

Recruitment Procedure

1. INTRODUCTION

This procedure describes the process for the appointment of all permanent or temporary, full or part time staff, to Trowbridge Town Council (“the Council”); it should be followed by all those involved in the recruitment process.

As well as detailing the responsibilities of employees and councillors the procedure covers the key phases of recruitment:

- Advertising of vacancies
- Responding to job applications
- Preparation for interviews
- The interview
- The interview decision
- The offer of employment

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Town Clerk / Head of Service: Resources and Venues

Having agreed the requirement for the job vacancy with the Council the Town Clerk may retain responsibility for the appointment process and the implementation of this procedure or may delegate to the Head of Service: Resources and Venues (HOS)

The Head of Service: Resources and Venues may in turn delegate responsibility to the relevant line manager, but will retain overall responsibility for the ultimate candidate selection process.

2.2 Line Manager

If delegated, the line manager will take charge of the selection process in accordance with this procedure, up to the candidate decision point, when the candidate is selected by interview panel consensus.

2.3 Head of Service: Resources and Venues

The Head of Service: Resources and Venues will have overall responsibility for the day to day administration of the recruitment and selection process but may delegate to The HR Officer specific actions to be undertaken are defined in the Recruitment Checklist (*Appendix 2*).

2.4 Employees

In line with the Council’s Employee Interests and Integrity Procedure all employees must declare an interest to the Town Clerk if they are related to, or have a close personal relationship with, a person applying for a position with the Council.

Employees declaring an interest should not be involved in any area of recruitment process for the vacancy, unless specifically permitted to do so by the Town Clerk.

In addition, to avoid accusations of bias, they should not discuss the applicant with any member of the assessment panel.

2.5 Councillors

As with employees, Councillors should declare an interest to the Town Clerk if they are related to, or have a close personal relationship with, a person applying for a position with the Council.

Councillors should be involved in the appointment of all Management positions and in any other appointments where it is considered necessary (*see Appendix 2*).

3. RECRUITMENT AUTHORISATION FORM

The Recruitment Authorisation Form (*Appendix 1*) should be completed by the recruiting manager as the first rule of recruitment, whether this is a new vacancy or to replace an employee who has left the Town Council. Once completed, the form should be signed by the Head of the Department and the Town Clerk before submitting to Head of Service: Resources and Venues. Head of Service: Resources and Venues will agree a closing date and interview date with the Recruiting Manager once the Recruitment Authorisation form has been received and will then begin the recruitment process.

4. ADVERTISING OF VACANCIES

Under no circumstances should vacancies be advertised without approval from the Town Clerk.

Head of Service: Resources and Venues, in consultation with the line manager and Head of Service: Resources and Venues, will prepare and distribute all adverts.

4.1 Internal advertising

All vacancies will be advertised at all Council premises where employees are based. Interested applicants will be required to formally apply for the vacancy as indicated in the advertisement.

4.2 External advertising

External adverts should be placed using the most appropriate and cost effective media possible. The choice of media will depend on the nature of the vacancy but should include the "Jobs" page of the community area website (www.trowbridge.gov.uk). Other options include job centre website (free of charge), local newspapers or national publications.

The use of recruitment agencies is not generally encouraged due to costs, although in extreme circumstances, and with the approval of the Town Clerk they may be considered.

5. JOB APPLICATIONS

5.1 Application Packs

The following information will be made available to anyone interested in applying for employment, either as downloadable documents from the website or by hard copy;

- ❖ Application Form
- ❖ Equal Opportunities monitoring form
- ❖ Job Description

Head of Service: Resources and Venues will be responsible for the preparation and issuing of the information.

5.2 Consistency

Head of Service: Resources and Venues will maintain a record of all correspondence with applicants and will ensure that all applicants are treated fairly. They will ensure that all applicants going forward for consideration have completed an official application form, received by the advertised closing date. Incomplete application forms or CV's will not be put forward, nor will applications received after closing dates, unless written consent for a delayed application has been forwarded to the applicant by Head of Service: Resources and Venues.

