

To: Councillor Lovelock (Chair);
Councillors Gavin, Page, Skeats and Terry.

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8 July 2015

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NOTICE OF MEETING - PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - 16 JULY 2015

A meeting of the Personnel Committee will be held on **Thursday 16 July 2015 at 6.30pm** in **Committee Room 1**, Civic Offices, Reading.

AGENDA

	ACTION	WARDS AFFECTED	PAGE NO
1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST			
2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5 MARCH 2015	INFORMATION	BOROUGHWIDE	1
3. PROCEEDINGS OF THE LOCAL JOINT FORUM HELD ON 25 JUNE 2015	INFORMATION	BOROUGHWIDE	5
4. DISABILITY IN EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME - GENERAL UPDATE & BUSINESS DISABILITY FORUM	DECISION	BOROUGHWIDE	9
5. EQUALITY AUDIT 2014-15	INFORMATION	BOROUGHWIDE	14
6. AMENDMENTS TO RECRUITMENT AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS GUIDE	DECISION	BOROUGHWIDE	25

At this point, the following motion will be moved by the Chair:

“That, pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following items on the agenda, as

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it is likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of that Act”

7.	EARLY RETIREMENTS AND REDUNDANCIES	DECISION	BOROUGHWIDE	45
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PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MINUTES -5 MARCH 2015

Present: Councillor Lovelock (Chair);
Councillors Page and Terry.

Also Present: W King, J Littlefair (for items 27 to 30), K Magee (for items 27 to 30), I Wardle and R Woodford.

Apologies: Councillor Gavin and Skeats.

RESOLVED ITEMS

27. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

28. PROCEEDINGS OF THE LOCAL JOINT FORUM

The Managing Director submitted the proceedings of the Local Joint Forum meeting held on 3 February 2015.

Resolved - That the proceedings of the Local Joint Forum meeting be received.

29. PAY POLICY 2015/2016

The Interim HR/Payroll Services Manager submitted a report that sought input from the Committee on the development of the 2015/16 Pay Policy and guidance on the next steps that would need to be completed prior to submission to the 24 March 2015 meeting of Council. A copy of the Pay Policy Statement 2015/16 was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that local authorities were required under section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 to prepare a Pay Policy Statement. The Statement had to articulate the Council's policy towards the pay of the workforce, particularly senior staff and the lowest paid employees. The Council had published its first Pay Policy Statement in April 2012; subsequently the Statement had been amended in a number of respects.

The report explained that each local authority was an individual employer in its own right and had the autonomy to make decisions on pay that were appropriate to local circumstances and which delivered value for money for local taxpayers. The provisions of the Localism Act did not seek to change this or to determine what decisions on pay should be taken but they did require individual employing authorities to be more open in their own policies in relation to pay and how decisions were made in this regard. Section 40 of the Act required authorities, in developing their Pay Policy Statement, to have regard to any guidance that had been published by the Secretary of State. This included Communities and Local Government guidance on Openness and Accountability in Local Pay and the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency (as amended).

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The Government had taken steps to increase transparency on the pay and reward of public sector employees and the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency had asked Councils to consider the way they released data on senior salaries. In addition, in March 2011 the Hutton Review of Fair Pay had been published which made several recommendations for promoting pay fairness in the public sector by tackling disparities between the lowest and highest paid in the public sector.

The report explained that the provisions contained in the Act had brought together the need for increasing accountability, transparency and fairness in the setting of pay which had culminated in the formation of the Council's Pay Statement, which outlined the pay and reward of the most senior employees set within the context of the pay of the wider workforce. The Act set out the specific elements which the Pay Policy Statement had to include as a minimum and required that in addition to the determination of senior salaries authorities had to make clear what approach was taken to awarding other elements of pay. The Act required that authorities included in their Pay Policy Statements their approach to the publication of and access to information relating to the remuneration of Chief Officers. The Act required that the Pay Policy Statement was produced annually and was considered in full by the Council and that the Council's approach to pay, as set out in the Statement, was accessible for Council Tax payers for them to take an informed view of whether local decisions on all aspects of remuneration were fair.

Finally, the report stated that the Hutton Report and The Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency also suggested that the organisation's pay multiple was published.

Resolved - That the report be noted and endorsed for submission to Council on 24 March 2015.

30. INTRODUCTION OF CHANGES TO FAMILY FRIENDLY LEGISLATION 2014/15

The Interim HR/Payroll Services Manager submitted a report that set out a new Shared Parental Leave Policy following changes in legislation. A draft copy of the Shared Parental Leave Policy was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that Shared Parental Leave (SPL) was a new legal entitlement for parents (including surrogate parents) of babies due, or children placed for adoption on or after 5 April 2015. SPL replaced additional paternity leave and pay. Parents had remained entitled to take maternity, paternity and adoption leave and shared parental leave was also available to surrogate parents.

The report contained an outline of the new legislation, the key options for the Council to consider in implementing the legislation and a draft shared parental leave policy.

Resolved -

- (1) That the changes to parental employment rights, as set out in the report, be noted;**

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- (2) That the draft Policy for Shared Parental Leave be endorsed and the amendments to other relevant HR policies, as set out in the report, be carried out as necessary;
- (3) That the bringing forward of a system to implement the Policy in March 2015 by the HR/Payroll Service be noted;
- (4) That the Policy be put into effect subject to further consultation with CMT, JTUC and other stakeholders, as necessary;
- (5) That the operation of the Policy and the systems that underpin it be reviewed in 12 months.

31. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved -

That pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following item, as it was likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

32. EARLY RETIREMENTS AND REDUNDANCIES (INCLUDING VOLUNTARY RELEASE SCHEME APPLICATIONS)

The HR and Payroll Services Manager, the Monitoring Officer and the Head of Finance submitted a joint report, which set out five requests for dismissal on the grounds of redundancy, four requests for early retirement on the grounds of redundancy, one request for retirement on the grounds of efficiency and one request for dismissal on the ground of redundancy (expiry of a fixed term contract).

Proposals, together with the financial implications were set out in a schedule appended to the report on the following basis:

- Financial cases were given which represented the highest cost to the Council. In most cases this included discretionary added years on pension (where payable), as this represented a direct and ongoing cost to the Council. This was in accordance with the Council's current practice of considering redundancy and retirement terms up to the maximum limit of discretion, where applicable. The Committee was asked to approve individual proposals subject to a maximum ceiling on the exercise of discretion;
- Financial implications were costed on the basis of the estimated figures, which were subject to final confirmation. The figures might be affected by changes to final salary, pensionable service, age or date of leaving. The Committee was asked to approve the proposals on the basis of the estimated figures, subject to any individual proposal being brought back to Committee if the confirmed costs were more than 10% in excess of those reported;

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- The costs of early retirement on the grounds of ill health were met by the Local Government Pension Scheme or the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

The report sought approval for the payment of a compensation package in the case of proposed termination of employment or early retirement on grounds of redundancy, efficiency of the service or ill health subject to the conclusion of all outstanding matters in each case, including ongoing consultation with employees and their representatives, and efforts to secure alternative employment, where appropriate.

