

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

PERSONNEL & PROPERTY SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 5 JUNE 2001

REVISED RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

Report by the Director of Corporate Resources/Depute Chief Executive

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is ask the Sub-Committee to approve proposed changes to the Council's Recruitment and Selection Procedures following a review of the current process, subject to consultation with the Trade Unions.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The existing Recruitment and Selection Procedures which have been in place since 1996 have served the Council well. They have generally been regarded as representing good practice, have generally been well received by managers in pursuing candidates for appointment and by job applicants.
- 2.2 The procedures apply to all appointments and to internal and external candidates. They do not apply to teaching posts, which are the subject of separate documentation.
- 2.3 Since the introduction of the Council's Recruitment and Selection Procedures, there has been various new employment legislation enacted, e.g. The Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, Employment Rights Act 1996. Further guidance has been received on the impact of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and COSLA have issued an updated document on Best Practice Guidelines for Recruitment and Selection.

3. SUMMARY

- 3.1 All departments have been consulted via their Personnel Officers who were asked to consider the procedures and the proposed amendments from a service department perspective. The procedures have been amended to take account of their comments as well as the impact of new employment legislation and further guidance received as detailed in paragraph 2.3. above. The main changes which have been incorporated into the revised documentation are summarised as follows: -
- Enabling both Part A and Part B of the Application Form to be forwarded to a shortlisting panel where it has been agreed that this is appropriate due to the highly sensitive nature of the post e.g. working in Children's Units, Homes for Older People etc.
 - Introducing a recruitment charter which sets out the Council's commitment to applicants and outlines the standards of service that they should receive from the Council under the recruitment process
 - Requiring, in agreement with the Occupational Health Service, that the recommended candidates in a number of agreed posts have to pass a pre - employment medical

examination (eg HGV Driver, user of heavy equipment etc) in addition to completing a medical questionnaire prior to commencing employment. This proposal supports the Managing Absence process.

- Amending and updating various forms to reflect improved operational practice or legislative change e.g. Criminal Convictions; Employment Reference; Medical Questionnaire; Interview Assessment and Recruitment Administration Forms.
- Providing more guidance to managers on shortlisting disabled applicants and the use of feedback in post interview counselling.
- Making the recruitment process more accessible for applicants on - line e.g. request application forms by e-mail; advertising on the Council's W.W.W. and Intranet sites.

3.1.2 Police Act 1997

3.1.2.1 Further guidance is awaited from the Scottish Executive regarding the implementation of Part V of the Police Act 1997 relating to the new criminal record checking system, types of post that can now be checked; payment arrangements for payment of the appropriate fee and approved signatories.

3.1.2.2 The Criminal Convictions Section within the Procedures will be amended to reflect any further guidance received from the Justice Department of the Scottish Executive.

3.2 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES

3.2.1 Account has been taken of the need to have in place within the Department of Educational and Social Services a rigorous approach to the recruitment and selection of employees working directly with children, young people and the elderly. This will include the introduction of a probationary period of service in exceptional circumstances.

3.2.2 This will be further developed as a result of any recommendations made by the Scottish Recruitment and Selection Consortium set up in 1998 to review the recruitment, training, support, management and development of social work employees. The Consortium will be forwarding their recommendations for approval to the Scottish Executive in due course and appropriate amendments will be made within the procedures to reflect any guidance received from the Scottish Executive.

3.3 ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

3.3.1. Application forms and other additional supporting information should be made available in large print, Braille, computer disk, audiotape or alternative medium. These alternative formats will be introduced after the revised procedures have been agreed by the Council.

3.4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

3.4.1 It is essential that recruitment and selection activities are continuously monitored and evaluated and appropriate auditing will take place to ensure that the revised recruitment and selection procedures are being properly adhered to.

3.5 COMPUTERISED PERSONNEL INFORMATION

- 3.5.1** At the end of the recruitment and selection process a formal offer of appointment is made to the recommended candidate and on receipt of their written acceptance of the appointment, an HR/Payroll record is created on Cyborg. In accordance with their recommendations made by the External Auditor in the review of Financial Systems appropriate checks will be undertaken between payroll and HR to ensure that the employee is paid the correct rate of pay.

3.6 ESSENTIAL POINTS OF POLICY

- 3.6.1** The Recruitment and Selection Procedures contained a list of Essential Points. This will be continued in the revised procedure and are summarised in Appendix A. Copies of the full Recruitment and Selection Procedures are available on request from the Head of Personnel.

4. FEEDBACK FROM APPLICANTS

- 4.1** Recruitment Satisfaction Survey Questionnaires have been issued to applicants for various Council vacancies to establish feedback and comment on the Council's recruitment process from the applicant's viewpoint.
- 4.2** The findings from the returned questionnaires have shown a high satisfaction level with the Council's Recruitment and Selection Process. It has been agreed to continue to issue Recruitment Satisfaction Survey questionnaires on an ongoing basis to enable improvements to be made to the recruitment process as a result of any feedback received.
- 4.3** A copy of the proposed charter is also attached as Appendix B.

