APPENDIX B

1

RECRUITMENT & SELECTION POLICY & PROCEDURE

Policy Schedule		
Policy owner and lead	People Services: HR Policy Manager	
Consultation	Trade unions	N/A
	Disability forum	N/A
	CMT	N/A
	CCF	10 December 2018
	Children's Safeguarding S11	November 2018
Approving body	Employment & Appeals Committee	
Date of approval		
Date of implementation	January 2019	
Version number	Version 6 final (December 2018)	
	Criminal Record (DBS) Policy and Procedure Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy Redeployment Policy and Procedure Policy and Procedure on Employing Migrant Workers	
Review interval	Three yearly (December 2021)	

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1. Policy Statement

1.1 Slough Borough Council is committed to being an employer of choice and to attracting employees of the highest calibre. Our employees are our most important asset and are critical to the services we provide. It is therefore essential that we recruit the right people to the right positions at the right time and in line with all statutory requirements.

2. Policy Aim

The aim of this policy and procedure is to provide a framework for the recruitment and selection of employees, to ensure all our processes are conducted fairly, consistently and effectively.

2.1 We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as set out in the statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government 2018).

2.2 As a responsible employer our approach is to:
Ensure we undertake 'Safer Recruitment' when recruiting to all posts for children, young people and adults at risk which require an Enhanced DBS check and Barred List check if in regulatory activity. Please refer to Appendix D "Safer Recruitment Guidance" if recruiting to posts working with children, young people and adults at risk" and apply this guidance alongside this policy and procedure. Refer to https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dbs-check-requests-guidance-for-employers

- Recruit the best person for the position based solely on merit.
- Employ a range of techniques to select candidates dependent on the competencies required for the position.
- Design positions to take advantage of potential/current employees' skills and abilities.
- Recognise the quality, experience and career aspirations of current employees and ensure they are given proper consideration in this process.
- Vacancies will be advertised internally in the first instance and externally if the

position cannot be filled unless there are exceptional circumstances.

- Limit recruitment consideration to internal candidates where redundancies are likely and ring-fence vacancies that arise from re-organisation to those affected by the restructuring and at risk of redundancy.

2.3 This policy and procedure should be read and applied in conjunction with National Safeguarding Statutory Requirements and Legislation, (attached as Appendix E) the Criminal Records Check (DBS) Policy and Procedure, Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy, Policy and our Equal Opportunities Statement.

3. Scope

3.1 This policy and procedure covers all activities that form part of the recruitment and selection process. It is applicable to all employee recruitment excluding 'as and when' workers and those employed in schools for whom the Governing Body would be responsible. This policy with appropriate amendments is recommended for adoption by Governing Bodies who will be required to make adequate and satisfactory arrangements of their own.

3.2 Chief Executive and Director appointments must comply with the Council's Constitution.

3.3 The Council has a contract in place with Matrix for the provision of temporary agency support to fill short term resourcing requirements. Whilst temporary agency requirements do not need to be advertised in the same way as outlined in this policy, there are additional approval mechanisms within the Matrix electronic system, which includes authorisation by finance, HR Business Partner and the appropriate Director.

4. Equality and diversity

4.1 We recognise the positive value of equality and diversity and welcome applications from people of all backgrounds.

4.2 Recruitment panels should be aware of equality legislation and understand how discrimination can occur in the recruitment process. No applicant or candidate will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of any of the eight protective characteristics, namely:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

4.3 The Slough Borough Council application form includes an equal opportunities section, which is detached from the application prior to being forwarded to the recruitment panel. We monitor details of applicants' ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, sex, age and whether the applicant has a disability. This helps us to prevent discrimination and identify areas of under-representation that may need attention. The collection of equality data is a corporate requirement, although applicants can decline to supply the information if they wish.

