



**Stafford**  

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**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

# Recruitment and Selection Policy

Human Resources  
March 2004  
Updated May 2005

## **Recruitment and Selection Policy**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Council recognises that its employees are its most important asset, representing a substantial part of the Council's total expenditure. Without an effective workforce, the Council would not be able to fulfil its obligations to service users or to respond effectively to local and national initiatives. It is therefore important to ensure that the recruitment procedure is underpinned by the principles of good practice Human Resource Management.
- 1.2 It is therefore essential that those individuals involved in the recruitment and selection process allow enough time to follow the appropriate procedures and ensure that the **'right person is appointed to the right post.'** Recruitment is important, since the right person for the job will positively affect the Council's performance.

### **2 Diversity in Employment**

- 2.1 This process is designed to be free from bias as the Council is committed to the development and use of employment procedures and practices, which do not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or belief, responsibility for dependents, trade union or political activities or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified. It seeks to promote equality of opportunity for all and to promote good employee relations.
- 2.2 In undertaking the process, care should be taken to ensure the Council is not perceived to be discriminating against candidates, as all applicants for a job have the right to appeal to an Employment Tribunal under a variety of Acts, in particular the Race Relations Act, Sex Discrimination Act or Disability Discrimination Act, if they believe they have been treated unfairly.
- 2.3 The Council seeks to provide a positive role model for other organisations in the community. To achieve these aims the Council will continue to:
  - Act promptly on any complaints about our employment practices and service delivery
  - Ensure positive action is taken to enable under-represented groups to achieve their potential
  - Acknowledge and celebrate, wherever possible, the variety of lifestyles and cultures in the borough
  - Ensure that all Council employees and customers are informed of the Council's equal opportunities policies with regard to employment matters

## 2.4 **The Aim of the Council's Approach to Diversity in Employment is to ensure:**

- 2.4.1 That no applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment than another on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, age, political or trade union activity, religious beliefs or spent offences.
- 2.4.2 That no applicant or employee is placed at a disadvantage by any unjustifiable requirements or conditions which have a disproportionately adverse affect on the basis of race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, etc.
- 2.4.3 That where appropriate and provided for under the legislation, positive action be taken in order to achieve equality of opportunity in employment.
- i) Encourage the widest access to employment opportunities from within the local community to reflect its diversity.
  - ii) That each individual applicant or employee be assessed according to their capability to fulfil the role and not on group stereotypes.
  - iii) That terms and conditions of service do not discriminate and wherever possible allow for employees to enable them to achieve a level of worklife balance.
- 2.4.4 Whilst overall responsibility for effective implementation of equality matters rests with the Chief Executive, Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring equality is effectively implemented and monitored within their own service area. Advice is also available from Human Resources.
- 2.4.5 Employees also have a responsibility not to discriminate in the workplace.

## **3 When to recruit**

- 3.1 In normal circumstances recruitment will take place when a vacancy occurs or the need for temporary cover arises. This occurs for one of a number of reasons, eg
- An employee leaves an existing post
  - An employees decides to job share or reduce hours
  - An employee is sick for a long period
  - An employee takes maternity leave
  - A new post is established
  - An employee is suspended
- 3.2 Recruitment should not be deemed the automatic reaction to the receipt of an individual's resignation or to any of the above circumstances. Time should be taken to consider whether it is appropriate to recruit to the same post, on the same scale in the same structure. Alternatively it should be looked as an opportunity to review current work practices and the fundamental design of a job or a number of jobs.
- 3.3 In the case of an individual taking maternity leave or long-term absence a secondment or development opportunity should be considered. This is a means of

looking at the existing skills within the work force and enabling and promoting the development of our employees. This should be viewed as an opportunity to demonstrate the value and commitment, which we place upon our employees. In these circumstances it could be beneficial to suggest that individuals 'act up' and if necessary bring in cover at the lower levels, which is more cost effective. In these circumstances managers should consider the appropriateness of awarding additional payments (see Additional Payments Policy)

- 3.4 Additionally we should also consider the development/multiskilling of our existing employees as a means of providing cover in the short term. This is extremely useful in areas which may be difficult to recruit.

#### **4 Deciding on the type of Contract**

- 4.1 Before advertising takes place consideration must be given as to whether or not the vacant post needs filling in its existing form and/or to the type of contract available. Factors that influence this decision include external funding, budgetary constraints, requirements of the service and continuity etc. With all contracts (apart from casual) many employment rights are effective after one year's service. Currently there are four main types of contract: -

- |               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| a) Permanent  | b) Temporary |
| c) Fixed term | d) Casual    |

#### **4.2 Permanent Contract**

This can be whole time, part time or job share and as its name suggests is an ongoing employment contract. This type of contract is more likely to lead to increased commitment from the employee and continuity in service delivery.