Resolved -

- (1) That the early retirement on the grounds of redundancy of employees C, E, G and H, the early retirement on the grounds of efficiency of employee F, the dismissal on grounds of redundancy of employees A, B, D and I and the dismissal on grounds of redundancy (expiry of fixed term contract) of employee J be approved on the terms set out in the schedules appended to the report subject to the conclusion of all outstanding matters in each case, including ongoing consultation with the employees and their representatives and efforts to secure alternative employment, where appropriate;
- (2) That the proposals set out in (1) and (2) above be approved on the basis of the financial implications set out in the report, and that authority to conclude the proposal be delegated to the Head of Finance, Monitoring Officer and HR and Payroll Services Manager (acting jointly) within that framework, and subject to the maximum ceiling identified for the proposal.
- (3) That the current terms for agreeing compensation packages in specific cases of early retirement or termination of employment on the grounds of redundancy or efficiency be confirmed.

(Exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2).

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 6.45 pm).

PROCEEDINGS OF THE LOCAL JOINT FORUM - 25 JUNE 2015

Present:

Councillors Livingston (for Cllr Page), Lovelock and Steele	
Ms J Boyd	National Union of Teachers (NUT)
Mr R Hall	Unison
Mr R Kiff	Unison
Mr J Magee	Unite
Mr P Narancic	Unison
Mr W King	Interim HR/Payroll Services Manager
Mr R Morris	HR Partner
Ms S Poole	Committee Services

Apologies:

Councillors Gavin and Page

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Kieran Magee was elected to serve as Chair of the Forum for the Municipal Year 2015/2016.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

Councillor Lovelock had been appointed to serve as Vice Chair at the Annual General Meeting of the Council on 27 May 2015 (Minute 11 refers).

3. PROCEEDINGS OF THE LOCAL JOINT FORUM MEETING HELD ON 3 FEBRUARY 2015

The Proceedings of the Local Joint Forum meeting held on 3 February 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Further to Minute 3, Joan Boyd reported that there had been revised guidelines from the Department for Education (DfE) that stated that it was not necessary to ask employees to complete a form to declare anything that could make them 'disqualified by association' from working with children and suggested that there were other, less intrusive ways to obtain this information.

AGREED: That methods of obtaining disclosure information be discussed with Kirsty Bennett.

4. DISABILITY IN EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME - GENERAL UPDATE AND BUSINESS DISABILITY FORUM

Warren King, Interim HR/Payroll Services Manager, submitted a report updating the Forum on the work that was being undertaken to review and update the Council's policies, procedures and practical support to employees and prospective employees with a disability. This work was being undertaken by a working group led by Roger Morris and with the active support and engagement of members of the JTUC (Joint Trade Union Committee). The group had agreed a series of areas for development and the report outlined the planned work and progress against each area.

The report stated that in addition to the work of the employment group, the Council's recruitment and selection procedures (and related admin processes) had been amended to ensure that managers who were recruiting to posts established at the outset the minimum

requirements of the post prior to advertisement. This underpinned the Council's '2 Tick' commitment to ensuring that all candidates with a disability were interviewed if they met the minimum requirements.

Business Disability Forum

The report stated that the Business Disability Forum (BDF) was a not-for-profit member organisation that made it easier and more rewarding to work with and employ disabled people. BDF sought to remove the barriers between employers and disabled people and provided members with pragmatic support by sharing expertise and offering advice and training.

The report explained that BDF had also produced a 'Disability Standard' which provided organisations with examples, based on 10 criteria, of what 'Good' looked like across business functions including recruitment and retention, communications and facilities management.

The report outlined the benefits of the Council becoming a member of the BDF, including the opportunity of support to undertake a self-assessment and benchmark the Council's policies and procedures against the Disability Standard as well as the on-line and telephone support available from their Information and Advice Service.

It was agreed that this work would have to link with, and complement, the opportunities for young disabled people that the Council had already committed to do through City Deal and Project Search.

AGREED: That the report and the proposal to join the Business Disability Forum be noted.

5. EQUALITY AUDIT 2014/15

Warren King, Interim HR/Payroll Services Manager, submitted a report to provide the Forum with a statistical summary of the equal opportunities monitoring under the Council's Equality Monitoring Framework for the financial year 2014/15. The tables were attached to the report at Appendix 1.

He explained that the report was a component of the Council's Equal Opportunity and Fair Treatment Policy and would be presented annually in the form set out in the Equality Monitoring Framework and provided background data that would assist and inform the work of the Forum.

The report stated that the framework contained key employment profiles which the Council had to measure by law and also included other profile data based on previous national performance indicators (PIs) outturns where relevant. In addition, data from the report would assist each directorate in setting its own targets based on their clients, customers or service users.

The report explained that the agreed framework reporting heads were:

- All Council Staff by directorate, gender, ethnic origin and disability;
- All Council Staff by gender, ethnic origin and disability across salary bands;

PROCEEDINGS OF THE LOCAL JOINT FORUM - 25 JUNE 2015

- Proportion of female, BME and disabled job applicants;
- Female, BME and disabled applicants as a proportion of their relative cohorts, who progress to through shortlisting to appointment compared with male, white and non-disabled applicants;
- Proportion of female, BME and disabled employees accessing Council training by directorate, training type, compared to male, white and non-disabled employees;
- Proportion of female, BME and disabled employees involved in Council procedures, compared to male, white and non-disabled employees;
- Staff turnover data analysed by gender and ethnicity.

The statistical summary for each of these areas was detailed in Appendix 1 and the report highlighted the following points:

- The proportion of women employed by the Council had remained static at 78.7%, with 92% in schools but only 50.1% in the Directorate of Environment and Neighbourhood Services (DENS);
- The proportion of black and minority ethnic (BME) staff had increased from 13.7% to 14.7%, but this was in comparison to a 23% BME economically active population within the Borough;
- The proportion of employees who had declared a disability had increased from 1.8% to 2.6% but this was in comparison to a 6% economically active population within the Borough;
- In 2014/15 there had been 5774 applications for 396 appointments, compared with 4420 applications for 306 appointments in 2013/14. Of the applications in 2014/15, 60% were from women, 27% from BME applicants and 4% from people with a declared disability.

The tables also showed comparisons of gender, ethnicity and disability across salary bands and this indicated that there were at least 55% female employees in all salary bands except for band 1 (which consisted mainly of apprentices). The overall number of employees who had declared a disability was relatively even across most of the bands with the exception of band 10. The level of BME employees in the higher earnings bands had remained static since 2011 and with only 5% in the highest band, which was lower than the proportion of BME employees in the Council as a whole.

