the normal advertisement process.
- 5.2 Acting up arrangements can be used to assist manager in filling short-term vacancies and are intended as a short-term measure, whilst longer term plans are being considered. Routine acting up would normally be for periods over 4 weeks and will normally be for a maximum of 6 calendar months; any extensions will require the relevant Executive Director's approval. Acting up payments are authorized by way of the Acting Up Honorarium Request Form available on HR intranet pages. Where the position is known at the outset to exceed 6 months, this should be filled through a more formal secondment arrangement.
- 5.3 At the time of notifying employees of the vacancy, the recruiting manager will provide employees with:
 - the employee specification and the job description; and
 - a specified start, end and review date for the arrangement.
- 5.4 In recruiting to secondments, shortlisting, interview and selection will be conducted according to the guidance in this procedure. However, an informal interview can be used for acting up situations where there is only one candidate.
- 5.5 Where a temporary secondment becomes available to fill on a permanent basis, then the incumbent secondee can be offered a permanent contract providing they have 12 months or more continuous service and they were subject to an appropriate recruitment process (including a competitive interview) for that specific post at the outset.

- 5.6 The notice period for termination is usually 4 weeks for acting up and secondment positions. In the event that it may be necessary to terminate the arrangement sooner, managers should consult with their Senior HR Advisors.

6.0 Casual or temporary workers

- 6.1 Fixed term and temporary employees should be recruited in accordance with the principles outlined in this procedure. For further information on recruiting to, managing and ending temporary contracts, refer to the council's Fixed Term and Temporary Contracts Procedure available on the HR intranet pages.
- 6.2 When recruiting casual workers, the principles of good practice outlined in this procedure should be followed, in particular:
- selection must be on the basis of appropriate criteria and merit; and
 - a record of the process and decision must be kept.

7.0 Recruitment and selection process

7.1 Reviewing vacant posts

- 7.1.1 Where vacancies and/or recruitment are as a result of restructures, refer to the council's Organisational Change Management Procedure, available on the HR intranet pages.
- 7.1.2 Recruiting managers are responsible for reviewing the post in light of the current and future service needs, to include the content of the job description and employee specification, and the hours required. Council templates should be used for job descriptions and person specifications.
- 7.1.3 Before recruiting to a vacancy, managers will need to ensure that the post has been set up on the organisational structure. This will require Head of Service and financial approval.

7.2 Job evaluation

- 7.2.1 Managers must ensure that the post has a current job evaluation outcome, including the grade, issued by HR, before proceeding to advertise the vacancy.
- 7.2.2 Managers making substantive changes to the content of an existing job description, should allow sufficient time for a job evaluation exercise to be conducted.
- 7.2.3 Normally, minor amendments to a job description will not require a full re-evaluation. However, all changes will be subject to a job evaluation review.
- 7.2.4 Prior to advertisement all job descriptions will be checked to ensure the grade has been confirmed through a previous job evaluation exercise.

7.3 Advertisement and application forms

- 7.3.1 It is within the recruiting manager's discretion to decide whether the advertisement should be placed internally only or externally.
- 7.3.2 Managers should complete the relevant manual/electronic job advert process in order to advertise their vacancy.
- 7.3.3 Eligible redeployees will be given priority interviews. See 7.4.3.
- 7.3.4 A candidate from a previous recruitment and selection process may be appointed providing:
- ❖ The post is identical to that which the previous application was made;
 - ❖ It is within 3 months of the previous selection/interview taking place;
 - ❖ The selection score that was achieved was appropriate and can be evidenced.
- 7.3.5 Where the post is politically restricted, this should be included in the job description and must be clearly stated in the job advert. Refer to the council's Politically Restricted Posts Procedure.
- 7.3.6 Where relocation expenses apply, full details of the appropriate scheme must be clearly stated in the job advert. Refer to the council's Relocation and Temporary Accommodation Expenses Procedure.
- 7.3.7 Where market supplements apply, those must be clearly stated in the job advert. Refer to the council's Market Supplement Procedure.
- 7.3.8 If advertising a fixed term or temporary vacancy, the reason for the temporary nature of the vacancy and the expected duration of contract must be clearly stated in the job advert. Refer to the council's Fixed Term and Temporary Contracts Procedure.
- 7.3.9 Where there is a requirement for a DBS Check or barred list check to be undertaken, this should be included in the employee specification and must be clearly stated in the job advert. Candidates should also be verbally informed of this at the point of interview.
- 7.3.10 When recruiting to customer-facing roles, managers should ensure that the candidate's standard of English enables them to communicate fluently with members of the public, this should be included in the employee specification and clearly stated in the job advert. Candidates should provide evidence and/or be tested at the selection stage.
- 7.3.11 The council will include a Safeguarding Statement on adverts wherever necessary.
- 7.3.12 All adverts must contain an Equality and Diversity statement and/or an appropriate logo (e.g. Disability Confident or Diversity Works).

7.3.13 A standard council application form is required for all recruitment.

7.3.14 Late applications will not be accepted unless exceptional circumstances apply and this will be at the discretion of the recruiting manager.

7.4 Shortlisting

7.4.1 Shortlisting must be carried out by at least two panel members. The recruiting manager must ensure all correspondence for shortlisted candidates is sent out in sufficient time. Candidates should be given sufficient notice to attend a selection process (assessment centre and/or interview).

7.4.2 The council operates a guaranteed interview scheme for:

- ❖ Applicants who inform the council at the time of their application that they have a disability as defined in the Equality Act 2010 *and* who evidence in their completed application form that they meet the minimum selection criteria as detailed on the employee specification for the post.
- ❖ Applicants who provide information in their application form evidencing that they have previously served in the UK armed forces *and* who evidence in their completed application form that they meet the minimum selection criteria as detailed on the employee specification for the post. This is a commitment made by the council in the Community Covenant.

