HELLESDON PARISH COUNCIL
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Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure

Introduction

This policy sets out the position of the Council in respect of recruiting and selecting the best candidate for the role.

Scope

This policy applies to the appointment of all employees excluding the Parish Clerk

Procedures for the vacancy

- **a)** When a post becomes vacant or the establishment of a new post is agreed, the purpose and objectives of the post will be defined.
- **b)** A person specification will be prepared detailing the skills and experience and qualifications required to fulfil the role
- **c)** Job descriptions and person specifications will be prepared to take account of The Equality Act 2010.
- **d)** Consideration will be given to whether the vacancy is appropriate for permanent, fixed term, temporary or casual appointment.
- **e)** The above points in section 1 will be the responsibility of the Staffing Committee with assistance from the Parish Clerk.
- **f)** A panel made up of no more than three members of the Staffing Committee will be appointed for the specific recruitment process in the case of a Finance Officer, Projects Officer or Head Groundsman. For all other posts the interview process would be the responsibility of the Parish Clerk with approval from the Staffing Committee.

Job Description

- **a)** Every existing post, without exception, will have a written job description outlining the main duties and responsibilities and specifying the key tasks.
- **b)** This will be drafted by the Parish Clerk with approval for any amendments coming from the Staffing Committee as per Terms of Reference.

Person Specification

- **a)** A person specification to specify the attributes required to fulfil the duties of the job will be prepared. It will outline the criteria against which applicants are assessed at the short listing and interview stage.

b) This will be drafted by the Parish Clerk with approval for any amendments coming from the Staffing Committee as per Terms of Reference.

Pay and Conditions

a) At this stage, when the job description and person specification have been defined, the question of Terms and Conditions will be considered.

b) This will be drafted by the Parish Clerk with approval for any amendments coming from the Staffing Committee as per Terms of Reference.

Disclosures

a) The disclosure of a criminal record, or other information, does not debar the candidate unless the selection panel considers that the conviction renders him/her unsuitable for appointment. In making this decision the Council will consider the nature of the offence, how long ago and the age of the candidate when it was committed and any other factors which may be relevant, including appropriate considerations in relation to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

b) Failure by an applicant to declare a conviction, caution or bind-over may, however, disqualify the candidate from appointment. Disclosure of a conviction after appointment will be subject to the disciplinary procedure.

c) It will be the responsibility of the Parish Clerk to apply for any DBS checks which they deem necessary. The results of such checks will be discussed by the Staffing Committee if appropriate.

d) When recruiting the council will be mindful of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Safeguarding

a) The council acknowledges that everyone who uses facilities for which it is responsible, or who may be involved in Council-led activities, should be treated with dignity and respect, and should be protected from harm in accordance with the Council's Safeguarding Policy.

Fixed Term (Temporary) Contracts

a) All temporary contracts should have defined or estimated end dates and where appropriate these will be issued as Fixed Term Contracts.

b) The use of 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 (such as seasonal posts).

Methods of Recruitment

In-house recruitment

a. The number and quality of replies to each source will be monitored by the Parish Clerk so that their relative success can be judged and can inform future advertising. Whether handling the whole process in house, or handing over the job to an agency, certain other decisions will be made before the advertisement is placed. These may include:

- the design of the advert
- the information pack for candidates and contact person for further details
- how applicants should respond will be detailed in the advertisement
- who will make up the recruitment panel
- the dates for interviews
- the nature of the full selection process

b. The Council will as far as possible seek to run this process themselves, led by the Parish Clerk.

Advertising the vacancy
The advertisement should contain the following:

- The Council's corporate identity logo
- The heading, including the Council's name and the job title
- What will have primary importance in the text - for example, job interest, pay, career opportunities, location and qualifications required
- What form of reply is required and the closing date for applications and interview dates for the position

  b) All advertisements must be approved by the Parish Clerk and ratified by the Staffing Committee

Information for candidates

a) The total package will vary according to the advertised position. All applicants will receive the below items:-

- A copy of the job description
- A copy of the person specification
- The relevant application form

Initial applications

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

Short listing

a) It is important that the immediate line manager is involved, and can express a view before a final decision is made.

b) If possible the candidate should meet the prospective line manager and visit the prospective work location before deciding whether to accept the job.

c) When the deadline is reached the Parish Clerk will be responsible for the confidentiality of the information supplied in line with all data protection legislation.

d) For posts requiring an application form a blind sift, redacting any personal information, will be conducted in conjunction with the appointed panel to shortlist to an appropriate number of candidates to interview.

e) The candidates will then be marked accordingly using the person specification and job description as criteria, with the most appropriate candidates being invited to interview.