Joan Boyd added that the NUT had reported that there was some evidence that BME employees and part-time employees (who were predominantly women) were less likely to progress under the new performance related pay in schools.

AGREED:

- (1) That the report be noted:

- (2) That equality information be collected in relation to performance related pay in schools;
- (3) That equality information be benchmarked against other councils and the results reported to a future meeting of the Forum.

6. AMENDMENTS TO RECRUITMENT AND PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS GUIDE

Warren King, Interim HR/Payroll Services Manager, submitted a report to update the Forum on amendments that had been made to the Recruitment and Pre-Employment Checks Guide - Posts with Access to Children and Vulnerable Adults, to bring it into line with legal requirements and best practice within the Council. A copy of the revised Guide was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report stated that the Council's recruitment policy had been updated in 2007 following guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) on safer recruitment practices in schools and education settings. The principles contained within that guidance were adopted by the Council for recruitment across the wider range of posts with access to vulnerable groups. The policy had now being revised to address the application of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009, and the inclusion of specific handling of references in Children's Services.

The report explained that the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations required that anyone working in a childcare setting was asked to declare if they were disqualified from such work through having an order or other restriction against them in relation to childcare, having committed certain offences, and/or living with another person in their household to whom such a disqualification applied ('by association'). It was noted that since these new regulations had been applied, one member of staff had successfully applied for a waiver, three had been redeployed and one had resigned.

The other new procedure that had been added to the policy was that recruiting managers in Children's Services were required to confirm that references supplied for candidates were double checked with the referee to ensure they were genuine.

In conclusion the report stated that the updated policy set out a recruitment procedure that met guidance from the DfE to support safer recruitment and would satisfy the expectations of external inspection bodies such as Ofsted.

AGREED: That the report be noted.

(The meeting opened at 5.00 pm and closed at 5.30 pm).

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

TO:	PERSONNEL COMMITTEE		
DATE:	16 JULY 2015	AGENDA ITEM:	4
TITLE:	DISABILITY IN EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME - GENERAL UPDATE & BUSINESS DISABILITY FORUM		
LEAD MEMBER	CLLR LOVELOCK	PERSONNEL COMMITTEE CHAIR	
SERVICE:	CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
AUTHOR:	ROGER MORRIS	TEL:	72348/937 2348
JOB TITLE:	HR PARTNER	E-MAIL:	roger.morris@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Personnel Committee on the progress of this review.
- 1.2 To note the proposal for joining the Business Disability Forum.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

That you note and endorse the recommendation in this report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 LJF and Personnel Committee have endorsed a programme of reviewing and updating our policies, procedures and practical support to employees and prospective employees with a disability. This work is being undertaken by a working group led by an HR Partner (Roger Morris) and has the active support and engagement of members of the JTUC, in particular Rob Ketley (now Joan Boyd) and Patrick Kenny (Now Bob Hall).
- 3.2 The group has developed a series of work 'heads' as set out below and progress / planned work is highlighted in the RH column:

AGREED WORK AREAS	PROGRESS / PLANS
Developing work placement opportunities (and publicising successes) so that the Council is seen as visibly committed to its objectives.	Work in partnership with neighbouring health employer to understand key success criteria. Currently working with Royal Berkshire NHS Trust and Project SEARCH as previously reported and highlighted at a recent Team Talk session.

Revitalising the Council's disability awareness training programme to increase understanding, skills and awareness.	New training course 'Supporting staff with disabilities' developed and launched in March 2014. 2 courses have been run to date. 3 rd course cancelled due to small numbers of managers who registered. Need to relaunch training.
Developing further guidance on 'reasonable adjustments'	Included in a new Guide & FAQ for Managers and staff.
Encouraging existing staff to declare that they have a disability.	Re-declarations underway linked to roll out of iTrent employee self service
An overhaul of the Council's guidance / support to managers on the recruitment of staff with a disability.	Completed.
Completing and promoting the Council's 'Two Tick' accreditation.	Completed.
Giving staff with a disability a 'voice' through reactivating a focus group to consult and listen to the collective needs and opinions of disabled staff.	Initial Forum met on 13 th August 2014.
Working with individual staff who have a disability to discover more about their direct experience of recruitment and assimilation into the Council's workforce.	Staff with a disability who were employed by the Council within the last 12 months have been invited to a meeting to discuss their experiences. Need to write to recent appointments.
Work in partnership with a professional employment organisation to obtain examples of good practice in the private and public sector - perhaps hosting a seminar or conference to share ideas and experiences.	Approaches to Randstad Worker Support Group & BT have been unsuccessful due to the significant costs involved. Suggested alternative approach to become a member of the British Disability Forum (see 4 below).
Ensuring that the new Civic Offices reflects the needs of disabled people and promoting its accessibility.	Completed.

3.3 Separate to the work of the employment Group, the Council's recruitment and selection procedures (and related admin processes) have been amended to ensure that managers who are recruiting to posts establish at the outset the minimum requirements of the post prior to advertisement. This will underpin the Council's '2 Tick' commitment to ensuring that all candidates with a disability are interviewed if they meet the minimum requirements. It will also assist to ensure that appropriate consideration is given to redeployees who have been affected by change programmes and who meet the minimum requirement for the post.

4. BUSINESS DISABILITY FORUM

4.1 Business Disability Forum (BDF) is a not-for-profit member organisation that makes it easier and more rewarding to work with and employ disabled people.

BDF seeks to remove the barriers between employers and disabled people. BDF provides members with pragmatic support by sharing expertise, advice and providing training and networking opportunities.

4.2 Current BDF members include Bank of America Merrill Lynch, Barclays Plc, BBC, BT, Cabinet Office, Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust, Channel 4, Charity Commission, Department for Work and Pensions, Department of Energy & Climate Change, Environment Agency, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, Leicestershire Police, Ofsted, Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust and Sainsbury's.

4.3 All BDF Members and Partners have access to toolkits, factsheets, case studies, videos and webinars to help to deliver a disability-smart business. BDF have produced a 'Disability Standard' which provides organisations with examples of what 'Good' looks like across business functions including recruitment and retention, communications and facilities management.

4.4 Disability Standard

The Disability Standard is an online management tool developed by the BDF to help business to measure and improve on performance for disabled customers, clients or service users, employees and stakeholders. It's the best way of checking how disability-smart your organisation is, right across the Council. To take part in the Disability Standard you need to be a Member of the BDF.

The Disability Standard is based on 10 criteria which need to be considered in order to meet the needs of disabled people as customers, employees and stakeholders.

- a) Commitment - promoting a commitment to best practice on disability internally and externally.
- b) Know-how - equipping our employees so that they are confident interacting with disabled people, knowing what to do and how to do it.
- c) Adjustments -anticipating the needs of disabled people together with a robust process for making any adjustments which might be needed by individuals.
- d) Recruitment - attracting and recruiting disabled people, which gives access to the widest talent pool at every level.
- e) Retention - valuing all our employees, including those who are disabled or who become disabled, and a commitment to their retention and development.
- f) Products and services - we value our disabled customers, clients and service users and address their needs when developing and delivering our products and services.