#### **4.3 Temporary and Fixed Term Contracts**

- 4.3.1 These are similar in nature as they are both for a limited period of time. Temporary contracts should be used where staff are required for a limited period of time, and allow for flexibility as they are reviewed on a week-to-week basis. Temporary contracts, which are regularly extended, should be called into question, as in legal terms they may be regarded as permanent.

- 4.3.2 Fixed Term contracts are those which terminate on a specified date, or when an event does or does not occur. The Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002 ensure that fixed term employees do not suffer any less favourable treatment than their permanent counterparts. Therefore all terms and conditions should be consistently applied. Under the regulations, the use of successive fixed term contracts is limited to four years, following which the contract automatically becomes permanent.

#### **4.4 Casual Employees**

In this situation there is no obligation on either side to provide or accept work. Casual employees may work regular hours but should have no expectation of work. Where there is a regular pattern of work, consideration should be given to issuing a contract as discussed above. Individuals, who can demonstrate a pattern of work over a

period of time, would be deemed to be permanent in employment law terms. Casual employees will be required to complete a medical assessment form, CRB Disclosure (if required) and provide proof of National Insurance Number.

Managers should review any casual employment which is likely to exceed 12 weeks and consider the appropriateness of continuing the contract and issuing a temporary contract of employment.

## **5 Pre-Advertising**

5.1 Before advertising a post, it is essential that:

- If a current **job description** does not already exist, **one is drawn up or amended** as appropriate if the post already exists.
- Further guidance can be sought in the ***‘Good Practice in compiling Job Descriptions and Employee Specifications’*** booklet.

5.2 Job descriptions are read by a range of individuals and should therefore be written using clear and unambiguous language. There should be no indication that someone of a particular race or sex must hold the job, unless the post is exempt under the Genuine Occupational Qualification provisions of the Sex Discrimination and Race Relations Act.

5.3 Job descriptions and employee specifications should not be over long or complicated and should only be concerned with the genuine requirements of the post; it should not include duties that are to be carried out on an ad hoc or voluntary basis. All job descriptions must state,

**“Postholders must comply with the Council’s Equal Opportunities and Health and Safety Policies”.**

5.4 Catch all phrases such “Any other duties commensurate with the grade of the post” may only be included if amended to recognise responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act. The recommended wording is

**“Any other duties appropriate to the grade of the post, subject to any reasonable adjustments under the Disability Discrimination Act”.**

5.5 As a means of supporting the Council’s commitment to sustainability it is deemed appropriate for posts above Scale 6 to have the following statement included in the job description:

**“To develop, support and promote principles of sustainability both in service delivery and in the workplace”**

5.6 Job descriptions have a number of functions:

- To assist potential applicants in deciding if they have the experience, qualifications and aptitude to fulfil the role
- To enable recruiters to draw up an accurate employee specification

- To set out post-holder duties and responsibilities in a clear and unambiguous manner

5.7 An **employee specification** must be drawn up which reflects the needs of the post. Further guidance on this can be sought in the '**Good Practice in compiling Job Descriptions and Employee Specifications**' booklet.

5.8 Care should be taken to ensure that the skills and attributes required are identifiable by recruiters within the means available, eg interview, application form, references and assessment. Consideration should be given to experience and qualifications gained abroad and skills acquired during periods out of paid employment.

## **6 Advertising**

6.1 All vacant posts should be advertised internally as a minimum to demonstrate equality of opportunity in the recruitment and selection process.

6.2 Advertisements are the public face of recruitment. They should be designed to attract all the people who would have the experience, qualifications and aptitude to fulfil the role. Text should be based on an up-to-date job description and employee specification and should not include additional or irrelevant requirements.

6.3 The advertisements should explain clearly and briefly what the job involves and what qualifications, skills and experience are essential to do the job. The advertisements should be designed to encourage self-selection and should be non-discriminatory. Consideration should be given to the use of positive encouragement to attract under-represented groups, ie flexible working hours as a means of attracting women wanting to return to work. Any Genuine Occupational Qualifications (GOQ's) should be clearly stated in the advert, quoting the relevant section of the Race Relations and Sex Discrimination.

6.4 The initial impression created by the Council is crucial to the success of the recruitment process, particularly when skilled and experienced individuals are difficult to attract.