7.4.3 The recruiting manager must ensure that employees on the redeployment register who apply for the post and meet the essential criteria of the post or could do so with appropriate training, are given prior consideration for all advertised council vacancies. These employees will be interviewed before other candidates and must be offered the job if they can undertake the duties with appropriate training. Refer to the council's Redeployment Procedure.

7.5 Selection

7.5.1 Managers will arrange the interview / assessment process and invite candidates to attend providing them with sufficient notice.

7.5.2 Each panel member should individually score interview responses and agree a moderated score at the end of the interview.

7.5.3 Assessment and selection criteria must, in all cases, be pre-determined, specific and clearly relate to the job requirements as set out in the employee specification. The same criteria must be applied to all candidates.

7.5.4 Managers must take photocopies of relevant documents submitted at interview, date and sign them. Refer to section 7.8.1 below.

7.5.5 Managers should refer to the Recruitment & Selection Toolkit throughout all stages of shortlisting and selection for further guidance, clarification on documents required and to access template recruitment and selection forms.

7.6 Decision to appoint

- 7.6.1 The recruiting manager will make a verbal conditional offer of employment to the preferred candidate. The candidate must be informed the conditional offer is subject to the satisfactory completion of all the required pre-employment checks, including references.
- 7.6.2 The recruiting manager must note that a verbal offer of appointment is as binding in law as a written offer.
- 7.6.3 All appointments must be made on merit except in exceptional circumstances where positive action maybe appropriate in situations where candidates' scores are tied and one has a protected characteristic, which the manager reasonably believes, is underrepresented in the workforce. In such cases where the manager is unable to 'split' the candidates through the selection process, they may choose to appoint the candidate with the protected characteristic. Decisions regarding positive action must be justified and supported by relevant data and records must be kept.
- 7.6.4 The council's Pay Policy must be adhered to when managers are confirming starting point within the grade.
- 7.6.5 Managers must inform HR of the successful candidate and submit all relevant documentation for the successful candidate. HR will confirm a conditional offer in writing to the successful candidate, subject to satisfactory references and pre-employment checks.

7.7 References

- 7.7.1 Managers are responsible for requesting references and these should normally be taken up after interview and at conditional offer stage.
- 7.7.2 Two references are required for external candidates. One referee must be the candidate's current or last employer. Where a character reference is given, the reference must be from a professional person. No appointment must be made based on two character references alone. Referees must not be relatives or partners.
- 7.7.3 Internal appointments require only one reference and this must be from their existing direct line manager, unless the employee is moving to a new job with the same existing line manager and then no reference will be required.

7.8 Pre-employment checks

- 7.8.1 Managers are required to see originals, take copies of, sign and date the following evidence that is requested to be provided by candidates during the assessment and/or interview stage (refer to the Recruitment and Selection Toolkit):

- ❖ **Identity** - an ID check is required.
- ❖ **Right to work in the UK**
- ❖ **Qualifications and Professional Accreditations** as required by the employee specification

The above applies to all external candidates and internal candidates unless evidence is already on their existing personnel file – managers will need to check this.

7.8.2 Where appropriate, the recruiting manager must also obtain the following checks:

- ❖ **Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS)** for appointments to posts who will use or have access to specific government assets, such as certain types of information, council systems or finance. Further details can be obtained from HR Recruitment.
- ❖ **Safer Recruitment**
 - All new appointments to posts requiring an enhanced DBS check who have lived, studied or worked abroad, must provide an Overseas Criminal Records Certificate (OCRC) or a Statement of Good Conduct (SOGC) relating to the time they were resident overseas. Recruiting managers must notify candidates of this requirement and ensure that the candidate obtains the relevant checks directly in the country of previous residence, or the country's embassy/consulate in the UK prior to interview. Further guidance can be found in the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Procedure.
 - Disqualification from Caring for Children Regulations Disclosure form (DCCR Form) is required for posts in regulated activity, i.e. roles that involve caring for children, such as day nurseries, pre-schools or child-minding. Recruiting managers must ask candidates to complete and sign a blank DCCR form and submit it to the selection panel at interview.

7.8.3 Any documents which are not in English must be accompanied by a certified translation. The translator credentials should be provided, along with their official declaration that the translation is accurate.

7.9 Unsuccessful candidates

7.9.1 Managers should verbally inform unsuccessful candidates of the interview outcome at the earliest opportunity and provide feedback if requested.

7.9.2 Managers must return the original copies of all personal documents they have obtained from any candidates. Copies made of personal documents (identity documents etc.) for all unsuccessful candidates must not be retained and must be confidentially shredded.

7.9.3 Application forms (received through the e-recruitment solution) and selection documents including assessment material relating to unsuccessful candidates

must be retained in a secure and confidential place by the recruiting manager for a period of 6 months, after which it must be confidentially shredded.

7.10 Processing the appointment

7.10.1 All the required pre-employment checks must be satisfactorily completed, before the manager can agree a start date with the prospective employee.

7.10.2 The recruiting manager must complete the necessary appointment form. This must then be sent to HR with the appropriate documentation, i.e. successful applicant's application form, copy of verified ID documents and qualifications, assessment material, references etc.

7.10.3 HR will issue relevant employment documents and confirm the start date in writing.

7.11 Commencement of employment

7.11.1 The recruiting manager must ensure all new starters undertake and complete an induction programme. Refer to the council's Recruitment and Selection Toolkit.

7.11.2 Probationary periods will apply as per the council's Probationary Procedure.

8.0 Complaints

8.1 It is the recruiting manager's responsibility, in the first instance, to respond to any complaints from job applicants.