4.4 The Council is a 'Disability Confident' employer (previously two ticks) and is committed to employing people with disabilities. Applicants with a disability who meet the essential criteria on the person specification will be guaranteed an interview. In addition, we will make reasonable adjustments to the recruitment and selection process to ensure that no applicant/candidate is disadvantaged as a result of their disability. Additional guidance on supporting candidates with disabilities is included in Appendix A.

5. Record keeping and Data Protection

5.1 HR Transactional Services will keep all recruitment records in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018. It is the responsibility of the chair of the recruitment panel to ensure that all documents, including shortlisting and interview forms, notes, interview questions and copies of any correspondence, are passed to HR Transactional Services at the end of the recruitment process. Candidates have the legal right to submit a request to see copies of all recruitment and selection records relating to them.

5.2 Confidentiality must be maintained in relation to information in relation to recruitment and selection procedures in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018. Any breach of the Councils Data Protection and Privacy Policy may result in action under the Council's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

6. Training

6.1 To help ensure effective and non-discriminatory recruitment and selection practices, all panel members should complete the Council's internal recruitment and selection training. Where this is not possible, as a minimum it is essential that the chair of the recruitment panel has attended the training. An e-learning refresher module is also available for those who have already attended the internal training, and should be completed every three years to keep abreast of any developments to recruitment best practice.

6.2 Any panel member recruiting to a position where someone will be working with children, young people and adults at risk must also have undertaken safer recruitment training in the last three years and for posts where someone will be working with children or young people, must be trained in accordance with the Safer Recruitment Consortium training to undertake Safeguarding interviews.

7. STAGE 1: Identifying a vacancy

7.1 Vacancies usually arise when an employee leaves an existing post or a new permanent or temporary position is required. When a position becomes vacant the line manager should:

- Consider whether or not the position is still required

- Consider whether it would be appropriate to re-distribute the workload (or part of it) to existing employees or reduce the workload through the use of improved processes and effective use of technology

- Review and update the job description to ensure that it accurately reflects the key duties and responsibilities required of the position

- Review the person specification to ensure it accurately reflects the essential and desirable qualifications, skills, experience and knowledge required. This should include consideration of any English language requirement for customer-focused positions

- Where key duties and responsibilities have changed, discuss with your HR Services Officer whether the position should be re-assessed through the job evaluation scheme

- For temporary positions, consider the required length of contract and whether the position should be offered on a secondment or acting up basis.

- Review the required working hours for the position and whether the position can be offered on a remote and/or flexible basis.

- If the vacancy has arisen as a result of a restructure, consult with your HR Services Officer before starting the recruitment process to review whether the position should be ring fenced to those affected by the re-organisation.

- Draw up a clear and realistic timetable for recruitment taking account of the various steps that need to take place (including internal advertising in the first instance) and selection methods, allowing sufficient time for candidates to prepare their application and for interview

- Consider who to involve in the recruitment and selection process

- Prepare the job pack

8. STAGE 2: Preparing the job pack

8.1 Job descriptions

8.2 A job description outlines the position to be performed. It should be a straight forward description of the key duties and responsibilities and avoid jargon and abbreviations. Ideally, it should confirm any reporting lines and the position the position holder reports to and any financial responsibilities.

8.3 Drawing up an accurate job description is crucial to the success of the recruitment process as it provides applicants with clear information about the position. A job description should neither overstate nor understate the required duties and responsibilities as it plays an important part in helping a potential applicant to decide whether to apply. In addition, the job description indicates the expectation of performance of the employee once in position.

8.4 A job description template is available on SBC Insite here http://insite/people/recruitment/recruitment-process

8.5 Person specification

8.6 Once the position has been defined you should consider the key qualifications, skills, experience and knowledge required to perform the position successfully. The use of fair criteria that can be measured during the selection process will help ensure the final decision is objective and will reduce the potential for discrimination.