- g) Suppliers and partners - we expect our suppliers and corporate partners to reflect and enable us to meet our commitment to disability best practice.
- h) Communication - when we communicate with disabled people we are as inclusive as possible and whenever necessary we make adjustments for individuals.
- i) Premises - our premises are accessible to people with disabilities and whenever necessary we make adjustments for individuals.
- j) Information and communication technology (ICT) - our ICT is accessible and usable by disabled people and we also make adjustments for individuals.

4.5 Benefits of becoming a member of the BDF:

- ✓ Access to their Information & Advice Service, via email and telephone: answering our questions.
- ✓ An introductory pack (x28 publications) of their line manager guides, briefing papers and awareness guides, and discounted access to all content resources.
- ✓ A wide ranging programme of training and events: some free, some paid-for, including workshops, masterclasses and webinars.
- ✓ Online access to their Disability Standard self-assessment management tool.
- ✓ A relationship manager to help us make full use of your Business Disability Forum membership.
- ✓ Corporate policy review (up to 3 in a year, then £600 each); ensuring best practice on disability as it affects the Council is covered... this could be an overall corporate policy, a policy covering a specific area of the Council, or even a customer feedback questionnaire.
- ✓ Monthly telephone legal surgeries with their legal director.
- ✓ Monthly telephone recruitment surgeries with their recruitment expert.
- ✓ Monthly communications such as their Newsletter, Legal Update and Technology Taskforce) newsletter.
- ✓ Access to e-Check, their web accessibility/usability service.
- ✓ Networking: 1-2-1 connections, events, and via their social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, etc.).
- ✓ Use of their logo on our job adverts, company websites and intranets.
- ✓ Branding and sponsorship opportunities across their websites, communication channels, publications and social media.
- ✓ Signposting to other specialist services, including site audits, e-learning, web development, consumer research and mystery shopping.

4.6 There are a number of other services and products that can be provided for a fee. These include an evaluation of the Disability Standard, consultative advice, specialist recruitment surgeries, recruitment audits, tailored training and masterclasses and a content licence for their toolkits so that we can distribute them internally.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 It has previously been agreed that that the Council will work in partnership with a professional employment organisation to obtain examples of good practice in the private and public sector.
- 5.2 Initial discussions to benchmark the Council's policies & procedures with Randstad and BT have resulted in proposals costing £21,500 and £15,000 respectively.
- 5.3 That Reading Borough Council becomes a Member of the BDF allowing us to undertake a self-assessment and benchmark the Council's policies and procedures against what 'Good' looks like across functions including recruitment and retention, communications and facilities management.
- 5.4 That the Council approves the funding for BDF annual membership which is currently £3,300 per year plus VAT.
- 5.5 The Council will receive support in undertaking this benchmarking exercise from the BDF as well as continued on-line and telephone support from their Information & Advice Service.
- 5.6 Membership of the BDF will be a significantly cheaper option (See 8.1) than requesting an external organisation to benchmark our services and the Council can review the success of BDF membership at the end of the initial year's membership.
- 5.7 Further to discussions at CMT on 16 June, that an action plan be developed to increase the number of employees with disabilities at the Council.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Included in the report, where applicable.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 BDF membership costs £3,300 per year plus VAT and a one off joining fee of £750.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None.

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

TO:	PERSONNEL COMMITTEE		
DATE:	16 JULY 2015		5
TITLE:	EQUALITY AUDIT 2014/15		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	CLLR LOVELOCK	PORTFOLIO:	
SERVICE:	HR	WARDS:	BOROUGH WIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	ROGER MORRIS	TEL:	Ext: 72348
JOB TITLE:	HR PARTNER	E-MAIL:	Roger.morris@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1. To present a statistical summary of equal opportunities monitoring under the Council's Equality Monitoring Framework for the financial year 2014 / 15.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1. That you note the report.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1. The report is a component of the Council's Equal Opportunity and Fair Treatment Policy. This report is presented annually to provide background data that will assist and inform the work of the Committee. This data is intended to provide an equalities context and focus for ongoing discussions with internal and external stakeholders.
- 3.2. The report takes the form set out in the Equality Monitoring Framework endorsed by the Local Joint Forum, the Personnel Committee and the (then) Black Communities Forum in September 2004.
- 3.3. The framework contains key employment profiles which the Council has to measure by law and also includes other profile data based on previous national performance indicator (PIs) outturns where relevant.
- 3.4. In addition, each directorate is expected to set its own targets based on its clients, customers or users of its services and the data from this report is provided to assist the process of target setting.
- 3.5. The agreed framework reporting heads are:
 - All Council Staff by directorate, gender, ethnic origin and disability
 - All Council Staff by gender, ethnic origin and disability across salary bands
 - Proportion of female, BME and disabled job applicants.

- Female, BME and disabled applicants as a proportion of their relative cohorts, who progress to through shortlisting to appointment compared with male, white and non-disabled applicants
 - Proportion of female, BME and disabled employees accessing Council training by directorate, training type, compared to male, white and non-disabled employees
 - Proportion of female, BME and disabled employees involved in Council procedures, compared to male, white and non-disabled employees
 - Staff turnover data analysed by gender and ethnicity.
 - An action plan is to be created to increase the number of employees with disabilities and those from minority ethnic groups.
- 3.6. Data gathered, with the exception of training information, is based on the previous Council structures i.e. Directorate of Environment & Neighbourhood Services (DENS), Directorate of Adult & Children's Services (DEACS), Corporate Support Services (CSS) and Schools.
- 3.7. It has previously been agreed that the profile data would include profile information based on 'protected characteristics' as defined by the 2010 Equality Act - Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.
- 3.8. Self Service was fully launched to all non-school staff in February this year and it is hoped that this will encourage staff to update their records to include protected characteristics.
- 3.9. E-recruitment was fully launched to external applicants from the first week of February this year and as part of this project all applicants have to complete the data on the protected characteristics as they are mandatory. At the moment Gender Reassignment isn't available as an option, however we have asked our software provider to include this category in the future.
- 3.10. Due to 3.8 and 3.9 we have only been able to collect data on protected characteristics since February 2015 and therefore an analysis of this data at the end of March 2015 would not reflect a 'true' position of the Council. However we expect to be able to provide this analysis for the 2015/16 annual audit.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

- 3.11. We use old National Best Value Performance Indicator (NBVPI) return methodology to compile the statistics, unless stated otherwise. This includes all full time and part time permanent staff and school based staff (unless otherwise stated). Casual staff or those on fixed term contracts of less than 12 months duration are excluded.
- 3.12. Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4 are snapshots of the workforce at the 31 March 2015. The following is a summary of what each table shows.

