

Bardney Group Parish Council

Recruitment Selection Procedure

This policy was approved and adopted by Bardney Group Parish Council at their meeting on 18th January 2018 Item 293-18/01/2018

1. Analysing the vacancy

When a post becomes vacant or the establishment of a new post is agreed, care should be taken to define the purpose and objectives of the post and to decide if a new appointment is the appropriate solution to the vacancy. The following should be considered:

- Is the job content entirely appropriate?
- Can the work be allocated to other staff with a view to job enlargement, job enrichment, motivation of staff and streamlining the establishment?
- Will the supervisory and reporting relationships be effective?
- What qualifications are required for the job?
- Is there a need for different skills or experience for future needs?
- Are there any justifiable reasons why the job is not suitable for job sharing?

Consideration needs to be given as to whether the actual tasks performed have changed or developed over the years in line with the skills and experience of the present job-holder.

Consultation with the current job-holder and colleagues may produce good ideas for usefully changing the job.

Information from the exit interview may prove a useful assessment of the current role. An exit interview should ideally be conducted prior to the vacancy being advertised.

The Clerk to the Council and RFO is appropriate should review the job profile and person specification to include any significant amendments in job content in consultation with the Personnel Working Group. In the event that the job role is considered unsuitable for job sharing the Personnel Working Group must provide written reasons.

Consideration should also be given as to whether the vacancy is appropriate for permanent, fixed term, temporary or casual appointment.

2. Recruitment authorisation

The Personnel Working Group in consultation with the Clerk to the Council is authorised to approve the establishment of temporary posts of less than 3 months duration or specifically for maternity/paternity cover, where they can be financed within approved budgets.

3. Post specification

Every post must have a written Terms of Reference outlining the main duties and responsibilities and specifying the key tasks.

4. Person specification

A person specification specifies the attributes required by the applicant to fulfil the duties of the job. It outlines the criteria against which applicants are assessed at the short listing and interview stage.

The requirements should not be unnecessarily restrictive so as to unjustifiably exclude any particular group of people or individuals.

The job profile must ensure that the duties and responsibilities specified are based solely on the genuine requirements of the job. Failure to do so may result in discrimination.

Education and other qualifications should only be specified where it is clearly shown to be a requirement for the job. There must be no distinction between qualifications obtained in the UK and those that are fully

comparable and recognised outside the UK.

5. Pay and conditions

Once the job profile and person specification has been defined the question of Terms and Conditions should be considered.

6. Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 specifies time periods after which specific criminal convictions are considered as spent, and therefore are no longer required to be disclosed. However, some posts are exempt from the Act:

- Accountants.
- Solicitors/Barristers.
- All employees with substantial unsupervised access to children.
- All employees involved in the provision of services to vulnerable clients.

Additionally, the Council is empowered under Home Office Regulations to check, both with the police and the Department of Health, posts involving substantial access to children or vulnerable adults. As part of the recruitment process, shortlisted candidates are required to complete a form concerning criminal convictions and, if selected as the successful candidate a police check is carried out on the individual concerned. After completion of the recruitment procedure all forms are destroyed. The Council cannot retain a copy of the Disclosure & Barring check.

Candidates for posts falling within the above categories will be required to declare any 'spent' or 'unspent' convictions. A false or non-declaration may lead to employment being terminated without notice.

The disclosure of a criminal record, or other information, does not debar the candidate unless the conviction renders him/her unsuitable for the appointment. Consideration must be given to the nature of the offence, how long ago it occurred and the age of the candidate at the time the offence occurred; and any other factors which may be relevant, including appropriate considerations in relation to the Council's Equality & Diversity policy.

7. Options for filling vacant posts

Job share

A form of employment in which the duties of one position are shared, usually by two people, and the salary and fringe benefits are divided between each employee according to the number of hours worked. It is different to part-time working as a high-degree of co-operation is required between the job-share partners.

A job-sharing situation can arise if:

- An individual employee comes to an agreement with the Council which allows him/her to reduce their contracted hours and the Council to appoint an additional employee.
- A candidate/candidates, apply for a job on a job-share basis.

Temporary upgrades

Where an employee is required to cover all the duties of a post at a higher grade, they may be temporarily regraded for a fixed period of time, with the authorisation of the Personnel Working Group.

Fixed term temporary contracts

All temporary contract should have a defined or estimated end date, where appropriate these will be issued as Fixed Term Contracts.

Can only be justified in the following situations:

- Cover for maternity leave.
- Cover for long-term sick leave.
- Cover for a vacancy while the recruitment process takes place.
- Short-term projects of a definable length.

