

LITTLEHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL

Recruitment & Selection Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Littlehampton Town Council recognises that people are its most important asset. Selecting the right person for a job is, therefore, essential - the quality of our services depends on it. Any mistake is both costly and disruptive. Selection processes are often described as somewhat hit and miss. It will never be an exact science because the human resource is too unpredictable.
- 1.2 Despite the emergence of methods such as psychometric testing, no-one will ever make a performance prediction which is 100% accurate. However, good training and thorough preparation will minimise any uncertainty. Moreover, anti-discrimination legislation now demands high standards of recruitment practice and justifiable decisions.
- 1.3 This policy, therefore, provides a framework to ensure that all the Town Council's recruitment is handled with consistency, fairness and as effectively as possible. The Finance & Resources Manager will offer the support and advice required by Managers throughout the process and will be responsible for monitoring the policy to ensure that high standards are maintained.

2. Scope

- 2.1 All future appointments to the Town Council, at whatever level, will be administered in line with this Policy until it is superseded.

3. The Vacancy

- 3.1 When a vacancy arises, the needs of the role need to be re-assessed to understand if the requirements of the post or qualifications required have changed.
- 3.2 The Town Clerk and Finance & Resources Manager, in consultation with the Chair (or Vice Chair) of the Property & Personnel Committee, will decide on the vacancy requirements.
- 3.3 No appointment shall be made without open competition, even where an individual has been "standing in" or covering the post temporarily. This requirement may be waived for casual appointments and temporary cover only.

4. Defining Job Requirements

- 4.1 The selection panel for the appointment should be involved in the process as soon as possible and should be fully involved in planning the recruitment and selection exercise.
- 4.2 Careful planning is essential if the vacancy is to be filled in a timely manner and it is crucial that those involved in the selection process are given ample opportunity to assist the preparation of the job description, person specification, job advertisement and short-listing. Such involvement promotes consistency throughout the process.
- 4.3 Once the requirements have been determined, these should be clearly defined by producing a job description and a person specification.
- 4.4 A Job Description should describe the tasks and responsibilities in simple, clear and concise terms, specifying:
 - i.) Job Title.
 - ii.) Department/Section.
 - iii.) Grade (plus any allowance).
 - iv.) To whom/for whom responsible.
 - v.) Overall purpose of job (one or two sentences).
 - vi.) Principal Duties.
 - vii.) Responsibilities.
- 4.5 A Person Specification profiles the personal skills, knowledge and experience to be sought. It should specify:-
 - i.) Education level required.
 - ii.) Experience gained.
 - iii.) Membership of Professional Bodies (if required).
 - iv.) Any other special requirements (a particular skill, quality or willingness to meet a requirement such as shift working).
- 4.6 Defining vacancy requirements forms the basis for fair and objective recruitment procedures, which are the Town Council's legal obligation. The job description and person specification are working documents which should assist the selection panel in short-listing and selection. In addition they inform potential applicants and promote self-selection.
- 4.7 The key duties and requirements for the post form the basis of the job advertisement. This should specify:-

- i.) Job Title, department/section; salary range, including any allowances.
- ii.) The work of the section/department (one or two sentences).
- iii.) Main duties of the post.
- iv.) Key requirements for the post (skills, experience, qualifications).
- v.) Contact for an application form/pack and closing date.
- vi.) Interview date (if known).

4.8 For some positions, it may be desirable to include a contact for informal enquiries. The aim is for quality not quantity of applicants so the advertisement should be clear and specific about the vacancy's requirements. All advertisements will include the wording " As an Equal Opportunities employer, applications to the Town Council are encouraged regardless of age, gender, race, colour, nationality (subject to legal status), ethnic or national origins, disability, sexual orientation or marital status."

4.9 It must be made clear on the advertisement that the successful candidate will be selected only on the grounds of ability, qualifications and experience.

5. Application forms

5.1 Application forms and information packs will be issued by the Senior Department Manager involved. A record of those applying for an Information Pack and Application Form should be kept.

5.2 Following the closing date, a vacancy file consisting of completed application forms will be forwarded to the Chair of the selection panel for short-listing.