- 3.13. The non-declaration (ND) data in tables reflects those employees who have made a positive decision not to declare their ethnicity or a disability or where information is not available. Since the validation exercise in 2006/7, further efforts have been made to obtain declarations from staff who have previously declined to take part and this will continue.

Comparisons of Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Within Directorates

- 3.14. Tables 1, 2 and 3 show employees at 31 March 2015 by directorate, gender, ethnic origin and disability compared with those at 31 March 2014.
- 3.15. The numbers of black and minority ethnic (BME) employees and disabled employees are shown as a proportion of employees who have made a positive declaration.
- 3.16. The proportion of women employed by the Council has remained static at 78.7%. The lowest percentage is employed in Environment & Neighbourhood Services at 50.1%, where there are a larger number of traditionally male occupations. The largest percentages are in Schools (92%) and Education & Children's Services (DEACS), where the proportion remains around 86%. Corporate Support Services are at 70%.
- 3.17. The proportion of BME staff employed by the Council has increased from 13.7% to 14.7%. The reduction in overall staffing (4301 to 4275), however, does not appear to have disproportionately affected BME staff groups. The highest proportion of BME staff is in DEACS (as previous years) followed by CSS. All directorates have shown an increase in the proportion of BME staff with the exception of DENS which has remained at 50%. These outturns compare with a 23% BME economically active population (excluding white Irish and other) within the borough boundaries¹.
- 3.18. Table 3 below shows the profile of employees who have declared a disability. The overall percentage has increased from 1.8% to 2.6%.
- 3.19. The proportion of staff with a disability in the Council is around 2.6%. If school based staff are taken out of the calculation, the proportion of staff in the Council with a disability would be 3.5%. This outturn compares with a 6% economically active population within the borough boundaries¹.

Progress of Applicants Through Recruitment

- 3.20. For this report we have attempted to provide more information about the attrition rate of applicants through the recruitment process (Table 4) in order to better understand the dynamics of the process as it rolls forward. The figures in brackets are 2013/14 figures,
- 3.21. In 2014/15 the Council received 5774 (4420) applications for 396 (306) appointments. Of these, 3467 (2702) were from women - 60% (61%), 1581 (1162) from BME applicants - 27% (26%) and 238 (214) from people with a declared disability - 4% (5%). These headline figures are consistent with an increased level of recruitment overall across the Council, but the proportions of groups facing disadvantage applying for employment have remained constant or increased.

¹ 2011 census data

- 3.22. Of the successful applicants, 69% (69%) were women, 16% (20%) were BME and 4% (3%) were applicants with a disability.

Comparisons of Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Across Salary Bands

- 3.23. Table 5 shows employees at 31 March 2015 by salary band and then by gender, ethnic origin and disability. Salary bands are based on the RG pay scales introduced in May 2011. The totals for staff are different from those in tables 1, 2 and 3, which show all employees as this data is drawn from the old NBVPI 11 earnings profile which excludes school based staff in its methodology.
- 3.24. The numbers of black and minority ethnic employees and disabled employees are shown as a proportion of employees who have made a positive declaration.
- 3.25. Female employees continue to form the greater percentage across the majority of salary bands with the exception of salary band 1. With the exception of salary band 1 each band has over 55% women, with the proportion reaching around 65% - 70% in band 2, 3, 8, 9 and 10.
- 3.26. This analysis shows that the level of BME staff in the higher earnings bands have remained static since 2011, (5% in the highest earnings band) which is lower than the proportion of BME staff in the Council as a whole.
- 3.27. The overall number of employees who have declared a disability across salary bands ranges between 0% and 5.0%. The proportion of people with a disability is relatively even across most of the bands with the exception of band 10.
- 3.28. Salary band 1 consists mainly of apprentices.

Access to Corporate Training

- 3.29. Tables 6(a) and 6(b) show access to Training by Directorate and by type of training for employees from the different groups during 2014/15.
- 3.30. A comparison is given with the numbers of attendees on the type of training with the last year these figures were reported for 2011/12. A comparison is not given with the figures for attendance on training by Directorate as the Directorate structures have changed significantly during the intervening years.
- 3.31. Table 6(b) includes figures for attendance on Workplace Specific training for the first time. This data is available to be reported on as an increasing amount of Directorate and Team organised training is now recorded centrally.
- 3.32. The ethnicity and disability data shows only people who have made a positive declaration under ethnicity and disability. Generally, the data reflects the proportions of these groups of employees in the workforce.
- 3.33. Overall a much larger percentage (83%) of women than men undertook training during last year. This is an increase from 72% during the year the statistics were last reported.
- 3.34. BME employee access to training has increased from 13% to 17%.

- 3.35. Employees, who had declared themselves as having a disability, formed 3% of the total employees on corporate training, which remains the same as the last year reported.

Involvement in Council Procedures

- 3.36. Table 7 shows a breakdown of those involved in the Council's formal procedures: capability ill health, capability performance, discipline and grievance. The levels of formal casework reduced in 2014/15 (from 90 in 2011/12 to 69 in 2014/15), but whilst the absolute numbers are small, they do not indicate that procedures were applied and / or accessed disproportionately by any particular group profiled in the report.

Turnover and Attrition

- 3.37. Table 8 shows a profile of 'leavers' from the Council divided between 'voluntary' and 'involuntary' forms of exit.
- 3.38. Total turnover for the Council was 12.5% in 2014/15. The table shows that for most forms of exit, women, BME staff and staff with a disability did not leave the Council in higher than expected proportions - that is to say, the level of exit indicates that these staff are generally being retained.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 4.1 Monitoring our workforce is linked specifically to the promotion of equality and ensuring that we move to a position where our workforce represents the community it serves.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

It has a duty to publish workforce and employment information to demonstrate compliance with the Equality duty.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Employee Profiles by Directorate at 31.03.15 compared to 31.03.14

Table 1 Employee Gender Profile

Directorate	31.03.14			31.03.15		
	All staff	Women	% Women	All staff	Women	% Women
DENS	1049	527	50.2%	1036	519	50.1%
DEACS	994	848	85.3%	993	855	86.1%
CSS	464	310	66.8%	366	257	70.2%
SCHOOLS	1794	1660	92.5%	1880	1734	92.2%
TOTALS	4301 ¹	3345	77.8%	4275	3365	78.7%

Table 2 Employee Ethnicity

Directorate	31.03.14				31.03.15			
	All staff	No	% BME ²	ND	All staff	No	% BME ²	ND
DENS	1049	133	13.0%	27	1036	128	13.0%	50
DEACS	994	188	19.7%	39	993	183	19.3%	47
CSS	464	60	13.2%	9	366	53	15.0%	12
SCHOOLS	1794	175	10.7%	155	1880	203	13.2%	343
TOTALS ¹	4301	556	13.7%	230	4275	567	14.8%	452

