

**Manchester City Council
Report for Discussion**

Report to: Human Resources Subgroup – 24 November 2016

Subject: Employment Policy - Recruitment and Selection

Report of: Interim Director of HR and OD

Summary

This report is intended to seek views of Members on the development of the revised Recruitment and Selection Policy and Guidance for Managers. Once finalised and approved it is intended that this policy will replace the Recruitment and Selection Best Practice Handbook approved by Personnel Committee on the 20th February 2003.

Recommendations

The Human Resources Subgroup is asked to note the report and provide comments on the revised Recruitment and Selection Policy and the accompanying guidance.

Wards Affected: All

Anti-poverty No	Equal Opportunities Yes	Environment No	Employment Yes
--------------------	----------------------------	-------------------	-------------------

Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
A thriving and sustainable City: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	The Recruitment and Selection Policy will support the Council to recruit a diverse workforce and will support residents gain entry level posts and traineeships.
A highly skilled City: world class and home grown talent sustaining the City's economic success	By offering a flexible and modernised approach to recruitment, this policy supports managers to get the right people with the right skills to deliver 'Our Manchester'.
A progressive and equitable City: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	Using a flexible and adaptable approach to recruitment will aid in designing strategies to support partnership working and delivery of neighbourhood focussed recruitment.
A liveable and low carbon City: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	E-recruitment will support a low carbon approach and reduce dependency on paper based solutions.

A connected City: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	Through the use of e-recruitment and social media, the Council's approach to recruitment will support connectivity and candidate experience.
---	--

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Contact Officers:

Name: Mark Grimley, Interim Director of HR and OD
Tel: 0161 600 8380
E-mail: m.grimley@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Pat Fetherstone, Head of Service Delivery
Tel: 0161 234 1847
E-mail: p.fetherstone@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Mallicka Mandal, Employee Relations Manager
Tel: 0161 219 6365
E-mail: m.mandal@manchester.gov.uk

Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

- 1) Best Practice Handbook on Recruitment and Selection 2003.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The need to have a modern, up to date, flexible framework which guides Recruitment and Selection activities within the organisation has been the key driver behind the refresh of the recruitment and selection arrangements.
- 1.2 It is our intention that Manchester City Council is viewed as an employer of choice and as our workforce will be integral to delivering 'Our Manchester', that we attract & retain people with the right skills & behaviours.
- 1.3 We also need to ensure that recruitment and selection is conducted in a professional and timely manner and not only are the 'best' candidates attracted to work for the Council but that a positive and lasting impression is made on all applicants going through our recruitment and selection processes, many of whom will be our residents.
- 1.4 Feedback from the HR Sub-group will be considered and incorporated into the final policy and guidance. Once formally adopted by Personnel Committee this policy will replace existing arrangements as set out in the "Revised Best Practice Handbook on Recruitment and Selection" which was approved by Personnel Committee on 20 February 2003.

2.0 Context

- 2.1 'Our Manchester' sets out a very different relationship between public services, citizens, residents, and businesses, with all working together to ensure the city's success. This new relationship will include a number of different elements – developing new approaches for how public services engage and empower local communities, encouraging new behaviours and attitudes among all partners in the city, improving the social and physical connectivity of the city, to name a few. It will be underpinned by a set of common principles, supporting a new strengths-based approach to working.
- 2.2 This approach is underpinned by the creation of a new People Strategy for the Council, 'Our People'. This Strategy will have Our Manchester at its heart with its proposed focus on realising an ambition to *Inspire, Connect & Empower* the workforce to be agents for the delivery of Our Manchester ensuring this becomes 'the way we do things around here'.
- 2.3 Recruitment and selection forms a core part of any organisation's people management activities. At a fundamental level, those undertaking recruitment and selection decisions act as 'gatekeepers' in that only the people selected for employment can be led, managed and developed. It is also critical for an organisation's credibility that those involved in recruitment and selection decisions conduct themselves in a way that is professional, fair and ethical.
- 2.4 The aim of the Recruitment and Selection policy is to support managers in making recruitment decisions that put in place individuals who can perform at the high level expected and demonstrate the behaviours and commitment needed by the organisation. Recruiting and selecting staff in an effective

manner can avoid undesirable costs – for example those associated with high staff turnover, poor performance and dissatisfied customers.

3.0 Legislative Framework

There has been significant new legislation since 2003 which impacts on previous arrangements. The new policy takes cognizance of the legislative provision with regards to:

- Equality
- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults,
- Data Protection,
- Right to Work etc.

The impact of these changes have been considered and incorporated into the draft Recruitment and Selection Policy and the associated Guidance for Managers.

The Government is currently considering further legislation in relation to the treatment of exit payments in the public sector. The Council's Recruitment and Selection policy and re-engagement arrangements will comply with any prevailing legislation. The relevant policies will be reviewed once legislation is in place.

3.1 Research and Consultation

In developing this policy research was undertaken on the recruitment and selection practices of a wide range of organisations including the Civil Service Commission, NHS, other local authorities and private sector bodies such as the BBC.

The endeavour has been to develop a policy that was succinct and adaptable to a range of local needs whilst providing sufficient guidance to inform and support managers. The draft policy was widely consulted on with service managers, trade unions legal colleagues and HR officers. The general feedback was that the policy and guidance was easy to follow and set out the core requirements clearly. Feedback received have been considered and addressed within the revised draft.

Consultation was undertaken on the safeguarding aspects of the policy with the Head of Safeguarding and an Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

3.2 Main Changes

- 3.2.1 The policy sets out a set of core standards and the key considerations in relation to recruitment and selection. A suite of documents providing more detailed guidance for managers accompanies the policy.

Core Standards

The policy emphasises core behavioural and service standards that should be adhered to for all recruitment episodes.

These are:

- Through clarity, fairness and courtesy shown to candidates at each stage of the process, all staff involved in Recruitment and Selection will promote the Council as an employer of choice, concerned with service excellence and customer care.
- All recruitment information will be up to date, in plain language and accessible.
- Each opportunity to recruit will be assessed with a view to promoting the Council's employment initiatives.
- All selection decisions will be justifiable and based on fair and objective assessment of candidates against skills, knowledge, behaviours and experience required for the role.
- Care will be taken to ensure that the recruitment and selection processes used are cost effective both in terms of cost and officer time.
- The Council's values will underpin all our efforts and are embedded in our workforce, supporting the drive for excellence in service delivery.

3.2.2 The policy sets out a flexible framework enabling managers to recruit staff in a way that is best applicable to their circumstances, further guidance on selection and assessment options are provided in the accompanying guidance. .

3.2.3 The guidance accompanying the policy clearly sets out the roles and responsibilities of the recruiting manager, appointment panels and the corporate functions that support and advise managers.

3.2.4 Detailed guidance is included on safer recruitment i.e. recruitment to roles working with children and vulnerable adults. There is also the added ability for panels to use young people in the assessment process for roles that involve working with children and young people.

3.2.5 Advice on a range of assessment methods along with scoring methodology and advice on ranking of appointable candidates is included in the Guidance for Managers.

4. Implementation

4.1 Once formally approved, the policy and guidance will be publicised to staff and managers using the HROD intranet site and news broadcasts. The policy and guidance will be supplemented by 'I want to' guides which will be available on the Intranet for managers covering:

- I want to fill a vacancy?
- I want to prepare an advert and I need to know where to advertise?
- I want to shortlist?
- I want to give feedback?
- Preparing interview questions etc.

