

## RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

Carmarthenshire County Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy aims to ensure that appointments to posts at all levels within the Authority are made in accordance with sound principles of equal opportunity and personnel practice so that the workforce comprises employees with the skills, experience and attributes which maximise the performance of the Council's activities ensuring best value services to the community of Carmarthenshire.

To achieve this:-

1. Directors have delegated authority within the approved structure and approved limits of their budgets to employ, in consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive (Organisational Development), such staff as are necessary to fulfil their business plans and service delivery obligations at grades to be determined by the Council's approved Job Evaluation Scheme or the prevailing grading assessment procedure.
2. Under the Authority's General Scheme of Delegation officers are authorised to make appointments within the authorised establishment other than in relation to Heads of Service and above.
3. All vacancies shall be advertised internally and externally except where precluded for valid operational reasons e.g. redeployment of staff facing redundancy, redeployment of staff for health reasons, organisational restructuring, moratorium on recruitment.
4. Appointments shall be made on merit by comparing candidates fairly against a pre-determined person specification detailing the criteria necessary to fulfil the requirement of a particular post as determined by a job profile, thereby selecting the best person for the job.
5. Appointments shall be in accordance with the Council's obligations as an employer under the prevailing relevant employment legislation which currently includes - Local Government and Housing Act 1989; Disability Discrimination Act 1995; Race Relations Act 1976 as amended; Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 and 1986 as amended; Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974; Asylum and Immigration Act 1996; Welsh Language Act 1993.
6. All appointments shall be in accordance with the Council's Equal Opportunities and related Policies to prevent unfair discriminatory practices.
7. The recruitment and selection process shall be documented accurately at all stages and access limited to recruitment staff. Records shall be kept for a period of 6 months following the selection process to allow for any complaints to be handled. All application forms, interview notes, equal opportunities monitoring forms, etc will be handled and stored confidentially in accordance with sound data protection principles.
8. The Council shall take steps to ensure that all persons (employees, Elected Members and external consultants) who are required to participate in the recruitment and selection process are adequately and appropriately trained to fulfil their responsibilities. The Council's objective is to have training completed within 12 months of the implementation of this policy, followed by a rolling programme to accommodate staff turnover.
9. Recruitment and selection practices will be regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure that best practice is maintained.

## RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION CODE OF PRACTICE

## 1. AIMS

- 1.1 To provide procedures and guidelines for the recruitment and selection of employees which will ensure consistent practice across all departments
- 1.2 To provide a corporate framework for best practice in recruitment and selection setting a minimum standard of performance which may be enhanced by approved departmental adaptations to meet specific needs.
- 1.3 To provide a basis for training.

## 2. SCOPE

- 2.1 The Code of Practice will apply to all recruitment activity within Carmarthenshire County Council except appointments, which are the particular responsibility of a School Governing Body. School Governing Bodies will be encouraged to adopt the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Code of Practice.
- 2.2 The provisions of the Code of Practice will apply to all recruitment that is within the scope except where precluded for valid operational reasons, such as:-

- organisational restructuring: Staff will be transferred and appointed wherever possible to revised structures in accordance with the approved matching and slotting procedure.
- redeployment: existing employees at risk of redundancy, employees whose disability causes them to seek redeployment or employees who would otherwise have to retire due to ill health may be granted prior consideration for suitable vacancies as a means of averting termination of employment.
- a moratorium on recruitment for whatever reason.

In the situations outlined above consultation will take place with the appropriate recognised trade union(s).

- casual appointments (a casual worker is not guaranteed work and is not required to accept work when it is offered. Work is ad hoc and occasional.)

## 3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 Ensuring the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection process is a joint responsibility shared by Organisational Development, the employing department and, for the appointment of senior staff, elected Members.
- 3.2 Organisational Development as the corporate professional resource will undertake an advisory and guidance role, manage established control mechanisms to ensure consistency and monitor and evaluate practice to ensure compliance with quality standards as set out in the Code of Practice, Equal Opportunities Policy and the Welsh Language Scheme.

- 3.3 The employing department will be responsible for the necessary administrative support tasks and appointment decisions subject to 4.2 below.

#### **4. AUTHORITY TO APPOINT**

- 4.1 Due to the size and diversity of the Council the recruitment and selection of employees will be the responsibility of individuals at several levels across the organisation to ensure maximum effectiveness of the process and decision making.
- 4.2 Under the Authority's General Scheme of Delegation officers are authorised to make appointments within the establishment other than in relation to Heads of Service and above.
- 4.3 Wherever possible all Appointments Panels (including Appointments Panel of Members) will have a gender balance.