8.7 Person specification criteria should be:

- Genuinely relevant to the performance of the position. If unnecessary criteria are set the pool of potential applicants will be reduced such as asking for qualifications that are not necessary for the position. In addition, in certain circumstances unnecessary criteria could constitute indirect discrimination. For example, requiring a driving licence, when driving requirements are minimal and could be fulfilled by taxi, may be discriminatory towards applicants who are unable to drive due to a disability. Similarly, specifying a certain number of years' experience does not allow for the type or breadth of experience a person may have and could be discriminatory on the grounds of age.

- Measurable; it is pointless to include criteria that cannot be tested. It is important to be clear whether criteria will be assessed against the application form, via tests and/or during the interview so that applicants can respond as clearly as possible.

- Classified as either ‘essential’ or ‘desirable’. Essential criteria are indispensable if the position is to be carried effectively. They specify the minimum standard required and should be used in the shortlisting process as a basis for the rejection of unsuitable applicants. Desirable criteria enhance the applicant’s ability to carry out the position but a lack of these would not mean that they couldn’t carry out the position.

8.8 Criteria that could adversely impact on people with a protected characteristic should be avoided unless fully justified as being necessary for the position. There are certain exceptions in discrimination legislation, known as genuine occupational qualifications, where a position can only be performed effectively by a particular group of people. Examples are limited and care should be given in the use of such criteria and discussed with the HR Business Partnering Team before advertising.

8.9 A person specification template is available on SBC Insite here http://insite/people/recruitment/recruitment-process

8.10 Advertisement

8.11 All vacancies (excluding ‘as and when’ hours) must be advertised and, as a minimum, be posted on SBC Insite.

8.12 Vacancies will be advertised internally for a minimum of two weeks in the first instance to help maximise equality of opportunity and provide employees with career development opportunities. After this period, if no appointment can be made, the advertisement will be extended to include external applicants. In exceptional circumstances, the relevant Director may waive the need to advertise internally first. This is likely to include positions requiring specialised expertise where a comprehensive review of existing expertise has been undertaken.

8.13 Where possible, we will amalgamate vacancies into a composite advertisement to increase impact and to reduce advertising costs. Whilst this may delay the placing of an advertisement slightly, the impact of a composite advertisement often increases applicant response rates.

8.14 All advertisements should: Create a positive impression of the Council. Think about selling the Council, the position and the benefits we can offer.

- Include an appropriate job title - make sure the audience will understand the job title
- Outline the essential criteria for applicants
- Salary range and any allowances
- Confirm particulars such as length of contract, hours and work pattern if appropriate
- Include our equality statement *'We value diversity'*
- Include a safeguarding statement "*We are committed to safeguarding".*
- Detail the closing and interview/assessment dates
- Be personalised as much as possible, reading as if you are speaking directly to the applicant, e.g. 'You will be responsible for' and 'you will need to have'.

8.15 All external advertisements will be placed on our SBC website and most will also be advertised with Jobcentre Plus. A further advertisement can be placed in one local paper (such as the Slough Observer) or in a national newspaper or professional journal if appropriate.

8.16 Where possible advertisements should be placed online rather than in print. Online advertisements can be live within 48 hours, cost less than printed media, have no limit on content and reach a wider pool of potential applicants.

8.17 Recruiting officers are encouraged to consider the use of social media for recruitment advertising. The council's twitter feed and LinkedIn page can be used to publicise vacancies and we encourage employees to use their own professional LinkedIn pages to share vacancies within their own service areas with their online networks.

8.18 Whilst not essential, advertisements may offer the opportunity of an informal telephone discussion with the manager for the position. The purpose of these informal discussions is to assist applicants with understanding the position, department and organisation so they can decide whether to apply. Informal discussions do not form part of the selection process.

8.19 Further advice on writing advertisements and media use is available from the HR Business Partnering Team.

8.20 Advertising requirements for non-EEA nationals

8.21 Where positions may need to be filled by a non-EEA migrant we must meet the Resident Labour Market Test (RLMT). The purpose of this test is to ensure that settled workers are given an equal chance to apply for positions as non-EEA migrants.