Employees and managers will also be signposted to information related to recruitment and selection including approval processes for requesting a resource, e-recruitment, equality and diversity, disclosure and barring checks.

- 4.2 Along with policy improvements there have also been system improvements to how recruitment is conducted for the authority. Following a review of resourcing across the Council, a decision was taken to work collaboratively with AGMA colleagues on the procurement of a new e-recruitment system to improve the way we support and deliver recruitment. It was recognised that in order to move forward with our approach and delivery of recruitment there was a need to streamline processes, reduce time to hire and improve the overall experience for both customers and prospective job applicants. As a result, there will be a new recruitment system implemented shortly which will see a fundamental shift in the way in which the organisation operates internal and external recruitment. The benefits of the system are:
- a much improved candidate experience
 - an improved customer journey
 - reductions in time to recruit to vacancies
 - an enhanced level of self-service for both recruiting managers and job applicants
 - compatibility with modern devices such as smart phones, tablets etc
- 4.3 Finally, a programme of leadership and management development training has been developed and is due to be launched using the Greater Manchester Leadership framework. This programme will promote leadership across organisation and system boundaries. Linked to this we have developed a series of learning opportunities for our managers and leaders (grade 10 and above) which will support the delivery of “Our Manchester” strategy and reflect the emerging GM priorities.

In addition to developing management capacity, individual modules will be available on recruitment and selection. This one day course will enable recruiting managers and panel members to carry out the process of filling vacancies with the right applicant in accordance with the council’s policies on recruitment and selection.

- 4.4 The Recruitment and Selection policy and guidance will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it remains legally compliant, comprehensive and fit for purpose.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The HR Sub-group is requested to provide views the draft Recruitment and Selection Policy and the accompanying Guidance for Managers.

DRAFT

Recruitment and Selection Policy

Employee Relations

HROD

November 2016



**MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL**

Contents

Introduction.....	1
Our Manchester.....	1
Core Standards	1
Scope	2
Re-engagement	2
Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults	2
Politically Restricted Posts.....	2
Manchester Residency Criteria.....	3
Selection and Assessment	3
Probationary Period.....	3
Record Keeping.....	3

Document Control			
Date effective from	July 2016	Owner	Employee Relations Team, HROD
Approval Date		Approval By	
Review date	Two years from the date of approval (or earlier where there is a change in the applicable law)		

Introduction

1.1 Our vision for Manchester in 2025 is to be in the top flight of world class cities. The Council believes that its people are critical to achieving this vision.

1.2 An organisation is only as good as the people it employs, and Manchester City Council's most valuable resource is its workforce. Some 7000 individuals are employed in a wide variety of roles and work across Manchester's diverse neighbourhoods and communities in libraries, children's homes and parks as well as the iconic Manchester Town Hall. Our people are the driving force behind the 'Our Manchester' strategy, working together to deliver this vision of Manchester's future.

Our Manchester

2.1 The 'Our Manchester' strategy is an ambitious statement of where Manchester people, businesses and public services want to get to. Setting a long term vision for Manchester's future, and describing how we'll achieve it, the strategy provides a framework for actions by our partners working across Manchester: public sector organisations, businesses, the voluntary sector and our communities. It is not a strategy for Manchester City Council, but for Manchester.

2.2 Only by citizens, public services and businesses working together, differently, can we deliver this vision of Manchester's future. 'Our Manchester' will be a bold approach that focuses on people's strengths and helps unlock the potential that exists in our city. This approach is underpinned by the creation of a new People Strategy for the Council, 'Our People'. This Strategy will have Our Manchester at its heart with its proposed focus on realising an ambition to *Inspire, Connect & Empower* the workforce to be agents for

the delivery of Our Manchester ensuring this becomes 'the way we do things around here'.

2.3 The aim of the Recruitment and Selection Policy is to support managers in making recruitment decisions that put in place individuals who can perform at the high level expected and demonstrate the behaviours and commitment needed by the organisation.

Core Standards

3.1 The diversity of Manchester's residents and local communities is a matter of pride for the Council. Providing equal opportunities is a high priority on the Council's agenda. It aims to ensure that this diversity is reflected in its workforce so that it has the attributes, talents and skills necessary to effectively engage with all community groups and in doing so provide excellent, world class services to all its residents. The Council is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and this policy will support the Council in providing safer practice in the recruitment of staff who work with these groups.

3.2 The core standards that underpin all recruitment and selection activity are:

3.3 Through clarity, fairness and courtesy shown to candidates at each stage of the process, all staff involved in this process will promote the Council as an employer of choice, concerned with service excellence and customer care.

- All recruitment information will be up to date, in plain language and accessible.
- Each opportunity to recruit will be assessed with a view to promoting the Council's employment initiatives.
- All selection decisions will be justifiable and based on fair and objective assessment of candidates against skills, knowledge,

behaviours and experience required for the role.

- Care will be taken to ensure that the recruitment and selection processes used are cost effective both in terms of cost and officer time.
- The Council's values and Our Manchester will underpin all our efforts and will support the drive for excellence in service provision.

3.9 Recruitment and Selection activity must comply with statutory requirements. Further details are provided in the Guidance for Managers. There are a range of resourcing options available to managers, external recruitment being one of them. All requests for resourcing solutions need to be submitted for approval in line with the prevailing authorisation and governance arrangements.

3.10 The Council's also sets out certain obligations in relation to declaration of interests both from those participating in the recruitment and selection process as well as potential candidates, details of which are set out in the Guidance for Managers.

Scope

4.1 All employees involved in any stage of the recruitment and selection process should be aware of and adhere to the arrangements set out within this policy and the accompanying guidance. This policy contains the broad principles and arrangements that underpin the Council's approach to recruitment and selection. Detailed guidance exists to support fair and effective implementation of the policy.

4.2 Whilst this policy explicitly applies to the Council, community schools may wish to adopt the principles and standards set out in this document.

Re-engagement

5.1 The Council's re-engagement policy sets out that those employees who have left through voluntary early retirement and voluntary severance will not be re-engaged by the Council for a minimum period of 2 years from the date they left employment on these grounds.

5.2 Potential applicants and managers also need to be aware that the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015 enables the recovery of exit payments when high earners return to the same part of the public sector within 12 months of leaving.

5.3 The Council's Recruitment & Selection Policy will comply with any legislative requirements in relation to exit payments prevailing at the time.

Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults

6.1 Ensuring that recruitment to roles working with children and vulnerable adults are dealt with in line with safe recruitment practices means that the safety and welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is held paramount at every stage of the recruitment process. Recruiting managers must have regard to any specific requirements and considerations for recruiting to roles working with vulnerable groups. Further advice is provided in the Guidance for Managers accompanying this policy.

Politically Restricted Posts

7.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (as amended by Section 30 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009) imposes restrictions on political activities by employees who hold certain posts. If a post is deemed politically restricted this

must be indicated on the job particulars and the appointment documents.

Manchester Residency Criteria

Work in progress

8.2 For Graduate Trainee positions, whilst the above criteria applies, in the event that no one is found appointable the criteria is extended to cover graduates from a Greater Manchester university or a resident of Greater Manchester.

Selection and Assessment

9.1 A range of selection methods is available to the Council at the interview stage to assess candidates against objective criteria contained in the role profile and competency framework. The purpose is to accurately predict a candidate's ability to perform the role in question. Interviews will generally be undertaken by a panel of two or more people. Selection panels will keep written notes on each applicant recording reasons for decisions taken. These are disclosable to the applicant.