Table 3 - Employee Disability

Directorate	31.03.14				31.03.15			
	All staff	Dis	% Dis ²	ND	All staff	Dis	% Dis ²	ND
DENS	1049	17	1.8%	99	1036	24	2.6%	124
DEACS	994	31	3.5%	108	993	36	4.2%	135
CSS	464	12	2.7%	15	366	13	3.7%	19
SCHOOLS	1794	4	0.3%	495	1880	4	0.5%	1016
TOTALS ¹	4301	64	1.8%	717	4275	77	2.6%	1294

1. Includes all permanent employees, teachers & school based employees; does not include those on temporary contracts for less than a year
2. As a proportion of employees who have made a positive declaration

Table 4 -

(a) Recruitment Profile April 2014 - March 2015

	Male	Female	Unspecified	BME	White	NoDec	Disabled	ND	NoDec
Applied									
5774	2170	3467	137	1581	3578	615	238	4981	555
	38%	60%	2%	27%	62%	11%	4%	86%	10%
Appointed									
396	123	273	0	64	309	23	14	350	32
	31%	69%	0%	16%	78%	6%	4%	88%	8%

(b) Recruitment Profile April 2013 - March 2014

	Male	Female	Unspecified	BME	White	NoDec	Disabled	ND	NoDec
Applied									
4420	1643	2702	75	1162	2674	584	214	3766	440
	37%	61%	2%	26%	60%	13%	5%	85%	10%
Appointed									
306	96	210	0	61	235	10	9	282	15
	31%	69%	0%	20%	77%	3%	3%	92%	5%

Table 5 - Council Employees in Salary Bands as at 31.3.15

Grade Bandings	Total Staff	Women		BME			Disability		
		No	%	No	ND	%	No	ND	%
RG1 Up to 15,207	23	8	35%	10	2	48%	1	3	5%
RG2 16,572	194	141	73%	54	21	31%	4	57	3%
RG3 19,742	339	251	74%	54	22	17%	11	56	4%
RG4 24,472	572	389	68%	95	15	17%	19	60	4%
RG5 29,558	446	286	64%	65	26	15%	18	46	5%
RG6 33,857	304	198	65%	37	9	13%	13	25	5%
RG7 39,267	224	149	67%	28	9	13%	5	16	2%
RG8 44,794	156	109	70%	15	2	10%	2	9	1%
RG9 50,324	70	42	60%	11	2	16%	2	4	3%
RG10 54,080	28	22	79%	2	0	7%	0	2	0%
Above 54080	57	33	58%	3	1	5%	1	6	2%

1 - Based on 2014/15 pay bands and earnings

2 - As a proportion of employees who have made a positive declaration

3 - Excludes schools

Table 6 - Equality Access to Training

(a) Individual Employee Access to Corporate Training by Directorate April 2014 to March 2015

Directorate	Total	Gender		Ethnic Origin		Disability	
		Women	Men	BME ¹	White ¹	Yes ¹	No ¹
CSS	236	72%	28%	12%	88%	5%	95%
DACHS	1857	83%	17%	19%	81%	3%	97%
DCEEHS	2135	87%	13%	22%	78%	3%	97%
DENS	455	55%	45%	9%	91%	1%	99%
Schools	1469	88%	12%	10%	90%	1%	99%
TOTALS	6152	83%	17%	17%	83%	3%	97%

(b) Individual Access to Corporate Training by Type of course April 2014 to March 2015

Training Type	Total ²	Gender		Ethnic Origin		Disability	
		Women	Men	BME ¹	White ¹	Yes ¹	No ¹
Corporate Induction	(136) 137	75%	25%	19%	81%	4%	96%
Equal Opportunities/ Positive action	(68) 83	81%	19%	5%	95%	6%	94%
Health & Safety	(834) 1235	75%	25%	13%	87%	2%	98%
Management Development	(402) 266	78%	22%	7%	93%	3%	97%
Personal Development	(603) 574	80%	29%	17%	83%	5%	95%
Workplace specific	3857	87%	13%	20%	80%	2%	98%
Total All Training³	(2043) 6152	83%	17%	17%	83%	3%	97%

¹ shows those staff who have declared their ethnicity or a disability

² The figure in brackets is the number trained in the previous financial year

Table 7 Completed HR Casework - Use of Formal Procedures - April 2014 to March 2015 - Analysis by Employee Profile

Case Type	All Cases	Gender		BME		Disability	
		Women	%	No	%	No	%
Capability IH	25	16	64.0%	3	12.0%	2	8.0%
Capability - Performance	4	1	25.0%	1	25.0%	1	25.0%
Disciplinary	23	3	13.0%	7	30.4%	2	8.6%
Grievance	16	7	43.7%	5	31.2%	3	18.7%
Bullying / Harassment	1	1	100.0%	0	0%	0	0%
TOTALS	69	28	40.5%	16	23.1%	8	11.5%

Table 8 - Turnover / Leavers 2014/15

INVOLUNTARY EXIT							
REASON	ALL	FEMALE		BME		DISAB	
Death	5	4	80%	0	0%	1	20.0%
Dismissal	8	6	75%	5	63%	0	0.0%
Ill Health Dismissal	2	1	50%	0	0%	1	50.0%
Redundancy	19	16	84%	3	16%	0	0.0%
Redundancy & Early Retirement	5	4	80%	2	40%	0	0.0%
End of Fixed term/ Temp Contract	41	35	85%	8	20%	1	2.4%
Other (Not Known/TUPE)	5	3	60%	1	20%	0	0.0%
TOTAL	85	69	81%	19	22%	3	3.5%
VOLUNTARY EXIT							
REASON	ALL	FEMALE		BME		DISAB	
Retirement	28	20	71%	1	4%	0	0.0%
Mutual Agreement	6	3	50%	0	0%	0	0.0%
Efficiency Termination /Retire	17	10	59%	2	12%	1	5.9%
Resignation	392	323	82%	63	16%	4	1.0%
TOTAL	443	356	80%	66	15%	5	1.1%
TOTAL ALL	528	425	80%	85	16%	8	1.5%

TO:	PERSONNEL COMMITTEE	
DATE:	16 TH JULY 2015	AGENDA ITEM: 6
TITLE:	AMENDMENTS TO Recruitment and Pre-Employment Checks Guide - Posts with Access to Children and Vulnerable Adults	
AUTHOR	KIRSTY BENNETT	HR PARTNER

1. PURPOSE

To outline the amendments made to the Recruitment and Pre-Employment Checks Guide - Posts with Access to Children and Vulnerable Adults, to bring it into line with legal requirements and best practice within the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That you note this report and endorse the recommendations set out in 5 below.

3. BACKGROUND

COUNCIL POLICY

The Council's recruitment policy was re-launched in 2007 following guidance from the Department for Education on safer recruitment practices in schools and education settings. The principles contained within that guidance were adopted by the Council for recruitment across the wider range of posts with access to vulnerable groups.