8.22 In order to meet the Resident Labour Market Test:

. Positions must be advertised for a minimum of 28 calendar days

. Two advertisements must be placed and one of those will be online. In most cases this will include mandatory advertising through Jobcentre Plus.

. Advertisements must clearly state the:
- job title
- The main duties and responsibilities of the job
- location
- salary package
- skills, qualifications and experience needed
- closing date for applications

8.23 English language requirements for public sector workers

8.24 The Immigration Bill requires public authorities to ensure that employees in customer facing roles can speak fluent English. This 'fluency duty' applies to employees who, as a regular and intrinsic part of their role, are require to speak to members of the public.

8.25 Third party and agency workers who are engaged in customer facing roles for the council are also required to hold the level of English proficiency required to fulfil the position effectively.

8.26 To determine whether a role is customer facing or not it is necessary to consider the nature of the work involved including:

- Is there a business need for interaction with the public
- What is the frequency and form of this interaction
- What is the level of service quality and responsiveness expected by the public
- What proportion of the role requires spoken interaction with members of the public

8.27 Employees in a customer facing role must have a command of spoken English that is sufficient to enable the effective performance of their position. The level of language proficiency required will therefore depend on the type of customer facing role. The following factors may be relevant when considering the standard required:

- The frequency of spoken interaction
- The topic of spoken interaction
- Whether the communication is likely to include technical, profession-specific or specialist vocabulary
- The typical duration of spoken interaction
- Whether the communication is repeated in or supplemented by written material provided to customers
- The significant of spoken interaction for service delivery.

8.28 In the context of a customer facing role, an employee should be able to choose the right kind of vocabulary for the situation without a great deal of hesitation. They should listen to their customer and understand their needs. They should be able to tailor their approach to each conversation appropriate to their customer, responding clearly, even in complex situations. The table below provides a useful summary extracted from the CEFR levels of fluency:

CEFR Cert	Description	Fluency
B1	Threshold or intermediate	Exploits a wide range of simple language flexibility to express much of what they want. Can keep speaking comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning. Repair is evident, especially in longer stretches of free production.
B2	Vantage or upper intermediate	Adjusts to the changes of direction, style and emphasis normally found in conversation. Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo; although they can be hesitant as they search for patterns and expressions. There are few noticeably long pauses.
C1	Effective operational proficiency	Expresses themselves fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural smooth flow of language.
C2	Master or proficiency	Expresses themselves spontaneously at length with a natural conversational flow, avoiding or backtracking around any difficulty so smoothly that the customer is hardly aware of it.

8.29 Person specifications and recruitment advertisements for a customer focused position should make reference to the English language requirement, for example:

'The ability to converse at ease with customers and provide advice in accurate spoken English is essential for the post'

8.30 Where a particular standard of spoken language ability has been legitimately set as a requirement of the role, applicants may need to be assessed on their English language ability, either through a formal test or as part of the interview process. Where applicants are clearly fluent to the necessary standard for the position, no further action is necessary.

8.31 There are a range of techniques to demonstrate spoken English ability such as:

- Competently answering interview questions in English
- Possessing a relevant qualification for the role attainted as part of education in the UK or fully taught in English by a recognised institution abroad
- Passing an English spoken language competency test
- Possessing a relevant spoken English qualification at CEFR Level B1 or above, taught in English by a recognised institution abroad.

8.32 When the fluency duty is met by the provision of a sign language interpreter, the interpreter should be registered with the NRCPD.

8.33 The full code of practice on the English Language requirements is available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-language-requirement-for-publicsector-workers-code-of-practice

8.34 Recruitment agencies

8.35 Agency fees can be expensive and so generally positions will be recruited to by the Council directly. However, in some circumstances it may be more effective to engage a recruitment agency, for example when it has not been possible to find a suitable applicant or for a particularly specialist or senior position. This will not eliminate the need to advertise positions internally. In addition, any external agencies who assist us with recruitment must act in accordance with this policy and with respect of our commitment to equality and diversity.