9.2 If, within a service, the same job, at the same grade, was filled in the previous six months preceding a current recruitment exercise, and there was more than one appointable candidate, then the recruiting manager may offer the job to the next highest ranked applicant from that process. Further information relating to the stages of recruitment, assessment methods, interviews and scoring is available in the Guidance for Managers.

9.3 A conditional offer of employment may be made to the most appointable candidate. A firm offer of appointment will only be made when all the pre-employment checks have been completed satisfactorily. In some cases there may be circumstances that lead the Council to withdraw the offer of employment, such as lack of a satisfactory reference or misrepresentation of qualifications. The candidate should be informed of any such withdrawal of offer of employment in writing.

Probationary Period

10.1 All new employees to the Council are subject to a 13 week probationary period (unless the appointee is an existing employee or someone transferring from the service of another local authority, or has service under the redundancy modification order). If at the end of the period, performance is deemed unsatisfactory, then the contract can be terminated. The period of probation may be extended to a maximum of 26 weeks in some circumstances.

10.2 All roles working with children's residential care will be appointed subject to completion of 52 weeks probationary period.

10.3 Apprentices are covered by separate arrangements.

Record Keeping

11.1 The recruiting manager should retain application forms and related shortlisting and assessment documents. To meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998, documents should be stored for a period of 6 months following interview or a longer specified period of time where necessary, then destroyed confidentially.

DRAFT

Recruitment and Selection

Guidance for Managers

Employee Relations

HROD

November 2016



MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL

Contents

Legislative Framework	1
Roles and Responsibilities	5
Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults	6
Involving Children and Young People in Recruitment	9
Declaration of Interests	14
Stages in Recruitment & Selection	15
Selection Stage.....	15
Appointment Stage.....	16
Guidance on Assessment Methods	18
References	22
Forms	24

Legislative Framework

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act came into force on 1 October 2010 and it aims to provide a simpler, more consistent and more effective legal framework for preventing discrimination. The stated aim of the Act is to reform and harmonise discrimination law, and to strengthen the law to support progress on equality. It replaces the following equality legislation:

- the Equal Pay Act 1970
- the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- the Race Relations Act 1976
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- the Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

It also introduces new measures that have direct implications for higher education institutions (HEIs).

Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act covers the same groups that were protected by existing equality legislation and now calls them 'protected characteristics':

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

Types of Discrimination

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic.

Indirect discrimination

Indirect discrimination can occur when you have a condition, rule, policy or even a practice that applies to everyone but particularly disadvantages people who share a protected characteristic. Indirect discrimination can be justified if you can show that you acted reasonably in managing your business, i.e. that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'. A legitimate aim might be any lawful decision you make in running your business or organisation, but if there is a discriminatory effect, the sole aim of reducing costs is likely to be unlawful. Being proportionate really means being fair and reasonable, including showing that you've looked at 'less discriminatory' alternatives to any decision you make.

Discrimination by association

This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.

Perception discrimination

This is direct discrimination against an individual because others think they possess a particular protected characteristic. It applies even if the person does not actually possess that characteristic.

Victimisation

Victimisation occurs when an employee is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act; or because they are suspected of doing so. An employee is not protected from victimisation if they have maliciously made or supported an untrue complaint. There is no longer a need to compare treatment of a complainant with that of a person who has not made or supported a complaint under the Act.

Harassment

Harassment is "unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual". Employees will now be able to complain of behaviour that they find offensive even if it is not directed at them, and the complainant need not possess the relevant characteristic themselves. Employees are also protected from harassment because of perception and association.

Protected Characteristics: Equality Act 2010

Age

The Act protects people of all ages. However, there may be grounds to justify that different treatment because of age was not unlawful direct or indirect discrimination if you can demonstrate that it was a proportionate means of meeting a legitimate aim.

Disability

The Act has made it easier for a person to show that they are disabled and protected from disability discrimination. Under the Act, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, which would include things like using a telephone, reading a book or using public transport.

An employer is required to make reasonable adjustments when recruiting, selecting, inducting and promoting disabled employees. The Act puts a duty on the employer to make reasonable adjustments for staff to help them overcome disadvantage resulting from an impairment (e.g. by providing assistive technologies to help visually impaired staff use computers effectively). The Act includes a new protection from discrimination arising from disability. This states that it is discrimination to treat a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected with their disability (e.g. a tendency to make spelling mistakes arising from dyslexia). This type of discrimination is unlawful where the employer or other person acting for the employer knows, or could reasonably be expected to know, that the person has a disability. This type of discrimination is only justifiable if an employer can show that it was a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. Additionally, indirect discrimination now covers disabled people. This means that a job applicant or employee could claim that a particular rule or requirement you have in place disadvantages people with the same disability. Unless you could justify this, it would be unlawful. The Act also includes a new provision which makes it unlawful, except in certain circumstances, for employers to ask about a candidate's health before offering them work.

Gender reassignment

The Act provides protection for transsexual people. A transsexual person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. The Act no longer requires a person to be under medical supervision to be protected – e.g. a woman who decides to live as a man, but does not undergo any medical procedures, would be covered.

It is discrimination to treat transsexual people less favourably for being absent from work because they propose to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment than they would be treated if they were absent because they were ill or injured.

Marriage and civil partnership

The Act protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination. Single people are not protected.

Pregnancy and maternity

A woman is protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled. During this period, pregnancy and maternity discrimination cannot be treated as sex discrimination. You must not take into account an employee's period of absence due to pregnancy-related illness when making a decision about her employment.

Race

For the purposes of the Act 'race' includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

Religion or belief

In the Equality Act, religion includes any religion. It also includes no religion, in other words employees or jobseekers are protected if they do not follow a certain religion or have no religion at all. Additionally, a religion must have a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief, including no belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour. Denominations or sects within a religion can be considered a protected religion or religious belief. Discrimination because of religion or belief can occur even where both the discriminator and recipient are of the same religion or belief.

Sex

Both men and women are protected under the Act.

Sexual orientation

The Act protects bisexual, gay, heterosexual and lesbian people.

Equality Notes

Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

Established on 1 October 2007, the EHRC brought together the work of the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Rights Commission. It will enforce equality legislation on gender, race, disability and health, age, religion, sexual orientation and transgender status and encourage compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998. It will campaign for social change and justice, has extensive legal powers and may take legal action on behalf of individuals.

Other Legislation

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Under this Act an individual who has had a conviction for an offence may, with some exceptions, be rehabilitated and allowed to treat the conviction as if it had never occurred. A conviction will become 'spent' where the person has not, after a period of time, committed another serious offence. Employers may not, under the Act, ask prospective employees if they have 'spent' convictions during the recruitment process.

Rehabilitation of Offenders 1974 (Exceptions Order) 1975

However there are exemptions to the Act and it does not apply to certain posts or professions including medical practitioners, dentists, nurses, and those concerned with providing elderly, sick or disabled people with health or social services.

Criminal Records Checks

Pre-employment criminal records checks will be required for certain posts, particularly those working (i) with vulnerable groups, such as the under 18s and people with mental health issues, and (ii) regulated activities.

The Data Protection Act 1998

The act defines certain types of information as "sensitive data" and restrictions are imposed on employers in relation to the collection and use of such data, including in the recruitment process e.g. seeking information on spent criminal records is restricted to certain posts.