5. TRAINING

- 5.1** The existing Recruitment and Selection Training Course will require to be updated to reflect the revised procedures as approved and existing employees should receive a refresher on the new procedures to ensure that they are aware of recent examples of best practice. This can be delivered via workplace Toolbox Talks by the Training and Development Section. This will ensure maximum impact with minimum disruption to departments' service delivery.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** Any additional costs arising from the review of the Council's Recruitment and Selection procedures will be contained within existing budgets.

7. TRADE UNIONS

- 7.1** The Trade Unions have been informed of the review of the Recruitment and Selection procedures and further detailed consultation will follow on the proposed revisions as approved by the Council.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The Sub-Committee is asked to:-

- (a) approve the proposed changes to the Council's Recruitment and Selection Procedures, subject to consultation with the trade unions;
- (b) ask the Head of Personnel to report back to the Sub-Committee on receipt of further guidance from the Scottish Executive in respect of the Police Act 1997 and Social Work appointments;
- (c) refer the Sub-Committee decision to Council for approval; and
- (d) otherwise note the content of the report.

Fiona Lees
Director of Corporate Resources/Depute Chief Executive
GP/YC
15 May 2001

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Anyone wishing further information should contact Graham Haugh, Head of Personnel (Tel 01563 576092).

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

REVISED RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

SUMMARY OF THE ESSENTIAL POINTS OF POLICY

3.2 Recruitment Charter

3.2.1 A Recruitment Charter has been adopted which demonstrates genuine commitment to ensuring provision of quality customer service to all applicants.

3.3 Equal Opportunities

3.3.2 The Council's Recruitment Procedures give candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities regardless of sexuality, ethnic origin, age, marital status or any disabilities etc..

4.2 Exit Interviews

4.2.1 Once an employee has intimated their resignation, an exit interview should be undertaken prior to reviewing a post.

5. Redeployment

5.1 Employees on the Redeployment Register will be given first consideration for any vacancies which arise.

6. Advertising the Vacancy

6.1.4 A Recruitment Administrative Form must be provided by the appropriate Department and forwarded to Personnel Services prior to any post being advertised. The Head of Personnel is responsible for approving all vacancies.

6.3 Appropriate Media

6.3.1 The media to be used in advertising a vacancy will be agreed between the department concerned and the Head of Personnel.

6.4 Internal Advertising

6.4.1 All adverts should be displayed in the Council's Internet Vacancy List and on the Council's Intranet Site.

6.5 External Advertising

6.5.1 Having regard to the availability of a pool of appropriate applicants and value for money, a post may be externally advertised in the appropriate external recruitment media. All external Council vacancies will be displayed in the Council's WWW Internet Site.

6.7 Skillseekers

- 6.7.1 On occasions when the Council is looking to fill a temporary clerical/word processing post(s) within a tight timescale then Personnel Services in consultation with the Skills Training Manager may appoint on a temporary basis, skillseeker(s) employed with the Council to fill the vacancy for the specified period.

6.11 Arrangements for Replacing a Job Sharer

- 6.11.1 If a job sharer leaves the Council, the remaining partner will be offered the post being shared on a full time basis.

7.2 Alternative Formats

- 7.2.1 Alternative formats e.g. large print, computer disk etc will be available for applicants.

7.3 Speculative Applications

- 7.3.1 Application forms will only be issued in respect of advertised vacancies or to applicants wishing to be placed on any Employment Registers.

7.4 Information Pack

- 7.4.1 An appropriate information pack relevant to each vacancy will be prepared and issued to applicants. As a minimum this will include an application form, notes for guidance, job outline, timetable for the recruitment and selection process, a brief summary of the Council's objectives in terms of equal opportunities including details of any positive action measures e.g. Job Sharing if applicable, an information document outlining the Council's departmental structure and main conditions of service together with any additional information which may be relevant to the job.

11. Criminal Record Checks

- 11.3 SCRO checks will be undertaken for appropriate agreed posts and an individual will not be given a formal offer of appointment or be allowed to commence work until a satisfactory SCRO check has been received.

13. The Interview Process

- 13.8 Evidence of driving license, qualifications, authorisation to work in the UK, membership of professional bodies etc must be sought from candidates at interview.

14. Applicants Inability to Attend Interview

- 14.1 Where an applicant advises that they are unable to attend at the time requested and are able to give early notice, the panel should try where possible to re-schedule the interview depending on the urgency to fill the post and the length of any delay.

15. Disabled Candidates

- 15.1 Interviews should focus on the person specifications, not on any disability which an applicant possesses. Interviewing panels may need to consider the way in which adjustment would allow a disabled person to be given equality of opportunity when assessed against the selection criteria.
- 15.2 It may be necessary to consider whether any adjustment is required to enable a disabled applicant to take up the duties of the post. This should be discussed with the applicant who may be able to offer suggestions as to ways in which his/her disability can be accommodated.