Fixed term contracts can be renewed providing the need is genuine and only with agreement of the Council and employee. All details of the offer must be accepted in writing.

Non-renewal of a Fixed Term Contract

Non-renewal of a Fixed Term contract is regarded as dismissal; it must be for a fair and substantial reason and the process must be carried out fairly, including use of the redundancy procedure where appropriate.

The employee should be warned of any shortfall in competence or conduct and given the opportunity to improve.

Under the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993, dismissal for reasons other than those relating to the individual (EG, conduct, competence) is regarded as redundancy and there is a requirement to consult with the appropriate recognised trade union. This requirement exists even if the employee concerned is not a member of these unions and regardless of his/her length of service.

The individual should receive as much warning of the non-renewal as possible. The details of the non-renewal should be set out in writing to the employee, including the reason why the contract is not being renewed: if the employee has been continuously employed for more than two years this becomes a legal entitlement.

If the employee has accrued employment rights there is a need to instigate a search for suitable employment.

8. Recruitment

Before an advert is placed consider:

- Where the advert is to be placed and its design.
- The information pack for candidates and contact person for further details, Clerk to the Council or RFO.
- Who will make up the shortlisting (if required) and interviewing panel.
- Dates for interview and availability of interview room.
- Will work-related exercises be used? If so, are they approved and relevant and supervised by an appropriate person and have the candidates been made aware?

9. Advertising the vacancy

In drafting the advertisement, account should be taken of the following factors:

- Depending on where the advertisement is placed should the Council's corporate logo be included?
- The text should be informative but not too full to cramp the overall effect.
- The heading, should be large and eye-catching and include the Council's name, as well as the job title.
- What should have primary importance in the text; job interest, pay, career opportunities, location.
- Specific details such as pay (range and pro-rata salary where appropriate) and any qualifications required will help to reduce the number of unsuitable applications that are sifted out.
- Reference to Rehabilitation of Offenders and Politically Restricted posts, where appropriate.
- What form of reply is required and the closing date for applications.

All applications should be approved by the Clerk to the Council or RFO (depending on the post) in consultation with the Personnel Working Group.

10. Information for candidates

The total package will vary according to the position applied for, however, applicants should receive:

- A copy of the job profile.
- A copy of the person specification.
- The relevant application/monitoring form.
- The process involved in selection, e.g. Notifying candidates, where appropriate, of testing or work-related exercises.

11. Application forms

If applications are not to be acknowledged applicants should be advised at the outset.

Where the ability to complete an application form is not of direct relevance to the job the candidate's inability to complete the form should not exclude him/her from further consideration.

12. Short-listing

The purpose of short-listing is to limit the number of applicants to those who meet the essential criteria defined in the person specification. If, at this stage there are more applicants than are appropriate to interview, the desirable criteria should also be used.

It is important that the immediate line-manager is involved and can express a view before the final selection is made. Similarly, it is much better for the candidate to meet the prospective line-manager and to visit the prospective work location before deciding to accept the job.

13. Interview arrangements

As candidates are recruited following an interview it is important that the interview is structured, and questions are aimed at obtaining information about the candidate, relevant to the person specification.

The interview panel should consist of a minimum of two Councillors, with Clerk to the Council or RFO in attendance (depending on post) and it is good practice for those involved in the interview to also have been involved in the short-listing process.

Selected candidates should receive clear instructions in respect of date, time and location of the interview and be advised of the composition of the panel and any contact name on arrival. Where necessary, advance notice, must be given of additional selections methods, e.g. tests.

Candidates should be asked if they have any special needs and assistance offered where these are advised.

Arrangements should be made to ensure that appropriate accommodation is booked, internally and externally, attention being given to minimising distractions providing a relaxing atmosphere for candidates particularly where they need to wait, for example between testing and interview.

If, at the time of the interview, additional requirements are identified to overcome any disability not previously notified, the Council is under a duty to make reasonable adjustments accordingly.

14. Preparation for interviews

The following principles shall apply:

- Short-listing should be undertaken by at least two Councillors (preferably both who are part of the Personnel Working Group. In the event that the Personnel and Working Group consists of only one Councillor the Chairman will fill the second role) and the Clerk to the Council or RFO (depending on role advertised).
- The interview panel to consist of a minimum of two Councillors (one at least part of the Personnel Working Group with Clerk to the Council or RFO in attendance (depending on post)).

All panel members will receive adequate notice of the short-listing, and support paper work – to include:

- The job profile.
- The job advertisement.
- The person specification.
- The application forms.
- Selection and interview assessment form.

