

RECRUITMENT POLICY

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out the Alliance's approach to recruitment and selection. The policy is applicable to those graded AR2 – Head of Service level.

The Alliance is committed to providing high quality services and excellent value for money to its customers and both reputations of high performing Councils. In order to maintain high quality services the Alliance recognises the value of their "human resource" and acknowledges there is a need to have a robust recruitment policy in place to achieve this. The aim of recruitment at all times is to recruit the person who is most suited to the particular job. Recruitment will be solely on the basis of the applicant's abilities and individual merit as measured against the criteria for the job. Qualifications, experience and skills will be assessed at the level that is relevant to the job. This will ensure the corporate objective of a high performing and well motivated workforce is achieved.

The Alliance is committed to applying its equality and diversity policy at all stages of recruitment and selection. Shortlisting, interviewing and selection will always have due regard to the protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership (in employment only), pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex.

There is a commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people/other adults and expects all employees to share this commitment. The policy has been developed to help deter, reject or identify people who may be unsuited to working with young people/other adults by having the correct procedures in place for appointing staff and carrying out the necessary employment checks.

Candidates with a disability will not be excluded unless it is clear that the candidate is unable to perform a duty that is intrinsic to the role, having taken into account reasonable adjustments. Reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process will be made to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged because of their disability. All disabled applicants who meet the minimum requirements of the job as set out in the job description and person specification will be guaranteed an interview.

Scope

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with the recognised trade unions to ensure recruitment and selection procedures are clear, fair and in line with current employment legislation and relevant codes of practice.

The policy is applicable to the recruitment of all permanent, temporary and casual employees (Grades AR2-Heads of Service). There is a separate agreed procedure for the recruitment to the positions of Chief Executive and Executive Director.

Responsibility

All recruiting managers are responsible and accountable for recruitment in their particular services areas, in conjunction with Human Resources. It is also their responsibility to adhere to this policy.

Training will be provided to those responsible for recruitment and selection to ensure the policy is followed correctly and in line with legislation and relevant codes of practice.

The Human Resources Service Area will periodically review or revise this policy to reflect changes in legislation are adhered to.

Managers will be responsible for drawing up advertisements, job descriptions/job specifications, shortlisting, providing interview questions and completing recruitment documentation. Human Resources will ensure they are legally compliant.

Should applicants disclose at the application stage they are related to an elected member or employee, it is the responsibility of the recruiting manager to ensure that this known person is not involved in the recruitment and selection process or the decision making process.

Recruitment and Selection Procedure

Vacancy Review and Approval to Recruit

Vacancies can exist as a result of an employee temporarily or permanently leaving an established post. It can also exist by the creation of a new post to provide a new service, to extend a service, or to support current employees.

A vacancy provides the opportunity to examine the needs of the service area and to redefine the duties of the vacant post to enable objectives to be achieved more effectively. The filling of a vacancy should be in line with the relevant Service/Business Plans.

Consideration should be given to options other than recruitment (e.g. redistribution/reallocation of duties). Where a post does need to be filled consideration should be given to whether it can be advertised as a part-time, job share, or temporary post if appropriate.

The duties and responsibilities of the post should also be reviewed and if significant changes are identified, the post should be re-evaluated using the job evaluation scheme and a revised job description and person specification produced.

Where it has been identified that a replacement is required or a new post is created (internally or externally) the recruiting manger should obtained approval from AMT/Human Resources. Mangers should complete the [**Recruitment Approval Form**](#) and email to Alliance HR for approval.

Advertising

The aim of the advert is to only attract candidates who have the qualifications, skills, experience and other attributes that are necessary to carry out the job competently.

A mixture of internal and external recruitment options will be used to widen the pool of selection and to reach a diverse audience. Internal applicants are required to inform their manager when applying for internal positions. Job adverts will initially be advertised internal only for a period of two weeks.

Adverts will be placed on our websites, intranet and via social media. Specific publications will be considered where appropriate, with prior approval of Human Resources. Internal adverts will be placed on the intranet, job boards and placed on notice boards in different work locations.