Fixed Term Employees

Fixed-term employees should not be treated less favourably than comparable permanent employees on the grounds that they are fixed-term employees, unless this is objectively justified in accordance with the legal framework (**Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment Regulations 2002**).

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

This provides the legislative framework for a new vetting and barring scheme for people working with children and vulnerable adults. The Act establishes a central database of offenders in respect of people working, or applying to work, with children or vulnerable adults. Any person named on the list will be barred from working with children and/or vulnerable adults, or subject to monitoring.

Asylum and Nationality Act 2006

These provisions came into force on 29 February 2008 and aim to prevent illegal migrant working in the UK. Failure to comply with these regulations can result in the Council becoming liable to pay a civil penalty of up to £10,000 for every illegal worker.

The Immigration Act 2016

Requires public authorities to ensure their workers in customer-facing roles speak English (or, in Welsh authorities, English or Welsh) to a sufficient degree of fluency to "do their jobs effectively". This should be highlighted in the relevant job profiles.

Roles and Responsibilities

Recruiting Manager

It is the Recruiting Manager's responsibility to ensure that relevant Council policies and procedures are complied with and that there is no bias or discrimination throughout the recruitment and selection process.

The recruiting manager must do the following:

- Ensure that there is an up-to-date role profile which supports business needs
- Ensure the necessary approval process has been followed and authorisation has been secured to externally recruit to the role
- Complete the Equality and Diversity e-learning module before being involved in any recruitment and selection activities
- Shortlist applications against pre-determined selection criteria (with at least one other panel member)
- Design interview questions and appropriate selection mechanisms such as assessment tests and exercises using the role profile as a basis, and consider any access needs
- Conduct the selection process, list appointable candidates and make an appointment decision
- Ensure all the relevant pre-employment documents such as interview assessment forms, new starter forms etc are completed and sent through to the Employee Shared Service
- Provide feedback to external candidates where requested
- Deal with the practical arrangements for new employees, such as ICT access, ID badges and other facilities
- Plan and implement a quality structured induction
- Manage and implement the probationary period where relevant, ensuring new recruits are given clear objectives and quality feedback on performance

Interview Panels

- Ensure the recruitment activity is well planned and timely
- Ensure the process is objective and fair
- Plan and design the methods of assessment
- Assess the candidates and select the appointable candidate, ensuring that decisions are evidence based and documented accordingly
- Proactively communicate with candidates throughout each stage of the process, including successful and unsuccessful outcomes and the provision of feedback
- Complete the e-learning module on equality and diversity prior to any involvement in recruitment and selection

Corporate Support

- Provide support, advice and guidance on the recruitment and selection process
- Receive and process resourcing requests
- Record equality monitoring information
- Send letters & request references
- Process Disclosure and Barring Service checks
- Provide New Starter Packs
- Store all documentation relating to a recruitment and selection process in line with requirements
- Set up payroll for the new employee
- Develop and maintain suite of generic role profiles linked to job families
- Review, govern and take ownership of the Recruitment and Selection policy
- HROD will provide support to Members in the instance of senior recruitment, if necessary

Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults

The safety and welfare of every child or vulnerable adult is paramount at every stage of the recruitment and selection process when recruiting to safeguarding roles. The Council has a responsibility under S11 of the Children Act 2004 to ensure safe recruitment practices are in place and maintained.

It starts with detailed planning of the recruitment exercise and, where the post is advertised, ensuring that the advertisement makes clear the organisation's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It also requires a consistent and thorough process of obtaining, collating, analysing, and evaluating information from and about applicants.

Key elements within this process include:

- ensuring the role profile for relevant posts/roles makes reference to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
 - obtaining and scrutinising comprehensive information from applicants, and taking up and satisfactorily resolving any gaps, discrepancies or anomalies;
 - obtaining independent professional references that answer specific questions to help assess an applicant's suitability to work with children and following up any concerns;
 - a face-to-face interview that explores the candidate's suitability to work with children as well as his or her suitability for the post;
 - verifying the successful applicant's identity;
 - verifying that they have the Right to Work in the UK (where employed)
- verifying the successful applicant's qualifications;
 - checking his or her previous employment history and experience;
 - carrying out an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring (DBS) Check for roles in "regulated activity";
 - Where adults do not have a specific role working with children, but are likely to be in contact with children during the course of their work, the safer recruitment practices still apply.

Role Profiles

Role profiles for all such posts should reference the responsibility the council has for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. In addition, each role should specify suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults in the key role accountabilities.

References

For such roles, two references are required. One reference should be from the candidate's current or most recent job role, which is usually working with children or vulnerable adults. Where a candidate does not have current experience of working with children or vulnerable adults but has done so in the past, a reference should be taken from this previous organisation, regardless of when this role was. Alongside this, a reference from their current job is appropriate.

References must be obtained for the candidate. It is ideal to have any references prior to interview in order to have the opportunity to scrutinise the information during the interview.

For roles working in residential care with children or vulnerable adults all shortlisted applicants must provide references prior to interview. This ensures the whole panel has access to each candidate's references which are used to probe any areas of concern at interview.

Deciding whether the references are appropriate will be the responsibility of the recruiting manager and the panel. The recruiting manager should ask sufficient questions to ensure the source of the reference is genuine. Recruiting managers need to understand any gaps in the applicant's employment history and be satisfied that there is a reasonable account.

Any offer of employment should always be conditional on the receipt of satisfactory references. References should always be obtained in writing and telephone contact must be made with at least one referee (the most recent or relevant) in order to verify the reference. Referees should be asked to comment on work and professional competence and personal qualities, although it should be borne in mind that comments on "personal qualities" can be highly subjective. References should also specifically request information regarding the applicant's suitability to work with children and vulnerable adults including details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to including those where the sanction has expired. All reference requests should contain a copy of the role profile.

Interview

There should be a face-to-face interview for every role that incorporates an element of safeguarding. The basis of this interview will be to explore the candidate's suitability to work with children and vulnerable adults, as well as

whether they are suitably matched to the role. An interview can also enable the recruitment panel to question the candidate's qualifications and previous employment history and experience.

Verification

Resourcing will verify the following:

- The candidate's identity
- Whether they have the Right to Work in the UK
- That their qualifications are correct
- That their employment history is sound and appropriate for the post applied for

Disclosure and Barring Checks

Enhanced DBS checks will be carried out on the appointable candidate. DBS checks will be undertaken every 3 years in line with Council's policy unless otherwise specified.

Recruiting to Roles Working in Children's Residential Homes

It is important that the guidance for recruiting to children's residential homes is followed, as the law is very clear in this instance. Recommendations have been implemented from the Warner Report in 1992, including an enhanced DBS check and the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015.

The safeguarding reference process should be followed, meaning that references should be obtained prior to the interview stage of the recruitment process. This will allow the recruitment panel to scrutinise the references

and provides more time to assess that they are genuine. A minimum of 2 references must be received before the candidate can take on any responsibilities. This includes telephone references as well as written references.

The candidate must be of the minimum age of 21 and at least 4 years older than the eldest child that resides at the children's home. The experience or qualifications necessary for the role must be set out in full in the role profile. The role profile should set out the Council's commitment to safeguarding practice and state that the role is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, with an enhanced DBS check necessary before appointment.

