



PARISH COUNCIL

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Recruitment Policy

Policy Name:		Recruitment Policy		
Policy Owner:		Chigwell Parish Council		
Amendments:	Version	Date	Author	Approved By
Recruitment Policy	1	July 2025	Hayley Moore	Full Council Minute ref:
Reviewed and updated				
Reviewed and updated				
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1. Introduction

Chigwell Parish Council will follow fair and lawful processes in recruitment.

Chigwell Parish Council's policy:

- Goes through each step of our process for attracting and selecting external and internal job candidates
- Explains how we make sure that we avoid discrimination and any unfairness in recruitment
- Sets out how we tackle the risk of unconscious bias
- Explains how we incorporate special cases, such as agency workers and those selected for redundancy, into our recruitment processes

This Policy does not form part of your contract of employment. We reserve the right to amend or remove this Policy.

Chigwell Parish Council's Policy applies to all external and internal candidates or prospective candidates for employment vacancies within our organisation.

2. An overview of the recruitment process

Our recruitment process for any vacancy includes the following steps:

Identifying a need to recruit: Once the Council have identified a need to recruit, officers will seek approval to incur expenditure on the basis of a recommendation from Finance and Governance for approval at the Full Council.

Preparing a job description: Officers will prepare a recruitment pack to include ad, full job description and a person specification or review any existing documents for the position. These documents will include the key criteria we are looking for in any applicant and will include job adverts. The recruitment pack for all roles apart from the Clerk will be approved by the Clerk. The recruitment pack for the Clerk's role will be approved by Full Council.

Internal recruitment: We will consider whether to open the vacancy to internal applicants before advertising externally.

Receiving applications and shortlisting: We will only consider information submitted as part of the application process when making decisions on shortlisting. The Council uses application forms for recruitment in respect of all staff and CVs are not accepted as part of the job application process.

As soon after the closing date as possible those involved in the shortlisting will meet to draw up a shortlist. The composition of the Shortlisting Panel will vary according to the type of post being filled. Shortlisting will be undertaken by more than one person. Shortlisting panels will be drawn up by the Clerk, apart from the Clerk's role where the shortlisting panel will be agreed by Full Council. .

The person specification and the further particulars must be used as the basis for shortlisting against the factual elements and criteria specified. At this stage particular care should be taken to avoid discrimination.

It is essential for monitoring purposes and for defence purposes in the event of a claim for unlawful discrimination that the Council keeps records of reasons for not shortlisting candidates.

Ideally, no more than six candidates should be identified for interview. Particular care should be taken in fielding any queries from candidates not shortlisted, or unsuccessful following the interview

Any attempt by Councillors, an applicant or others to influence any stage of the decision making process in favour of a particular applicant will result in that applicant's immediate removal from the process.

Selection process: The Interview Panel will comprise normally the members of the Shortlisting Panel will be appointed by the Clerk. The process may include interviews with up to two Councillors not on the shortlisting panel according to the type of post being filled (e.g. a senior role such as RFO or Clerk). For the Clerk's role Full Council will agree the composition of the Interview Panel

The aim of the interview is to ascertain who is the most suitable candidate for the job and to ensure that the candidates have a clear picture of what the post entails.

Before the interviews begin the Panel will establish at the outset aspects of the candidate's qualifications and experience to be explored by each panel member. To ensure equity, all candidates should be asked similar questions, with supplementary questions structured around each candidate to enable individuals to demonstrate their relevant skills and abilities. The selection process will vary depending on the vacancy. Examples of selection methods which we may use include structured interviews, case studies, presentations and psychometric tests.

