



Ashfield District Council

Recruitment & Selection Policy

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Recruitment & Selection Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Ashfield District Council recognises that the most valuable resource in the organisation is its workforce and aims at all times to recruit the applicant who is most suited to the particular vacancy to ensure the success of the organisation now and in the future.
- 1.2 Recruitment will solely be on the basis of the applicant's knowledge, abilities, skills and behaviours as measured against the criteria for the post and outlined in the job description, person specification and competency framework. Qualifications, skills, experience and behaviours will be assessed at the level that is relevant to the post.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline the Council's approach to recruitment and selection to ensure that a fair and consistent approach is applied and to enable managers to recruit the most suitable candidate each time they recruit.
- 2.2 It is the responsibility of all managers to ensure that this policy is followed within their service areas.

3. Equal Opportunities

- 3.1 The Council is committed to applying its equal opportunities policies at all stages of the recruitment and selection process. Short listing, interviewing and selection of applicants will always be carried out without regard to gender, sexual orientation, marital status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age or trade union membership.
- 3.2 The Council supports both disabled applicants and employees once they commence in post. If an applicant informs us on the application form that they are disabled under the Equality Act then they will be guaranteed an interview if they meet the essential criteria on the person specification, having demonstrated this on their application form.
- 3.3 As part of the recruitment process, all applicants are provided with the opportunity to notify the Council if they require any adjustments to enable them to attend an interview or participate in the assessment process. All reasonable steps will be taken to support disabled applicants and implement any requested adjustments.
- 3.4 All individuals involved in recruitment and selection will have received appropriate training by the Council (or will have been determined to have significant relevant experience of recruitment through previous employment and will have received training / information on the key principles of the Council's recruitment process).
- 3.5 All applicants are asked for information on a voluntary basis for equality monitoring purposes. This information will not be made available to the recruiting manager but will be used to monitor and develop equality policies and plans and to inform service and process changes.

4. Vacancy identification and analysis

- 4.1 Before recruitment takes place, a review of the vacancy will be undertaken by the manager and consideration given as to whether the vacancy should be filled in the same way. For example whether the job can be designed differently i.e. change of duties, amendments to qualifications, change to the number of hours / working pattern (see also section 8 for more information on agile working). If recruitment to the vacancy is necessary, the manager will review how the vacancy should be filled in order to ensure effective and efficient use of Council resources.
- 4.2 During periods of down-sizing or reorganisation, and in particular during periods of financial constraint, the Council may partially or wholly freeze external recruitment in order to reduce costs and mitigate against redundancy for current employees.
- 4.3 Some posts may be ring fenced for existing employees where there is a restructure or redundancy situation. Human Resources also have the discretion to withhold a request to advertise a particular vacancy for advertisement where there is a possibility that an employee requiring redeployment could meet the requirements of the post. For further information please refer to the Redeployment Policy and the Restructure & Redundancy Policy.
- 4.4 Where the manager recognises that due to current market conditions / recruitment incentives are required they should be considered at this stage (for example market supplements).

5. Job Description and Person Specification

- 5.1 All posts will have a job description and a person specification which will be reviewed by the manager prior to any recruitment to ensure that it is up to date, fit for purpose and an accurate reflection of the post.
- 5.2 Copies of the job description and person specification will be available to applicants when applying for vacant posts and all selection and assessment will be completed against these documents.
- 5.3 Some posts at the Council are determined as 'politically restricted', as defined by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. This means that the post holder is restricted from standing for, or holding, elected office. If a post is politically restricted this will be stated in the advert and outlined on the job description and person specification.
- 5.4 Posts will have been subject to a job evaluation process to determine the grade of the job.

6. Competency Framework

- 6.1 The Council's competency framework sets out how we want people in the Council to work. There is a leadership framework and an employee framework which is used for both recruitment and performance management purposes. The person specification for each post will detail which framework and which individual competencies are relevant to the particular post. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate their ability within the relevant competencies for the post when they apply.

7. Advertising

- 7.1 All externally advertised posts will be displayed on the Mansfield and Ashfield Shared Service jobs portal which can be accessed at www.mansfieldandashfieldjobs.co.uk and also made available through Job Centre Plus, which is operated by the local employment service. Where appropriate and cost effective, and depending on the nature of the job, posts will also be advertised via the Council's social media pages, online jobs boards and relevant specialist professional publications to maximise the chances of attracting the best quality and most suitable candidate.
- 7.2 Some vacancies may be advertised internally for current employees of the Council only to apply. Typically this will be in circumstances where there is a restructure or employees are potentially at risk or where the Council feels that there are current employees who have the required skills, knowledge and experience to fulfil the post.
- 7.3 If an employee applies for an internal vacancy and subsequently leaves the organisation, providing that they were employed at the time that the post was advertised then they can be considered for the post.