### **PROCEDURE**

#### **5. PRE RECRUITMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 5.1 Whenever a job vacancy arises those responsible, before making a decision to recruit, must give careful consideration to a number of questions such as:-
- Is there a definite need for the posts?
  - Does the vacancy create an opportunity to review the job content or reallocate accountabilities?
  - Is the post consistent with the departmental business plan?
  - Is the post consistent with the Authority's Welsh Language Scheme?
  - Is the post within the approved structure?
  - Is there sufficient funding for the post?
  - Have alternative working arrangements been considered?
  - Should the post be filled on a permanent or temporary basis?
  - Would the post be suitable for a Job Share arrangement?
  - Would the post be particularly suitable for individuals involved in government employment initiatives?

Where necessary, consultation will take place with the appropriate recognised trade union.

- 5.2 The responses to the above questions will determine if recruitment is necessary and the nature of the appointment.

#### **6. PLANNING**

- 6.1 Recruitment is a multi stage process that needs to be well planned.
- 6.2 As soon as a decision has been taken to recruit it must be clearly established who, within the framework of the Code of Practice, will be involved in the recruitment process.
- 6.3 To ensure consistency in decision making the managers identified will participate throughout the recruitment and selection process.

- 6.4 Those who will be involved should determine a realistic timetable for key events in the process, i.e.
- advertising
  - closing date for applications
  - shortlisting
  - selection tests
  - interviewing
  - offer of employment
- 6.5 Every post must have a Job Profile, which defines the purpose, principal accountabilities and scope of the job, based on an analysis of the requirements of the job. If the job involves access to vulnerable groups such as children, the profile must include a statement outlining that a Criminal Records Check (CRB) will be required.
- 6.6 The Job Profile should be clear, concise and presented in the prescribed format.
- 6.7 Every Job Profile must have a corresponding Person Specification based on an analysis of the job requirement, as detailed in the Job Profile.
- 6.8 The Person Specification must describe the person sought for the job in terms of essential and desirable qualities in the following areas:-
- qualifications/vocational training/competencies
  - experience
  - knowledge
  - job related skills
  - personal skills
  - any requirement for bilingual linguistic skills
- 6.9 All decisions and systems used throughout the recruitment and selection process will be based on the Person Specification. It is therefore essential that it must be clear, concise, presented on the prescribed format, directly related to the Job Profile and free from any reference, which may be interpreted as discriminatory.
- 6.10 Established criteria must be justifiable and measurable. The Person Specification should indicate how each criterion can be assessed during the selection process.
- 6.11 New posts or existing posts where the job analysis or pre recruitment considerations have highlighted significant changes must be evaluated to determine the appropriate grade for the post.
- 6.12 An up to date Job Profile and Person Specification must be forwarded to the Organisational Development for a job evaluation to be carried out in accordance with the agreed job evaluation scheme.
- 6.13 Selection tests to assess the criteria prescribed by the Person Specification should be determined and the necessary arrangements made for competent persons to carry out the tests.
- 6.14 When the planning stage has been completed consideration can be given to advertising the vacancy.

## 7. ADVERTISING

- 7.1 All vacancies will be advertised internally and externally simultaneously, except where precluded for valid operational reasons e.g. redeployment of staff facing redundancy, organisational restructuring, medical incapacity or freeze on recruitment.
- 7.2 All vacancies will be examined by the Assistant Chief Executive (Organisational Development) (or nominated representative) to determine, in consultation with the Head of Department (or nominated representative), the suitability for redeployment of staff 'at risk'. Any vacancies identified as suitable will be ring-fenced to 'at risk' staff and be precluded from advertising until these candidates have been considered.
- 7.3 Recruitment advertisements will be consistent with:-
- the job profile and person specification for the job
  - the Authority's Equal Opportunities Policy and Welsh Language Scheme
  - the prevailing relevant legislation
- 7.4 Advertisements will provide sufficient information to enable prospective applicants decide whether or not to seek further details and will clearly and concisely indicate:-
- post title
  - salary range
  - work location
  - brief description of the job
  - brief details of the essential person specification
  - any bilingual linguistic abilities required (see ????)
  - where and how to obtain an application form and further information
  - closing date for applications
- 7.5 Careful consideration should be given to selecting appropriate preferred media to achieve the most cost effective way of reaching the widest possible target group based on advert response analyses. The form of the advertisement and the placement of the advertisement will need to conform with the Welsh Language Scheme and the Authority's Corporate Identity Manual.
- 7.6 Organisational Development will advise on selection of appropriate media, copy content and recruitment campaigns.
- 7.7 Requests to place recruitment advertisements should be made using the appropriate form and be forwarded together with the Job Profile and Person Specification to Organisational Development.
- 7.8 Upon receipt of the recruitment advertisement and supporting documents Organisational Development will carry out the necessary checks to ensure:
- (i) the advertised post is within the approved departmental structure.
  - (ii) the Job Profile, Person Specification and recruitment advertisement comply with the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Code of Practice.
  - (iii) welsh language requirements as defined in the Person Specification are approved by nominated members.

