

# People Management – Policy and Guidance

## Recruitment and Selection Policy

November 2019



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## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Carmarthenshire County Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy aims to ensure that internal and external appointments to posts at all levels within the Authority are equitable, consistent and safe. Carmarthenshire County Council will ensure our workforce comprises of employees with the knowledge, skills, experience and attributes which maximise the performance of the Council's activities, ensuring best value services to the community of Carmarthenshire.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- To ensure that the workforce has the relevant competencies, experience, skills and attributes for the Authority's current and future needs - the right people for the right roles at the right time.
- To provide guidelines for the recruitment and selection of employees which will ensure consistent and ethical practice across all departments.
- To provide a framework for best practice in recruitment and selection setting a minimum standard of performance, which may be enhanced by approved departmental adaptations which meet specific needs.
- To ensure that recruitment practice reflects relevant legislation, including ACAS Codes of Practice and the Welsh Government's Ethical Employment and Supply Chain principles and to commend these principles to our suppliers and contractors.
- To support the recruitment of a diverse workforce that will enrich the organisation and reflect the community we serve

## **PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

This policy applies to all employees and job applicants/candidates other than those in educational establishments with delegated powers. Please refer to the schools' model Safer Recruitment Policy for recruitment and selection within schools.

This policy encompasses all activities that form part of the recruitment and selection process. In order for the policy to be effective, it is essential that any employee involved in any aspect of the recruitment and/or selection of staff is familiar with the content of this document and adheres to it.

Whilst the principles of this policy apply to the recruitment of Chief Officers, there are separate arrangements in place for shortlisting and appointments which involve Elected Members as set out in the Council's Constitution.

## **SAFER RECRUITMENT**

As an Authority we are committed to ensuring that people who work in regulated activity and/or with children or adults at risk, are checked via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). It is the responsibility of the Recruiting Manager to ensure that the job profile states what level of check is required. Advice can be sought from your HR or Recruitment Advisor.

A DBS check is just one of a range of checks we undertake to ensure that we recruit safely. Recruiting managers must follow a safer recruitment process throughout by ensuring:

- Clear messages about safeguarding are sent to candidates from the outset
- The selection process must include a face to face interview
- Any gaps in employment or education history are fully investigated
- Reasons for leaving previous post(s) are clarified

We make it clear that we will ask for [references](#) from the appropriate referee. References must be scrutinised and the referee must be contacted if all of the questions have not been answered or if there are vague or ambiguous statements.

All pre-employment enquiries / checks must be completed and satisfied before an offer is made to the preferred candidate. Pre-employment checks for posts which include working with children and adults at risk may require additional checks – [see Reference Guidance](#).

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Ensuring the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection process is the responsibility of the employing department, with support and advice from the People Services team. The appointment of senior staff employed under JNC conditions of service i.e. Chief Executive, Directors and Heads of Service, will be made by Elected Members with support from the People Management team. Appointments will be made in accordance with the Council's obligations as an employer under the prevailing relevant employment legislation

The Recruitment and Selection process must be documented accurately at all stages. In accordance with the [Information Governance Guidelines](#)

all documentation will be retained for a period of **six months** following the selection process. This allows for any post recruitment enquiries to be responded to by the People Services team or the recruiting manager. All documentation must be stored and then destroyed in accordance with [the Guidelines](#).

Training is available to support those employees who are required to participate in the Authority's recruitment and selection processes. Please contact the Organisational Development Team for further information.

Anyone who is directly involved in the recruitment process i.e. shortlisting, interviews and assessments must "declare an interest" if they have a close personal association or relationship with any of the candidates. [Please refer to the Employee Code of Conduct and Close Personal Associations and Relationships](#) guidance.

Where appropriate and where there may be a perception of a conflict of interest, another suitably experienced manager may have to stand in to ensure independence and transparency.

The grade and salary for all NJC jobs with the Council should be assessed via the Pay and Reward Team and must sit within the agreed pay and grading framework.

Due to the size and diversity of the Council, the recruitment and selection of employees will be the responsibility of recruiting managers at several levels across the organisation.

Recruitment and selection practices will be regularly monitored, evaluated and updated by People Management.