8. Agile working

- 8.1 A range of flexible working options including flexi time, part time working and job share is available to support employees to achieve an effective work-life balance.
- 8.2 All applicants are encouraged to discuss flexible working at the recruitment stage if this is something that is of interest.
- 8.3 The Council is looking at developing a more agile workforce and consideration of how and where the job can be undertaken should also form part of the pre-recruitment process.

9. Applications

- 9.1 All applications must be received on the standard online application form which can be accessed via the jobs portal. Reasonable adjustments will be implemented for those applicants who require them due to a disability. Applicants who require adjustments should contact Human Resources to discuss this further.
- 9.2 Applicants may apply for some senior management vacancies using a CV. If this form of application is acceptable this will be clearly indicated in the advert. In these circumstances, it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the CV they submit addresses the requirements of the post and associated competencies. Applicants may be required to submit a supporting statement along with their CV.
- 9.3 The Council reserves the right to limit the number of applications that will be accepted for posts where a high volume of applications is generally received. The advert will indicate if a limit will be placed on applications for the post so that applicants are aware that they need to submit their application as soon as possible.

10. Selecting candidates

- 10.1 All shortlisting, interview and candidate selection panels will consist of a minimum of two people. The number of individuals on a selection panel may vary depending on the type and nature of the vacancy, however, the choice and number of panel members should be considered carefully in relation to the vacancy and each member should add value to the process. The panel should consist of appropriate individuals who have an interest in the appointment and are able to make an informed decision on selection (for example the line manager of the post; individuals with specific knowledge of the skills of the post or stakeholders).
- 10.2 Panel members must declare an interest and/or withdraw from the process if a family member or close friend applies. This will also apply if a panel member feels that there is a conflict of interest due to prior involvement which could be seen to affect their objectivity (for instance being involved in disciplinary / grievance matters). In these circumstances further advice should be sought from Human Resources.
- 10.3 Wherever possible the same people should serve on the selection panel through the entire process. This means that the same people who shortlisted applicants should be involved in the interview / selection process and should make the final decision regarding selection of the successful applicant(s). In circumstances where this is not possible, at least half of the panel should remain consistent and should be involved in both shortlisting and selection. For example, if two people completed the shortlisting, one of those must also complete the interview / selection process.
- 10.4 Alternative arrangements may be implemented for Chief Officer appointments which will be determined on a case by case basis depending on the requirements of the post. Elected Members of the Council may be involved in the selection process for posts at Chief Officer level. Other than these agreed posts, an elected member should not solicit for any appointment / applicant or seek to influence the recruiting panel.
- 10.4 The confidentiality of all applications will be respected by all individuals involved in the recruitment process.
- 10.5 When applicants are notified that they have been shortlisted they will be informed whether written exercises or other relevant tests are to be used as part of the selection process. Reasonable adjustments will be implemented for any applicants that require them in order to participate in the selection process and applicants should notify Human Resources if they require adjustments.
- 10.6 The relevant assessment form(s) will be completed to ensure that each applicant has been assessed fairly against the person specification and competency framework. Each individual involved in the assessment process must ensure that they take accurate notes, for example in relation to interviews; assessment centre observations etc.
- 10.7 A number of techniques could be used as part of the selection process and this could include (but is not limited to) interviews; assessment centres, psychometric tests; scenario tests; prioritisation exercises; presentations and ICT based tests. Managers should ensure that the assessment method reflects the requirements

and/or competencies of the post. When they are invited to take part in the selection process, applicants will be advised what assessment techniques will be used.

- 10.8 The Council may use outside expertise, for example East Midlands Councils or recruitment agencies, in the advertising of posts and/or in the selection and assessment process when considered necessary.

11. Offers of employment

- 11.1 The recruiting manager is responsible for notifying the successful candidate and making a verbal offer of employment. Any verbal offer will be subject to relevant pre-employment checks (see section 12 and 13 for more information).
- 11.2 The commencing salary for new starters will be on the minimum point of the grade. In certain circumstances managers may exercise discretion when offering a salary above the minimum point but should always seek advice from Human Resources before confirming to the candidate to ensure consistency and that there is a robust rationale for the decision.

