



# **East Herts Council**

## **Recruitment Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 The objective of recruitment and selection at East Herts Council is to fairly and consistently appoint the best person for the post.

1.2 Our recruitment processes are therefore:

- Based on fairness and equal opportunity to all candidates, and that East Herts Council adheres to current legislation and the Equality Act 2010 – Employment Statutory Code of Practice.
- Flexible to ensure that they can be updated
- To comply with the Equality Act 2010 East Herts Council’s recruitment process will not be discriminatory with regard to the protected characteristics of race, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, age, gender reassignment, religion or belief.

## **2.0 Scope**

2.1 East Herts recruitment procedures apply to all posts within the Council, excluding Chief Officers. The selection process will vary depending upon the post.

## **3.0 Principles**

3.1 The recruitment process will be compliant with relevant recruitment legislation;

- Disclosure and Barring Service
- The Equality Act 2010
- Immigration, Asylum & Nationality Act 2006

and ensure that the Council is not put at risk.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service**

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. It replaces the

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

Where the role is working with children or vulnerable adults an assessment will need to be carried out to determine if the role meets the definition of regulated activity as specified in the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and, if so, an enhanced DBS check with barred list check will need to be carried out. Further information on eligible positions is available in the Councils Disclosure and Barring Service Policy

The Equality Act, October 2010

This replaced all existing discrimination legislation and aimed to provide a simpler, more consistent and effective framework to enable employers to prevent discrimination and promote equality across ‘protected characteristics’. These are age, disability, race gender, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and gender reassignment.

This applies to how the Authority;

- Advertises vacancies
- How we shortlist candidates
- How we interview candidates
- The terms and conditions of employment offered
- Offers training and development

### **Immigration Employers’ responsibility for avoiding illegal employment**

The law on preventing illegal working is set out in sections 15 to 25 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 which came into force on 29 February 2006. The law is in place to;

- Make it harder for people with no right to work in the UK to unlawfully gain or keep employment
- Make it easier for employers to ensure that they only employ people who are legally allowed to work for them;

- Strengthen the Government’s controls on tackling illegal working by making it easier for the UK Border Agency to take action against employers who use illegal workers

### **Workers who can be employed without restriction**

- British Citizens
- Commonwealth citizens with the right of abode
- Nationals from the Common Travel Area
- Nationals from the European Economic Area (EEA) countries (except for Romanian and Bulgarian nationals who have restrictions placed on them)
- Family members of adult nationals from EEA countries

The following are EEA countries; Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Irish Republic, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland

### **Employing workers from outside the European Economic Area (EEA)**

If East Herts Council wishes to employ workers from outside the EEA they will need to be sponsored. The Council would need to be licensed to sponsor these types of workers. Please contact Human Resources for further information.

### **Points Based Immigration System**

The new points system which was rolled out by the Home Office during 2008/9 has changed the way individuals from outside the EU and EEA can work, train or study in the UK. There are now five tiers. Please contact Human Resources for further information.

Recruiting managers must have sight in the first instance of the documentation at interview stage, through a passport, or residence permits, Further detail and guidance regarding combinations of accepted identification will be given by the relevant HR Officer.

## **Consequence**

Failure to carry out checks and results in the Council knowingly employing an illegal worker. May lead to the recruiter facing up to two years imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine. In addition to this, the Council could be fined £10,000 for each illegal worker employed. The recruiter in all circumstances is the manager that is recruiting.

- 3.2 The Recruitment Policy should also be used in conjunction with other related Council Policy as appropriate;

Redeployment Policy

Disclosure and Barring Service Policy

Employing and Managing People with Disabilities

- 3.3 As part of the council’s approach to succession planning managers are requested to consider whether posts which become vacant would be suitable for trainees or apprentices recruiting. If so please contact the relevant HR officer who will assist in this process.
- 3.4 Most positions will be advertised internally first to encourage internal staff development. Any employees on the redeployment register will be notified of vacancies prior to the general advert and be given priority as set out in East Herts Council [Redeployment Policy](#). If it is identified that the necessary skills required for the role are unlikely to be met internally, the internal and external recruitment may run concurrently.
- 3.5 Non permanent vacancies, (for example maternity leave cover or back-filling of vacant hours) should be advertised internally first to give existing employees the opportunity to apply. These vacancies can be filled with fixed term contracts or secondments as applicable. For very short periods or where specific skills are needed it may be more appropriate to use temporary agency staff. See section 11 for more information.
- 3.6 Vacant posts will be advertised with a job description & person specification which have been evaluated in accordance with the Council’s job evaluation policy.