## WHAT TO DO WHEN A VACANCY ARISES

Use this opportunity to reflect upon your workforce/service plans and ask yourself the following questions:

- Is there a definite need for the post or does the focus need to be changed or can you provide the service in a different way?
- Is the post within the approved structure? If not you will need to complete the [Create a New Post template](#)
- Do your Head of Service and Director support the recruitment to the post?
- Do you have sufficient funding for the post in the budget or is your service required to save costs?
- Is the post critical to the delivery of the department's business plan?
- Have alternative working arrangements within the existing team been considered?
- What language skills are required for Welsh and English, as these may have changed since you last reviewed the job requirements
- Do you need to fill the post on a permanent, secondment or temporary basis?
- Would the post be suitable for any type of flexible working arrangement?

If you decide to go ahead with the recruitment process then it would be useful to set some time aside to plan and prepare the information you want to provide to your prospective job applicants.

Please speak to your HR Advisor for advice at any stage of the process.

## **PLANNING**

### The Job Profile

Time is well spent drafting or updating the job profile and you must ensure it is on the Council's current [job profile template](#) as this document sets the parameters against which you shortlist and ultimately select the best person for the job. Particular care should be taken when setting the essential and desirable criteria as these will be used for shortlisting and interviewing. Do not overstate the requirements for specific academic qualifications, experience, skills, etc. Unnecessary or inflated requirements may be considered discriminatory and/or limit the field of applicants. Read the [Writing Job Profile Guidance](#), and if in doubt, speak to your HR Advisor.

As well as the job responsibilities, knowledge, experience etc., you should consider:

### Language Skills

Managers must make sure they are familiar with the Welsh Language Skills Strategy and ensure that a [Welsh Language Skills Assessment](#) is completed and recorded for the job (this is a requirement of the Welsh Language Standards and the Language Skills Strategy and must be retained as part of the recruitment process). Advice may be sought from the Policy and Partnership Team

### Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) Check

It is essential that you identify whether or not the job requires a [DBS check](#) as you may be breaking the law if you employ someone in a regulated activity (e.g. working with children or vulnerable adults) without this check being done. Speak to your HR Advisor if you need advice.



## Other Information

Think about any other information which is relevant to the post such as whether the post requires travel, participation in an out of hours standby rota, overtime working, night working

When a post is advertised that has been identified as politically restricted, this should be clearly indicated in the advert. Information about [what it means to be politically restricted](#) should be made available to candidates prior to interview, and should be discussed prior to selection.

Once you have completed the profile, send it to the Pay and Reward Team who will assess the grade, confirm this to the manager and may on occasions suggest amendments to the content. Once this has been done, the manager should arrange for the job profile to be translated so that it is available in Welsh and English and provide the final version to the Pay and Reward Team.

As part of the planning process, it is also worth thinking about how you will assess applicants against the essential and desirable criteria you have set within the Job Profile. You must only rely on the application form for shortlisting and, in addition to face to face interviews, it is good practice to use other assessment tools to select a candidate from those who were shortlisted. Your HR Advisor and/or Recruitment Team can provide advice.

## **APPROVAL TO RECRUIT**

Before advertising your vacancy you must have approval from your Director and Head of Service. This ensures that a strategic view, taking into account any workforce planning implications, can be taken regarding recruitment of staff. There are few exceptions to the Approval to Recruit process and your Director, Head of Service, line manager and/or HR

Advisor will be able to provide further information on these. Your request should be made using our [online process](#) *Please note **the Approval process also applies to the engagement of Agency workers.***

## **ADVERTISING/PUBLICISING THE VACANCY**

Once you have approval, your vacancy can be advertised. Your advertisement must be concise and available in Welsh and English. It should include as a minimum:

- Job Title
- Salary
- Short description of the vacancy
- Location
- Requirement for DBS Check
- Politically Restricted (if applicable)
- Permanent, Fixed Term, Temporary or Casual
- Contact Officer
- Closing Date

Your advertisement will, as a general rule, be available as a Redeployment opportunity first (so that staff who are at risk of losing their job are given the first opportunity to apply if suitable). If you fail to appoint through the Redeployment process then vacancies will usually be advertised internally, only proceeding to external advertisement if no suitable applicants are appointed from within.