Managers will be responsible for drafting adverts as they have detailed knowledge of jobs in their teams and are in a good position to determine where to advertise and what to include in the advert. Prior to advertising Human Resources will provide final approval to ensure the advert is compliant with all the relevant legislation.

Advertisements will make it clear of our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and other adults. This is also covered on our websites to deter potential unsuitable applicants.

Application Forms

All applicants will be required to complete the job application form when applying for external recruitment and complete all required fields on the application form. CV's are not accepted but can be used to supplement job application forms.

Applicants will also be required to account for any gaps/discrepancies in employment history. ***Incomplete or un-signed application forms will not be shortlisted.*** There is a separate job application form for internal job applicants.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)

The recruitment of ex-offenders for employment is considered and is based on their individual merits.

Job applicants are required to disclose any unspent convictions at the application stage. At the interview stage job applicants will not be asked questions about spent convictions, nor will they be expected to disclose any spent convictions.

If an applicant has a conviction that is not spent and if the nature of the offence is relevant to the job for which they applied for, the Alliance will review the individual circumstances of the case and may, at its discretion, decline to select the individual for employment. **Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy Statement is shown at Appendix A.**

Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

Managers should ensure prior to recruitment job descriptions and person specifications are up to date. The job description will describe the duties, responsibilities and level of seniority associated with the post, while the person specification will describe the type of qualifications, training, knowledge, experience, skills, aptitudes, behaviours and competencies required for effective performance of the job. **Job Description and specification**

Job descriptions and person specifications will make it clear of our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and other adults and where applicable, will identify levels of safeguarding training and experience required for the role.

Shortlisting

Short-listing is the stage of the recruitment process where the number of applications received is reduced to a shortlist of suitable candidates for selection. Candidates should be considered against the requirements of the post which are detailed in the person specification and based on the essential requirements of the role and if necessary, the desirable criteria detailed in the person specification. No other criteria may be used.

Disabled candidates who meet the essential criteria of a person specification are guaranteed an interview (disability confident employer). At the application stage disabled candidates will be asked to provide information on any reasonable adjustments.

Short-listing should be carried out by the recruiting manager/interview panel. The panel will agree the shortlisting criteria against the person specification. This will be verified by Human Resources to ensure a consistent approach has been undertaken and in compliance with employment legislation. Short-listing should be conducted within a reasonable time-frame.

If an employee involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familiar relationship with an applicant they must declare this as soon as they are aware of the individual's application. Under these circumstances it would be necessary for the employee to avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection process.

Interviews and Selection

Interviews will be face to face where possible and consist of a minimum of two interviewers. The composition of interview panels are identified below:-

Grade of Position	Interview Panel Composition
AR7-AR9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corporate Service Manager <u>and</u> Service Area Representative (trained).• Human Resources Business Partner.
AR1-AR6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corporate Service Manager <u>/or</u> Service Area representative (trained).

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Human Resources Representative. |
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Chief Executive/Executive Directors/Heads of Service/ Operational Services Managers are subject to an agreed separate procedure.

Interview

The key purpose of the interview is to focus on the needs of the job and skills needed to perform the job effectively. Some of this evidence will have been previously identified from the application form but this information needs to be explored in more detail at interview to gain specific information on skills and competencies to carry out the job effectively.

The interview is also an opportunity to provide candidates with a favourable impression of the Alliance by providing candidates with further information about the post and the Alliance. This in return should give the candidate a favourable impression in the event of a job offer being made the successful candidate will accept the offer of employment.

It is important to plan and structure the interview to enable the interview panel to assess the competencies of the candidates against the candidate's skills for the job. This will ensure there is a consistent approach to the interview especially, when there are a number of candidates to be interviewed. Prior to the interview recruiting managers should read the job applications of each individual candidate along with the job description and person specification for the role to identify areas of further exploration or clarification. This provides the panel the opportunity to explore any anomalies or gaps identified on the job application form to satisfy them that the chosen applicant can meet safeguarding criteria.