8.36 Application forms and CVs

8.37 Applicants are required to complete our application form in order to be considered for a vacancy. They may, if they wish, submit a CV in addition to their application form. However, CVs on their own will not be accepted as they do not assist with consistent shortlisting and do not support our commitment to equal opportunities.

9 STAGE 3: Panel members and additional panels

9.1 Prior to shortlisting candidates, the recruiting officer should consider who will join them on the recruitment panel for shortlisting and interviewing candidates.

9.2 Normally all members of the main recruitment panel will be senior to that of the position being filled and, wherever possible, should include the immediate manager.

9.3 Additional panel interviews may be arranged (e.g. peer interviews for senior management positions). For additional panels it is not unusual for panel members to be of the same or similar level and may include the outgoing position holder who can offer useful information for candidates or members of employment groups such as the employee engagement forum. Additional panels should be considered as a sub-panel to the main recruitment panel and whilst their feedback should be fully taken into consideration as part of the decision making process, the final decision should be made by the main recruitment panel.

9.4 A representative from HR will not usually be a member of a recruitment panel unless it is for a senior management level position. However, advice and guidance on specific recruitment campaigns and best practice is available.

9.5 To help ensure effective and non-discriminatory recruitment and selection practices, all panel members should attend recruitment and selection training. Where this is not possible, as a minimum it is essential that the chair of the recruitment panel has attended the training.

9.6 When appointing recruitment panel members, consideration should be given to the diversity of the panel including, but not limited to, gender diversity. This is to help tackle unconscious bias and helps to demonstrate our commitment to diversity.

9.7 Panel members who are known to applicants should notify the chair of the recruitment panel. Depending on the nature of the relationship they will usually be prevented from participating in the recruitment process unless this is unavoidable (e.g. during internal recruitment).

9.8 The Council's Constitution includes specific requirements for the panel composition for the recruitment of Chief Executive and Director positions.

10 STAGE 4: Approval

10.1 Once the job description, person specification and advertisement have been prepared, the next step is to complete a Recruitment Checklist available here https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-language-requirement-for-publicsector-workers-code-of-practice The checklist should then be submitted to your Finance Business Partner and relevant Director for sign off before being passed to your HR Business Partner.

10.2 The HR Business Partnering Team will review the Recruitment Checklist and recruitment documents before forwarding the job pack to HR Transactional Services who will then place the advertisement.

11. STAGE 5: Redeployment and ring-fencing

11.1 As outlined in our Redeployment Policy and Procedure, we are committed to minimising compulsory redundancies where we can. One way of achieving this is to redeploy employees who are at risk of redundancy to other positions within the Council. Therefore, it may be appropriate to ring-fence vacancies to particular service areas and/or to slot an employee at risk of redundancy into another position without the need to compete in the normal way. If there is more than one employee at risk of redundancy then there will likely need to be a competitive process. Considerations should also be given as to whether re-training may be needed for redeployees applying for vacancies.

11.2 When a job pack is received, the HR Business Partnering Team will consult the redeployment register before the advertisement proceeds. They will contact you if your vacancy is identified as potentially suitable as a redeployment opportunity to discuss next steps.

12. STAGE 6: Selecting applicants for interview/assessment (short listing)

12.1 Shortlisting is a sifting exercise to decide which applicants you wish to invite for interview/testing. This involves undertaking a comparison of the application form against the person specification criteria. Shortlisting must not include consideration of the applicant's social media profiles or any views of colleagues who know the applicant/s.

12.2 HR Transactional Services will provide the recruitment panel with electronic copies of all application forms (excluding the section containing equality monitoring data), the original job pack and the shortlisting proforma by Monday at 5pm (2 working days after the closing date).

12.3 Shortlisting should take place as soon as possible after the closing date to ensure that sufficient notice can be provided to applicants invited to interview. In addition, long delays in the selection process may mean that strong applicants secure employment elsewhere.