You should think carefully about where to advertise your vacancy ensuring that you are using the most cost effective and relevant media/publication, taking care not to discriminate against, or to restrict potential applicants,

covered under the Equality Act. The cost of this is payable from the Recruiting Manager's budget

## **THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

The Council requires job applicants to complete the standard application form via its online recruitment process. CV's are not accepted. This provides a consistent basis from which to shortlist and make recruitment decisions. Adjustments to this process may be allowed in certain circumstances e.g. where the applicant requires an alternative format due to disability.

A job applicant's equalities information is used anonymously by People Management for recruitment monitoring purposes and is not used for selection to any posts.

Only those applications received by the closing date will be put forward for shortlisting unless express permission has been provided, after consultation with a HR Advisor, to an applicant to make a late submission.

## **SHORTLISTING**

You should assess each application against the essential/desirable criteria for the post detailed within the job profile. Only those applicants who meet all the essential criteria should be shortlisted. Please keep a written record of your shortlisting decisions as you may be required to provide feedback to applicants.

You should provide the Recruitment Team with details of the shortlisted candidates together with:

- ✓ Interview date
- ✓ Interview times
- ✓ Location of interview
- ✓ Other Assessment methods (in addition to interview), details of which will need to be provided bilingually

It is the Council's policy to notify unsuccessful applicants by email.

### The Disability Confident Scheme

In line with our commitment under the Disability Confident Scheme, the Council operates a 'Guaranteed Interview' policy for applicants with disabilities. This means that if an applicant for a job indicates on the application that they have a disability and meets all the essential job criteria, then they must be short-listed and invited for interview.

## **SELECTION**

In addition to the interview, it is good practice to adopt other relevant selection methods to test the applicant's skills or aptitudes for the post they are applying for. Selection methods must be relevant to the post and examples may include:

- A presentation to the interview panel to assess verbal communication skills
- Work Sample tests which test the applicant's ability to perform tasks which are required in the job e.g. to draft a letter or set up a spreadsheet

- Psychometric tests which assess an applicant's ability, aptitude or personality. These are usually administered by a trained professional. Further information can be obtained from your Organisational Development (OD) Advisor.

### Language Skills

Language skills must be considered when short-listing. If a candidate does not have the required linguistic skills according to their self-assessment, s/he could still be included on the shortlist. We will be able to offer opportunities to learn Welsh or English to the required level within a realistic and achievable timescale.

After creating a shortlist, candidates' language skills may need to be assessed as part of the interview process. You can contact the Policy and Partnership team or People Management for advice and support with [this](#).

### Candidates with disabilities

You should ensure that no part of the recruitment process discriminates against an applicant with a disability. Reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure that the applicant is not disadvantaged because of a disability. Such an example may be to allow a candidate who is dyslexic, additional time to complete a written assessment test. Speak to your HR Advisor or the Recruitment Team for [advice](#).

### The interview

We commit to providing shortlisted applicants with no less than 5 working days' notice of an interview/assessment test. You may wish to include details of the interview/assessment dates in your advertisement to ensure

that the candidate is well informed about the process and has an opportunity to prepare.

When conducting job interviews, recruiting managers should comply with the Welsh Language Standards. On the application form for each post the applicant can state whether they wish the interview to be conducted in Welsh or English. If the applicant is then selected for interview arrangements must be put in place for that interview to be conducted in the language of choice.

All shortlisted candidates will be asked to bring ID documents, Right to Work documentation and original qualification certificates/s to the interview. It is essential that the Recruiting Manager, or their nominated officer, check these for their authenticity. Photocopies of Right to Work documents will be a mandatory requirement for the preferred candidate/s.

Wherever possible all recruitment and selection panels (including the Recruitment and Selection Panel of Members) will be gender balanced. The panel should consist of a minimum of two people, at least one of whom must be trained in recruitment and selection although it is considered best practice that all should be trained.