The policy has now being updated to address two areas that have changed since 2007 - a) the application of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009, and b) the inclusion of specific handling of references in children's services.

(a) CHILDCARE (DISQUALIFICATION) REGULATIONS 2009

The regulations require that anyone working in a childcare setting is asked to declare if they are disqualified from such work through a) having an order or other restriction against them in relation to childcare, b) having committed certain offences, and/or c) living with another person in their household to whom a) or b) applies ('by association').

These provisions have been added to the recruitment and selection policy.

Since we have started applying the regulations, one member of staff has successfully applied for a waiver and one has resigned. We have not had cause to suspend any other members of staff.

(b) REFERENCES

In children's services recruiting managers are required to confirm that references supplied for candidates are double checked with the referee to ensure they are genuine. This has been added into the procedure set out in the policy.

4. IMPACT

The updated policy sets out a recruitment procedure that meets guidance from the DfE to support safer recruitment. It also underpins the expectations of external inspection bodies such as Ofsted who will want to see policies and procedures in place to support safer recruitment.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the updated Recruitment and Pre-Employment Checks Guide - Posts with Access to Children and Vulnerable Adults policy is noted and agreed.

**Recruitment and
Pre-Employment Checks
Guide**

**Posts with Access to Children
and Vulnerable Adults**

All Posts Excluding Schools

Updated May 2015

Updated NOV 2014

(Approved at Personnel Committee 11/12/14)

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Part 1 - Introduction

This guide provides a consistent recruitment process when recruiting to posts with access to children or vulnerable adults, including pre-employment checks, and should be viewed as supplementary to the "Recruitment and Selection Policy", which can be found on IRIS. This guide does not replace any more specific advice you may require from HR.

This guide is split into three further parts - background, legislative requirements, and then a detailed recruitment and selection procedure.

This guide lays out the recruitment and selection process required when filling posts with access to children or vulnerable adults. **This does not include school based posts, for which separate guidance has been produced.**

Please also refer to the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure which gives the over-arching Council policy on Recruitment and Selection.

Part 2 - Background

Reading Borough Council has a duty to ensure the safety and welfare of all staff and client users, and this includes vulnerable adults and children either in our educational establishments or in our care.

To ensure this duty is carried out, Reading Borough Council has produced this guidance to define the recruitment process for staff, to ensure that those recruited are suitable to work for the council, and with vulnerable groups.

The Council must satisfy itself that each new recruit is suitable for the job for which they have applied, and this applies equally to paid staff and workers, and volunteers. This manifests itself through a number of pre-employment checks carried out on new staff, workers, and volunteers.

The focus is to ensure that all staff working in locations or establishments where there is access to children or vulnerable adults, have been given criminal clearances via a disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service before they commence work.

Of particular note is the use of references when recruiting to a post with access to children or vulnerable adults. References will be made available to the Chair of the interviewing panel prior to interview, so that any appropriate and relevant issues contained in them can be shared with the interview panel and explored with the candidate.

It should be noted that Ofsted inspections look at safeguarding and this includes recruitment and selection procedures. The DfE produced updated guidance in April 2014 called Keeping Children Safe in Education - Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, which includes a section on safer recruitment., The Commission for Social Care Inspectorate (CSCI) also carries out this evaluation.

Part 3 - Legislative Requirements and Key Points

Vulnerable Adults

The Disclosure and Barring Service maintains a list of people barred from working with vulnerable adults.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (SVGA) (2006) places a duty on employers of people working with vulnerable adults to make a referral in certain circumstances. Local Authorities have duty to refer and power to refer under the SVGA (2006 as amended).

An eligible organisation recruiting to a position (paid or unpaid) that falls within the definition of regulated activity relating to adults may require an applicant to obtain an enhanced DBS check with barred list check to help determine suitability for the position, prior to engaging them.

DBS Adult First allows an individual to be checked against the adult DBS barred list while waiting for the full criminal records check to be completed. This should only be done for successful applicants.

If the DBS Adult First check is clear, employment can start provided a risk assessment has been completed and satisfactory references and medical clearance have been received. There is an extra cost for this check (£6 as at August 2014).

Children

The Disclosure and Barring Service maintains a list of people barred from working with children, and all regulated childcare organisations have a statutory duty to refer the names of individuals for possible inclusion. Voluntary bodies are also permitted to do so.

The Department for Education (DfE) provides on-line access to registered employers to check names against the list of people barred from working with children.

Under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 it is an offence to knowingly offer work to or to employ in a "regulated" (including child care) post, any person who is disqualified from working with children, through inclusion on either of the above lists, or who has a disqualification order from a court. It is also an offence for that barred person to seek, or remain in, such work.

It is therefore vital that these checks are carried out, either directly or through the DBS, before anyone takes up a post with access to vulnerable groups with RBC.

Keeping Children Safe in Education - Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges was issued by the DfE in 2014 to update previous guidance issued in 2007. Whilst this guidance is not always applicable to all the settings in which RBC employees have access to children, a number of the

recommendations contained within it have been adopted for use across all RBC posts that have access to vulnerable groups, both adult and children. The use of references when appointing to a post with access to vulnerable groups is the key principle taken from this guidance.

Background checks on recent residents

As part of the DBS check, applicants are required to provide a continuous address history covering the five years leading up to the present date.

However, the DBS check cannot cover addresses and police records held in parts of Scotland and Ireland, or any overseas country. In these cases the DBS check itself may not be worthwhile or will only provide limited information. This will need to be supplemented by other checks, including asking for certificates of good conduct from the police force in the applicant's original country, or seeking references from those forces.

If any preferred candidate falls into this category, please be aware that you should seek further advice from HR, and that the timescale to achieve full clearance could be significantly increased.

Part 4 - Procedure

1. Job Description and Person Specification

- 1.1 A vacancy will occur where a member of staff leaves and needs to be replaced, or where a new post is created within a team/service.
- 1.2 Where a vacancy occurs through a member of staff leaving, the opportunity should be taken to determine whether the post needs to be refilled, whether it should remain the same, or whether changes should be made before advertising it. Where changes are made consideration should be given to the effect this may have on the duties of other team members. If radical changes are made the revised job description and person specification should be sent to HR for evaluation.
- 1.2 In any event, the job description and person specification should always be reviewed before advertising to fill a vacancy to ensure they are up to date and an accurate reflection of the duties, skills and abilities needed in the role.
- 1.3 Where a new post is created the job description and person specification must be drawn up to again ensure that the job role is reflected accurately. These must be sent to HR for evaluation.
- 1.4 If a job description is newly created, or significantly changed, consideration will need to be given as to whether a DBS and other pre-employment checks are needed, and this information must be included on the job description and person specification. It is important to remember that if a job role evolves over time, it may become necessary to carry out checks that had not previously been needed for the post holder.
- 1.5 The person specification should not take an "essential" and "desirable" approach. However the Lead Officer and panel should be clear about what the minimum criteria for the job are, i.e. the skills/attributes the post holder must have to be able to carry out the duties of the post. This is important for shortlisting and interviewing generally, but is particularly important for disabled applicants and redeployees. Disabled applicants are guaranteed an interview if they meet the minimum criteria of the post, as required under the Two Ticks scheme, to which the Council is committed. Please see the Disability and Recruitment – A Good Practice Guide, for more details. Redeployees should be given prior consideration for a post if they meet the minimum criteria in accordance with the Council's Employment Stability Agreement and other employment policies.
- 1.6 In all cases the person specification will be your guide to writing the advert, producing your interview questions and devising any tests. After appointment it should be used as the starting point for a

learning needs analysis during probation and on into the employment relationship, and used to inform appraisals.