6.5 To achieve a professional image, all advertisements and associated recruitment literature for vacancies should conform to the same high quality of standards of presentation and content consistent with corporate image.

6.6 The advertisement should include the following:

- Post title and Number
- Salary, incentives and benefits
- Key duties and functions of the post
- Skills/knowledge/experience/qualifications needed to undertake the post
- Whether the post is temporary or permanent
- Whether the post is a whole time, part time or job share
- Closing date

- Interview dates (actual if possible, or week commencing .....)
- A telephone contact point if potential applicants wish to discuss any issues or to request an application form

6.7 Advice and guidance may be sought from Human Resources with regards the appropriate media, and wording. Additionally further advice may also be obtained from the advertising agency.

## **7 The role of the Human Resources Service**

7.1 The Human Resources Service provides the interface between the department and the Advertising Agency. Details of vacancies to be advertised, including Approval to Advertise, Job Description, Person Specification, Post Details and Advertisement must be sent to the Human Resource Department by **Wednesday 12.00 noon**, prior to appearing in the local/national press the following week. Other media choices should be discussed with Human Resources.

### **7.2 Unsolicited Applications for Recruitment**

The Council has a policy of not accepting unsolicited applications for any vacancies. Anyone who receives a direct request of this nature should forward it to Human Resources.

Applicants will then receive a standard letter outlining the Council's recruitment and selection process. Copies of these applications will be kept for a period of 6 months in line with the formal application process.

## **8 Information to Applicants**

8.1 In order to decide whether they would like to apply for a particular job, applicants need certain information. The minimum information provided to applicants will include:-

- Application form
- Job Description and Employee Specification
- Post details
- Recruitment Booklet (including information about the organisation, the Borough and the Recruitment Charter)
- Criminal Records Information (if applicable to post)
- Managers may wish to include additional information in relation to their service area – if this is the case, this information should be forwarded at the time of submitting the Appointment Approval Form.

8.2 Application for posts must be via the Authority's job application form. CV's will only be accepted in support of the completed form, not in place of it. However, if the applicant has a disability, which makes it difficult for them to submit a completed application form, a submission via an alternative format will be accepted as a reasonable adjustment.

8.3 Application requests will be dispatched promptly on request (within 2 days).

## **9 Late Applications**

9.1 Application forms received after the closing date will only be considered by prior arrangement with the recruiting manager or in exceptional circumstances at the time of recruitment.

## **10 Shortlisting**

10.1 Recruiting Managers should ensure that

- i) Officers involved in short-listing ensure that the standard of handwriting on the application form is not to be used as a measure of a candidate's literacy.
- ii) Candidates must not be excluded from the short list on the grounds of age, racial origin, sex or disability except where such disqualification is already written into the employee specification.
- iii) Where the candidate has not completed the Equal Opportunities Monitoring form, this should be treated as if major parts of the application form, eg qualification, experience has not been filled in. Should a department wish to short-list such a candidate, the candidate should be asked to complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring form prior to interview.
- iv) Reasons for not short-listing are recorded in line with the guidance issued (Appendix 4), as applicants may request feedback or in certain circumstances challenge the decision.
- v) Short-listing should be undertaken by those individuals to be involved in the interview process (minimum of 2 individuals) against the predetermined criteria in the employee specification
- vi) Individuals who do not meet the essential criteria should not to be short-listed in the first instance. If there are deemed to be no individuals who meet the essential criteria, advice and guidance should be sought from Human Resources.

## **11 Guaranteed Interview Policy**

11.1 The Council operates a Guaranteed Interview policy for people with disabilities. This means that if an applicant for a job is disabled and meets the **essential** job criteria, then they **must** be short-listed and invited for interview . (see Appendix 1)

11.2 If it is considered a disabled applicant does not meet the essential criteria, then the application form, person specification and reasons for not offering an interview must be referred to the Human Resources Department for verification. If the decision is confirmed, the recruiting manager should write to the applicant explaining the reasons why they have not been short-listed. If the decision is in favour of the applicant, then the department must offer an interview. Interviews should not be arranged until a decision has been made in these circumstances.

## **12 Access to Work Scheme**

12.1 Access to work can provide funding towards a range of support for disabled people at work, including:

- Alterations to premises or to the working environment
- Adaptations to a vehicle, or meeting transport costs if people cannot use public transport because of a disability
- A support worker for practical assistance at work (eg with personal care)
- Specialist equipment or adaptations to existing equipment
- Part-time reader or assistance for blind/partially sighted employees
- Communicators for deaf people

12.2 Funding up to 80% (and in certain cases 100%) of the costs may be provided. Applications for assessment must be made via the appropriate Disability Employment Advisor (DEA) at the Job Centre. Support in these instances will be provided from Human Resources.

