

**Manchester City Council
Report for Discussion**

Report to: Human Resources Subgroup – 16 February 2017

Subject: Employment Policy - Recruitment and Selection

Report of: Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development (HROD)

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 HR Sub Group 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	Equal Opportunities	Environment	Employment
No	Yes	No	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

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

- 1) Best Practice Handbook on Recruitment and Selection 2003.
- 2) Report on Draft Recruitment and Selection Policy and Guidance for Managers, HR Sub Group, 24 November 2016.

1.0 Introduction & Context

- 1.1 '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. It is founded by a set of common principles, supporting a new strengths-based approach to working.
- 1.2 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'.
- 1.3 To realise the ambition to inspire, connect and empower our workforce, we need a new perspective in regards to our policies. Moving away from what could be considered an prescriptive and prohibitive approach, the large number of HR & OD policies will be reduced to a core suite focusing on positive behaviours and reducing the length and complexity of the policies.
- 1.4 Recruitment & Selection has been chosen as the first policy to undergo this change. The Council needs to have a modern, up to date, flexible framework which guides Recruitment and Selection activities within the organisation and will be the key driver behind the refresh of the recruitment and selection arrangements.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 Feedback from the HR Sub-group has been considered and incorporated into the updated policy, any further feedback will also be incorporated. 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 Recruitment & Selection

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 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

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 The impact of these changes have been considered and incorporated into the draft Recruitment and Selection Policy and the associated Guidance for Managers.
- 3.3 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.

4.0 Research and Consultation

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 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.

5.0 Main Changes

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 This policy sets out key principles which will underpin all of our efforts in the R&S process. These are:

- All employees involved will positively promote the Council, providing the best customer service and care possible.
 - 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.
 - Selection decisions will be made through a fair evaluation of the candidate's skills, knowledge, behaviours and experience required for the role.
 - Recruitment and Selection (R&S) processes will be cost effective and will minimise disruptions to any involved officer's schedules.
 - The Council's values and Our Manchester strategy and behaviours will underpin all our efforts.
 - All employees involved in any stage of the recruitment and selection process should be aware of and adhere to the arrangements of this policy and the accompanying R&S Guidance for Managers.
- 5.3 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. .
- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 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.
- 5.6 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.
- 5.7 Following from the previous HR sub group meeting, the following changes have been included:
- **Our People section added:**
Detailing how our R&S practices will contribute towards this goal.
 - **English Speaking requirement in customer facing roles:**
In line with changes to the 2016 Immigration act requiring applicants to be fluent in English for all customer facing roles. This has been further expanded in consideration of our multicultural communities and their communication requirements.
 - **Encouraging applications:**

This section has been added in regards to encouraging applications from Manchester's residents and its underrepresented groups.

6.0 Implementation

6.1 Once formally approved, the policy and guidance will be publicised to staff and managers using the HROD intranet site and news broadcasts.

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.

6.2 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, a new e recruitment system has been launched and has potential to create 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

6.3 Finally, a new programme of leadership and management development training has been launched. This programme promotes 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.

6.4 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.

7.0 Conclusion

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

Recruitment & Selection Policy

Principles

- ▶ All employees involved will positively promote the Council, providing the best customer service and care possible.
- ▶ All recruitment information will be up to date, in plain language and accessible.
- ▶ Where possible recruitment will be linked to the City Council's employment initiatives.
- ▶ Selection decisions will be made through a fair evaluation of the candidate's skills, knowledge, behaviours and experience required for the role.
- ▶ Recruitment and Selection (R&S) processes will be cost effective and will minimise disruptions to any involved officer's schedules.
- ▶ The Council's values and Our Manchester strategy and behaviours will underpin all our efforts.
- ▶ All employees involved in any stage of the recruitment and selection process should be aware of and adhere to the arrangements of this policy and the accompanying R&S Guidance for Managers.

People Strategy

With these principles in mind, the recruitment and selection process will champion the Our People ambition of every employee feeling inspired, connected and empowered.

Inspired: Our recruitment and selection process will strive towards ensuring that applicants feel inspired about our City's history, excited about its future, and wanting to be a part of it. We will recruit leaders that can motivate and energise staff to deliver the best outcomes for our citizens.

Connected: Exploring new ways of working across organisations and streamlining an employee's experience of moving between roles.

Empowered: Providing managers with the tools and support needed to create effective and fair recruitment processes.

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 arrangements detailed in the Guidance for Managers.

The Council 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.

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

Manchester Residency Criteria & Encouraging Applications

In line with its commitment to the Our Manchester strategy, the Council will encourage applications for posts at all levels from groups that are representative of the City's population and in particular, from groups underrepresented in the Council's workforce. Recruiting managers will be supported to achieve this with a range of options and tools detailed in the Guidance for Managers.

Only Manchester residents are recruited in the instance of a job at Grade 1 – 3 or for traineeships or apprenticeships. This is to help reduce unemployment in Manchester, which is higher than the average across the country. An applicant is a resident of Manchester if they live within the municipal boundaries of the City of Manchester. This means that council tax is paid to Manchester City Council.

For Graduate Trainee positions: If applicants are residents in Manchester OR attending a Manchester University then they will be eligible to apply. In the event that no one is found appointable the criteria is extended to cover graduates that are residents in Greater Manchester, or attending a Greater Manchester University.

Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults

Recruiting managers must have regard to any specific requirements and considerations, such as enhanced DBS checks, for recruiting to roles working with vulnerable groups. Further advice is provided in the Guidance for Managers.

Politically Restricted Posts

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.

Declaration of Interests

Employees who have a personal/business relationship with an applicant must not take part in any part of the recruitment process involving that applicant. The Council's application forms will ask candidates to make a declaration of any potential conflicts they are aware of. Furthermore, an employee must also inform the recruiting manager if a personal/business relationship exists.

Customer Facing Roles

The Immigration Act 2016 requires that employees working in customer facing roles must be fluent in English. However, the Council also recognises and values the diverse range of languages spoken in the City and the diverse communication needs of customer facing services.

With both of these points in mind, recruiting managers must ensure that their employees are fluent in English, and are encouraged to have due consideration of other potential communication requirements when undertaking recruitment assessment and selection processes.

Selection and Assessment

Interviews will 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 on.

If the same role has been filled in the previous six months, then the recruiting manager may offer the job to the next highest ranked applicant from the previous process.

Managers must ensure that all recruitment processes are fair and equitable, including the provision of reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants.

A conditional offer of employment may be made to the most appointable candidate based on suitability assessment. 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 will be informed of any such withdrawal of an offer of employment in writing.

Further information relating to the stages of recruitment, assessment methods, interviews and scoring criteria is available in the Guidance for Managers.

Record Keeping

The recruiting manager will retain application forms and related shortlisting and assessment documents in order to demonstrate equity, aid recount of events and to help

inform feedback requested.

To meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998, documents should be stored securely for a period of 6 months following interview or a longer specified period of time where necessary, then destroyed confidentially.

Probationary Period

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). The period of probation may be extended to a maximum of 26 weeks in some circumstances.

If performance is deemed unsatisfactory, then managers should explore if there is any further support that could be provided, e.g. training. If then the contract can be terminated. Apprentices are covered by separate arrangements.

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

Leaving the Council

Employees who have left through voluntary early retirement and voluntary severance will not be employed again by the Council for a minimum period of 2 years from the date they left employment. This includes an ex employee's re-engagement as a consultant or agency staff; for more information please see the Re-engagement Policy.

When high earners return to the public sector within 12 months of leaving, Government legislation may enable the recovery of exit payments.

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