Selection

The interview panel, in conjunction with Human Resources will agree the methods of selection. The agreed selection process will be consistently applied to each candidate. In the majority of cases the selection process will primarily focus on a panel interview, with the exception of positions identified in the management structure and those position agreed previously with Human Resources. Selection for these positions could include a variety of selection methods to supplement the panel interview. These methods could include psychometric testing, role plays, written exercises, practical tests, presentations and in-tray and team exercises. The Alliance will ensure that assessment and selection methods have been validated in relation to the job, are free of bias.

Interview Questions

Interview questions should be structured to explore facts and focus on ability to perform the job. Care should be taken not to make assumptions about applicants based on their subjective views and opinions. Prior to interview managers should prepare a list of core questions to ask all applicants. This ensures consistency and fairness and all applicants will have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills and abilities.

Managers should not be restricted to asking only these questions, as there will also be a need to ask particular applicant points of clarity from their job application i.e gaps between jobs. There may also be a need to follow-up/probe certain points raised by the applicant.

Effective questioning techniques should be used and questions should be designed to check facts, obtain relevant information about each applicant's background, work experience, qualification, skills abilities, behaviours, ambitions and strengths and weaknesses.

Questions should be open for example, those that begin with "what", "which", "why", "how", "where" & "when" to avoid the applicant responding with yes or no answers.

Applicants should be asked questions to provide examples of real situations and response to factual questions about past experience and behaviours for example.

Questions about applicant's health including disability should be avoided as it is discriminatory to do so prior to a job offer being made.

Specific safeguarding questions will be asked for roles that involve working with children & other people/.

Interview Notes

It is essential that interview notes and interview assessments forms are kept. Notes on the reasons behind selection decisions should be retained to show the reasons for selection and rejection. Applicants have a legal right to request this information.

Assessment Criteria

The essential and desirable criterion identified in the person specification is used to assess each candidate. A weighting for each criterion will be agreed by the interview panel in accordance with the relative importance of the job. The weighting is:-

HIGH	3
MEDIUM	2
LOW	1

A record of each candidate needs to be kept on how they have been assessed against the criteria for the role. At the end of each interview panel members will mark each candidate against each criterion using the following scoring matrix:-

STRONG EVIDENCE	4
ACCEPTABLE EVIDENCE	3
POOR/LITTLE EVIDENCE	2
NO EVIDENCE	1

Each criterion is multiplied by the weighting factor and added up to give the total score for each candidate. The candidate with the highest score most closely

matching the person specification should be the successful applicant. The overall scoring will then be authorised by the interview panel. The assessment form identifies the interview questions to ensure they focus on the key competences and skills that have been identified in the person specification. [Interview Assessment Form.](#)

Offer of Employment and Employment Clearances

All offers employment will be made by Human Resources and are subject to the following employment clearances:-

- Satisfactory receipt of two references
- Medical clearance
- Disclosure and Barring Check (where applicable)
- Right to work in the UK verification
- Identity verification
- Provide documentation of any convictions not spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Proof of qualifications and professional membership

No new employee will be able to commence employment until the above employment clearances have been received.

Identity and Right to work in the UK verification

Verification of identity and the right to work in the UK are the most fundamental employment checks. Undertaking this verification reduces the risk of employing or engaging a person who is:

- An illegal worker
- Impersonator
- Avoiding the detection of a criminal offence
- Using illegal means to obtaining genuine documents to gain employment.

Right to work in the UK checks will be undertaken for all prospective employees. Documents that are acceptable evidence of someone's right to work in the UK are split into two lists and original documentation must be provided by providing one or a combination of documents from List A or List B:

List A	Documents showing ongoing right to work in the UK
List B	Documents showing right to work in the UK for up to 12 months

List of acceptable documentation contained in **List A** and **List B** are contained in the [Home Office Guidance](#)

Identity verification will be undertaken by the Post Office (ID checking service). Guidance on how to do this can be found at [Post Officer ID Service](#) Applicants will

pay the initial fee and will be reimbursed once proof of ID verification has been received from the post office.