3.7 Applicants will complete application forms rather than submit CVs. Any CVs that are received will not be considered as part of the recruitment process.

#### **4.0 Job Descriptions & Person Specifications**

4.1 The line manager should consult with Human Resources when reviewing the job description and person specification to ensure consistency.

4.2 Before requesting authority to recruit, the line manager of the vacancy should review the current job description and person specification to ensure it is fit for purpose for the service now and the changing needs of the authority.

4.4 A copy of the job description and person specification should be sent to Human Resources. Human Resources should be notified if any substantial changes have been made to the Job Description. The job description may be subject to evaluation should any substantial changes be made. If this is the case the Job Evaluation must take place prior to submitting a recruitment request.

4.5 Job descriptions should be reviewed annually in line with the employee PDR process.

4.6 Should a post be graded at a higher grade the postholder will be placed at the lowest SCP of the new grade band, unless the grade overlaps then the postholder will move to the next SCP.

4.7 Selection will be measured and scored against the criteria for the person specification, it is therefore important to ensure this is suitable and up to date.

4.8 Line managers should assign ‘F(orm), I(nterview) or T(est)’ next to each criteria on the person specification; this will inform applicants how they will be assessed for each point. Managers need to split criteria into ‘essential’ and ‘desirable’ as this will support short listing.

#### **5.0 The Recruitment Process**

- 5.1 All recruitment is subject to approval by the Corporate Management Team (CMT). This includes permanent, temps, consultants, casual and secondment appointments.
- 5.2 After reviewing the job description and person specification, the recruiting manager (usually the line manager to the vacant position, or another senior manager) must complete a recruitment request form. This form details the business case to fill the vacancy, and outlines any advertising costs. Recruitment request forms must be submitted to CMT adhering to the usual timescales for CMT reports.
- 5.3 East Herts Council does not pay interview expenses unless there is a business need to attract candidates. This will need to be agreed at CMT as part of the request to recruit.
- 5.4 Following approval, the recruiting manager should send the approved recruitment request to Human Resources with the job description and person specification, vacancy details, advert Contractual hours & working arrangements, whether it is permanent, fixed term or a secondment and recruiting manager’s contact details and closing date).

## **6.0 Recruitment & advertising**

### **6.1 Internal recruitment**

- 6.1.1 Internal positions will be advertised on the staff intranet and via a weekly vacancy bulletin that is emailed by Human Resources.
- 6.1.2 The weekly vacancy bulletin is sent to Redeployees on Wednesday and all staff on a Thursday. Recruiting managers must send all the paperwork to HR by noon on Wednesday to ensure inclusion in the bulletin.
- 6.1.3 Positions are generally advertised internally for 2 weeks. In cases where internal recruitment is unlikely and the role needs to be filled quickly this may be reduced to one week.
- 6.1.4 Applicants will be required to complete an internal application form against the person specification and submit it to HR before the deadline. The internal application form is available on the HR pages of the intranet. Prospective applicants for secondments



should ensure they have their line manager’s approval prior to submitting an application as per the Secondment Policy.

6.1.5 After the deadline, HR will email the recruiting manager with the application forms. The short listing grid, interview assessment sheets and statement of employee particulars will need to be completed by the recruiting manager, and are available to download from the Council’s Intranet site. The recruiting manager should then proceed to the selection stages as detailed below.

6.1.6 Redeployees will be given priority and will be considered ahead of other internal candidates in accordance with East Herts Councils Redeployment Policy.

## 7.0 External recruitment

7.1. Should internal recruitment be unsuccessful the recruiting manager may proceed to external recruitment provided permission to do so was given by CMT at authorisation stage. In some cases CMT will agree to internal and external recruitment commencing simultaneously. The service will cover the cost of recruitment.