The reasons applicants have not been short-listed will be recorded, to include:

- lack of relevant skills,
- lack of relevant previous experience,
- lack of relevant qualification
- lack of work experience at appropriate level

a) Internal candidates are to be given no special consideration and it is their responsibility to communicate to the panel through their application their suitability for the post.

b) If at any point during this process a panel member, or the Parish Clerk, is aware of any reason why they may be prejudiced against or in favour of any candidate then they must excuse themselves from the process immediately and another member of the Staffing Committee must replace them.

c) When the shortlisted candidates for interview are known then the panel shall be supplied with the candidates' personal information.

d) The Parish Clerk will then invite the shortlisted candidates to interview.

Interview arrangements

a) Candidates are recruited following interview. It is, therefore, essential that the interview is structured and questions aimed at obtaining information

about the candidate, relevant to the person specification and job description. It will be the responsibility of the appointed members of the panel to construct these questions with guidance from the Parish Clerk.

b) If at the time of interview additional requirements are identified to overcome any disability not previously notified, the Council is under a duty to make reasonable adjustments accordingly.
c) It is the responsibility of the Parish Clerk to facilitate this arrangement and communicate all details to the candidates.

Preparation for Interview

All panel members will receive adequate notice of the interview, and any supporting paper work or requirements.

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

Selection methods

a) The selection method chosen must be at the appropriate level for the post.
b) A range of selection methods will be considered, including ability tests, personality questionnaire, presentations, group exercises, in-tray exercises, written papers and interviews (first and second stage).
c) 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 or potential to carry out or train for the duties appropriate to the job in question.
d) Candidates should be informed in advance that they will be sitting any test.
e) Candidates should be provided with a suitable comfortable area with refreshments to wait.
f) Good interviews are prepared and conducted in an orderly and thorough manner. In preparation the panel should:

- Compare the person specification with what is already known about the candidate: which areas of experience, qualifications, etc, need exploring or clarifying?
- Ensure preliminary communication between members of the panel to facilitate a balanced and controlled approach to interviews.
- Plan the questions: they should be designed to probe the candidates' knowledge, ability, disposition and attitudes.
- Allocate the subjects: if there is more than one interviewer, decide who will cover the different areas, e.g. job knowledge, training, qualifications?
- Highlight areas on the application form that need to be followed up.
- Give candidates an opportunity to ask questions

- Allow sufficient time for the interviewers both to record an individual assessment of the previous candidate and to review the plan for the next candidate. Do not cut an interview short.
- Make sure there will be no interruptions, e.g. divert telephone calls and switch off mobile phones.
- Inform reception staff of interview details to ensure applicants can be welcomed courteously and efficiently, shown the cloakroom etc.

a) A Chair of the panel should be appointed prior to the day itself who should keep the interview moving. The facilitator will also be responsible for greeting the candidate and informing them of the content and running order of the interview.
b) If the panel members are expected to interview for an entire day a simple lunch will be provided.

Interviewing

a) The panel should arrive in good time for the interview with the appropriate paperwork in place. All details surrounding the requirements of all panel members to be addressed no later than 5pm of the last working day before the interview day.
b) It is best practice to have a pre-interview meeting with the panel to run through the processes and address any last minute concerns.
c) All questions will be given to all candidates in a considered manner and no panel member should make any last minute additions or ask a question in the interview without informing the panel as a whole first.
d) Any follow up questions to the agreed questions may take any form as appropriate, but must absolutely pertain to the original question.
e) The focus on the style of interviewing must at all times be to draw the best possible response from the interviewees and not be designed to trip up a candidate or to ask 'trick questions'.

Making a decision after interview

a) The panel should meet in good time following the interviews in order to make a decision.
b) Due consideration should be given to the marking and assessment sheets when making this decision in accordance with best practice.
c) Any decision does not necessarily have to be unanimous but should absolutely include a majority decision with input from the potential line manager.

d) It is the responsibility of the Parish Clerk to inform the successful candidate, gain a verbal acceptance and then send out a written offer of appointment letter.

e) Upon receipt of this signed offer of appointment letter the Parish Clerk will then inform the unsuccessful candidates with appropriate feedback.

Appointment

a) After making a decision the panel, via the Parish Clerk, should then feed back to the Staffing Committee with a recommendation to ratify the panel's decision.

b) The appropriate administrative procedures for the appointment is then handed over to the Parish Clerk who will obtain references and make sure arrangements are in place for a start date.

References

a) References will be used to check factual information such as job title, length of service, attendance record.

b) The Parish Clerk can obtain this information most efficiently by asking specific questions or using a standard form.

c) If the Parish Clerk wants an opinion as to suitability for a specific job, a brief outline of duties should be included, and a telephone discussion may be helpful.

d) Written references will be taken up after short-listing or after interview and whether an offer of appointment will be made subject to receipt of these references satisfactory to the Council.