Any enquiries that may arise in the course of the application process will be responded to. Queries that cannot be answered by Head of Service: Resources and Venues will be escalated to the line manager in the first instance, then to the Head of Service: Resources and Venues and ultimately the Town Clerk.

Head of Service: Resources and Venues, in consultation with the Head of Service: Resources and Venues, will take a view on whether queries and their responses should be brought to the attention of other applicants. If deemed necessary points of clarity will be circulated to all applicants as soon as practical; this action may happen after the closing date.

5.3 Assessments

5.3.1 Assessment and Interview Panels

With input from the delegated line manager, Head of Service: Resources and Venues will coordinate the assessment and interview panel membership; this will be variable based on the importance of the vacancy. Appendix 3 gives recommendations on panel membership.

Wherever possible the HR Officer should be included on the interview panel to act as scribe. However, where the number of panel members is heavily biased as to put the interviewee under pressure, this may not be possible.

5.3.2 Application Assessments

Head of Service: Resources and Venues will arrange the assessment in line with the panel membership listed in Appendix 3.

For more senior positions Head of Service: Resources and Venues will arrange that all members of the proposed interview panel be in attendance. Ideally the short list should be no more than 6 candidates per day for interview, or more if over 2 days.

The following documents will be made available to assessment panel members prior to any meeting:

- ❖ Copies of all applications received
- ❖ An assessment form for each application (*selection criteria must be agreed in advance*)

Assessment forms must be completed fully before being returned to Head of Service: Resources and Venues.

To provide evidence/feedback on why an application was unsuccessful, details of unsuccessful candidates will be retained for a period of 6 months from assessment.

6. THE INTERVIEW

6.1 Invitations to Interview

Head of Service: Resources and Venues will contact candidates selected for interview as soon as possible after a decision has been reached. In instances of short timescales, it may be necessary to contact initially by telephone/email and send a confirmation letter.

Details of the interviews time, location, presentation requirements (if applicable) and a request to bring documentation to prove the applicants right to work in the UK should be included.

6.2 Pre-interview Arrangements

6.2.1 Interview Location

A suitable room will be booked; this should provide sufficient space and as little disturbance as possible. Projectors / flip chart etc will be made available.

6.2.2 Agreement on Panel Roles

The line manager will contact other panel members and agree roles

6.2.3 Interview Papers

Head of Service: Resources and Venues will arrange for the following documents to be made available to interview panel members at least 2 days before interviews are scheduled;

- ❖ Interview timetable (*Appendix 2* provides an example)
- ❖ Copies of application forms for all interviewees
- ❖ Assessment forms for each application (*selection criteria must be agreed in advance*)
- ❖ Interview criteria and guidance notes (*Appendix 3*)

6.3 Interviews

Head of Service: Resources and Venues will ensure that the preparation steps detailed in Section 5.2 have been completed. They will also ensure adequate signing to the interview reception point and the possible need for a 'greeter'.

6.3.1 Format of interview

The following points should be considered when interviewing;

6.3.1.1 Aims

- To **Assess:** skills, aptitudes, ability, suitability, insight into candidates' personalities
- To **Confirm:** qualifications and technical abilities

The interview criteria (*Appendix 4*) can be used as a reference to assist in identifying areas to be explored for evidence of ability and suitability.

6.3.1.2 Questioning

Head of Service: Resources and Venues will agree some appropriate questions in advance and include them on assessment paperwork. Other questions may be asked but care should be taken to avoid discriminatory questioning (*see Appendix 4*).

Candidates should be given 5 minutes to ask questions to the panel. Information specific to the employment terms will be provided with the assessment paperwork.