7.2 Recruiting managers must send the recruitment request form, job description and person specification and advert to HR to start the recruitment process.

7.3 Adverts must clearly state the following information;

- The grade and salary range + local weighting
- Service, team and location of the job
- Job title and reference number (usually the job number)
- Basic outline of the job role and key requirements
- Contractual hours and working arrangements
- Whether the position is permanent, fixed term, secondment etc.
- East Herts District Councils Logo/IIP Logo/ Disability two ticks symbol (all jobs)
- Contact details including email address
- Closing date

A basic advert template can be obtained from the Human Resources intranet pages.

- 7.4 HR will work with the recruiting manager to finalise the advert.
- 7.5 Applicants will be able to access information packs on the Council's website. Packs will include
- Job Description/Person Specification
  - Application Form and Guidance Notes on completing the form
  - Key terms and conditions for the post
  - Equalities Monitoring Form
- 7.6 After the deadline, HR will send the recruiting manager the application forms. Recruiting managers will also need to use shortlisting grids and interview assessments sheets. These are available on the Council's Intranet site.
- 7.7 The recruiting manager should now proceed to the selection stages detailed below.

## **8.0 Short listing & Interviews**

- 8.1 Recruiting managers should follow the selection procedure detailed below for both internal and external recruitment.
- 8.2 Recruitment panels should be representative of gender and if possible, race, At least one member of the panel must be trained by the Council in recruitment and selection. The same panel that shortlists should be used to interview. The line manager for the vacant position should be part of the recruitment panel.
- 8.3 All stages of the selection process must be written and recorded, panel members should keep notes throughout. When the successful candidate is appointed, the panel should send their records to HR.

## **9.0 Equalities and Diversity**

- 9.1 Under the Equality Act 2010 the Council has a duty to make reasonable changes for disabled applicants. These are known as 'reasonable adjustments'. Please see the Council's Policy on Employing and Managing People with Disabilities for further guidance.

- 9.2 East Herts Council is part of the Job Centre's Disability Two Ticks Scheme. HR will inform recruiting managers if any applicants have indicated they wish to be considered under this scheme.
- 9.3 The Two Ticks Scheme applies to applicants that have a disability and have indicated on their monitoring form that they wish to be considered under the scheme. It guarantees that applicants will be invited to interview provided that they meet the essential criteria of the person specification.

## **10.0 Short listing**

- 10.1 The recruitment panel will shortlist the applicants against the criteria detailed in the person specification. These will be the only criteria used in the selection process. The panel should use the short listing grid to record the scores of the applicants.
- 10.2 The panel should score applications 0-3 for each criteria of the person specification (Qualifications, Job Specific Skills, Team Working, Contacts, Service Delivery and Communication).
- 10.3 The scores equate to the following rating;
- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | = | Exceeds requirements of the person specification        |
| 2 | = | Meets requirements of the person specification          |
| 1 | = | Below requirements of the person specification          |
| 0 | = | No evidence of requirements of the person specification |
- 10.4 After short listing, the panel should use the scores to select for interview. Recruiting managers should invite both internal and external applicants (a standard template letter is available on the Human Resources intranet pages).
- 10.5 When inviting to interview, applicants should be informed of the following details;
- Date, time, location and duration of the interview
  - Who will be on the panel
  - Arrangements for arrival at Council offices, i.e. who to ask for
  - The assessment methods, i.e. interview, tests