- 7.9 Approved recruitment advertisements will be co-ordinated by Organisational Development and forwarded to the Communications in-house advertising team for placement with the agreed media. All vacancies will be placed on the Authority's website and with Job Centres.
- 7.10 Organisational Development will be responsible for collating, preparing and distributing the internal vacancy bulletin.
- 7.11 The use of commercial employment agencies should only be considered in exceptional circumstances and would be subject to approval by the Assistant Chief Executive (Organisational Development).

## **8. APPLICATION REQUEST**

- 8.1 Applicants must submit an application for a post using the County Council standard application form. C.V.'s submitted by applicants cannot be considered. However an exception to this rule can be made in the case of applicants with a disability if their disability is such that they are not able to complete the standard application form. In such instances advice should be sought from the Organisational Development.
- 8.2 It will be a departmental responsibility to respond to requests for application forms.
- 8.3 Enquirers will be provided with the following documents as a minimum standard:
- Covering letter indicating the closing date, the policy on acknowledging receipt of returned application, the proposed interview date, the policy on advising applicants they have not been successful, requirements under the Asylum and Immigration Act and any special requirements relating to the post.
  - Carmarthenshire County Council application form.
  - Job Profile.
  - Person Specification.
  - Structure Chart.
  - Summary of Conditions of Service.
  - Equal Opportunities Monitoring Questionnaire.
  - A summary of the Welsh Language Scheme in the context of service delivery (Page 1 Welsh Language Scheme)

## **9. SHORTLISTING**

- 9.1 No applications will be accepted after the closing date unless there are exceptional circumstances.

- 9.2 Receipt of applications will not be acknowledged unless accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.
- 9.3 The shortlist of applicants for interview shall be drawn up by the persons responsible for the recruitment process.
- 9.4 Selection panel members must disclose any relationship/friendship or contact they may have with an applicant. If a relationship is declared, that person should withdraw from the process and play no part in it.
- 9.5 Selection for inclusion on a shortlist shall be determined primarily by measuring the attributes of each applicant as described on their application form methodically against each of the essential criteria. Applicants who do not meet all the essential criteria will not be shortlisted.
- 9.6 Every attempt should be made to ensure that shortlists are kept short (i.e. 6 is a reasonable number).
- 9.7 If the initial selection process results in a shortlist of too many candidates a second selection of the applicants will be done on the basis of desirable criteria.
- 9.8 Selection for inclusion on a shortlist shall be consistent with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 9.9 The shortlisting process should be completed within 5 working days of the closing date.
- 9.10 When the shortlist has been drawn up all applicants will be informed of the progress of their application.
- 9.11 Shortlisted candidates should be given as much notice as possible of the interview date and not less than 10 working days notice.
- 9.12 Shortlisted candidates should be informed of the selection process to be used and advised of the documents, which will need to be produced at interview:
- qualification certificates
  - any document prescribed under the Asylum and Immigration Act.
  - any other document relevant to the job (e.g. driving licence)
- 9.13 Organisational Development will examine the application forms of the shortlisted applicants and prepare for each candidate specific conditions of service and appropriate starting salary in order to ensure consistency across the Authority.

## 10. SELECTION PROCESS

- 10.1 The selection process and selection methods used will vary according to the vacancy to be filled. Any selection methods used in addition to a formal interview will be in consistent with the method of assessment indicated on the person specification.
- 10.2 Selection methods must be appropriate for the vacancy to be filled and be based on the requirements of the job. The Organisational Development will provide advice and guidance on appropriate methods which could include:-

- psychometric tests
  - presentation on given subject
  - in-tray exercise etc.
  - simulation exercise
  - where it is specified that Welsh is an essential requirement of the post a proportion of the Selection process will be conducted in Welsh. Where this includes the ability to write in both English and Welsh appropriate tests will be made available.
  - where Welsh is a desirable criteria for a post applicants will be afforded the opportunity of demonstrating their bilingual linguistic skills.
- 10.3 Any tests used as part of the process must be administered by a competent person. Feedback on tests will be made available to candidates.
- 10.4 All parts of the selection process must be applied consistently to all candidates. The predetermined 'core' interview questions must be asked of all candidates.
- 10.5 In making the selection decision Appointments Panel members should consider the extent to which each candidate matches the requirement of the person specification, including proof of qualifications, using the evidence gathered.
- 10.6 Comprehensive, clear and accurate records will be made of each candidate's performance throughout the selection process.
- 10.7 Each member of the Appointments Panel will record his/her scores and comments individually, for each candidate, using a predetermined scoring and weighting system for selection tests (if applicable) and the formal interview.
- 10.8 Individual judgement will be discussed and compared openly with those of other Appointments Panel members to reach a consensus on the final decision.
- 10.9 The final selection decision will be consistent with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 10.10 The successful candidate will be informed as soon as possible. If a decision is likely to be delayed, candidates must be advised accordingly.
- 10.11 The formal letter of offer will be sent to the successful candidate within 1 working day of the verbal offer.
- 10.12 Unsuccessful candidates will be advised of the outcome of the selection process as soon as possible and within 5 working days of the interview.