Panel members must use the job profile and person specification in measuring the suitability of the candidate.

The reasons unsuccessful applicants have not been short-listed will be recorded.

- Lack of relevant skills.
- Lack of relevant previous experience.
- Lack of relevant qualification.
- Lack of work experience at appropriate level.

All applicants may request feedback from the Council as to the reason they were not short-listed.

15. Selection methods

The selection method used must be pitched at the appropriate level for the potential applicants and based on the content of the post as stated in the person specification and job profile.

- A range of selection methods may be considered, including ability tests, personality questionnaire, written papers and interviews.
- Where the job involves practical skills, it makes sense to confirm or test these at the time of the interview, e.g. manual or keyboard skills; if appropriate and if the skill can be tested easily.
- Drafting and letter-writing skills can be tested by asking applicants to draft a letter from information provided.
- Selection criteria and tests should be examined to ensure that they are related to job requirements and are free from any unjustifiable bias. Tests should be assessed against agreed criteria and the weighting to be given to the tests decided before the interview occurs.
- Where selection tests are used in the recruitment process, their validity and reliability as tests of suitability for the job must be established.
- Where tests requiring demonstration of skill are used, they must be related to the job, and be capable of being assessed and applied equally to all candidates. They should measure the individual's ability to carry out or train for the duties appropriate to the job in question.
- Candidates must be notified in advance that they will be required to sit a test.
- Candidates should be provided with adequate seating, lighting and an environment free from interference.

Good interviews are well prepared and conducted in an orderly and thorough manner. In preparation interviewers should:

- Compare the person specification with what is already known about the candidate: which areas of expertise, qualifications.
- Ensure preliminary communication between them to facilitate a balanced and controlled approach to interviews.
- Plan the questions: they should be designed to probe the candidate's knowledge, ability, disposition and attitude.
- Allocate the subjects, decide who will cover the different areas, e.g., job knowledge, training, qualifications.
- Highlight areas on the application form that need following up.
- Be ready for the candidate's questions: give candidates an opportunity to ask questions and anticipate the information needed to meet the more likely ones.
- Allow sufficient time for the interviewers both to record an individual assessment of the previous candidates and to review the plan for the next candidate. Do not cut an interview short. Allow for introductions, questions from all panel members, questions from the candidate and short discussion time for interviewers between each interview.
- Be properly organised; make sure there will be no interruptions and have someone available to meet the candidate on time before the interview and show them out at the end.

If a test is required, the letter should ask if any special facilities are needed. However, consideration will need to be given on an individual basis, having regard to the nature of any disability and the candidate's ability.

16. Interviewing

The following principles shall apply:

- The interview panel shall consist of at least two Councillors with the Clerk to the Council or RFO in attendance (depending on role).
- Ample and equal time shall be allowed for each interview in order to ensure fair treatment.
- The interview will follow the agreed plan.

The interviewer's role is to listen, probe, assess and above all be objective and fair. Open-ended questions will be the most helpful in giving the candidates a fair opportunity to present information about themselves.

Questions must not be asked which go against the letter or the spirit of the Law or the Council's Equality & Diversity policy.

Interviews should be concluded by:

- Checking that the candidate has no further questions or points to make.
- Advising the candidate that all appointments are subject to satisfactory police and qualification checks (if appropriate), the receipt of references satisfactory to the Council and the relevant document in accordance with the Asylum and Immigration act 1996.
- Advising the candidate what will happen next and when, and who to contact if they have any queries or wish to receive feedback.

Selection decisions must be based on the suitability of the candidates to do the job, considering the overall requirement of the Council.

When a decision has been made, the Clerk to the Council or the RFO (depending on job) should inform each candidate of the outcome, whether successful or unsuccessful.

17. References

References can be helpful but should be used with care. They are perhaps most useful for checking factual information such as job title, length of service, attendance record and many employers when asked for a reference will only provide this type of information.

References must be provided in writing and may be taken up after short-listing or after the interview. They should however, ideally, be obtained before a candidate commences employment with the Council.

18. Qualification checks

Proof of qualifications is required when these are essential to the job, before the selected candidate is offered the post. It may be necessary to offer a post subject to the receipt of certificates etc.

References should be made, where necessary, to the appropriate professional body in respect of compatibility of certain qualifications, and the validity of qualifications obtained the UK.

19. Prevention of illegal working

In accordance with Section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, as amended on 1 May 2004, it is a criminal offence to employ a person who is not entitled to live or work in the UK.

An offer of appointment made by the Council will be subject to the prospective employee producing the following documents.