The candidate must demonstrate, throughout the interview process, and when questioned, that they have the ability to follow the practices contained within current statutory guidelines, including complying with an enhanced DBS check.

The candidate must have the following carried out, and a copy of each must be stored at the children's residential home:

- Identity checks (must supply 3 original documents such as a driver's license, birth certificate and passport)
- DBS disclosure certificate, the type of disclosure (for safeguarding roles this must be an enhanced disclosure), the date it was completed, the unique

reference number and the outcome (suitability to work with children)

- Checks to confirm required qualifications and any qualifications the manager of the children's home considers to be relevant
- At least 2 references, including a statement from each referee to confirm suitability of working with children. Any gaps must be explored to ensure that there is a reasonable explanation for the gaps.
- Checks to confirm the Right to Work in the UK
- Where the person has lived outside of the UK, DBS checks are not sufficient as proof of the candidate's suitability to work with children. Further investigation will be necessary to establish this.

DBS checks will be undertaken every 3 years in line with Council's policy

The Council's policy of Whistleblowing will be expected to be adhered to by any potential employee. If any malpractice is seen that the potential employee is aware of and do not report, they could be implicated.

The period of probation will be 52 weeks.

Involving Children and Young People in Recruitment

Children and young people taking part in the recruitment and selection process allow them to have an input into who will be working with them. It is also a clear way of demonstrating to candidates the importance and value the organisation places on such participation.

The involvement of children and young people can include preparation of role profiles, contributing to assessment methods and taking part in short listing before interview. Children and young people can also take part on interview panels either alongside adults or separately for roles that require working with young people.

Advantages

How this helps the Council:

- i) Supports Our Manchester by giving a clear message to existing staff, potential new recruits, funders, partner organisations, and young people, that the involvement and views of young people are integral to services which affect them
- ii) Improves service delivery by selecting candidates whose personal skills and qualities suit the needs of young people
- iii) Demonstrating respect for children's rights
- iv) Helps staff to develop new skills in working creatively with young people
- v) Gives staff greater insight into young people's views by communicating with and listening to them.

How this helps the young people:

- i) Develops valuable skills and experience that will help them in the future

- ii) Provides opportunities to gain accreditation or recognition of their involvement
- iii) Improves interpersonal and communication skills with adults and peers
- iv) Helps to develop a sense of responsibility and increased confidence
- v) Recognises that their contribution is valued and they have directly influenced appointing the strongest candidates into the services.

What to consider

The Council may already have a young people's forum or a user group of current and former service users from which to draw volunteers from. It is also worth being mindful of the balance between service users and non-service users.

Access issues and specific needs of any kind should not preclude a young person from participating. The pool of young people should be representative of the local population, wherever possible.

Which job roles to involve young people in?

Although they can be involved in recruiting for any job role, the most relevant are those involving direct contact with young people or making decisions about the services they access. The decision as to which roles to begin with will vary from organisation to organisation with some choosing top senior roles to demonstrate commitment from the top. For others it may be selecting a small service to pilot and evaluate before rolling out more widely.

Which young people to involve?

Inviting young people into the process who have already interacted with people in the job role being recruited to, or with the service, brings additional value, although it is not essential. It is useful to be aware of whether any of the young people have current issues or challenges with the service so that they are supported in the best way possible during the process.

How to prepare the interview panel?

Involving young people will increase the length of the recruitment process so providing a clear message about the expected benefits when preparing the staff panel is essential. The staff panel, HR representative, and participation officer (or other support person) should start working collaboratively with the young people at an early opportunity to begin building relationships and planning the recruitment activities. Getting the staff panel involved in the young people's training sessions can be a good starting point for this, together with shadowing opportunities, to experience each other's role. Aim for an open culture, a collaborative dynamic, and equality throughout the process.

Have you considered how to weight the scores?

Weighting can vary depending on how much the job role has direct involvement with young people. The minimum is usually 20 per cent. Consider having a form for the panel to complete to provide evidence of how the young people's views have been taken into account.

Also, give consideration as to how potential disputes will be resolved between the young people and the panel in the event of a clear difference of opinion as to which candidate to appoint.

Have you considered what to offer as a reward?

Saying thank you is essential. Providing rewards can help young people to feel valued and can also provide useful evidence of their skills and experience. Rewards could include:

- a follow up email, letter or card
- a certificate of recognition
- reference letters
- letters of acknowledgement to the school or college
- vouchers

Have you considered what to do in the event of a disclosure?

If a safeguarding disclosure is made at any stage by young people involved, make sure there is a clear understanding about the process to be followed by the recruiting team.

Have you considered how you will prepare candidates?

The involvement of young people should not come as a surprise to candidates on the day. Prepare candidates by making it clear in the job advertisement that this is part of the process. If the young people have prepared a document or a video, include a link to it in the advert. Include in the interview letter what their specific involvement will be, for example, a young people's interview panel, the weighting, and any pre-interview activity. This also provides a clear message to potential candidates that the views of young people are important to the organisation.

Have you considered consent forms?

Consent forms (especially for those who are under 18) will need to be sent to parents or carers, and to the young person's school or college if the interview, training etc is during school time. These forms should explain what the young person will be doing and the benefits of being involved.

Methods of Involving Young People

There are a number of methods and models for including children and young people in recruitment and selection. Three of the most common are set out below, however, less formal participation can also be considered:

A parallel young people's panel

This method is applicable across a wide range of settings, using a separate young person's panel running parallel to an adult panel, which on completion of interviews feeds back their recommendations to the adult panel. This creates a unique opportunity for children and young people to plan, organise and facilitate their own involvement. They can have a lot of control over the format of the interview and their role within it.

A guided group discussion

This method brings all of the candidates together and young people and asks them to either answer in turn or openly discuss a number of topics or statements that are directly relevant to the post or the children and young people they will be working with if successful.

Mixed adult and young people panel

This usually involves one young person sitting alongside adults on a formal interview panel. The young person's weighting or influence on the decision may vary according to the type of post and the level of knowledge needed to assess different aspects of the person specification (e.g. strategic planning and financial management versus knowledge of young people's issues and experience of working with children and young people).

In each of the above methodologies the young people will require some level of support and training in preparation for their role, although the timescales and depth of knowledge required will vary according to the type of involvement.

Remember that participation can / should be voluntary and that children and young people should be allowed to leave the process at any stage if they uncomfortable. The young volunteers need to be aware that this requires a commitment to the process, particularly the interviews, to ensure equity for the potential candidates. Where possible, meetings and interviews should be scheduled for out of school hours; where this is not possible permission should be sought from the educational institution.

Developing questions and shortlisting

Young people have a different perspective from adult service users, and as such, should be provided with enough information about the job role, to understand the skills and behaviours required. This should feed directly into the role profile, as well as into the shortlisting process.

In addition, young people could devise their own questions or activities for applicants to enable them to see how well the applicant matches up to the desirable skills and behaviours. It is important to use the young people's own words as they are crafted from a young person's perspective.

Young people can also help to develop job adverts, including posters. Remember to make it clear in the advert that young people have been involved in devising the selection process.

Practical Arrangements on the Day

Timings

Take into account what time young people will need to set off from home when deciding the start times for interviews. Ensure sufficient time is allowed between each interview for reflection and discussion with the panel and factor in time for comfort breaks. Inevitably there will be no shows on the day which may create lengthy gaps so plan ahead for what the young people can be doing during this time.