## **13 Prior to the Interview**

13.1 Applicants should be invited to the interview by letter. Human Resources should be receive the shortlist as soon as possible as they require a minimum of 10 days before the interview date in order that interviewees are always given plenty of notice of an imminent interview. Details should be given about any tests/exercises to be undertaken including reference to the time allocated to the task. Information and timescales should reflect the need to make alternative arrangements should any applicants require any 'reasonable adjustments' under the Disability Discrimination Act.

## **14 Interview Preparation and Purpose**

14.1 The purpose of the interview is to obtain and assess information about a candidate, which will enable a valid prediction about their suitability for the position. Interviewing therefore involves processing and evaluating evidence about the capability of a candidate in relation to the employee specification. Some of this evidence will be on the application form, but this must be supplemented by more detailed or specific information about experience and personal characteristics that can be obtained in a face-to-face meeting. Additional evidence can be obtained from selection tests, other assessments and from references, which supplement the process.

14.2 An interview has been described as a conversation with a purpose. It is a conversation during which the candidate should be encouraged to talk freely with the interviewer about himself/herself and his/her career. Interviewers also have to provide candidates with information about the post and the Council.

14.3 A further aim is to give candidates a favourable impression of the Council. This should encourage the successful candidate to join and should leave the unsuccessful candidates without any ill feelings other than perhaps disappointment.

14.4 All interviewees should be asked the same core questions in addition to follow up questions, which allow more in-depth examination of their skills, abilities and approach

to the job. Interviewers should allow ample time to conduct the interviews. It is important to allow time for reflection during the timetable.

- 14.5 Under the Disability Discrimination Act it is appropriate to explore possible reasonable adjustments to a post in the light of a candidate's disability. This should be done separately from the formal interview process, at the end of the agreed interview questions.

## **15 Interview Procedure**

- 15.1 The Chair of the interview panel should greet each candidate on entering the interview room, giving the names of the interviewers. Time should be spent on explaining the process and when a decision will be made. When questioning the candidate, care must be taken to ensure that the questions asked are appropriately phrased, i.e. not likely to give offence or imply bias and not ones likely to produce yes or no answers and they must be relevant, i.e. aimed at helping to determine fitness for the job.
- 15.2 Interviewees are usually nervous and will not perform to the best of their ability. They will however want to find out as much as they can about the job and organisation and should be given the opportunity to ask questions at the end of the interview.
- 15.3 Individuals can also be asked supplementary questions which clarify information in their application form. Behavioural questioning is a useful technique whereby candidates are asked to give examples of past experience that relate to the specific aspects of the job on offer.
- 15.4 At the end of the interview the panel should check that the candidate is still a firm applicant for the post and willing to accept the post if offered. The candidate should be thanked for attending and advised of how the decision will be conveyed.
- 15.5 The panel should complete an interview assessment form for each candidate (see model, appendix 2) indicating their suitability against the person specification and associated questions in order that an accurate record of performance can be identified. Such records should be produced in a manner which would stand up to critical scrutiny should a complaint be received.
- 15.6 Further advice and guidance regarding interviewing may be obtained from the booklet entitled Interview Preparation and Guidelines, available from Human Resources.

## **16 Testing**

- 16.1 Various testing can be used in addition to the interview. These vary in their ease of administration and usefulness. Candidates must be advised in advance of the their use and reasonable adjustments will need to be considered if appropriate.
- 16.2 Skill testing such as word processing or report writing can be useful as they give some idea of how an individual will perform if appointed. However interviewers must be aware that performance may be affected by how familiar the interviewee is with the test procedure, the equipment, and their state of nervousness. Inevitably performance is likely to improve with experience and confidence.

- 16.3 Services, which are considering the use of any other testing methods, should consult with Human Resources regarding the appropriateness of a test in order to avoid any form of discriminatory practice.
- 16.4 All tests must be non-discriminatory and appropriate to skills/tasks required and the requirements of the post.

## **17 References**

- 17.1 References will be obtained, utilising a proforma (appendix 3). Referees will receive a copy of the job description and person specification in order that a factual assessment of an applicant's suitability may be obtained.
- 17.2 References are usually obtained at the short-listing stage unless a candidate has indicated otherwise on their application form. Formal offers of appointment will not be made until satisfactory references have been received.
- 17.3 If verbal or telephone references are obtained prior to confirmation in writing, a written note should be made of them and their source so that they can be included in the recruitment pack for monitoring purposes.
- 17.4 Referees should be informed that the Council has a policy allowing employees access to all information held about them, both on computerised and non-computerised personal files. This includes references unless the referee specifically requests otherwise. In such cases, applicants should be directed to the referee for authorisation to release.

