



Recruitment and Selection Policy

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation(s)	Cherwell District Council (CDC)
Policy title	Recruitment and Selection Policy
Owner	Human Resources
Version	1.0
Date of implementation	2 November 2023

DOCUMENT APPROVALS

This document requires the following committee approvals:

Committee	Date of meeting pending approval
Personnel Committee	1 November 2023

DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION

This document will be distributed to all employees of Cherwell District

DATE FOR REVIEW

No later than 1st November 2026 but sooner if impacted by legislative changes.

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Revision date	Summary of revision

CONTENTS

1	Introduction	4
2	Diversity, Inclusivity, and Accessibility	4
3	Disability Confident Scheme	4
4	Roles and Responsibilities	4
5	Vacancy Identification and Analysis	5
6	Job Description and Person specification	5
7	Vacancy Approval Process	6
8	Advertising	6
8	Applicants	6
9	Selecting candidates	7
10	Offers of employment	7
11	Pre-employment checks	8
12	Unsuccessful applicants and feedback	8
13	Inaccurate or misleading information	8
14	Maintaining records	8
15	Complaints against the process	9

1. **Introduction**

- 1.2 Cherwell 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.
- 1.3 A fair and robust recruitment and selection process is always undertaken to ensure selection is based on the most suitable candidates being employed, in terms of behaviours, skills and knowledge, in order to maintain a motivated workforce delivering high quality services in line with the Council's objectives, values and aims.
- 1.4 This policy applies to all employees and potential employees. It does not apply to agency workers, consultants, self-employed contractors, volunteers or interns.
- 1.5 This policy may be amended at any time following consultation with trade union and subject to agreement from the Personnel Committee.

2. **Diversity, Inclusivity, and Accessibility**

- 2.1 As part of our commitment to ensure the best person for the job is successful, it is important that our recruitment is inclusive and accessible at every stage of the process. From drafting the job description to making the appointment decision, the recruitment process must be conducted in a fair way that is non-discriminatory and that ensures equality of opportunity. This means that recruitment should be based on evidence-based merit and not be influenced by the protected characteristics of the applicant.

3. **Disability Confident Scheme**

- 3.1 Cherwell District Council is a Disability Confident Employer. Disability Confident is a government scheme designed to encourage employers to recruit and retain disabled people and those with long-term health conditions. Within recruitment, this means that any applicant who has met the essential requirements listed on the person specification must be invited to interview for the role. If you have not shortlisted someone who has disclosed a disability, it is important you have a record of why they did not meet the essential requirements in case feedback is requested.

4. **Armed Forces Community Covenant**

- 4.1 To further support the pledges in the Council's Armed Forces Community Covenant; and to make a positive contribution to help ex-Armed Forces personnel (veterans) make the transition to civilian life the Council is committed to ensuring that ex-armed forces personnel are not disadvantaged as a result of their service. Veterans of the armed forces will be guaranteed the offer of an interview, provided that:
 - The armed forces was the veteran's last long-term employer and where no more than three years has elapsed since they have left
 - The veteran meets the essential criteria
 - The veteran is in a position to take up employment within a maximum of 12 weeks following the offer of employment being made

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1 Recruitment is an expensive exercise and the Council places great value in getting it right first time.
- 5.2 In house training will be provided by Human Resources to ensure managers are appropriately trained and understand what is required of them.
- 5.3 The recruiting manager –
- Confirm budget is available for this role.
 - Produce a job description and advert that is in line with the Council's template and at an appropriate grade.
 - Raise a recruitment form (via HR/Payroll system) that outlines requirements of the recruitment campaign.
 - Shortlist candidates.
 - Plan and manage the interview process.
 - Give verbal offer to successful candidate(s).
 - Prepare and deliver the induction and onboarding programme.
- 5.4 The Assistant Director/Corporate Director–
- Review the recruitment form.
 - Approve the job vacancy or give feedback as to why approval hasn't been granted.
- 5.5 Human Resources department-
- Provide advice and support at every stage of the process.
 - Review recruitment form at Vacancy Management meeting.
 - Process recruitment form and advertise role internally and or externally as directed.
 - Signpost shortlisting documents to recruiting manager.
 - Issue the formal conditional offer to the successful candidate(s).
 - Request references.
 - Carry out pre-employment checks (eg right to work, Disclosure and Barring Services pre-employment medical check).
 - Issue contract of employment.
 - Set up new starter on HR/Payroll system.
- 5.6 Recruitment panel members –
- Shortlist candidates (at least two panel members).
 - Compile interview questions to ask candidate and decide if any other assessment is required.
 - Interview (at least two panel members).
 - Record interview notes of answers provided by candidate.
 - Decide on successful candidate.
 - Be able to offer feedback if requested.
- 5.7 For Senior appointments the recruitment process will be led by the Personnel Committee supported by Human Resources.

