

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

May 2025

[Review May 2028]

1. Introduction

The intention of the recruitment policy is to ensure that the Council can attract and retain high calibre employees into its job vacancies. It aims to attract the widest possible response to any employment vacancy. The Council will take positive steps to advise minority groups of all vacancies and of its Equal Opportunity Policy. The Council recognises the advantages of recruiting individuals with specialist knowledge and experience of local needs.

The selection process is of crucial importance in this policy and must, therefore, be carried out according to objective, job-related criteria. The Council will ensure that, through appropriate training, people making selection decisions will not discriminate, whether consciously or unconsciously, in making these selection decisions.

There is a requirement under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 that a parish sector council will appoint persons to vacant posts 'on merit'; in essence, the best person for the job.

2. Core Principles of the Recruitment and Selection Policy

The Council reserves the right under current legislation to advertise posts internally only, where the Council deems this to be appropriate and necessary.

3. A recommendation to recruit a Clerk will be made by the Chair of the Council to allow the full Council to make an informed decision.

The Recruitment and Selection Policy will be implemented with regard at all stages to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy, the Equality Act 2010 and subsequent legislation. All persons involved in the recruitment process will be made aware, and offered training where required, of the above legislation and its implications.

All stages of the selection process will focus on the needs of the job and the skills needed to perform effectively.

The Clerk and councillors will ensure that questions they ask job applicants are not in any way discriminatory or unnecessarily intrusive.

All candidates with a disability that meet the minimum selection criteria will be invited to an interview.

It is the Council's practice to seek the successful candidate's consent to seek two written references and to ask for documentary proof of qualifications.

4. Recruitment and Selection Process

The Chair will (or will delegate responsibility) to :

- Consider information arising from any exit interview conducted with the former post holder;
- Consider whether a salary evaluation is required, and will ensure that this is carried out prior to an advertisement being placed;
- Consider whether the hours allocated to the post are sufficient;
- Conduct a review of the job description for the post;
- Draw up a person specification for the post; or will review any existing specification to ensure that it is fit for purpose;
- Prepare an application form and any other supporting documentation required in this process.

Advertisements will be placed appropriately to allow maximum exposure to all sectors of the community. The Chair/delegated councillors will decide the outlets to be used for this purpose.

Candidates invited to interview where possible will be given at least one week's notice.

Letters sent to unsuccessful candidates will be issued as soon as practicably possible after the decision has been made. Reserve candidates may be kept 'on hold' for a period of time and should be notified of the delay in finalising the outcome of their application.

Job Description

- Each job will have an up-to-date job description that accurately reflects the job requirements;
- Job descriptions should be written in a clear and concise manner in the agreed Council format;
- Job descriptions should be reviewed and discussed prior to the commencement of the recruitment action;
- Where appropriate the equal rights dimension of service provision should be included.

Person Specification

- A person specification will be prepared for every job description reflecting the skills and qualities required to undertake the job;
- Criteria contained in the specification should be strictly relevant to the requirements of the job. The criteria should not be unnecessarily restrictive so as to exclude disadvantaged groups, since this may be viewed as indirect discrimination and therefore unlawful;
- All stated requirements must be clearly justifiable in terms of the principal function of the job vacancy, literacy, numeracy, qualifications, age and educational level achieved.

Attracting a Field of Applicants

- Publicity material must reflect the Council's adopted Equal Opportunity Policy;
- Publicity material should, where thought desirable, be translated into ethnic minority languages;
- Where necessary, use should be made of the ethnic minority press;
- Advertisements must be clear and unambiguous, so that applicants will be able to determine their own suitability.

Application Forms

- Assistance will be offered to candidates to complete any sections of the form if required;

Short listing

- Short listing will only be based on the information contained in the application form and any covering letter using the job person specification and the job description elements as the criteria;
- The criteria for short listing will be consistently applied to all applicants;
- The application form will not be used as a test of literacy unless a high standard of literacy is required as a genuine requirement of the job;
- There will be no unnecessary or unreasonable restrictions on the numbers to be short-listed;
- Any disabled applicant that meets the minimum requirements for the job should be short-listed;
- Reasons for not meeting the shortlist must be recorded for incorporation within the monitoring process;
- Original copies of educational/academic/qualification certificates or documents should be brought to interview by candidates;

5. Selection Interview

- All people responsible for short listing and interviewing will receive training/information in the appropriate techniques, and such training should include the equal opportunities dimension. No selection interview shall take place without someone that has received such training and is aware of the relevant legislation, in attendance;

- At least three people will sit on an interview panel.
- A scoring system will be used during the interviews to grade the candidates in specific areas of the job description and person specification;
- Interviewers must keep adequate notes of the interview to be able to make a fair comparison between candidates. This will be recorded on an interview report form;
- In determining whether a candidate is to be progressed to the next stage, interviewers may only consider factors relevant to the job requirements. If for any reason a candidate does not possess a certain requirement for a job, but is nevertheless short listed for interview, the candidate should not be subsequently declined solely on the grounds of not possessing that requirement.
- Reasons for unsuccessful candidates should be recorded for incorporation into the recruitment monitoring process;
- All application forms and interview notes will be kept for six months after the end of the recruitment process. Monitoring forms will be kept indefinitely;
- If any member of an interview panel feels that discrimination has occurred in the selection process, the matter must be reported immediately to the Chair of the Interview Panel. No selection decision will be made until the issue is resolved;
- Candidates of all ethnicities/ethnic backgrounds should not be asked questions that could be seen as directly or indirectly discriminatory, e.g., questions which test their understanding of 'U.K. Customs'. Neither should their fluency in the English language be used as a selection criterion unless it is a bona fide requirement of the job;
- Selection decisions must not be influenced either by the traditional racial or sexual profile of the previous post-holder;

6. Letters of Appointment

- Appointment letters will contain the following statement: "As an Employee of the Council you will be required actively to pursue the Council's policies on Equal Opportunities and Race Relations and to undergo any training associated with this";
- The appointment letter will be accompanied by a copy, which the applicant is required to sign and return to indicate acceptance of the job offered, and which is retained in the personnel record. This will include the following statement: "I have read and understood the Council's Equal Opportunity Policy, and acknowledge that the offer of employment is made subject to my agreement actively to pursue that policy during the course of my employment and to undergo any training associated with this";
- Letters to unsuccessful candidates' will not state reasons for non-selection, but such candidates will be provided with the name and telephone number of the person to contact if further information or feedback is required;
- All appointments will be subject to receiving two satisfactory references, one of which must be from the most recent employer or educational institution. If satisfactory references are not received, the Council may terminate the employment relationship.

7. Records

All records of job applicants and interview notes should be kept for a minimum of twelve months. These must be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, which requires records to be accurate and stored confidentially.

8. Retention and Development

The Council's strategy is to ensure all staff remain motivated in the working environment. This is done by way of regular meetings where everyone has their input listened to and they are clearly informed of business updates. Staff development is enhanced by the way of regular internal/external training courses on subjects that are relevant to the business and to personally develop their own working skills.

Every individual receives regular reviews where personal progress is discussed along with the individual's requirements to further enhance their work and working environment.

Every individual who decides to leave the Council will be invited to attend an exit interview. The results of the interview can be used as feedback into the business to enhance staff retention.

(Source: P D Solutions Ltd)