16. The Selection Process

- 16.1.6 When the interviewing panel have agreed upon a successful candidate then the Chair should complete the Recommendation for Appointment Form (RAF/1) and forward it to the departmental personnel officer who will make the appropriate arrangements regarding medical examination, offer letter etc.

16.2 Medical Questionnaire

- 16.2.1 The Council will medically assess successful candidates which will take the form of a medical questionnaire and both internal and external applicants will require to complete a confidential medical questionnaire.
- 16.2.2 The medical questionnaire will only be opened in respect of the applicant to be offered the job.
- 16.2.3 There a number of posts which in addition to completing a medical questionnaire require the recommended candidate to pass a pre-employment medical examination prior to any formal offer of appointment being made.
- 16.2.4 No formal offer of appointment should be made prior to the interviewing panel being satisfied on the health position of an applicant.

17. Other Considerations

17.1 Probationary Service

In exceptional individual circumstances, successful applicants can be required to satisfactorily complete a probationary period prior to being confirmed as a substantive employee of the Council.

Personnel Services
May 2001



EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION CHARTER



East Ayrshire
COUNCIL

The Council's Commitment to Applicants

East Ayrshire Council is committed to providing the best possible recruitment and selection service and is working to remove any barriers to equality of opportunity at all stages of the recruitment process.

Our commitment to you as a job applicant is:

- We will treat you in a polite, helpful and friendly manner at all times.
- When we write to you, we will give you the name and telephone number of the employee who will deal with any enquiries you may have.
- We will treat the information you provide in confidence. Your application form will only be seen by Personnel employees, elected members and those managers in the Department involved in the recruitment and selection process.
- We will normally send you an application form within **2 working days** of when we receive your request. At this stage we will inform you of the recruitment timetable for filling the post. (We will advise you in writing if the recruitment timetable is being significantly changed).
- We will normally return the acknowledgement slip of your application within **2 working days** of receiving it.
- Every applicant must complete the official Council application form, with the exception of employees who are applying for restricted posts who may be asked to complete an Employee Personal Profile Form. We can provide a large print or audio version and will offer assistance to visually impaired applicants to enable them to make an application.
- Any disabled applicant who meets the essential requirements of the job vacancy will be invited for interview.
- We will normally advise you if you are being invited for an interview as soon as possible after the closing date for the post.
- We will give you appropriate notice of the date of the interview. However if you are asked to make a presentation or submit a written report to the interviewing panel, we will normally give you a minimum of **2 weeks notice**.
- We will be pleased to make any particular arrangements you need to enable you to attend the interview, for example a location with ramp access, a sign language interpreter or information in large print.

- We will reimburse you for expenses that you have necessarily incurred in attending for interview. Should you be offered the post and subsequently decline the offer of appointment, no expenses will be paid out.
- We ask you to provide personal details such as name, address, date of birth, gender, ethnic origin on Part A of the application form which will not be used in the selection phase but used to monitor our recruitment process as Part B holds the job related information except for a number of specific posts where it is deemed necessary for the Selection Panel to be aware of the name and address of applicants due to the highly sensitive nature of the post.
- The information which you provide in Part B of the application form will play a vital part in deciding whether you will be called for interview, so it is important that you take your time to complete it as accurately and as fully as possible. Often applicants don't give enough information about themselves and their experience.
- If you are unable to attend for interview at the time requested and are still able to give early notice we will try where possible to reschedule your interview, depending on the urgency to fill the post and the length of any delay.
- Unless advised otherwise on the application form, we will contact your referees before we invite you to attend for interview.
- After interview, we will contact the successful applicant as soon as possible and definitely within **5 working days**. For certain posts, for example within the Education or Social Work Department, an offer may be subject to a Scottish Criminal Records Office Police check and some posts will be subject to a satisfactory medical examination.
- If you have been unsuccessful at interview, we will normally advise you within **5 working days**.
- We will give post interview counselling to any applicant who requests it, to assist them in their future applications.
- We are committed to achieving the standards we have set and to acting on feedback from our customers. If you feel dissatisfied with the service you have received, please write to me at the address below and I will investigate the matter and reply directly to you.

Service Standards

1	<i>Issue of Application Form</i>	Within 2 working days of request
2	<i>Acknowledgement of Application Form</i>	Within 2 working days of receipt.
3	<i>Notice of Interview</i>	Appropriate notice of interview depending on the nature of the post.
4	<i>Offer of Appointment</i>	Normally within 5 working days of the interview, reply requested no later than 5 working days .

5 *Advised if Unsuccessful at Interview*

Normally within **5 working days** of interview.

Graham Haugh, Head of Personnel
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AGENDA