Location

Depending on the base for the job role, if this is a location that the young people are already familiar with, consider whether this would be a suitable interview venue rather than another building. Consider access issues for wheelchair users.

Transport arrangements

Be clear about whose responsibility it will be to get young people to and from the interviews. Will it be the organisation, school, parents or carers? Make sure that all parties know the arrangements. Be aware that travel expenses will most likely need to be reimbursed if the Council

isn't arranging transport. For some young people, such as those in care or with disabilities, providing a taxi is recommended.

Individual needs of young people

Make sure the room is comfortable and facilities are easily available and accessible. Young people

should be given time to arrange the layout of the interview room as they wish. Meals could be provided together with drinks.

Briefing for Young People

This could include:

- understanding the importance of selecting the right candidate
- understanding the whole interview or assessment process
- questioning techniques
- choosing, developing questions and assessment tasks
- listening skills —how to interact with the candidates
- taking notes and recording
- identifying what makes a good or bad candidate
- being non-judgmental and an understanding of equalities issues
- scoring the candidates
- confidentiality (in relation to candidates and other young people involved)
- decision-making process
- how their scores and feedback will be used to make the final decision
- providing feedback to candidates.

Prompts for Managers

PRE-INTERVIEW PREPARATION		
Date	Activity	Status ✓
	Consider which job roles to involve young people in	
	Identify the young people to be part of the recruitment process	
	Devise young people-friendly training activities	
	Select which recruitment activities the young people will be involved in	
	Decide how the young people will be rewarded	
	Make it clear to candidates that young people will be involved, what their involvement will be, and the impact that will have on the final decision	
	Send consent forms (especially for those who are under 18) to parents or carers, and to their school or college	
ON THE DAY		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider timings for interviews Consider location and accessibility Be clear about transport arrangements Identify individual needs of the young people attending Consider the environment Provide meals and drinks A facilitator or supporter should sit in the interviews or activities with young people Make sure there is a safeguarding disclosure process in place 		
AFTER THE EVENT		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send a prompt and sincere thank you letter Notify young people of the outcome of the interview as soon as possible and explain why the person was chosen Arrange a debrief straight after, both group and individual, to allow for reflection and to receive feedback on performance Continuously evaluate and review the process 		

Declaration of Interests

Work in
progress

Work in
progress

Stages in Recruitment & Selection

Preparation Stage

Role Profiles

The Role Profile should have three constituent elements. The first section outlines the key role descriptors and key role accountabilities of the job family, which are generic in nature. This is supported by a further portfolio section which outlines the area of responsibility and context of the service area which a particular post sits in. The final section details the key behaviours, skills and technical requirements for the particular role, which is linked to the Council's Core Generic Skills and Behaviour Policy across three tiers: general, manager and leader.

The Immigration Act 2016 requires public authorities to ensure their workers in customer-facing roles speak English (or, in Welsh authorities, English or Welsh) to a sufficient degree of fluency to "do their jobs effectively". This should be highlighted in the relevant job profiles.

Advertising

Advertisements need to be designed and presented effectively to ensure the right candidates are attracted. Advertisements must be tailored to the level of the target audience, and should always be clear and easily understood. They must be non discriminatory and should avoid any gender or culturally specific language. Advertisements are often the first point of contact the potential recruit will have with the Council, so the panel needs to promote a positive image of the city and the Council and succinctly describe the job on offer.

Positive action can be used to encourage applications from people with certain protected characteristics that are underrepresented in the workplace in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty. Occupational Requirement specifies the exceptions under the Equality Act 2010 whereby the post requirements can enable recruitment to be lawfully restricted to people of certain protected requirements.

All external vacancies are advertised on the Council's website and on the Your Council Jobs website and the panel can determine the preferred closing date. The panel may choose to advertise the vacancy in other advertising media including social media such as LinkedIn.

Selection Stage

Shortlisting

After the closing date, each panel member should read every application independently and make an initial assessment of each applicant's suitability for further consideration. The full panel discusses their separate assessments and reaches agreement on the applicants who should be on the final shortlist.

Assessment

The assessment methods to be used in the selection process should be determined by the panel. The choice and construction of any assessment methods should flow from the requirements of the job in question and should aid the decision making process.

Depending on the type of vacancy, panels may find it useful to consider the use of a scoring

guide to assist them in identifying how well the candidate demonstrated they met the requirements. When all the assessment results are available, the full panel will then share and pool their assessment of the candidate and scores (if used). The panel should discuss any large discrepancies between different panel member's assessments on any of the requirements and agree which candidates are appointable, and (if used) a score for each candidate.

Interviews

In the majority of cases an interview will form part of the assessment process. All applicants who are invited into an interview will be asked if they have any requirements that need to be considered to ensure the process is accessible. If an applicant has requested a reasonable adjustment to the job to overcome a disabling barrier to their application, the panel must take the request seriously and be open to all possibilities for achieving a reasonable adjustment. A selection panel should aim to be representative of the community served. Panels should be made up of two or more people to reduce the likelihood of subjectivity and to allow a range of questions to be asked. The panel should ensure that sufficient notes are taken of the interview and that these are retained for record keeping at the end of the process for a minimum of six months.

From 1 October 2010, under s.60 of the Equality Act 2010, employers must not ask job applicants questions about their health or disability prior to making job offers to them (whether conditional or unconditional), unless it is to establish whether the job applicant will be able to carry out an intrinsic part of the job. Questions asked at interview should be designed to obtain relevant information about the applicant's experience and skills, check facts, test achievement and assess aptitude and potential.

Appointment Stage

Making an Appointment

All appointments must be made on merit, in line with the Local Government Act 1972, meaning the job should be offered to the best appointable candidate. If there is more than one appointable candidate, and scores have been used, go back to the requirements that were assigned the greatest weight and use the total scores for these requirements to provide a ranking order of candidates.

Feedback to Unsuccessful Candidates

Feedback should be readily available to all candidates. It is an important part of good Recruitment and Selection practice and can make a significant difference to the candidate's perception of the organisation, even if their application has been unsuccessful.

Where feedback is requested, it should be given as quickly as possible. Feedback should include an overview of the results of any tests and exercises as well as assessments from the interview. The feedback should be accurate, factual and helpful. It is important to provide a balance between those areas where the candidate did well or showed strength, and areas of weakness where the candidate could improve on in the future.

Pre – employment Clearances

An offer of employment must only be made to candidates who meet the relevant selection criteria, and in normal circumstances have been identified as the best candidate by the selection panel. Offers of employment will be confirmed in writing, although they may initially be communicated by telephone.

Offers of employment will remain conditional until the receipt and clearance of pre-employment checking, to the satisfaction of the Council.

The pre-employment checks include (not all of them will be required for every role):

References – All new prospective employees offered a job with the Council will be required to provide two satisfactory references in order to verify information about his or her employment history. One reference should be from the candidate's current employer if the candidate is currently employed or the last employer if the candidate is not currently employed. Guidance on References in Appendix 5.

DBS Disclosure Checks – When a person applies for a job with Manchester City Council, we will not take into account previous spent convictions as laid down in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (as amended), except when a person is being appointed to an exempted position under that Act. The disclosure of a criminal record will not necessarily bar a person from appointment. The Council will take into account factors including the nature of the offence, when the offence occurred and sentence given.

All information obtained as a result of a DBS check will be treated as highly confidential in keeping with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Right to Work Checks – Checks regarding entitlement to work in the UK must be made for all prospective employees who are not currently employed by the Council.