6.3.1.1 General good practice

- An interview should not be seen as an interrogation session it is essentially a controlled conversation to enable an exchange of information
- Encourage the candidate to respond to the questions and to expand on answers where appropriate
- Give the candidate time to think about their replies; do not rush in with supplementary questions when there is a pause in the answer

- Probe answers to important questions where necessary (within time constraints)
- Listen carefully to answers. Make notes only to questions from others on the panel. Notes are needed so that you have something to refer to when assessing the interview
- Ask only questions to establish the information necessary to meet the objectives of the interview; avoid discriminatory questions (see Appendix 4)
- Maintain control and do not allow candidates to take over or ramble

6.3.1.4 Interview closure

Guidance on areas to cover at the end of the interview will be provided with assessment paperwork; it will include employment terms (if not already covered), expected decision date, preferred method of contact (if successful)

6.3.1.5 Interview Assessment

- All interviewers should produce evidence to record how a candidate was selected; this process is managed through the completion of Interview Assessment Forms.
- Assessment forms must be completed fully before being returned to Head of Service: Resources and Venues.
- To provide evidence/feedback on why an application was unsuccessful, details of unsuccessful candidates will be retained for a period of 6 months from assessment.

7. INTERVIEW OUTCOME

Having interviewed all candidates, the panel should agree on which candidate to offer the position to. If appropriate it may be beneficial to agree a “reserve” candidate, should the first choice decline the offer. On reaching a decision the panel lead member/line manager should contact the Head of Service: Resources and Venues to agree starting salary, start date etc.

7.1 Candidate notification

The line manager will contact the successful candidate and make a verbal job offer.

If accepted this should be noted in writing, by recording the date, time and outcome of the offer discussion.

If declined, the panel should re-convene to agree the follow-up actions.

The unsuccessful candidates should

a) be notified following the successful candidate accepting the job offer

or

b) if applicable, be notified of a delay in the decision

7.2 Acceptance of verbal offer

Following acceptance of a verbal offer of employment Head of Service: Resources and Venues will carry out all necessary requirements detailed on the Recruitment Checklist prior to the candidate joining the Council.

8. THE OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT

Following the acceptance of the verbal offer an Offer Clearance letter will be issued detailing, and requesting acceptance of, the terms of the employment namely;

- 1) Proof of right to work in the UK
- 2) Satisfactory references (x2)
- 3) Satisfactory medical clearance
- 4) Satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Services Certificate (*to be obtained within 3 months of acceptance*)
- 5) Successful completion of a probationary period (*3 or 6 months, dependant on role*)

Wherever possible Head of Service: Resources and Venues should be in receipt of documents 1-3 weeks before any employment commences. In certain cases, which must be agreed with the Head of Service: Resources and Venues in advance, the employee may begin work with the minimum requirement of documentation having been obtained; namely;

- ✓ Acceptance of the offer terms
- ✓ Evidence of the individual’s right to work

Under no circumstances should anyone begin employment until proof of their right to work in the UK has been obtained

Appendices

Appendix 1	Recruitment Authorisation Form
Appendix 2	Recruitment Checklist
Appendix 3	Assessment Panel Membership Guidelines
Appendix 4	Interview Criteria and Guidance Notes

Lance Allan – Town Clerk & Proper Officer

Signed

Dated

Approved at the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee on 8th January 2019. This procedure will be amended and reviewed as and when the size and nature of the council changes or when new legislation is introduced. Otherwise date of next review is January 2023.

Appendix I

Trowbridge Town Council Recruitment Authorisation Form



Name of Recruiting Manager		
Vacant Position		
Department		
Salary Scale	TBC by HOS Resources and Venues	
Contract Type (please circle)	Permanent	Fixed Term
If Fixed Term, please state length		
Number of Hours per week		
Internal / External		
Commencement Date		
Where would you like the vacancy advertised?		
Closing Date (to be agreed with HR)		
Interview Date (to be agreed with HR)		

Signed by Recruiting Manager	
Signed by Head of Department	
Signed by Town Clerk	
Signed by Leader of the Council	