## **18 Making the Appointment**

- 18.1 The selection panel members should independently assess the evidence gained on each candidate against the predetermined requirements of the post, utilising the Interview Assessment Form. Once individual assessments are made, the panel should discuss their assessments as a panel. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Panel to seek a consensus and either select a candidate for appointment, or reach a decision to pursue an alternative course of action.
- 18.2 Careful consideration needs to be given to any applicant with a disability where '*a reasonable adjustment can be made*' that would enable the applicant to carry out the requirements of the job. Where a reasonable adjustment can be made which would lead to a disabled applicant being, or becoming, the most suitable candidate, then it is that candidate who should be offered the job. Any clarification on responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 should be raised with Human Resources.
- 18.3 Successful candidates for temporary and permanent posts must receive confirmation of their appointment as soon as possible after a decision to appoint is made. Under the Employment Rights Act 1996 the employee must receive a Written Statement of Particulars of Employment within 8 weeks of their date of starting, provided the contract is for a minimum of 4 weeks in duration.

## **19 Feedback**

- 19.1 Candidates who are unsuccessful at interview stage should be informed at the earliest opportunity and offered feedback.
- 19.2 The selection panel must have clear reasons why a candidate is rejected and be prepared to give feedback to rejected candidates if they query the result of their application or request advice. It is also advisable that the positive reasons for choosing the successful candidate are recorded and kept on file. Any unsuccessful candidate who wishes to know why he/she was rejected should be given the reason. Further guidance on this can be obtained from the '***Giving Feedback on the Recruitment and Selection Process***' booklet.

## **20 Records**

- 20.1 Application forms, candidate assessment forms and any other documentation forming part of the selection process for unsuccessful candidates must be returned to the Human Resources Department to be retained for six months after which they will be destroyed provided there has not been a recruitment and selection complaint.
- 20.2 If there is a recruitment and selection complaint or claim to an Employment Tribunal, the entire recruitment file will be retained until after the claim is resolved.
- 20.3 Recruiters should also complete and forward the Appointment Approval Form to the Human Resources Department for processing as soon as practically possible.

## **21 Pre-Employment Checks**

- 21.1 Appropriate pre-employment checks will be carried out by Human Resources before confirmation of the appointment is made, including:-

### **21.2 Medical Clearance**

When an external candidate is offered a post, they must be informed that they should not resign their existing job until they have been medically cleared. Initial letters of appointment will be issued prior to medical clearances providing it is made clear that the offer of appointment is '***subject to a satisfactory medical report***'. New employees must not commence employment before such a report is received.

The successful candidate must complete a medical questionnaire. This will enable the Occupational Health Physician to decide whether a medical examination is necessary.

Internal candidates may also have to complete a subsequent questionnaire if there is deemed to be a substantial change in duties, role and responsibilities or special health related considerations.

It is essential that candidates with disabilities are not singled out for an examination because of a disability if that disability is not related to their ability to do the job. Clearly there will be circumstances where a particular disability is relevant to the job and in such cases an examination will be required.

### 21.3 **Criminal Records Check**

Some posts within the Council will require individuals to be cleared by the Criminal Records Bureau. Individuals will be advised of this need at the application stage and there should be reference to it also on the post details.

The Council has a responsibility to protect vulnerable client groups from possible harm or abuse.

Further guidance on both the Criminal Records Bureau's Disclosure service and the Policy of the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders are available from Human Resources.

### 21.4 **Qualifications**

When a qualification is an essential requirement of a post, applicants will be required to produce the original certificate in order that a copy is made, which should be retained on the individual's personal file.

### 21.5 **Driving Licence**

Where driving is an essential requirement of a post, an applicant will be required to produce their driving licence, in order that a copy is made and placed on their personal file. Furthermore it is the responsibility of the manager to make bi-annual checks of the licence in order to ensure that employees still hold a valid licence to drive. Any endorsements should be noted and employees should be advised that failure to maintain a valid licence could affect their ability to fulfil their role and ultimately their employment with the Council.

### 21.6 **The Asylum and Immigration Act 1996**

Section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence to employ a person aged 16 or over without the authorisation of the immigration authorities.