- To bring proof of their right to work in the UK and relevant qualifications
  - Whether they require any reasonable adjustments to be made.
- 10.6 The candidate must be asked to bring proof of their right to work in the UK and relevant qualifications (as stated on their application); copies should be taken before the interview takes place and securely retained by the recruiting manager until the appointment is made.
- 10.7 The panel should meet before the interview to discuss and finalise the questions that will be asked at interview. Questions should be designed to assess whether the candidate meets the requirements of the person specification. The panel should pay particular attention to whether the person specification identifies how criteria will be assessed using ‘F(orm), I(nterview), T(est)’.
- 10.8 The panel may wish to agree and write ‘model answers’ to their questions prior to interview, to help them to score and assess candidates.
- 10.9 If the panel are using tests to assess the candidates, it is good practice to do a ‘mock’ before the interview, ensure that the answers are written prior to marking and to decide the weighting the test will place on the overall decision to appoint.
- 10.10 HR can help panels to devise tests and assessments that are fit for purpose and will help to recruit the best candidate to the post.
- 10.11 Panels should ensure interviews and assessments run on time, and that candidates are given sufficient time to prepare, time to complete and breaks. Interviews should last between 40 minutes to an hour. It is advised that the maximum amount of interviews scheduled for one day is 6.
- 10.12 Every member of the panel should take notes during the interview and individually score the candidates to the following ratings;
- 5 = Exceeds specification
  - 4 = Fully matches specification
  - 3 = Matches specification well, with only slight discrepancies
  - 2 = Matches specification fairly well, but with weaknesses

in some aspects.

- 1 = Matches specification in some respects, but with important omissions.
- 0 = Does not match specification

10.13 An offer of appointment will be made to the candidate who scores the highest in interview and any tests if applicable. If none of the candidates meet the requirements of the role the panel is not obliged to offer the job. In this situation the recruiting manager should speak to HR to discuss the next steps for recruitment.

10.14 If the successful applicant declines the offer of appointment, the recruiting manager should consider offering the position to the person with the next highest score at interview stage. If there are no other suitable applicants the recruiting manager should seek advice from HR.

## **11.0 Selection & appointment process**

11.1 When the panel has decided who to appoint to the post, the recruiting manager should contact the successful applicant and offer the appointment. They should inform the applicant that at this stage the offer is conditional on satisfactory reference, medical clearance and DBS check (if applicable), and that they should not hand in their notice to their current employer until HR have sent an unconditional offer of employment in writing. The recruiting manager should also discuss and agree the starting SCP and salary with the applicant.

11.2 Recruiting managers must then complete a statement of employee particulars (available on the intranet) detailing contractual entitlements and send to HR. Recruiting managers should check any details they are unsure of with HR, as this document will be used to write the appointee's terms and conditions. Recruiting managers must attach the successful candidate's application form, interview assessment sheets, copies of their right to work in the UK and qualifications to the statement of employee particulars. HR will check and send out the letter of appointment and the statement of particulars to ensure that the contract is correct.

11.3 Recruiting managers should inform both internal and external unsuccessful candidates (a standard letter is available on the Human Resources intranet pages). It is advised that unsuccessful

candidates should only be informed after the successful candidate has verbally accepted the offer of appointment. This will allow recruiting managers to offer the position to the next candidate should the first choice decline or withdraw their application.

- 11.4 The recruiting manager should retain their interview notes in order to provide feedback to any successful candidates for a few weeks. All selection paperwork must be sent to HR, including checks of the candidates' right to work in the UK and qualifications. HR will retain the paperwork for 1 year after the closing date and then destroy it as confidential waste.

## **12.0 Pre employment checks before making an offer**

- 12.1 Offers of appointment are conditional upon receipt of two satisfactory references (one from the current employer), medical clearance and DBS clearance (if applicable), and written evidence to work in the UK,. Successful candidates must be informed by the recruiting manager and HR not to give notice to their current employer until they receive an unconditional offer of employment in writing.
- 12.2 Should the recruiting manager or HR deem the pre-employment checks unsatisfactory, the manager should liaise with HR for advice on how to proceed. It may be appropriate to seek a third reference or arrange a medical consultation with the Council's occupational health provider. Conditional offers of appointment may only be withdrawn in agreement with HR, in which circumstances an offer will be made to the next highest scoring candidate.

## **Transition from non-permanent to permanent**

- 12.3 In some cases a non-permanent vacancy may develop into a permanent post. For example an employee may be appointed to cover maternity and then the substantive post-holder may choose not to return to work. In these situations managers must seek approval from CMT prior to making the post permanent. In requesting this, the manager must demonstrate that they are complying with the principles detailed in section 3 of this document.

12.4 The post will also be advertised internally unless the incumbent employee went through a selection procedure as outlined in this policy (or the Secondment Policy) then they may be made permanent without advertising the post again. The Council must ensure there are two references and medical clearance for the individual.