12.4 Shortlisting will ideally involve the full recruitment panel but as a minimum must be carried out by two panel members to avoid the potential for bias, one of whom would normally be the direct manager.

12.5 Applicants who meet all the essential criteria are likely to be shortlisted. If this produces too many candidates to interview effectively in one day the desirable criteria may be used as a second filter.

12.6 It is advisable not to interview more than a maximum of 6 candidates in one day. Where necessary two interview dates may be required. Alternatively, where a large number of applications are received, it may be appropriate to have a reserve shortlist which can be referred to if an appointment is not made following the interview process.

12.7 Shortlisting decisions should be recorded on the shortlist proforma. Where shortlisting is completed collectively at the same time, one proforma may be completed and signed by each panel member. Alternatively, each panel member may review applications individually and then discuss the overall assessments with the rest of the panel members before agreeing on a final short list. The proforma should then be returned to HR Transactional Services along with the interview arrangement form.

12.8 HR Transactional Services will make an initial telephone call to the candidates to establish whether they are still interested and their availability for interview. After the initial telephone call, HR Transactional Services will confirm the interview details in writing.

12.9 Due to limited resources, external candidates are not notified if they haven't been shortlisted and instead are advised to assume their application has been unsuccessful if they have not heard from the Council in 4 weeks. However, internal candidates should be offered the opportunity to discuss with a panel member why they were not shortlisted if they wish to do so.

13. STAGE 7: Selection methods

13.1 The next stage is to carry out a selection process to establish which of the short listed applicants is most suitable for the role. Interviewing is the most commonly used method of assessing prospective employees and all selection programmes must include a panel interview as a minimum. However there are other methods available to assist the decision making process including:

- Psychometric assessments and aptitude tests such as numerical and verbal reasoning
- Presentations
- Work based exercises e.g. preparing a written report or creating a spreadsheet
- Group exercises and observations

13.2 Psychometric assessments

13.3 Psychometric assessments are formal assessments carried out by a qualified practitioner. They fall into two broad categories:

Ability tests	Covering activities such as numerical reasoning and the ability to interpret written information
Personality questionnaires	Covering personality aspects such as decision-making style, preferred leadership style, team profile and other traits relevant to managing tasks and people.

13.4 Psychometric assessments can be a useful aid to the selection process and should be completed in advance of the interviews so that any questions that arise from the reports can be explored at interview. It is not necessary or practical to require psychometric testing for every vacancy that arises but we recommend their use for all managerial positions and for those that require numerical or verbal reasoning skills.

13.5 The Council subscribes to an online psychometric system and members of the HR Business Partnering Team team are able to arrange and provide feedback on assessments.

13.6 Interviews

13.7 Interviews should be structured the same way for each candidate, ensuring the items on the person specification are covered for every candidate. The likely structure will be:

Interview Structure	
Interview preparation	In advance of the interviews, panel members should re-read the candidates' application forms to familiarise themselves with applicants' backgrounds and strengths against the person specification.

Panel pre-meeting	Before the interviews begin the panel should meet to agree who will chair the panel, agree the questions to be asked and by whom and to make sure the venue and any equipment is set up effectively.
Welcome and introduction	The panel should endeavour to put the candidate at ease from the start. Most candidates are nervous and the chair can help alleviate initial tension by offering water, introducing panel members and telling them about the role/department.
Interview format	The chair should explain the format and likely length of the interview. They should explain that the panel will make notes and confirm there will be an opportunity at the end for the candidate to ask any questions they have.
Employment history	It is essential to explore any gaps in employment history during the interview. This is particularly important for safeguarding purposes and inspectors may review this during their inspection.
Interview questions	Questions should be asked by panel members in order, rather than jumping between panel members. They should be open ended, encouraging candidates to give examples of real situations. Sometimes the way a question is answered might prompt an additional question, or something on one particular candidate's application might lead you to ask a specific question and this is perfectly acceptable. Supplementary questions will often be used where the pre-agreed question has not been fully answered or has perhaps been misunderstood. The aim is to create an atmosphere of conversation, rather than interrogation, to help put the candidate at east and enable them to perform at their best. Guidance on effective questioning technique is included in Appendix B.
Candidate questions	The candidate should be offered the opportunity to ask any questions. As part of this section it is a good idea to ask all candidates if they would require any support or adjustments to undertake the role effectively. This will not only allow disabled candidates to discuss support they may need but allow other candidates to raise any flexible working needs, for example due to carer responsibilities.