Appendix 2

Recruitment Checklist

VACANCY:		
ACTION REQUIRED:	ACTION REQUIRED BY:	ACTION DATE:
Recruiting Manager and HOS: Resources and Venues discuss vacancy required.	Town Clerk / Head of Service: Resources and Venues	
The Recruitment Authorisation Form (<i>Appendix 1</i>) should be completed by the recruiting manager as the first rule of recruitment and provided to the Head of Resources.	Town Clerk/ Head of Service: Resources and Venues/ Recruiting Manager	
Town Clerk/ Head of Service: Resources and Venues to confirm Salary Scale	Town Clerk/ Head of Service: Resources and Venues/ Line Manager	
Line Manager to agree Job Description and specification with Head of Service / HR Officer	Head of Service: Resources and Venues	
Prepare vacancy advertisement as per the Line Managers wishes. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internally (Free) - TTC website (Free) - Job Centre (Free) - Wiltshire Council website (Price TBC) - Press (£Various) 	HR Officer	
Book Room/s for interviews	HR Officer	
Prepare application assessment form and attach to each application	HR Officer	
Provide copies of application and assessment forms to agreed assessor (<i>Ensure approved by recruiting line manager if different</i>)	HR Officer	
Send invitation to interview letters/emails (may choose to telephone first) Request proof of right to work (<i>provide detailed list of suitable documents</i>)	HR Officer	
Give copy of timetable, applications, questions/assessment forms and any other relevant papers to each interviewer	HR Officer	
Give copy of timetable & attendees names to Reception on day before interviews (<i>if applicable</i>)	HR Officer	
Interview candidates & agree outcome. Obtain proof of eligibility to work in the UK.	Interview Panel	
Ring successful candidate with verbal offer	Line Manager	
Send to referees: Reference Letter, Reference Form and prepaid envelope	HR Officer	
Send successful candidate: Offer letter, 2 x Statement of Particulars, pre-employment medical questionnaire, DBS self-certification and medical questionnaire Copy letter to Payroll.	HR Officer / Head of Service: Resources and Venues	
Send reject letters to those candidates who attended interview but were not successful	HR Officer	
Check medical questionnaire when returned	Head of Service: Resources and Venues / HR Officer	
Check references when returned	Head of Service: Resources and Venues / HR Officer	
Prepare Induction Programme	HR Officer	
Record probationary review due date. Set reminds to notify line manager / Head of Service: Resources and Venues of due dates (2 weeks in advance)	HR Officer	
Make up Individuals Personal file	HR Officer	
When returned place signed Statement & Appendices on individuals personal file	HR Officer	

Recruitment Procedure

On joining, update staff organisational chart and ensure the TTC contacts is updated	HR Officer	
Archive paperwork relating to the overall recruitment in vacancy's recruitment folder – file in personnel filing cabinet	HR Officer	

Appendix 3

**Assessment Panel Membership Guidelines
Example Interview Timetable / Format**

Panel Membership

Panel membership should be the same whether the post is for a part time or full time position.

Vacancy Description	Assessment panel (recommended)	Interview panel (recommended)
Temporary / Agency	Line manager & 1 staff member	Line manager, 1 staff member or HR Officer *
Secretarial / Admin / Clerical	Line Manager & Head of Service: Resources and Venues	Line Manager, Head of Service: Resources and Venues & HR Officer *
Supervisor / Officer / Junior Manager	Line Manager & Head of Service: Resources and Venues	Line Manager, 1 Councillor & HR Officer *
Manager	Line manager or Head of Service: Resources and Venues & 1 Councillor	Line Manager / Head of Service: Resources and Venues, & HR Officer *
Senior Manager (OMT Member)	Town Clerk, Head of Service: Resources and Venues & 1 Councillor	Town Clerk, Head of Service: Resources and Venues & 1 Councillor
Town Clerk	Town Clerk & up to 3 Councillors	Town Clerk & up to 3 Councillors

* Wherever possible HR Officer should attend to act as scribe. However, this may not be possible if the number of panel members is heavily biased and may put the interviewee under pressure.