6. Vacancy Identification and Analysis

- 6.1 Before recruitment takes place, a review of the vacancy will be undertaken by the manager with consideration given as to whether the vacancy should be filled in the same way or whether the job should be designed differently i.e. change of duties, updated to suit changing business needs, amendments to qualifications, change to the number of hours / working pattern.
- 6.2 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). See the Council's Market Supplement Policy for more information.

7. Job Description and Person Specification

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 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. Please see the Council's Politically Restricted and Politically Sensitive Posts Policy for more information.
- 7.4 Posts are subject to a job evaluation process in order to determine the grade of the job. The Council uses the GLPC and Hay job evaluation schemes.

8. Vacancy Approval Process

- 8.1 All vacancies (permanent/temporary/agency) will undergo a robust approval process, this process involves the recruitment manager seeking the approval from their Corporate Director in the first instance via a recruitment form available on the HR/Payroll system. Once approved this form will then be considered at HR's Vacancy Management meeting. Provided the vacancy is approved the recruiting manager can proceed to the advertising.
- 8.2 The vacancy approval process has been modified for the use of agency Waste Collection Loaders and LGV Driver/Loaders due to the need for covering unforeseen absences at short notice. For agency workers within these roles, a recruitment form will not be required. Agency usage will be monitored.

9. Advertising

- 9.1 All externally advertised posts will be displayed on the Council's website under a section specifically for jobs at the Council. Where appropriate and cost effective, posts will also be advertised via the Council's social media pages, online jobs boards and relevant specialist publications in order to maximise the chances of attracting the best quality and most suitable candidate.

9.2 Some vacancies may be advertised internally for current employees of the Council only to apply. Typically, this will be in circumstances where the Council feels that there are current employees who have the required skills, knowledge, and experience to fulfil the post or where there is a restructure or employees are potentially at risk.

9.3 Agency workers will be advised of any internal vacancies.

10. **Applications**

10.1 All applications for recruitment campaigns that are administered by Human Resources must be received on the standard online application form which can be accessed via the Council's website. Applicants who require reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process due to disability can outline these on the application form or can contact Human Resources to discuss their needs further if required.

11. **Selecting candidates**

11.1 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. 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).

11.2 Panel members must declare an interest and/or withdraw from the process if a family member or someone personally known to them 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. In these circumstances further advice should be sought from Human Resources.

11.3 Wherever possible the same people should serve on the selection panel throughout 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.

11.4 In line with the Council's constitution, the Personnel Committee are responsible for appointing the Chief Executive and Corporate Directors.

11.5 The confidentiality of all applications must be respected by all individuals involved in the recruitment process.

11.6 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 can notify Human Resources if they require adjustments.

11.7 An interview assessment form will be completed during the interview to ensure that each applicant has been assessed fairly against the role. Everyone involved in the interview process must take accurate notes to ensure they are able to score the responses to questions asked. The panel members will use these scores along with any other selection criteria to determining the candidate to be selected for appointment.

11.8 A number of additional techniques could be used as part of the selection process, and this could include (but is not limited to) assessment centres; scenario tests; written exercises; presentations. Managers should ensure that the assessment method(s) reflects the requirements of the role. When they are invited to take part in the selection process, applicants will be advised what assessment techniques will be used.

12. **Offers of employment**

12.1 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 for more information).

12.2 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 school, college or university. In exceptional circumstances, one reference may be a character reference, but this must not be from a relative of the candidate.

12.3 Where references are received and determined as unsatisfactory by 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.

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 UK as detailed in the Asylum & Immigration Act 1996.
- Occupational Health pre-employment 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 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.

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

13.4 Applicants who are applying for posts that involve driving, particularly posts that require 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. **Inaccurate or misleading information**

15.1 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 Probation or Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

16. **Maintaining records**

16.1 All original applications, assessment sheets and interview / assessment notes for unsuccessful applicants 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.

17. **Complaints against the process**

17.1 Where a current employee of Cherwell District Council feels that they have been treated unfairly at any stage of the recruitment and selection process they may submit a grievance.

17.2 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.

17.3 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.