- A passport issued in country of origin.
- A copy of their birth certificate.
- Evidence of National Insurance number
- Proof of qualifications and references.
- Copies of any previous work permits (if applicable)
- Copy of entry visa (if applicable)

Councils must check that:

- All documents are originals.
- Any photographs are checked to ensure they are consistent with the appearance of the potential employee.
- The date of birth listed is consistent with the appearance of the potential employee.
- Any expiry dates are checked to ensure that they have not passed.
- UK stamps or endorsements allow applicant to undertake type of work offered.

If the potential employee gives a document that has a different name a third document is required to explain the reason for this. This document could be a marriage certificate, divorce document, deed poll, adoption certificate or statutory declaration.

The following parts of the documents presented should be photocopied:

- The front cover and all pages which give the potential employee's personal details; in particular the page with the photograph and the page with the signature.
- Any page containing a UK Government stamp or endorsement which permits the potential employee to do the type of work offered.

Records of every document copied should be kept in the potential employee's personnel file. Should these checks reveal that a potential employee is not permitted to work the Council should then refuse employment to that person.

The Employers Helpline – 0845 010 6677 can help with specific queries.

20. Offer of employment

The Clerk to the Council or RFO (depending on job) will notify the successful candidate. This can be done by telephone, but a letter of offer must be sent promptly afterwards. A verbal offer forms the start of a legally binding contract of employment with the prospective employee. It should be made in consultation with the interviewing panel.

The offer letter should include:

- Reference to the interview.
- The appointment.
- Place of work.
- Annual salary, provision with regard to overtime and the periods and form of payment.
- Any payable expenses.
- Notice period.
- What is required to confirm acceptance.
- Confirmation of start date if known.
- Pension details so that the individual may opt out if wished.

The statement of Particulars of Employment will normally be contained in the offer letter. However, if it is not included it must be sent to the employee within 2 months of commencing employment with the Council.

The statement of particulars will include:

- Identity of the parties.
- Date on which the employee's period of continuous employment began.
- Scale or rate of remuneration and the intervals at which remuneration is paid.
- Any terms and conditions relating to hours of work and normal working hours.
- Any terms and conditions relating to holidays and holiday pay.
- Any terms and conditions relating to incapacity for work due to sickness or injury, including any provision for sick pay.
- Any terms and conditions relating to pension schemes.
- The length of notice which the employee is entitled to receive and obliged to give.
- The title of the job.
- Where the employment is temporary, the period for which it is expected to continue or, if it is for a fixed term, the date when it is to end.
- The place of work.
- Any collective agreements which directly affect the terms and conditions of employment.
- The person to whom employees can apply to if they are dissatisfied with any disciplinary decision or seek to redress a grievance, and the procedural steps to follow.

21. Making a complaint

Any complaint regarding recruitment and selection, the Clerk to the Council or RFO (depending on job) together with a member of the Personnel Working Group must, within thirteen weeks of the act complained of, conduct an investigation. A written response must then be forwarded to the complainant within 21 days.

If a member of the general public or an employee has a complaint concerning unlawful discrimination in respect of recruitment, selection or appointment they have the right of reference to the civil courts and

employment tribunals in addition to raising the matter with their local councillor or MP if they so choose.

22. Victimisation

Victimisation occurs where an individual, whether or not an employee, is treated less favourably than someone else in the same circumstances as a consequence of their previous actions. This can include the individual submitting a grievance, making a complaint, or any other action during the course of their work.

The Council will regard any action(s) by its employees which involve victimisation of other person(s) or employee(s) extremely seriously. Investigation of any allegations will be undertaken and may result in action being taken with the Council's Disciplinary Policy.

23. Induction

Preparations should be in place to ensure new colleagues become effective in the minimum period of time.

Where possible guidance notes should be prepared in advance and an induction checklist compiled to allow an effective programme of induction to be planned.

24. Probation

New employees should be subject to a 13-week probationary period.

The probationary period enables the employee to assess the job and the Council/line-manager to assess suitability and potential. The employee may need extensive support and guidance during this period. During the probation period members of the Personnel Working Group (and the Clerk to the Council or RFO is appropriate) will meet with the employee every 4-5 weeks to assess their employment to date,

The meeting will encompass:

- Work performance, including quality of work, accuracy, speed and ability to meet deadlines.
- Personal related abilities, including relations with staff/public and councillors, interest, enthusiasm, reliability, punctuality, initiative.
- Attendance record.
- Any training or remedial action required.
- Any concerns that the employee may have.

Where, at the end of the probationary period, the employee's performance is assessed as satisfactory, the employee will be informed that they are established as a permanent member of staff.