Interviews

A full timetable for the day(s) should allow for;

- preparation of meeting room
- final 'run through' of interview process
- candidates interview timings, based on the importance of the post
- sufficient time between interviews for interview review of notes and refreshments
- sufficient time for post interview analysis

Appendix 4**Interview Criteria & Guidance Notes****EXAMPLES OF JOB CENTRED CRITERIA**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managerial experience & skills • Work experience • Numeracy, literacy • Computer skills • Maintaining standards • Controlling a budget • Recruiting and training, mainly temporary staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys, customer feedback, statistics • Working with / for local authorities and others to maximise scarce resources • Dual use of facilities • Partnership arrangements • Working with other agencies, Health Authority, Police, and Doctors etc. • Outreach work • Health & Safety at Work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with schools, clubs, community and youth centres and linking them • Promoting the use of sporting, recreational and community resources • Dealing with the Sports Council and other grant giving bodies • Organisation and promotion of courses and events • Experience of Museum work
--	---	--

EXAMPLES OF PERSON CENTRED CRITERIA

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-starter • Fresh ideas • Enthusiastic • Commitment • Well organised • Sensible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track record • Diplomatic • Confidence • Working under pressure • Working with others and for others • Lively & dynamic personality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of humour • Ability to communicate with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Children of mixed ages ➢ Adults ➢ Elderly ➢ Learning difficulties
---	--	--

QUESTIONING TECHNIQUES**Interviewers should consider asking questions centred on:**

- ❖ Establishing why candidates chose this type of work as a career and why they want the job
- ❖ Establishing the candidates' experience of working successfully under pressure, at weekends and in evenings etc. as the job may require, together with the ability to work as part of a small team.

Questions also need to establish the candidates' long-term career goals and how they see this job fits into their career development.

OPEN Questions

Open questions are designed to open the candidate up; the following are good examples.

- ☺ "Give me an example of a time when you led a team."
- ☺ "Tell me about a time when you had to deal with a demanding customer."
- ☺ "Why did you leave your last job?"

The interview should start with open questions to encourage the candidate to talk. Listen carefully to the candidate's responses and probe as necessary

PROBING Questions

It is rare that candidates give all the required information from the first question. Probing is the key to successful interviews; questions should be short, simple and in the past tense e.g.

- ☺ What exactly did you do? ☺ Can you give me an example?
- ☺ What feedback did you receive? ☺ How would you do it differently if you did it again?

"BANNED" Questions

It is illegal for interviewers to ask any personal and/or discriminatory questions.

1) Personal questions

- ☹ How old are you? ☹ What are your childcare arrangements? ☹ Are you married?
- ☹ Are you a member of a trade union? ☹ What political party do you support?

2) Discriminatory questions to avoid (specific to age)

- ☹ asking an older applicant how he or she would feel about reporting to a younger supervisor
- ☹ asking a younger applicant how he or she would feel about supervising a group of older people
- ☹ asking a younger person who has applied for a management post if he or she feels mature enough to cope with a senior appointment
- ☹ asking older candidates for a physically demanding job whether they think they are "still fit enough" to cope with physical work
- ☹ suggesting to an older candidate that he or she might have difficulty adapting to change or learning a new computer system
- ☹ asking candidates how much experience they have in a specific area (*much better to re-word the question to "tell us about the experience you have in..."*)
- ☹ asking candidates how they think they will fit in with a team of younger or older people (*which implies that the interviewer thinks that age differences are likely to be a problem*)
- ☹ asking a candidate to disclose in detail what he or she likes to do in his or her spare time as this may result in the disclosure of a sport or activity (*for example, membership of an "over-40s club"*) that would create a focus on the candidate's age. (*Better to invite candidates to disclose information about any of their out-of-work activities that they think have some relevance to their suitability for the job*)