

## RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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## Oxford City Council

### RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

#### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

Oxford City Council wants to hire and retain the best people. Through our employees, we believe we can achieve our vision of building a world class city for everyone

The recruitment and selection of employees is one of a managers most important responsibilities and the Council takes every possible step to ensure that not only are practices fair, objective, transparent and legally compliant but that they attract and result in the appointment of the best candidates.

The Council values the diversity of its communities and wants to ensure this is reflected in its workforce, so that it has all the attributes, talents and skills necessary to effectively engage with all community groups, and hence provide excellent, high quality services to all its residents.

#### 2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy and procedure applies to all recruiting managers, potential employees and employees applying for a different job within the Council including those seeking redeployment, secondment and promotion.

#### 3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

##### **Recruiting Managers (line manager of the vacant post)**

- 3.1 The recruiting manager will:
- Design and manage the recruitment process with care and attention to ensure a high quality appointment. Recruitment is an expensive exercise and the Council places great value in getting it right first time. As such the level of attention given to any recruitment should be similar to that which would be given to a significant procurement exercise;
  - Ensure they are fully trained in recruitment or through previous experience can demonstrate that they have the skills and knowledge required to implement this policy;
  - Recruit and select in a fair and objective way, ensuring they have a thorough understanding of the Council's relevant equalities and employment policies.
  - Understand their role and responsibilities at each stage, using this Policy and the supplementary 'Recruiting Managers Guidance' accordingly.

## **Human Resources**

### **3.2 Human Resources will:**

- Provide strategic advice on recruitment and workforce planning options;
- Provide advice to recruiting managers on effective methods to attract potential employees who contribute to a diverse and high performing workforce;
- Assist in determining an appropriate selection and testing process;
- Co-ordinate the administrative elements of the recruitment process;
- Provide coaching and training for recruiting managers.

## **4. SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS**

- 4.1 Applicants should refer to supporting materials on the Council's [website](#) to find out more about working for Oxford City Council and for guidance on applying online, writing a great job application and preparing for interview.
- 4.2 Applicants who have more specific queries about a particular job may contact the recruiting manager identified in the job details for an informal discussion.
- 4.3 Applicants are welcome to contact the Human Resources team for general queries regarding the recruitment process or working for Oxford City Council.
- 4.4 Applicants who are unsuccessful at shortlisting or interview stage may request feedback to assist them with future applications. Requests should be made to Human Resources.

## **5. APPOINTMENT DECISIONS & PAY**

- 5.1 All appointment decisions must be made by a panel consisting of a minimum of two people. In most cases the panel will include one employee with line management responsibility for the job. At least one panel member will be on a higher grade than the position being filled.
- 5.2 Elected Members are responsible for appointing the Chief Executive and Directors through the Appointments Committee, which must include a member of the City Executive Board. In the case of the Chief Executive appointment the decision must also be ratified by full Council.
- 5.3 Offers of employment should be made by the recruiting manager. Appointment will be at the bottom of the grade, unless there are exceptional circumstances which should be agreed with the Corporate Lead for HR Policy and Organisational Development and before making the offer.
- 5.4 Offers of employment are conditional upon completion of all appropriate checks including references, medical clearance, proof of right to work in the UK and employment vetting and criminal record checks.

## **6. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS OR RELATIONSHIPS**

- 6.1 Applicants are required to declare any relationships to existing employees or Elected Members. Applicants also have a duty to declare any interests that they may have in respect of any aspect of the Council's business. Further details are in the [Employee Code of Conduct](#).
- 6.2 It is the recruiting manager's responsibility to ensure that if an applicant declares an interest or relationship, that the person concerned does not take any part in the recruitment process.
- 6.3 If the recruiting manager themselves identify that they have an interest or relationship with an applicant they must declare the fact to Human Resources immediately and either remove themselves from the recruitment process or agree with Human Resources appropriate measures and safeguards to ensure that the recruitment and selection process is fair and cannot be influenced by any personal interest or relationship.