References

References will be taken up after interview and a conditional job offers have been made. All job offers are subject to the receipt of two satisfactory references. One reference must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. For jobs that involve working with young people/other adults a specific references will be obtained to determine their suitable for the job and whether there is any reason why the applicant is unsuitable to work with young people/other adults. Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up. Verbal references and references from relatives will not be accepted.

Medical Clearance

All applicants will be required to complete a medical questionnaire to verify medical fitness. This information will be reviewed against the requirements of the job. The requirements of the Equality Act (2010) will be taken into consideration and no job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, considering further medical evidence and reasonable adjustments. It is a requirement for employment and for entry into the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Disclosure and Barring Checks (DBS)

The level of DBS check is determined by the activities and the type of access to all service users the employee will have when carrying out their role. There is a legal responsibility to ensure positions that are eligible in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) (Exemptions) Order 1975 (ROA) under go a relevant check. Where a post is not exempt from the (ROA) it is illegal to carry out a DBS check.

The appropriate level of (DBS) check will be included in advertisement, job description and person specification. Offers of employment are subject to (DBS) clearance. (DBS) checks are undertake by [Personnel Checks](#)

The (DBS) policy can be found [here](#).

Qualification/Professional Membership verification

Applicants must provide *original* documentation to demonstrate they have attained qualifications/professional membership that they require for the position and have stated in their job application form.

Employee Records Retention / General Data Protection Regulations

Documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). In particular, data collection as part of the recruitment process is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing the recruitment process effectively to decide who to offer the job to.

Induction

A structured induction programme will be developed for all new recruits. This will cover induction at a corporate and service level and will cover health and safety, policies and procedure and training and development.

Probation

All new employees are subject to the satisfactory completion of 6 months service. This is also applicable in some cases in respect of staff that have been promoted or transferred to another job role. [Probationary guidance.](#)

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders (Policy Statement)

The aim of this policy statement is to state the Alliances approach towards employing people who have criminal convictions. It is also a requirement of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for registered bodies to have a policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders.

The Alliance is committed to equality of opportunity for all job applicants and aims to select people for employment on the basis of their individual skills, abilities, experience, knowledge and, where appropriate, qualifications and training.

The Alliance will therefore consider ex-offenders for employment on their individual merits. The approach towards employing ex-offenders differs, however, depending on whether the job is or is not exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Jobs covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

The Alliance will not automatically refuse to employ a particular individual just because of a previous criminal conviction.

At the application stage of recruitment job applicants are asked to disclose any unspent convictions. At the interview stage job applicants will not be asked questions about spent convictions, nor will they be expected to disclose any spent convictions.

If an applicant has a conviction that is not spent and if the nature of the offence is relevant to the job for which they applied for, the Alliance will review the individual circumstances of the case and may, at its discretion, decline to select the individual for employment.

Jobs exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

If the job into which the Alliance is seeking to recruit is one of the excluded jobs listed in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 or the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exclusions and Exceptions) (Scotland) Order 2003, it will require the applicant to disclose all convictions, whether spent or unspent (other than where protected cautions and protected convictions do not need to be disclosed, depending on the job concerned). Even in these circumstances, the Alliance will not refuse to employ a particular individual unless the nature of the conviction has some relevance to the job for which the individual has applied.

If the job is exempt, the Alliance will, once it has selected the person to whom it wishes to offer employment, seek documentary evidence about that person's criminal convictions. Agreement will be sought from the applicant to make a joint application to the (DBS) for a standard, enhanced or enhanced with DBS barred lists check (as appropriate).

The cost of the check will be reimbursed by the individual for obtaining the appropriate criminal records check. Where the individual is member of the DBS

updating service, the Alliance with permission will carry out a status check on any current certificate.

The Alliance is committed to ensuring all information provided about an individual's criminal convictions, including any information released in disclosures, is used fairly and stored and handled appropriately and in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations. Data held on file about an individual's criminal convictions will be held only as long as it is required for employment purposes and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised person.