6. Short-listing

6.1 Once the selection panel have received all of the application forms for a particular vacancy they need to systematically mark each candidate against the essential and desirable criteria.

6.2 This record form provides the main evidence that the selection panel has complied with proper recruitment and selection practices. It must be completed and forwarded to the Finance & Resources Manager before candidates are notified of selection.

6.3 Failure to be specific and display objectivity will place the Town Council in a weak position in the event of a complaint to an Industrial Tribunal.

- 6.4 The shortlist scoring sheet and vacancy file should be returned to the Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk or Finance & Resources Manager, who will be responsible for drawing up a timetable, notifying candidates and arranging an appropriate location. They should also send an interview pack to each member of the panel at least three days in advance.
- 6.5 An applicant's request that a referee should not be contacted at this stage should be strictly observed. In such cases, any offer of employment will be "subject to satisfactory references".

7. Interviewing Arrangements

- 7.1 Any candidate who believes they have been unfairly discriminated against at any stage has the right to complain to an Industrial Tribunal. Therefore, where any Manager on an interview panel has not received appropriate training, the other members of the panel must all have been trained.
- 7.2 No Manager should undertake the interviewing of applicants alone.
- 7.3 A record of each interview must be kept and a scoring sheet devised for this purpose. This must be completed for every interview.
- 7.4 It was agreed by Committee in September 2007 which Members and Officers would be involved in the interview process at whichever grade the vacant post occurred. This list is attached as Appendix 1.
- 7.5 Managers are encouraged to consider additional selection methods (testing, group exercises etc.) if they feel it beneficial to the process.
- 7.6 Candidates should receive at least one week's notice of interview wherever possible.
- 7.7 If the person specification requires a relevant qualification this should be checked by contacting the institute or association that issued the certificate.
- 7.8 Managers should request to see any certificates of qualifications which candidates are asked to provide.

8. Appointment

- 8.1 Reasons for not selecting a candidate should be recorded in the section on the interview scoring sheet. Unsuccessful candidates may request information on the reasons for their non-selection.

- 8.2 It must be made clear to all interviewees that any offer of employment is dependant on receiving two satisfactory references, at least one of which should be from the previous employer.
- 8.3 The vacancy file, containing all applications and scoring sheets for the interview, should be returned to the Finance & Resources Manager who will retain all information for a period of six months.

9. Disabled Applicants

- 9.1 The Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 abolished the registration scheme for disabled people. For recruitment purposes the onus is on applicants to inform the Town Council if they feel they have a disability which is relevant to their application and give details of any specific requirement they may have to enable them to attend an interview.
- 9.2 The Town Council are required to make the necessary arrangements and adjustments wherever possible/reasonable.

10. Employment Department Schemes

When recruiting, Managers should also consider whether it is appropriate to make use of Department of Work and Pensions schemes which offer financial incentives to employers to take on those who have been out of work for a specified period.

11. Posts requiring a Disclosure & Barring Service Disclosure (DBS)

- 11.1 Littlehampton Town Council are familiar with, and follow, the DBS's Code of Practice. (Details can be found at <http://www.direct.gov.uk/dbs>)
- 11.2 A DBS Disclosure can only be applied for if the position is included in the list of offices, employments, work and occupations that are known as the exceptions to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. The exempted jobs are listed at <http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/dbs> .
- 11.3 A Disclosure should only be asked for when the job/role is one where, within the law, the exempted question ("have you been convicted by any court?") can be asked. The obligation for the member of staff/ interviewee to reveal convictions only arises if the question is asked.
- 11.4 The Town Council will make all applicants aware at the start of the recruitment process, in the advert and application pack, that appointment to the job/role for which they are applying is subject to a satisfactory DBS Disclosure and at what level. i.e. standard or enhanced.