Next steps	At the end of the interview the candidate should be informed of the next steps, including when and how they will be notified of the decision.

13.8 It is essential that panel members keep notes of the interviews and afterwards make a record of the rationale behind the selection decision using the interview pro forma. This includes scoring candidates against the person criteria so that it is clear why the successful candidate was selected and the other candidates rejected. Interview records may be called upon if we are questioned about a recruitment decision. Interview notes should be readable and should not include any comments that you would not be happy for somebody else to see. It is often practicable to have another panel member to make notes when you are asking questions so that you can make eye contact with the candidate and listen carefully to their responses.

14. STAGE 8: Making an offer

14.1 Following completion of all the selection assessments, the chair of the recruitment panel should gather together the evidence from all tests, feedback from others, interview notes and discuss the decision with other panel members. Scoring candidates together with open discussion will identify the strongest candidates. However, even if there is a majority in favour of a particular candidate or if the scoring shows that there is a clear front-runner, take the time to explore any reservations you have. Reassure yourself that the chosen candidate is capable of doing the job well or that it is feasible to instigate a development programme which will achieve this. Do not be tempted to recruit the best of an inadequate set of candidates if they are not capable of doing the job.

14.2 Whilst it is ideal to make a decision on the interview day when impressions are still fresh, don’t be pressured into making a difficult decision on the day if you are not confident in doing so, consider reconvening the next day after giving your decision further thought. If necessary, candidates can be called back for a second interview so any doubts can be explored further.

14.3 Once a decision has been made, the chair of the recruitment panel should telephone the chosen candidate to make a conditional offer. The offer must be conditional at this stage as it will be subject to successful pre-employment checks such as references, occupational health clearance and criminal record disclosure as appropriate.

14.4 The chair of the panel must complete the Appointment Details Form (http://insite/people/recruitment/recruitment-process) detailing the starting salary being offered and send this back to HR Transactional Services with all the interview paperwork. The ADF will be included in the interview pack.

14.5 Upon receiving all the interview paperwork, HR Transactional Services will produce a conditional written offer to be sent to the appointed candidates and for pre-employment checks to be carried out. Written offers of employment should only be sent by HR Transactional Services as the exact wording of the letter can make a significant legal commitment.

14.6 Where possible, it is advisable to have a good second choice candidate that can be approached if your first choice candidate declines the offer of employment. Where there is no strong reserve candidate you may need to revisit your shortlist or to re-advertise.

14.7 Unsuccessful candidates should be notified quickly and will be officially informed by HR Transactional Services. It is good practice to provide constructive feedback to any unsuccessful candidates who request feedback. Guidance on providing feedback to unsuccessful candidates is included in Appendix C.

15. STAGE 9: Pre-employment checks

15.1 Qualifications

15.2 Where qualifications are a requirement for the position, the successful candidate will need to provide original documents as proof to HR Transactional Services for verification and copying before commencing in their new position.

15.3 References

15.4 References must be taken up for internal and external candidates. The purpose of obtaining references is to confirm or gain factual information on an applicant's current position, salary, length of service, conduct and performance, attendance, disciplinary and sickness records. We recognise that increasingly employers are avoiding providing references on character or performance. This will not disadvantage a candidate providing key factual data such as employment dates and positions held are confirmed.

15.5 References will be emailed to the chair of the recruitment panel by HR Transactional Services for confirmation that they are acceptable. It is important that all references are treated in strict confidence and should be carefully destroyed or returned to HR Transactional Services after review.