Successful applicants will be required to produce a National Insurance number from a P45 or other relevant documentation (further guidance available from Human Resources )

### 21.7 **Work Permit**

Any person who is subject to immigration control and comes with the intention of working in the UK must ultimately have a work permit. People admitted other than as permit holders have no claim to stay in the UK. Human Resources can provide advice on this issue.

## 23.1 **Monitoring**

It is vital that those involved in the recruitment process ensure that the following monitoring information is completed and forwarded to Human Resource:

- Shortlisting criteria are clearly indicated on the shortlisting recording form, which fail to meet the desired level and progress to the interview stage

- Interview Assessment forms are completed for each applicant
- A copy of the questions used in the process

## **23.2 Induction**

All employees should have an Induction Programme designed to meet both departmental and organisation needs. The programme will vary according to duties and responsibilities of the post and the individual location of a post. All new post holders will be issued with an Induction Checklist which details the minimum requirements which will enable an individual to become integrated into the organisation and which together with the job description and person specification should form the basis for the probationary assessment with their manager.

Failure to provide individuals with a structured induction may lead to a number of consequences

- poor performance and low job satisfaction
- absenteeism
- high labour turnover
- resignations or early dismissals
- high demands on managers
- accidents leading to injuries and/or prosecution
- tribunal cases if employees complain of unfair dismissal because of inadequate training

The aim of an induction programme is to help employees become effective more quickly, improve motivation and performance and extend the range of skills of employees, enabling them to be more adaptable.

A member of the Human Resources Team will meet with all new employees on the first day of employment to ensure they receive basic information regarding terms and conditions of employment, access to the building, car parking arrangements and the most relevant processes and procedures which will enable them to integrate within the organisation.

All new employees will also receive an invitation to the Corporate Induction programme, which is coordinated by Human Resources.

## **24 Probationary Period**

24.1 New employees who have not previously worked in Local Government are appointed subject to the successful completion of a period of probation – normally six months duration. This period is intended to allow the employee time to establish his/her suitability for the post and to receive appropriate training and gain the experience necessary to perform the duties of the post.

24.2 During the probationary period, the employee's performance should be reviewed at 1, 3 and 5 months by the Manager, to allow for discussion about the employee's progress. Further guidance can be found in the ***Manager's Probationary Period Assessment Guide***. By the end of the first month of employment, probationary employees should be aware of the performance criteria against which their probation will be judged.

- 24.3 Probationary reviews must constructively assess performance and ability, allowing both the manager and employee input to the discussion and agreement on areas for improvement. A written record of the review is important and may provide the basis of any further action to be taken. The individual should be provided with a copy of the review, indicating any improvements and time scales agreed. A copy should also be forwarded to Human Resources for inclusion on the personal file.
- 24.4 At the five-month review, the manager must decide if the employee is to be confirmed as suitable or not. It is essential that Managers seek advice from Human Resources at the earliest opportunity if there are any problems and consideration should be given to an extension to the probation period. By the end of the 3 month review stage Managers should have a clear view as to the performance of employees on probationary periods.
- 24.5 If the probationary period is extended, it is important to set out in writing the length of the extension and the reasons for the extension. The letter must clearly specify the improvements to be made and the time periods allowed for improvement, a date for the next review and any assistance or training offered by the manager to assist the employee.
- 24.6 If satisfactory improvements are not made, the employee may be dismissed on the grounds of poor performance or incapability. Dismissal can occur whether the probationary period is extended or not, providing the manager has enough information on which to base a dismissal decision.
- 24.7 Employees should be given notice appropriate to their contract of employment. This course of action should only be taken following consultation with the Head of Human Resources or his representative and the employee will be entitled to an Appeals process.

## **25 Reviewing the Policy**

- 25.1 It is the Council's intention to review this policy as and when necessary to take into account new legislative requirements or to meet changing business needs.

## **26 Implications of the Policy**

- 26.1 All employees involved in the recruitment and selection of people must follow the Recruitment and Selection Policy.
- 26.2 All applicants, internal and external, can be expected to be treated in accordance with this Policy.

## **27 Exceptions to the Policy**

- 27.1 There is recognition that the range of jobs in the Council necessitates the use of a variety of recruitment methods. To this end, there are approved flexible recruitment methods and mechanisms that may be followed by service areas. Further advice and guidance should be sought from the Human Resources service if there are recruitment difficulties.

## **General Policy Statement on the Employment of Disabled Persons**

A person has a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Council will meet its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 by adopting a positive approach to the employment of disabled people and give full and fair consideration to their applications for employment.