## **7. POLITICALLY RESTRICTED POSTS**

- 7.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 imposes restrictions on political activities by employees who hold certain posts. This includes the Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Heads of Service and any posts that are 'politically sensitive' i.e. giving advice on a regular basis to Elected Members or speaking on behalf of the Council on a regular basis to journalists or broadcasters. If a post is deemed politically restricted this will be indicated on the job particulars. Employees should refer to the Council's Guidance for Employees and Managers on Politically Restricted Posts for further information. External applicants requiring further information should contact Human Resources.

## **8. HAVING MORE THAN ONE JOB**

- 8.1 The Council recognises the increasing variation in peoples' work patterns and arrangements. It does not wish to prevent employees from having more than one employment unnecessarily. We do, however, have a duty to ensure that employment legislation is not being breached and that there is not, or not likely to be a conflict of interest. Further information is available in the Council's Guidance for Employees and Managers on Additional Employment which is available on the Intranet or from Human Resources. External applicants should contact Human Resources if they have any queries or need further information.

## **9. APPOINTMENTS EXEMPT FROM FULL SELECTION PROCEDURES**

- 9.1 There are some instances where a full selection procedure may not be applicable. These include:-

- Redeployments – employees who are on the redeployment list are given priority for interview where they meet the criteria for the role. This includes employees who are under notice of redundancy and those who are

seeking alternative employment for health reasons. In these situations the procedures outlined in the Organisational Change Policy and the Attendance Management Policy should be followed.

- Internal Secondments – employees can apply for secondment opportunities within the Council through the Council's selection process. If the position subsequently becomes permanent the 'seconded' may be offered the position without the need for a further recruitment process. Refer to the Council's Secondments Policy and Procedure for further information.
- Temporary to permanent employment – Employees who are in a fixed term position may, in some circumstances, be made permanent without the need for a further recruitment process providing a full and open selection process has been carried out prior to the appointment and they have completed a minimum of 12 months in post. This is on the proviso that their performance in the role is rated as at least a good regarding objectives and behaviours.

## **10. TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT AND AGENCY STAFF**

- 10.1 The Council prefers to make permanent appointments where possible. Circumstances sometime, however, dictate the need to make temporary appointments. The Council aims to keep the use of temporary contracts to a minimum and maximise permanent employment opportunities. Where temporary appointments are necessary the Council will ensure compliance with employment legislation to avoid less favourable treatment.
- 10.2 Agency staff are normally recruited from agencies that are under contract or preferred supplier agreements with the Council.
- 10.3 In all cases where it is established there is a need to hire a temporary member of staff, the appointment will be subject to the approval of Human Resources.

## **11. INCREASING THE DIVERSITY OF THE WORKFORCE**

- 11.1 The Council wants to reflect the diversity of the community we serve so we welcome applicants from all communities. For all roles, we particularly encourage applications from suitably qualified black and minority ethnic candidates because people from these backgrounds are currently under represented in our workforce. Where applicable, we encourage applications from women in management posts as we are under-represented in these areas.
- 11.2 As part of this the Council is an accredited Two Ticks employer since 2010 and is committed to making all reasonable adjustments to accommodate any applicants declaring a disability under the Equality Act 2010.
- 11.3 The Council has fully embedded the Two Ticks standards in its recruitment and retention processes. We will interview all disabled applicants who meet the essential minimum criteria for a job vacancy and to consider them on their abilities. We will carefully consider and facilitate any reasonable adjustments

necessary to enable a disabled applicant to attend an interview or undertake any relevant and appropriate assessment centre or test.

11.4 Some of the ways in which we are seeking to have a diverse workforce include:-

- Advertising all posts in the Job Centre Plus and other appropriate local organisations, community newspapers and through community groups.
- Working with communities and neighbourhoods to understand the barriers to employment and seeking to address them through focus group feedback.
- Actively seeking feedback from unsuccessful applicants from diverse groups with the aim of improving our processes.
- Working in a Business in the Community Partnership with local schools to provide mentoring, work experience and careers workshop opportunities for students about to start their working life.
- Providing and promoting Apprenticeships, training schemes and developing Apprentice Ambassadors.
- Signing up to and supporting national campaigns and working with diversity partners such as Stonewall and Mindful Employer to embed best practice.
- Supporting local organisations which are working to get vulnerable groups into employment or return to work.
- Implementing initiatives to promote the Council as an employer of choice and community leader, such as the 'Oxford Living Wage'.