Qualification and Registration certificates – Checks must be made to ensure the relevant qualifications have been awarded and any necessary registration is up to date.

Medical Clearance – For identified roles, a pre-employment questionnaire must be completed by the candidates and a fitness clearance received before employment can commence. If it is deemed necessary an appointment will be made with the Council's Occupational Health service provider.

Completion of the Council's **Equal Opportunities Monitoring** information is essential for each recruitment episode.

Offer

A conditional offer of employment must be made to the most appointable candidate. A firm offer of appointment will only be made when all the pre-employment checks have been completed satisfactorily. The Recruiting Manager must then complete an online external appointment form. The corporate support team will then issue a revised contract.

In some cases there may be circumstances that lead the Council to withdraw the offer of employment, such as lack of a satisfactory reference or misrepresentation of qualifications. The candidate should be informed of any such withdrawal of offer of employment in writing.

Guidance on Assessment Methods

The Panel should decide on the assessment methods at the beginning of the recruitment process. Assessment methods provide insight on how the candidate scores in areas that wouldn't necessarily be seen in an interview.

The assessments chosen should relate to the job in question. The panel should identify essential elements in the role profile and find assessments that demonstrate these qualities.

The assessment results should be used in conjunction with the scores from the interview in order to determine the best candidate. It is important not to use alternative assessments when they are unnecessary.

Some examples of other methods of assessments are:

Psychometric Tests

These are objective, standardised tests that should be used in conjunction with other methods to determine if the candidate is suitable for the role. They are typically in the form of aptitude or ability tests. Ability tests assess an individual's current performance, whilst aptitude tests assess an individual's potential to perform with the benefit of adequate training. Verbal, numerical and logical reasoning are examples of psychometric tests.

Presentations

These can be planned presentations or on-the-spot. This will demonstrate the candidate's communication skills and how well they work under pressure. The ability to work under pressure is also tested well where a candidate has to prepare a presentation on the day. It can

also measure the candidate's level of strategic thinking.

Assessment Centres

These are not physical centres, rather a mixture of assessments that are completed over a half-day or day period. These can involve a timed written exercise, a group exercise or role-plays. Presentations and psychometric tests can also be included. It is important to ensure the way in which the assessment centre is applied is consistent so one group does not get an advantage over the other; for example, having a staff member present for one group but not for another. Where large number of appointments are to be made holding an assessment centre can often be a speedy and cost-effective way to select candidates.

Job Simulation (Sample Work Exercises)

This could be a presentation, a written exercise, group discussion exercises or role-play exercises. These are used to see how the candidate would react in a team environment, or how they would act in undertaking the work that the department does, as a result it is a powerful predictor of job performance.

Interviews

This is the most common way of assessing a candidate for a role. This will usually be used in conjunction with another aspect of assessment. Interview questions should be based on the role/person specification in order to determine the candidate's suitability for the post.

Good interviews have a clear structure which should be maintained throughout to help both the candidate and panel stay focused. There should, however, be opportunity to ask additional questions, possibly based on what the candidate has said.

An interview is usually laid out as follows:

- An introduction to the interview. This will note who the panel members are and what they do for the Council. It will also inform the candidate of the layout of the interview. The candidate should be warned that notes will be taken during the interview, so they aren't distracted.
- A series of questions are asked. To ensure clarity, one question is asked at a time. Make sure that everyone on the panel has asked their question (if desired) before moving on
- Give the candidate a chance to ask any of their own questions
- Close the interview, thank the candidate for their time, and explain what will happen next, i.e. when they will hear about the next stage.

Dos

- Ask challenging questions, but never aggressively.
- Try and ask open questions that will contain a more developed answer, as opposed to closed questions that usually end in yes or no
- Ask performance based questions

Don'ts

- Don't make assumptions before they have answered the question. It is important to remember that in your role as interviewer, you must be impartial to the interviewee.

- Never ask questions that could be construed as being discriminatory
- You must not ask about any protected characteristics (age, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, religion, pregnancy, disability, race) unless you are finding out if someone needs help to take part in the interview, or if reasonable adjustments must be made before someone can attend.

Interview Panels

Prior to sitting on an interview panel, all staff need to have completed the Equality and Diversity e-learning module. They must also have read the Recruitment and Selection policy and have an overview of the Council's current aims and objectives. In addition, the recruitment panel must have a thorough understanding of their service and its strategies. This will ensure they are aware what skills a candidate needs to possess to be appropriate for the role.

Planning the Recruitment Strategy

It is best practice to ensure timescales are met by planning the strategy at the beginning of the recruitment process. The panel should review the role profile prior to advertisement to ensure it is relevant and if it requires any specific skills or qualifications. If the vacancy is being advertised externally, the panel should decide where it should be advertised, whether this is on the Council website or wider job sites. Finally, the panel must decide upon what assessment methods are appropriate for the job. These can range from a psychometric test to a group exercise. The use of a mix of assessment methods enables the recruitment panel to shortlist the most suitable applicants. An interview with the recruitment panel is usually the last stage of the recruitment process.

Membership of the Panel

The panel should be made up of at least 2 qualified officers that have complied with the criteria above. The panel should be made up of a mixture of men and women, where appropriate, and should endeavour to reflect the diversity of the community served.

The Chair of the Panel has the responsibility of leading the process to ensure it remains fair and within timescales. The Chair should also ensure that large panels are avoided as they can overwhelm the candidate. It is the personal responsibility of any panel member to ensure they do not have a relationship with the candidate that could cause bias. This relationship could be, for example, a close friend or family member. If this is evident, the panel member should immediately withdraw and the Chair will find another stakeholder to fill their position on the panel.

Using an Assessment Scoring Matrix

Manchester City Council use competency based questions to measure candidates against one another. Examples of these could be:

- Give me an example of a time when you worked in a team to achieve something. Did everything go as planned?
- Have you ever had to overcome a problem in your life? How did you do so?
- What is the biggest change you have dealt with? What would you do differently?

Competency based questions enable interviewers to give a score to the candidate's answer depending on how well they answered the question. This will depend on things like how relevant the answer was, how structured the answer appeared and if there was any knowledge

of the subject demonstrated by the candidate. The score sheet is at the end of the document.

The interviewer will work out the maximum amount of points the candidate could have received, and then add up how many points were actually achieved. This is a good way to measure up how well the interviewer thought the candidates did at the time compared to one another. Of course, this cannot be the only thing relied on, which is why an interviewer should make comments during the interview so s/he can refer back to their notes.

If a candidate answers a question well, in the sense that they are concise and clear in their approach, and they answer in an articulate manner, they may score a 5.

If a candidate pays no attention to what the question was asking, and moulds it to fit their agenda, thus not answering the question at all, it is likely they will be scored a 1 or a 2.

There is no definition for which answer meets which score. It is dependent upon how the assessor interprets their answer and which meaning in the score table it meets the criteria for.

Appointments on Merit

- By law, all City Council appointments should be made on merit
- If there is one appointable candidate, offer the job to that person
- If there is more than one, this is where the scoring system can be used to its full advantage
- Looking at the total scores, rank the candidates. Whomever is at the top should be offered the job

Where scores were not used then ranking should be introduced at this stage. Individual panel members should go back to the requirements

that were assigned the greatest weight before starting the interviews and assign a score for each appointable candidate against each of these requirements. The offer should then be made to the candidate ranked highest.