The Council is committed to the following:

1. To interview all applicants with a disability who meet the essential criteria for a post and to consider them on their abilities.
2. To make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment by making reasonable adjustments as appropriate, including redeploying and retraining opportunities.
3. To take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make commitments work.
4. To ensure there is a mechanism in place to discuss at any time, but at least once a year, what can be done to support disabled employees and develop and use their abilities at work.
5. To review these commitments each year and what has been achieved, plan ways to improve on them and let all employees know about future plans.

We are committed to ensuring that disabled people are treated no less favourably than other employees and the avenues for training; career development and promotion are open to them in the normal way.

**The above statement applies to all disabled persons**

**STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL – INTERVIEW ASSESSMENT FORM**

Criteria	Question	Additional information obtained	Weighting (0-5)	Rating (0-5)	Total
				<u>Grand Total</u>	

**EMPLOYMENT REFERENCE REQUEST FORM**

<b>Name of Candidate</b>	
<b>Post applied for</b>	
<b>Date of commencement with you</b>	
<b>Job Title/capacity in which they are/were employed</b>	
<b>Number of hours employed per week</b>	
<b>Number of days absence in the last two years of employment</b>	
<b>Current salary or salary on leaving</b>	
<b>Has any parental leave been taken in your employment? If yes please state how many days</b>	
<b>How long have you known this person?</b>	
<b>In what capacity/relationship?</b>	
<b>Please confirm that you are authorised by your organisation to give a reference</b>	

<p><b>Please give an outline of main duties</b></p>	
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<p><b>You may wish to use additional sheets to answer the following questions</b></p> <p><b>Please give your opinion of the applicants:-</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ability to fulfil the duties set out in the Job Description attached</b></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>match the criteria set out in the Employee Specification attached</b></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>integrity</b></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>reliability</b></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ability to work as part of a team</b></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>professional expertise</b></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>relationship with Manager, peers, clients, customers etc</b></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>strengths</b></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>weaknesses</b></li> </ul>	

<p><b>Is/was the candidate subject to any disciplinary action during the last two years of their employment with you? - If yes please give details</b></p>	
<p><b>Was any disciplinary action pending against the individual or disciplinary investigation being conducted at the time she/he left your employment. - If yes please give details.</b></p>	
<p><b>Are you aware of any criminal convictions (other than those defined under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act as spent) recorded against him/her? - If yes please give details.</b></p>	
<p><b>If no longer employed on what date did they leave and what was the reason for leaving?</b></p>	
<p><b>Do you know of any reason why we should not employ him/her? - If yes please give details.</b></p>	
<p><b>Would you re-employ? - If no please give reasons why.</b></p>	

**If there is any additional information or comment you would like to add, please note below or use an additional sheet.**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

Signature ..... Post Title .....

Organisation ..... Date .....

## **SHORTLISTING & INTERVIEW PROCEDURE**

The following guidance has been produced to assist those individuals involved in shortlisting and interview processes and to provide documentary evidence of why individuals were not selected to meet statutory requirements under the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000.

The interview panel must ensure that they enter both the shortlisting and interview decision code, which will be transferred to our Recruitment and Selection database, which tracks individuals from application request to successful candidate is entered on the Shortlisting and Interview Code Form.

<b>Shortlist Decision Codes</b>		<b>Interview Decision Codes</b>	
Qualifications	Q	Experience	E
Experience	E	Personal qualities	PQ
Special knowledge/skills	S	Special knowledge/skills	S
Insufficient information	I	Canvassing	C
Application withdrawn	WD	Falsification of documentation	F
Canvassing	C	Reference	R
Driving licence (where essential to the post)	D	Medical	M
Other	O	Spent conviction (post not exempt)	SC
Late application	L	Appointment refused	AR
Shortlisted candidate	SC	Application withdrawn	WD
		Other	O
		Appointment accepted	AC

## SHORTLISTING & INTERVIEW DECISION RECORDING FORM

Post ..... Post Number .....

Service Area ..... Grade .....

	Application Number	Shortlist Code	Interview Code
1			
2			
3			
4			
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## Manager's Probationary Period Assessment Guide

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 All new entrants to local government service, and employees returning after a break in local government service are subject to a six-month probationary period, commencing from the date of appointment.
- 1.2 During this period managers/supervisors need to undertake a continuous assessment of the individual's performance. This assessment is to ensure that the employee is suitable for the post and that any areas of concern or weakness are identified and appropriate training or support is made available.
- 1.3 At present, employees transferring from another Local Authority are not subject to a further probationary period, but it is still advisable for managers to assess their performance in the early stages of employment so that any difficulties are identified at an early stage.
- 1.4 At the end of the 6-month period each employee will receive written notification indicating whether or not their performance is considered satisfactory. Satisfactory probation reports will result in the employee being confirmed in post. Unsatisfactory reports may result in an extension to the probationary period or in dismissal.