12. References

- 12.1 Human Resources will request two references for successful external candidates, at least one of which should be the candidate's last employer or in cases of school leavers / graduates a reference from the college / university. Exceptionally, one reference may be a character reference, but this should not be from a relative of the candidate.
- 12.2 For internal candidates, a reference will typically be provided by the employee's current manager along with another manager within the Council who works closely with the applicant. Where this is not possible, a reference may be obtained from a member of a partner organisation. Any referee should have experience of working with the employee or a good knowledge of their skills. Typically references will only be sought for internal candidates where they are applying for a post outside their current section and where they will report to a different manager from their current one.
- 12.3 Although an Elected Member of Ashfield District Council cannot solicit for any appointment / applicant, they are able to provide references for applicants.
- 12.4 Where references are received and determined as unsatisfactory to the Council any offer of employment may be withdrawn. Alternatively the Council may withdraw an offer of employment where, despite numerous attempts, they are unable to secure a satisfactory reference.
- 12.5 Copies of references that have been used as part of the recruitment process will be provided to candidates on request.

13. Pre-employment checks

- 13.1 In addition to satisfactory references, any offer of employment is subject to a number of pre-employment checks which include:-
- Evidence of eligibility to work in the under as detailed in the Asylum & Immigration Act 1996.

- Occupational Health questionnaire and any relevant medical checks.
- Sight of original certificates for qualifications.
- Any relevant safeguarding checks, such as a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check.

13.2 Applicants will be required to bring original certificates / qualifications when they attend for interview / selection process along with documents to demonstrate their eligibility to work in the UK. Further information regarding the documents required will be provided on invite to the interview / selection process.

13.3 Depending on the nature of the post, a basic criminal record check; standard or enhanced DBS check or police vetting may be required. The advert will clearly indicate if a check is required and this will also be detailed on the job description / person specification. More information to progress the relevant check will be provided to the successful candidate once an offer of employment has been made.

13.4 If any required pre-employment checks are not successfully completed any offer of employment may be withdrawn.

13.5 Applicants who are applying for some specified posts that involve driving, particularly posts driving larger vehicles, will also be required to undertake additional medical / licence checks. Details of these checks will be provided as part of the recruitment process.

14. Unsuccessful applicants and feedback

14.1 Applicants who are unsuccessful at the interview / selection process stage will be notified via email by Human Resources and provided with the opportunity to receive feedback.

15. Appointable but unsuccessful applicants

15.1 Managers may view the details of appointable but unsuccessful applicants to determine if they are suitable to fill a vacancy and therefore save on recruitment costs providing that the posts are a similar skill set and within two grades. In these circumstances, applicants may only be considered where the assessment for the post they were unsuccessfully appointed to was within 6 months of the new vacancy occurring. Managers should contact Human Resources to progress this.

15.2 Similarly, if between commencing date and six months a new employee leaves or is dismissed, the recruiting manager can determine if the second choice candidate who applied for the post is appointable and, if so, offer the post to that candidate.

16. Interview expenses

16.1 Depending on the nature of the selection event and the distance an applicant needs to travel, interview expenses may be reimbursed.

16.2 All recruitment expenses are paid at the discretion of the Council and only expenses considered as reasonable (depending on the grade of the post and distance travelled) will be reimbursed. Claims cannot be reimbursed without copies of the appropriate receipts / tickets and typically this will be limited to travel and car parking. More information regarding expenses is available from Human Resources.

17. Inaccurate or misleading information

- 17.1 Where an applicant knowingly gives inaccurate or misleading information or withholds relevant information, this may be considered as grounds for withdrawing an offer of employment. Where the applicant has already commenced employment, the Council may take action under the Disciplinary Policy.

18. Former employees

- 18.1 Where the Council is aware that an applicant is a former employee of the Council who was dismissed for gross misconduct, consideration may be given to the circumstances of the dismissal to inform any decision about whether or not to shortlist or recruit the individual. This will also apply where an applicant has resigned before the outcome of a disciplinary hearing or investigation into an allegation of misconduct.

19. Maintaining records

- 19.1 All original applications, assessment sheets and interview / assessment notes will be stored by Human Resources for a period of six months after the assessment has taken place, after which time records will be destroyed.
- 19.2 All application information will be stored by the system for a period of 12 months to enable the Council to use the data for appropriate statutory reporting (for example the Workforce Profile report).
- 19.3 Following a recruitment process, candidates may be issued with a survey to determine their levels of satisfaction with the recruitment process and their overall experience. This information is analysed and used to improve the service in the future.

20. Complaints against the process

- 20.1 Where a current employee of Ashfield District Council feels that they have been treated unfairly at any stage of the recruitment and selection process they may submit a grievance.
- 20.2 External applicants should raise a complaint using the Council's Complaints Policy and this should be raised within three months of the act or event which gave rise to the complaint.
- 20.3 In cases where a complaint is made by either an internal or an external applicant, Human Resources may immediately suspend any appointment to the post in question, provided no contractual obligation has been entered into with the selected applicant, whilst an investigation is undertaken.

21. Useful documents / additional information

- Restructure & Redundancy Policy
- Redeployment Policy