15.6 It is the policy of the Council to request two references for external appointments from the current or most recent employer/line manager (not a colleague from the organisation). For internal appointments, one reference is required, usually from the current line manager. Guidance on suitable internal references can be obtained from the HR Business Partnering Team if needed.

15.7 The successful candidate should not start work without references being obtained first, except in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the relevant Director. If references are to be received later continuation of employment will be subject to receipt of satisfactory references. Please refer to the Reference Request Template.

15.8 Criminal record checks (DBS disclosure)

15.9 As a responsible employer, we take every step to ensure that children and other vulnerable groups are cared for by employees, volunteers and contractors who have been screened to ensure they are suitable to carry out their roles and responsibilities. DBS checks are undertaken for positions that meet the standard or enhanced criteria for a criminal record check as outlined in the Criminal Record Check Policy and Procedure. Further guidance can be obtained from https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dbs-check-requests-guidance-for-employers

15.10 Where a position requires a criminal record check, the application pack must state clearly that this is a requirement.

15.11 Occupational health

15.12 Prior to commencing employment, new starters are required to complete a confidential occupational health questionnaire, which will be reviewed by HR Transactional Services. If they answer 'yes' to any of the questions, the questionnaire will be forwarded to our occupational health specialist who will contact the individual if necessary to ask more detailed medical questions. All medical and sensitive personal information provided to occupational health will be held confidentially. Occupational health will provide advice to the council on any adjustments that may be required to allow the individual to undertake the position.

16. STAGE 10: Preparing and inducting new starters

16.1 Once the successful candidate has accepted the offer of employment and a start date has been agreed, the next step is to prepare an induction programme for them. An effective induction will help ensure that the new employee settles in well and gains an understanding of the council and our policies, systems, values and culture as early as possible.

16.2 If the new employee has a longer notice period you may wish to keep in contact with your new starter before they join to help them feel part of the team and perhaps to become aware of current developments at an early stage. It may be appropriate for them to attend some key meetings that they would benefit from attending before they arrive.

16.3 Prior to their start date, ensure that workspace and equipment is ready for their first day and that the requests for ID cards and system access rights have been set up. You should also ensure that there is somebody available to greet your new starter on their first day to introduce them to the team and help them to settle in.

16.4 Each new employee will be inducted using the Council's induction checklist which includes familiarising them with the workplace and colleagues, local health, safety, fire and first aid arrangements, job responsibilities and any departmental specific procedures. It is the line manager's responsibility to ensure that the new employee receives written statements of policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding, that all sections of the induction checklist are completed within the specified timescales and that the form is signed off and returned to HR Transactional Services for inclusion in the personal file for the new employee. The induction checklist is available on SBC Insite here: http://insite/people/recruitment/induction . All employees are required to undertake safeguarding training to at least level 1 (either classroom or e learning dependent on the role) and for posts working with children, young people or adults at risk they must undertake enhanced safeguarding training.

17. Recruitment and selection timeline

Step	Deadline/timescale
Complete job pack submitted to ODHR	Wednesday 12 noon
ODHR review job pack, redeployment register and submit to HR Transactional Services	Tuesday 12 noon
Internal advertisement placed by HR Transactional Services	Within 3 days (Friday)
Internal advertisement closing date	1 week / 2 weeks (Thursday 5pm)
External advertisement closing date (if required)	Usually 2 weeks – advertisements close on Thursdays at 5pm
Short list pack provided to panel by HR Transactional Services	Monday 5pm
Short list provided to HR Transactional Services	Friday 5pm
Interview invites sent out	ASAP dependent on interview dates
References obtained where permission given and for posts working with children, young people and adults at risk	ASAP
Interview date	Candidates can be provided 1 weeks notice if date was included in advertisement, otherwise 2 weeks
Candidates informed of outcome	Within 2 days unless candidates have been informed of alternative timescales
Offer letter sent	Within 5 working days of receiving all completed recruitment paperwork

18. Process flowchart