## 11. VERIFICATION AND VETTING

- 11.1 The employing department should take up references prior to interview, for internal and external applicants, to check important factual information such as employing history, qualifications, sickness absence record, disciplinary record. These should not form part of the selection process and should only be used to verify information once a selection has been made.

- 11.2 Additional checks including record checks will also be carried out on the successful candidates for posts involving access to children and other vulnerable groups. This work will be carried out by Organisational Development.
- 11.3 Successful candidates will be asked to produce evidence, as prescribed by the Asylum and Immigration Act, relating to their right to work in the U.K. Any offer of employment must be made subject to receipt of appropriate documentation. No start date should be agreed until this has been checked.
- 11.4 Candidates will be asked to produce at interview evidence, including certificates, of qualifications claimed on application forms. The authenticity of documentation will be checked with relevant awarding body as necessary.
- 11.5 The employing department must be satisfied as to the successful candidate's state of health and fitness to undertake the job. This will normally be via the health questionnaire.
- 11.6 If necessary further information can be obtained from examination by the Council's Medical Adviser who will determine fitness for employment.
- 11.7 Offers of employment should either be made conditional on the satisfactory completion of verification procedures or delaying until those procedures have been satisfactorily completed.

## 12. RECORD KEEPING

- 12.1 The employing department will keep a comprehensive recruitment file for each vacancy, which will clearly document the progress of the recruitment and selection process and contain details of all selection decisions, which should be recorded as soon as they are made.
- 12.2 The recruitment file will contain the following document action as a minimum:
- Job Profile and Person Specification
  - Recruitment advertisement
  - Request to advertise and confirmation
  - Details of recruitment information pack
  - Application forms
  - Shortlisting forms
  - References
  - Selection tests and results
  - Interview questions
  - Interviewing monitoring forms.
- 12.3 All records will be kept by the employing department in accordance with the Data Protection Act for a period of 6 months following the selection decision.
- 12.4 Recruitment and selection records will be made available to Organisational Development staff on request to assist monitoring and evaluation of the recruitment and selection process.

## 13. PROBATION

- 13.1 New employees joining the County Council will be required to serve a 6 month (minimum) probationary period during which time they will be assessed to determine their suitability for the job.
- 13.2 The new employees performance will be carefully monitored during the probationary period by the line manager with formal assessments at regular intervals. (See Probationary Employees Policy for further information)
- 13.3 Upon satisfactory completion of the probationary period the employee will be notified in writing that they will be transferred to the permanent staff.
- 13.4 Any problems with the employee's performance identified during the probationary period should be addressed at that time. The Organisational Development Section will advise on appropriate action.
- 13.5 If, despite additional support mechanisms, the employee fails to satisfactorily complete his/her probationary period, their employment will be terminated.
- 13.6 The Probationary Employee Policy should be applied consistently to all new employees.

#### **14. INDUCTION**

- 14.1 Any employee who commences a new job, whether as an internal or external appointee, will need some form of induction. Formal induction, using the Employee Induction Profile should begin immediately upon commencement.
- 14.2 It will be the responsibility of the Department to ensure that induction is carried out.
- 14.3 New entrants to the County Council will be required to attend a corporate 1 day induction training event which will be co-ordinated by the Corporate Training Section.

#### **15. COMPLIANCE**

- 15.1 It will be the responsibility of Heads of Department to ensure that all staff involved in the recruitment and selection process in their Department comply with the provisions of the Code of Practice.
- 15.2 The Assistant Chief Executive (Organisational Development) shall be authorised to intervene at any point in the recruitment and selection process where non-compliance has occurred or is likely to occur.

#### **16. MONITORING**

- 16.1 Organisational Development will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating recruitment and selection activity within the Authority.
- 16.2 Organisational Development will monitor compliance with the Authority's Equal Opportunities Policy on recruitment and selection.

- 16.3 Organisational Development will periodically review the content and operation of the Code of Practice and put forward recommendations for improvements in light of developments in recruitment and selection practice and legal requirements to ensure that best practice is maintained.

## 17. TRAINING

- 17.1 Training will be provided to staff involved in the recruitment and selection process.