Offer: We will make any offers in writing from the Clerk or HR provider. Offers are subject to the previous three years of employer references. The Council should take care that all references ensure the Council complies with the requirements of the fidelity insurance. Care should be taken that employer references are provided by an organisation rather than an individual, for example a Council as a whole rather than an individual Councillor. If appropriate, additional evidence should be sought to ensure Chigwell Parish Council can demonstrate any reference received is on behalf of an organisation. They will usually be conditional on the following:

- Receipt of two satisfactory references
- Completion of our Right to Work checks in line with our Right to Work Policy
- Completion of a health assessment – for certain roles only (if applicable)
- Receipt of confirmation of essential qualifications – for certain roles only

3. Questions about health and reasonable adjustments

We will not generally ask candidates any questions about their health or any disabilities before any job offer is made. However, we may do so in the following circumstances:

- To find out whether a candidate is able to carry out an assessment which forms part of the application process
- To understand whether a candidate would be able to carry out a function which is central to the job

- To find out whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made to allow the candidate to take part in our recruitment processes
- For the purposes of equal opportunities monitoring. Please note we will store any information provided anonymously and separately from the candidate's application. Further details can be found below

4. Internal and external recruitment

For each vacancy which arises, we will consider the needs of the organisation and what we are aiming to achieve from the recruitment process and whether the role should be advertised internally. This will require approval from Full Council. An internal advertisement process may take place alongside the external process.

5. Our commitment to avoiding discrimination and unfairness in our recruitment processes

We take the following steps to avoid discrimination and unfairness in our recruitment processes:

- We ask candidates if they need any adjustments to help them with the recruitment process. We will action any requests made
- Our application forms do not require the submission of any details relating to protected characteristics (such as sex, marital status, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation and disability)
- Any equal opportunities monitoring will be carried out and stored separately. Submitted monitoring forms will not be viewed by any person actively involved in the recruitment process for the role in question
- We generally follow a competency-based structure for interviews
- We ask for Right to Work documentation at the same stage in the recruitment process for all candidates, so we are not influenced by immigration status in making any decision on recruitment

6. How we deal with the risk of unconscious bias in recruitment

The brain makes judgments every day by processing information at rapid speed. The brain interprets the information it receives to make judgments and to influence actions. This is not something that we can stop from happening. However, this thought process can also cause us to treat some people more favourably or less favourably. This is what we mean by unconscious bias.

We recognise that unconscious bias is not something that can be prevented; it is human nature. However, we believe that by making those involved in recruitment aware of it, we can help them to step back and assess any decision they make for the presence of unconscious bias. To assist with this, we will:

Make sure that recruitment decisions are not made by one individual – to make sure that a breadth of opinion is taken into account and to reduce the impact of any unconscious bias

Standardise aspects of our recruitment processes so that candidates are judged on objective criteria and standards in certain areas

7. Special situations: redundant employees, agency workers and fixed-term workers

Employees who have been provisionally selected for redundancy will be made aware of all vacancies existing within the organisation and will be kept informed should any new vacancies arise. For further information, please see our Redundancy Policy.

We have a clear process in place to inform agency workers and those on fixed-term contracts of employment of vacancies which become available with us.

8. Expenses

Any expenses incurred in travelling to or attending any interview or assessment with us are the sole responsibility of the candidate. We will not refund any expenses.

9. Data protection

All information and documentation collated in relation to candidates as part of our recruitment processes will be stored, processed and destroyed in line with our Data Protection Policy.

We will keep information in relation to candidates collated as part of any equality and diversity monitoring processes anonymously. We collect this information to monitor equality of opportunity and treatment to enable equality to be promoted or maintained. We will not share the information collated with any member of personnel involved in the recruitment process. Further information can be found in our Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice.

10. Complaints

If any candidate is unhappy with the way we have handled their application, then they should raise this with the Clerk or the HR provider.

11. Review and updates

It is the responsibility of Chigwell Parish Council's HR provider and the Clerk to ensure that this Policy is reviewed by Full Council and updated at least annually or when there is a significant change in either the regulatory environment or internal processes. Such updates should be made in a timely manner and wherever practical introduced at the same time as the new process or regulation is effective.

12. About this document

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