### 2. Procedure

- 2.1 It is each Managers responsibility to make sure that every new employee is aware of the standards of work expected, that they receive any necessary training and support and that both the employee's conduct and performance reach the standard expected.
- 2.2 At the commencement of each new employment an induction check- list is raised and passed to the line manager following the initial Human Resource induction process. This sets out a timetable for regular meetings between the manager and the new employee and includes a procedure for reviewing and notifying probationary period results.
- 2.3 It is important that any failure to reach required standards is identified at an early stage and that prompt action is taken to address specific problems before the probationary period expires.
- 2.4 Managers should consult with a member of the Human Resource team if they have significant concern or feel that an extension of the probationary period may be necessary.
- 2.5 On completion of **3 months** service a formal review must be undertaken by the manager together with the employee. The Probationary Employment Monitoring form should be completed and signed by both parties prior to return to Human Resources.
- 2.6 If concerns regarding performance and/or behaviour are identified at this stage the areas of concern should be identified and discussed with the member of staff. The employee should have the opportunity to provide any explanations or reasons why their work has not been up to standard. Any appropriate interventions should be identified and discussed. These might include:

- clear indications of the standard required and the improvements needed.
  - formal or informal training in the areas of weakness, which could include coaching or mentoring
  - increased supervision
- 2.7 The basis of the discussions should be confirmed in writing to the employee together with an agreed action plan and review date. The letter should also point out that failure to achieve satisfactory completion of the probationary period could result in termination of the contract.
- 2.8 Prior to the employee completing 6 months service a final review of performance should be held. It is recommended that this review is conducted as soon as **5 month's** service is completed, to allow time for further action if necessary. A further Probationary Period monitoring form should be completed and returned to Human Resources.
- 2.9 Employees who have progressed satisfactorily and those who have improved to the required standard will receive written confirmation of their successful completion of the probationary period and their transfer to the established staff from their line manager.
- 2.10 Employees who have failed to reach the required standard may:
- have their probationary period extended for up to a maximum of 6 months. This may be appropriate in cases where there has been marked improvement and it is felt that the employee has the potential to reach required standards or in instances when an employee has had a period or periods of prolonged sickness that have made accurate assessment of abilities difficult to achieve. Notification should be in writing quoting a review date.
- or**
- receive verbal, followed by written confirmation of the termination of their contract
- 2.11 **Human Resources should be advised of developments at each stage and must be involved in these final discussions.**
- 2.12 Dismissal can occur whether the probationary period has been extended or not, providing the manager and human resources are satisfied that enough information is available on which a decision to dismiss can be justified.
- 2.13 Employees are entitled to receive notice appropriate to their contract of employment. This course of action will only be taken following consultation with the Head of Human Resources or his representative and the individual will be entitled to an Appeals process.

**PROBATIONARY EMPLOYEE MONITORING**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Post:</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b><u>Report at 3 / 5 * months</u></b> (delete as appropriate)
<b>Date of Interview:</b>	<b>Date of Appointment</b>

**COMMENTS**

<b>Attendance &amp; Punctuality</b>	
<b>Ability to work</b>	
<b>Ability to learn</b>	
<b>Attitude &amp; Enthusiasm</b>	
<b>Relationship with colleagues</b>	
<b>Ability to deal with customers</b>	

<b>Progress to date</b>							
<b>Areas of distinction</b>							
<b>Areas of concern</b>							
<b>Training needs identified</b>							
<b>Additional Information</b>							
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<table> <tr> <td><b>Suitable</b></td> <td><b>YES/NO</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Some doubts</b></td> <td><b>YES/NO</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Extension to probationary period*</b></td> <td><b>3/6 months</b></td> </tr> </table>	<b>Suitable</b>	<b>YES/NO</b>	<b>Some doubts</b>	<b>YES/NO</b>	<b>Extension to probationary period*</b>	<b>3/6 months</b>
<b>Suitable</b>	<b>YES/NO</b>						
<b>Some doubts</b>	<b>YES/NO</b>						
<b>Extension to probationary period*</b>	<b>3/6 months</b>						

**Signed** ..... **Date** .....  
 (Employee)  
**Signed** ..... **Date** .....  
 (Line Manager)