- If not, take any who are employed Manchester residents, including Council employees, randomly select from these and offer the appointment to that person
- If not, take all the top, equal scoring candidates, randomly select from these and offer the appointment to that person

Appointments on Equal Merit

If candidates have equal rank, follow this process:

- If one of the candidates is disabled, offer the appointment to that person
- If not, take any that are unwaged Manchester residents, randomly select from these and offer the appointment to that person

Scoring Matrix

Score	Description	Relation to Job Performance
6	Excellent	A full response which demonstrated in-depth knowledge and understanding of the subject/ full possession of the requirement for superior job performance
5	Good	A good response which answered the question and showed depth of understanding and knowledge/ full possession of the requirement for effective job performance
4	Satisfactory	A response that was relevant and showed some understanding/ meets base requirements for adequate performance with scope for further development
3	Less than satisfactory	A response which was relevant but superficial and failed to demonstrate depth of understanding/ candidate requires significant further development to demonstrate the requirement satisfactorily
2	Poor	A response which was inadequate but which had some relevance/ candidate falls well below the base requirement for adequate performance and is unlikely to demonstrate competency without a great deal of further development
1	Very poor	A response which is either not relevant or substantially lacks any depth of content

References

Seeking References

All new prospective employees offered a job with the Council will need to ensure two satisfactory references are provided in order to verify information about his or her employment history. One reference should be from the candidate's current employer if the candidate is currently employed or the last employer if the candidate is not currently employed.

For all safeguarding i.e. roles working with children and vulnerable adults, two references are required. One reference will be from the candidate's current or most recent job role, which is usually working with children or vulnerable adults. Where a candidate does not have current experience of working with children or vulnerable adults but has done so in the past, a reference should be taken from this previous organisation, regardless of when this role was. Alongside this, a reference from their current job is appropriate.

The Shared Service will be responsible for any references obtained for the candidate. It is ideal to have any references prior to interview as to have the opportunity to scrutinise the information during the interview.

Deciding whether the references are appropriate will be the responsibility of the recruiting manager and the panel. The recruiting manager should ask sufficient questions to ensure the source of the reference is genuine.

Any offer of employment should always be conditional on the receipt of satisfactory references. References should always be obtained in writing and telephone contact must be made with at least one referee (the most recent or relevant) in order to verify the reference.

Referees should be asked to comment on work and professional competence and personal qualities, although it should be borne in mind that comments on "personal qualities" can be highly subjective.

Providing References

All reference requests must be made to a Head of Service who will then delegate to an appropriate manager. References should be provided where possible by the most recent Line Manager or Senior Manager who had some experience of managing the individual. If the manager it is delegated to has little experience of the individual, it is their duty to forward it to the appropriate Head of Service.

All references must be written on Council headed paper stating the roles and relationship between the manager and the employee.

References must be provided where requested. It is important to remember any information in the reference is subject to the Data Protection Act 1998, so care must be taken not to breach the individual's rights.

Before considering writing a reference for a current or former employee, the manager should speak with the relevant Head of Service to find out if an agreed reference already exists.

If providing a reference for a current or former employee, the following information may be included:

- Dates of employment with the Council;
- The employee's most recent job title;
- A short description of the employee's key job duties and level of responsibility;
- Any previous roles held in the Council;
- Any 'live' disciplinary action. Details of expunged warnings cannot be provided unless the person worked in a care environment. In this case, any previous disciplinary action relating to safeguarding issues should be disclosed, even if expunged;
- Reason for leaving for example resignation, dismissal, redundancy, retirement or expiry of a fixed term contract; and/or
- Information about attendance record, for example, number of days absent /occasions in the last 12 months

Where a reference is requested for an ex-employee who resigned whilst suspended on a charge of gross misconduct, a factual reference should be provided stating that the employee resigned during disciplinary proceedings. The unsubstantiated allegations can only be disclosed if they concern child-related offences. If there are any previous allegations of child-related offences on record, these should be disclosed if the individual is applying for a position working with children, regardless of when the allegations occurred.

Factual information such as amount of days absent can be found on SAP and disclosed. Information pertaining to why the individual was absent cannot be disclosed. An individual can be asked about the extent of the information to share in the reference to ensure the response is fair and accurate.

Once the manager has written the reference, this should be sent over to the Head of Service for approval. Once approved, one copy will be sent to the requesting employer, and one copy will be sent to Shared Service to go in the individual's personnel file. This should be within 10 working days where possible.

The Information Commissioner has issued a '[Data Protection Good Practice Note: Subject access and employment references](#)' which provides the following good practice guidance to new employers faced with a request for a copy of the reference given by their ex-employer:

"In most circumstances you should provide the information in a reference, or at least a substantial part of it, to the person it is about if they ask for it. Even if the referee refuses consent, this will not necessarily justify withholding the information, particularly where this has had a significant impact on the individual, such as preventing them from taking up a provisional job offer. However, there may be circumstances where it would not be appropriate to a reference, such as where there is a realistic threat of violence or intimidation by the individual towards the referee.

You should consider whether it is possible to conceal the identity of the referee, although often an individual will have a good idea of who has written the reference. If it is not reasonable in all the circumstances to provide the information without the referee's consent, you should consider whether you can respond helpfully anyway (for example, by providing a summary of the content of the reference). This may protect the identity of the referee, while providing the individual with an overview of what the reference says about them."

Forms

Individual Panel Member Short Listing Form

Vacancy Ref Number: NB **Post:** _____

Panel Member Name: _____

Date: _____

Make a note of key points in support of your initial assessment and /or which you feel should be discussed with the full panel in agreeing the final short list.

Candidate Name	Short List	
	Y/N	Notes/Reasons

Candidate Interview Assessment Form

Candidate Name: _____

Vacancy Ref Number: NB _____ **Post:** _____

Panel Member Name: _____

Interview Date: _____

Before interviews commence the panel should decide which, if any, requirements carry greatest weight for determining successful job performance.

Where more than one appointable candidate is identified use only the sum of scores for weighted items to rank the candidates.

If a scoring system is not used for assessing candidates at interview, mark Yes or No to indicate whether the candidate meets each requirement. Use the scoring system for relevant items if ranking is later required.

Where other methods of assessment are to be used, do not decide on the appointable candidate until all results have first been integrated using the Panel Scoring Matrix Form.

Requirement	Score	
	Panel Member Assessment (complete after individual interview)	Full Panel Agreement (complete after all interviews)

--	--	--

Panel Member's Notes

Candidate Name: _____

Vacancy Ref Number: NB **Post:** _____

Panel Member Name: _____

Interview Date: _____

Panel Scoring Matrix Form

Candidate Name: _____

Vacancy Ref Number: NB _____

Post: _____

Panel Members Names: _____

Interview Date: _____

Use the matrix to record and integrate interview and other scores/results where additional methods of assessment have been used. The headings included below are for illustrative purposes only and should be amended as necessary.

Requirement	Interview Score	Exercise 1 Score	Test Score	Exercise 2 Score

Panel Selection Decision Record Ranking Form

Vacancy Ref Number: NB **Post:** _____

Panel Members Names: _____

Date of Assessments: _____

Date of Selection Decision: _____

Record the selection decision by ticking the appropriate boxes.

Candidate Name	Not Appointable	Appointable	Ranking	
			Successful on Ranking	Unsuccessful on Ranking