- 11.5 The Town Council will make all those for whom a Disclosure is required aware of the DBS's Code of Practice, and give them access to it if they request that.
- 11.6 All applicants are made aware of the Council's Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy. Included in recruitment documentation is a statement that a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to appointment and any disclosure will be used fairly.
- 11.7 The Town Council has a Policy on the secure storage, handling and retention and eventual disposal of all information concerning applicants, recruits and employees.
- 11.8 Where an Enhanced Disclosure reveals "additional information", in no circumstances will this information be divulged to an applicant.
- 11.9 The Finance & Resources Manager will be the nominated person and will verify the identity of the person on whose behalf the Disclosure Application is made, as required by the DBS.
- 11.10 The Disclosure will be obtained by an Umbrella body e.g. South East Employers, who will discuss the resulting Disclosure, over the telephone or by email if the disclosure shows no records, with the nominated person only. The umbrella body will then retain the Disclosure, destroying this after six months. The Council's records will be confined to a note of the date of the conversation or email on the employee's personal file.
- 11.11 New appointments to the following posts and all posts that involve working or coming into contact with Children or vulnerable adults will be subject to DBS Checking.

Position	Level	Reason	Will the appointment proceed in advance of receiving the DBS check
Town Clerk	Standard	In a position of trust.	Yes, small part of role.
Finance & Resources Manager	Standard	In a position of trust. Working with cash, bank and general finance.	Yes, small part of role.
Assistant Town Clerk	Enhanced	Working with Children at events,	Yes, small part of role.

Position	Level	Reason	Will the appointment proceed in advance of receiving the DBS check
		Project 82 & in the community.	
Events & Publicity Manager	Enhanced	Working with Children at events & in the community.	Yes, small part of role.
Events & Publicity Assistant	Enhanced	Working with Children at events & in the community.	Yes, small part of role.
Museum Curator	Enhanced	Museum events, school visits, public talks, working with vulnerable adults.	Yes, large part of role.
Archives & Exhibition Officer	Enhanced	Museum events, school visits, public talks.	Yes, small part of role.
Saturday Museum Assistant	Enhanced	Museum events.	Yes, small part of role.
Museum Volunteers	Enhanced	Museum events.	Yes, small part of role. All volunteers will not require a check.
Amenity Team	Enhanced	Working at events and in a children's playground.	Yes, small part of role.
Project 82 all staff & Volunteers	Enhanced	Youth work.	Yes but supervised.

12. Recruitment of ex offenders

12.1 See the Councils Policy on Recruitment of Ex- offenders

13. Monitoring the Policy

13.1 Responsibility for monitoring this policy and procedure rests with the Finance & Resources Manager who should maintain a record for monitoring purposes.

13.2 Within the process, each Manager shall be responsible for ensuring that his/her decisions are made in accordance with best practice.

MEMBER INVOLVEMENT IN THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Town Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An Extraordinary Meeting of Property & Personnel Committee to be called within 7 days of resignation to agree process to fill vacancy.• Interview panel to comprise Mayor and Chair of Property & Personnel (Deputy Mayor or Vice Chair in their absence) and a third Member to achieve some political balance.*• Advice to panel from Town Clerk and/or a Town Clerk from another Quality Town Council.
Finance & Resources Manager (Responsible Financial Officer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two Members from the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chair of Policy & Finance and Chair of Property & Personnel, together with the Town Clerk.*• Further advice to be sought from the Responsible Financial Officer from another Band C and Quality Town Council.
Assistant Town Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two Members from the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chairs of Policy & Finance, Property & Personnel or Community Resources Committees, with the Town Clerk.*
Management Team (Project 82 Manager, Major Projects Manager, Events & Publicity Manager and Museum Curator)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One Member from the Chair or Vice Chair of the Community Resources or Property & Personnel Committees with the Town Clerk and/or Assistant Town Clerk.* (Project 82 Manager: advice from Neighbourhood Youth Worker. Museum Curator: advice from West Sussex Museums Council).
Personal Assistant to Mayor and Town Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mayor or Deputy Mayor and Town Clerk.*
Project 82 Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project 82 Manager (with Assistant Town Clerk where deemed necessary) and Neighbourhood Youth Worker.
All other staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least one of Town Clerk, Finance & Resources Manager or Assistant Town Clerk with other trained and relevant staff (normally Line Managers).

*Other suitably trained Members could substitute for those designated where this is necessary and with the agreement of that individual or in their absence, the Mayor (of Deputy Mayor).

25th March 2010