The interview is designed to provide an opportunity for you to ask questions of the candidates. In particular you should use this time to:

- Review the application form and ask the applicants to explain any gaps or inconsistencies in employment history or elsewhere;
- Obtain and assess information about a candidate in relation to their experience, skills and abilities.
- You should ask the same core questions of each candidate which relate to elements of the essential and/or desirable criteria, which may be supplemented by relevant follow up questions, where

appropriate. Make sure you allow ample time for the interview and reflection, making notes, etc.

- Under the Equality Act It is generally unlawful to ask questions about health or disability before the offer of a job is made. If the question relates to a person's ability to carry out a function that is intrinsic to the post then this may be permissible. In such circumstances seek advice from your HR Advisor

You should keep interview records so that you can refer to them when providing feedback to candidates. These records should not be retained for longer than six months and should then be destroyed.

Record the details of the successful applicant together with details of any other applicant who you considered to be suitable. This allows you to consider the other applicants should your first choice turn down the job offer or should the same vacancy arise in the 4 month period following the interview. This would need to be agreed with your HR Advisor who will also undertake an up to date check of the redeployment register.

## **MAKING AN OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT**

Before making an offer of employment, it is important that the appropriate checks are undertaken particularly where you are recruiting to a regulated activity such as in a school, residential care home and domiciliary care. It is your responsibility not to commence the employment of anyone without the necessary pre-employment checks being undertaken.

Pre-employment checks include;

- References – please go to [‘Managers’ Guide to References’](#)

- [Disclosure and Barring Service check](#) (only where regulated activity is being undertaken)
- [Right to Work in the UK \(in accordance with the Asylum and Immigration Act\)](#)
- Relevant certificates/qualifications if required
- Pre-employment medical examination with a medical professional, if required
- Professional registration

Failure by the Recruiting Manager to ensure that these checks are undertaken may result in disciplinary action.

After the pre-employment checks have been completed, a formal offer of employment can be made. This can be done by telephone, email or letter and you should agree a start date so that a contract of employment can be issued to the successful candidate. In addition, you should confirm:

- Starting salary (usually the bottom of the scale/grade) – Please speak to your HR Advisor if for some reason you wish to offer a [higher starting salary](#);
- Where to report to on first day;

If, for some reason you wish to make a conditional offer, for example where the candidate does not meet the language skills levels and is required to achieve the level within an agreed timeframe then this needs to be explicit from the outset and included in the contract of employment. Please contact your HR Advisor for further guidance.

Please notify the Employee Services Team of the agreed start date as soon as possible so that an employee number can be generated, contract of employment can be issued and the Onboarding process initiated



## **STARTING EMPLOYMENT**

It is important that new employees provide all the information requested via the Council's online induction process, a link to which will be sent by the Employee Services Team to the successful applicant.

Recruiting Managers can view a successful applicant's progress through "My View" and are responsible for ensuring that all information is provided and that a full induction is undertaken.

## **PROBATION**

All external appointees will be subject to the completion of a satisfactory probationary period of 6 months or as allowed for in the contract of employment. In accordance with the 'First Year in Practice Guide for Managers for Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSW)', newly qualified social workers new to the Authority must complete a 12 month probationary period.

The recruiting manager must implement the [Council's Probationary Policy](#) from the date of commencement.

## **ENSURING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY**

Managers must adopt a positive, open and fair approach to recruitment and selection and ensure the Authority's Equality and Diversity Policy is adhered to and applied consistently to all, irrespective of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, language, disability, religion and belief or non-belief, age, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, maternity, parental, marital or civil partnership status.

The Council is committed to the principles of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and the abolition of modern slavery and human trafficking. As an equal-opportunities employer, we are committed to creating and ensuring a non-discriminatory and respectful working environment for all our staff. Our recruitment and people management processes are designed to ensure that all prospective employees are legally entitled to work in the UK and to safeguard employees from any abuse or coercion once in our employment

If you have any equality and diversity concerns in relation to the application of this policy and procedure, please contact a member of the HR Team.

If you require this publication in an alternative format please contact People Management on Ext 6129 or email [PMBusinessSupportUnit@cararthenshire.gov.uk](mailto:PMBusinessSupportUnit@cararthenshire.gov.uk)