11.5 The Council's Fair Employment Statement gives more information on the Council's commitment to equality and diversity and is available at on the Council's [website](#).

## **12. EMPLOYING YOUNG PEOPLE**

### **Workers aged 16 and 17**

12.1 For workers over the minimum school leaving age, but under 18, legal restrictions on hours worked and other safeguards still apply e.g. right to paid time off for study, a requirement for a risk assessment of the impact of the young workers' relative inexperience on their health and safety in the workplace and other restrictions on working hours etc. Specific advice should be sought from Human Resources.

### **Young workers aged over 18**

12.2 Workers aged 18 or over may also have an entitlement to time off for training – seek advice from Human Resources if necessary.

### **13. EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH CRIMINAL RECORDS**

- 13.1 When a person applies for a job with Oxford City Council, we will not take into account previous spent convictions as laid down in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (ROA 74), except when a person is being appointed to an exempted position under that Act.
- 13.2 The disclosure of a criminal record or other information will not necessarily bar a person from appointment. The Council will take into account factors including the nature of the offence, the relevance to the post the person has applied for, how long ago the offence took place, etc.
- 13.3 Information provided will be treated in confidence and will only be taken into account in relation to an application where an exemption applies.
- 13.4 Refer to the Council's Policy on the Employment of People with Criminal Records which is available on the Council's [website](#) or on the intranet for further information.

### **14. SAFER RECRUITMENT**

- 14.1 As part of the Council's commitment to safeguarding children and adults we undertake 'Safer Recruitment' when recruiting to relevant posts. Safer recruitment in practice means thinking about and including issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults at every stage of the recruitment process. Adopting a structured recruitment process and ensuring all the necessary checking and vetting takes place will minimise the risk of appointing someone who is unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.
- 14.2 Recruiting managers who are recruiting to a position where someone will be working with children or vulnerable adults should have undertaken safeguarding training and should understand the responsibilities outlined in this policy and the supporting Recruiting Managers Guidance in relation to safer recruitment.
- 14.3 The Human Resources Team will be responsible for carrying out vetting checks and referencing, but it is the recruiting managers responsibility to ensure that during interview and selection that a candidates suitability and attitude towards working with children and/or vulnerable adults is explored thoroughly, and that gaps or anomalies in their employment or training history are understood, scrutinised and recorded.

### **15. DATA PROTECTION**

- 15.1 The Council will ensure that all information obtained during the recruitment process will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Further information is available on the [Data Protection Policy Page](#) of the Council's website.

15.2 The Council is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end may use the information provided in an application form for the prevention and detection of fraud. It may also share this information with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering funds for these purposes. The Council's [Policy on Avoiding Bribery, Fraud and Corruption](#) and [Privacy Notice](#) are available on the Council's website.

## **16. WHO DEALS WITH COMPLAINTS?**

16.1 Applicants can make any complaint to Human Resources in the first instance who will attempt to resolve concerns, in consultation with the recruiting managers, where appropriate. If you are not satisfied with the outcome you may make a formal complaint to the Council using the [Corporate Complaints Procedure](#) which is available on the Council's website. Council employees may use the Council's Grievance Policy and Procedure.

## **17. RELATED POLICIES AND FURTHER INFORMATION**

17.1 Related Policies and documents are listed below:-

- Code of Conduct
- Corporate Complaints Policy
- Corporate Equalities Scheme
- Data Protection Policy
- Fair Employment Statement
- Grievance Policy and Procedure
- Guidance for Employees and Managers on Additional Employment
- Guidance for Employees and Managers on Politically Restricted Posts
- Organisational Change Policy and Procedure
- Pay Policy Statement
- Policy on the Employment of People with Criminal Records
- Policy on Avoiding Bribery, Fraud and Corruption
- Policy on Safeguarding Children
- Secondments Policy and Procedure

## **18. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

18.1 The Chief Executive, as Head of Paid Service, has overall responsibility for employees and will receive regular monitoring information including diversity information on the effectiveness of this Policy.