### **13.0 Casuals**

13.1 Casual employees are those on a 'zero hours' contract who are asked to work as and when the service needs. There is no obligation on behalf of the Council to provide work and no obligation on behalf of the individual to accept work offered.

13.2 Casual employees will be subject to the same recruitment process and pre-employment checks as described above.

13.3 If casual employees wish to become a permanent member of staff they must apply for vacant positions following the recruitment processes detailed above. Casual staff may apply for vacancies at the internal vacancy stage.

### **14.0 Temps**

14.1 A 'Temp' is defined as an agency worker supplied by an agency to fill a temporary vacancy. The individual is not an employee of East Herts Council and the agency will invoice the service for any hours worked. This is different to those individuals employed by East Herts Council on Fixed-Term or 'Temporary' Contracts.

14.2 If a recruiting manager has a short term vacancy to fill (i.e. to cover long term sick leave) it may be appropriate to use a Temp to fill the role. Managers must obtain CMT approval to fill a vacancy as described in section 5.

14.3 To hire a temp to fill a vacancy, the recruiting manager should contact and liaise with Morgan Hunt directly. See the HR pages of the intranet for the temporary recruitment process.

14.4 Temps should be used to fill short-term vacancies and in general should not be in place for longer than 12 weeks. Temporary workers who work beyond 12 weeks are entitled to the same terms and conditions as other employees, in accordance with the Agency

Workers Regulations (2010). Managers considering keeping a temp on beyond 12 weeks should contact Human Resources for advice.

- 14.5 If temps wish to become permanent members of staff they must apply for vacant positions following the internal or external recruitment as detailed above.
- 14.6 Temp positions that become permanent through EHC recruitment processes are subject to an agency placement fee.

### **15.0 Consultants and ‘Sole Trader’ Contractors**

- 15.1 If a recruiting manager has a short term project which requires specialist skills, it may be appropriate to use a Consultant to fill the role. Managers must obtain CMT approval to engage a consultant. This is not a recruitment request but rather a report to CMT outlining the business case for hiring a consultant. Advice should be sought from Human Resources and Procurement to ensure the role is suitable for a consultant. Depending on the nature of the appointment it may be necessary to follow procurement regulations rather than follow the process outlined below. These can be found on the intranet under Procurement.
- 15.2 Morgan Hunt can assist with the hiring of consultants. This would be subject to a placement fee which should be negotiated in advance. Managers may also use other agencies for consultants.
- 15.3 To become a permanent, salaried employee, Contractors and Consultants must apply for a vacant position via internal or external recruitment.
- 15.4 Sole traders or small businesses where an individual is working as a contractor or consultant for all or most of their employment may be entitled to employment rights in the same way as temporary staff. It is the responsibility of the commissioning manager to make adequate checks. Human Resources should be consulted where this is likely to be the case.

### **16.0 External secondments**



16.1 External secondments will be subject to the appointment procedure as described in the Secondment Policy.

16.2 If the external secondment becomes a permanent vacancy (e.g. the employee does not return from maternity leave), the post may be offered to the external secondee without advertising internally or externally provided that the secondee has already gone through a recruitment procedure and the principles detailed in section 3 are complied with.

## **17.0 Volunteers**

17.1 If a recruiting manager would like to use volunteers in their service, they must contact HR for advice and read the Council's Volunteer Policy for further information

## **18.0 Work experience & Work placements**

18.1 Work experience placements are dependant on the services capacity to support them. If the service would like to provide a work experience placement, they should contact HR to complete the necessary paperwork.

18.2 The Council can only support unpaid work placements where the student is undertaking work experience as part of a UK further or higher education course. Managers interested in pursuing this should contact HR for further information.

## **19.0 Administration**

19.1 All recruitment and selection paperwork will be retained by HR for 12 months after the deadline for applications, it will then be destroyed as confidential waste.

19.2 The new starter process is outlined in Appendix 1, HR will contact the line manager directly to ensure this is followed.

## **20.0 Policy Review**

20.1 This Policy shall be reviewed after two years or sooner in line with legislation and best practice to reflect the best possible level of support and management.

