**RECRUITMENT MANUAL**

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**STEP BY STEP GUIDE**

September 2022

**RECRUITMENT MANUAL – STEP BY STEP GUIDE**

**INTRODUCTION AND CONTENTS**

Thank you for using this guide which has been developed to assist you and your Local Council through all the stages of a successful recruitment campaign.

Whilst it is primarily designed for use in recruiting your Clerk to the Council and/or the Responsible Financial Officer, the guidance may be adapted for virtually any job you wish to fill.

The Manual focuses on the key stages required in the recruitment and selection process from examining/confirming the need for the post to the point of the successful candidate settling into the job and completing their induction and probationary period.

The creation of, and/or appointment to any post, let alone the most senior job(s) in your organisation, is one of your most critical investments your Council will make. The recruitment process presents both legal requirements and key challenges in choosing the right person often between several excellent candidates.

It is important therefore that everyone responsible for or involved in staff recruitment and selection meet the challenges through a planned and structured process and are aware of and understand the key issues as well as the best techniques to use. Awareness of the legal requirements, particularly the Equality Act 2010, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Modern Slavery Act is also essential.

It is recommended that all involved in recruitment and selection of staff undertake specific training.

This manual will help you avoid some pitfalls that are present in recruiting and provide guidance to give confidence to all involved that they are carrying out the process in a thorough, fair, objective and *evidence-based* way.

The manual is divided into fourteen key units as listed in the contents, all of which include both guidance and, where relevant, specimen documentation reflecting best practice which may be customised to suit your own Council, duties and local circumstances as appropriate. This formatting of the manual will meet the differing needs of Local Councils by allowing you to follow the whole step by step process or to just dip into those parts which will be of help.

In addition, model letters and forms are included which are intended to give you the opportunity to customise them to suit your needs and circumstances.

Updated September 2022

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**UNIT 1**

**Recruitment Manual – step by step guide**

**RECRUITMENT PROCESS ACTION PLAN**

* 1. **Why has the Recruitment Manual – Step by Step Guide been produced?**

How a Council handles their recruitment and selection process is the key introduction for prospective staff to the Council’s culture, how it works with its staff and how it provides its services. The recruitment experience can often determine whether a candidate actually takes the job even if it’s offered on the terms they seek.

To do it properly takes time and effort and, as with all major decisions, the Council needs to invest properly in the process. A Council’s recruitment and selection procedure must be legally sound, thorough and professional in order to make the right appointment. Consistency of approach and the use of best practise will help choose the right candidate and reduce the risk of successful challenge to the process once completed.

This Recruitment Manual will help your Council and those responsible for, or involved in, your recruitment and selection processes. The unit by unit format focuses on the key stages required starting by reviewing the need for post of the Clerk to the Council to offering and contracting the successful candidate to the post.

Given the pitfalls and the challenges that are around for you as an employer and the employment rights available to candidates it is important that everyone responsible for, or involved in, staff recruitment and selection operate within an agreed and structured recruitment process and are aware of and understand the key techniques and issues involved.

Following this guide could reduce the risk to successful challenge, should your recruitment and selection practice be challenged by candidates and/or at an Employment Tribunal. Even more importantly, having a fair and fully inclusive recruitment process will allow you to take advantage of all the talent and experience available, and create a richly diverse workforce that reflects the community it serves.

In each of the 14 units of the manual key advice and recommended actions are given along with relevant guidance reflecting best practice. Where appropriate, a range of specimen forms and letters are included that allow you to customise everything to suit the circumstances of the vacancy.

Whilst the manual focuses mainly on the post of Clerk to the Council each unit may apply to any job and can be readily adapted.

Everyone responsible for or involved in the recruitment and selection of staff at any level should consider following the recommended process and guidance in all future appointments.

* 1. **How does the Council avoid discrimination in the recruitment and selection process?**

Every recruitment and selection process has to be:-

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * **effective**
 | attracting candidates and distinguishing between those suitable and those who are not |
| * **efficient**
 | using the most cost-effective recruitment method |
| * **fair**
 | Maintaining and enhancing the Council’s reputation with existing and new staff by dealing fairly, openly and courteously with all applicants. |

There are inherent risks to the Council when operating the recruitment and selection process and the Council can suffer damaging claims of discrimination if it goes wrong and the recruitment process is handled improperly.

The potential claims for discrimination are now on the grounds of one of the following protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010:-

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * sex
* race
* marriage and civil partnership
* age
* gender reassignment.
 | * pregnancy and maternity
* disability
* religion or belief
* sexual orientation
 |

Discrimination can be direct (a decision to discriminate knowing it would disadvantage someone from a protected group) or indirect (a recruitment and selection procedure or supporting documentation and selection criteria that inherently puts someone from a protected group at a disadvantage). Both apply to those perceived to be from a protected group or are disadvantaged against because they associate with a protected group.

Apart from these forms of discrimination there are other types of personal prejudice that have no place in a fair selection process; such as those associated with education, background, class, dress and appearance. These characteristics and unconscious bias should form no part of the decision-making process, unless they are genuinely relevant and justifiable in respect of the job and role concerned.

Apart from the legal implications, discrimination and prejudice:-

* are a bad use of potential resources
* limit the range of potentially suitable candidates available to the Council
* cause resentment and low morale
* are bad for the Council’s image
* have no place in the selection process or employment in general.

It is important that you have sound and thorough equal opportunities, equality and inclusions policies in place and observe them fully at every stage and in all actions during the recruitment and selection process.

* 1. **What is contained in the Recruitment Manual – Step by Step Guide?**

The remainder of this Recruitment Manual is divided into a number of further units which cover primarily the following matters:-

* the post of Clerk to the Council
* example Staffing Committee – terms of reference
* preparing the job description
* preparing the person specification
* use of application forms
* recruitment information pack
* advertising and media guidance
* short-listing guidance
* selection and interviewing guidance
* selection assessment guidance
* appointment process
* making adjustments, providing aids and adaptations for specific candidates/appointees
* induction and probation.

All or any of these sections can be used separately and adapted for your Council. Throughout each unit, the details that may be customised to suit individual or the Council circumstances are highlighted in **blue**.

As mentioned above whilst the Recruitment Manual is designed primarily to assist with the recruitment of the Clerk to the Council and although it extends in places to the post of Responsible Financial Officer, the principles and process are appropriate for all posts on the Council’s establishment.

* 1. **How should the Council plan and organise the recruitment process?**

It is helpful to start by developing an action plan scheduling the key events. A specimen is enclosed at **Appendix 1(a)** which will help you plan the whole process to suit your Council and once adapted it should be used to monitor progress to keep to your required timetable and form a record as part of the documentary trail should any subsequent challenge be forthcoming.

* 1. **Further Help**

If you require training, help or any other assistance with your recruitment and selection processes or have any questions on anything in the Recruitment Manual please email your county association.