- 1.7 In all cases the job description must make clear the responsibility the jobholder will have for child protection or the protection of vulnerable adults. The person specification must specifically state that the job holder is required to be suitable to work with children or vulnerable adults, and must contain details of the level of DBS check required for the post, if applicable, along with any other checks such as whether a barring list check is required.
- 1.8 The minimum criteria are those skills, abilities, competencies or qualifications that the post holder must possess to be able to start in the role. These must be identified and agreed before advertising the post to help inform the wording of the advert and to support later shortlisting and interviewing

2. Advertising

- 2.1 Once the job description and person specification are up to date, accurate and evaluated as necessary, the next step is to draw up the advert. HR staff are available to advise managers on writing adverts, as is the advertising agency, but there are a few simple guidelines to be followed.
- 2.2 Adverts need to be clear about what the job entails, concise but not to the point of including too little information, should show details of salary including any pro rata arrangements, and the hours of the post including any flexibility such as job share or flexibility over days worked.
- 2.3 The advert must also contain reference to the fact that a DBS check will be required, and the level of check required. The closing date should be clearly stated, and where possible the shortlist and interview dates should be included. Contact details will be the HR team who will handle the administration. If you have a contact for potential applicants wishing to have an informal discussion these details should be included in your advert.
- 2.4 The advert must contain the following, or a similar, statement: "This authority/service is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment".
- 2.5 The advert (and Job Description and Person Specification) must not include any text or images that could directly or indirectly discriminate against someone with a Protected Characteristic as set out in the Equality Act 2010. However there are circumstances where

it is appropriate to be specific about the person needed for the job, if this is the case please contact HR.

- 2.6 Decide and specify whether the advert should appear in a paper publication and/or on-line, and where necessary if it should be in colour or black and white.
- 2.7 If you wish the RBC logo to appear in the advert you must specify this. The Two Ticks symbol will be included in the advert to communicate a commitment to supporting disabled applicants.
- 2.8 The wording, appearance, and the choice of media can all influence how popular the vacancy will be, as well as affecting how attractive it will be to all groups in the community.

3. Advert Approval

- 3.1 HR will send the advert to the advertising agency, at which point the space in the chosen publication will be booked. The agency will set the advert into its final copy and send it back to HR for approval, along with the cost.
- 3.2 The advert will need to be approved, and this will be carried out by the Lead Officer for the vacancy. Any problems with the advert must be fed back immediately so they can be rectified.
- 3.3 Once approved the advert will be placed and the administrative process flowing from this will be handled by HR.

4. Timescales

- 4.1 Consideration will need to be given to when and where the advert should appear. Guidance on the best places to advertise can be obtained from HR, in liaison with the advertising agency. All adverts placed via Ambleglow will automatically be placed in the Job News bulletin and on the Jobsgopublic/RBC website, unless it is specified that this should not happen.
- 4.2 The closing date by which applications should be returned should be at least two weeks after the first appearance of the advert to allow enough time for potential candidates to complete and return the forms.
- 4.3 The names of the three panel members must be agreed early on. Please note that both the shortlist and interview panels must have the same membership. All members of the panel must have attended RBC's Recruitment and Selection training course, or have been

assessed as having suitable previous knowledge and experience in recruitment and selection. This assessment is available via HR.

- 4.4 Where shortlisting and interviewing involves people from other agencies or interim managers, these participants must be briefed by the Lead Officer and can take an active part in interviewing, but should not be part of the decision making process.
- 4.5 The panel should meet in advance of shortlisting to agree the criteria to be used for shortlisting, and to determine the standards required. The panel should also meet before the interviews to finalise the questions to be asked and who will be asking them, and to confirm the standards being sought during the interview.
- 4.6 The shortlisting date should be at least two working days after the closing date to allow time for shortlisting packs to be prepared for the panel.

5. Application Pack

- 5.1 The application pack should be informative and act as a first impression of the job and service. The pack must contain the job description, person specification, application form, and guidance on completing the application form, ~~and~~ the convictions and cautions declaration form, **and the disqualification from childcare declaration.**
- 5.2 In addition the pack should contain a copy of the Council's Equal Opportunities statement, and the Child Protection Policy Statement where applicable.
- 5.3 The covering letter to the applicant must state that the criteria in the person specification will be tested during the interview process, and that relevant issues raised in references will also be discussed at interview. The letter should also make it clear whether or not those applicants not shortlisted will receive communication telling them they have been unsuccessful. HR use a standard letter to cover this, but specific additions can be made to suit the vacancy.
- 5.4 The standard RBC application form should always be used to give consistency in the type of information being collected from each applicant. CVs are not acceptable. However, there may be a need to vary the approach if a disabled person wishes to apply for a post.
- 5.5 Additional information can be added to the pack about the service and post available in order to appeal to the intended audience.

6. Shortlisting

- 6.1 Once the closing date is reached, a shortlisting pack will be made available to the panel. At this stage application forms will be provided without the front page, thereby removing personal information that could lead to subjective judgements being made based on Protected Characteristics. The equal opportunities monitoring details will not be included with the forms in the shortlisting pack.
- 6.2 If there is a disabled applicant, the shortlisting pack will contain details of which candidate(s) are disabled. A copy of the "Shortlisting and Interviewing Disabled Candidates - A Brief Guide" will be included. No other personal information about that applicant will be made available. This will enable the panel to assess the applicant against the minimum criteria for the post, and consider them for interview. Please see the Disability and Recruitment - A Good Practice Guide, for more details.
- 6.3 If there is a redeployee, the shortlisting pack will contain details of which candidates are redeployees. This will enable the panel to assess the applicant against the minimum criteria for the post, and consider them for interview.
- 6.4 Every candidate should be assessed against all the criteria from the person specification using a grid, indicating Met, Part Met, or Not Met against each criteria to ensure consistency and fairness.
- 6.5 Once shortlisting has been carried out all packs must be returned to HR, with the shortlisting grids completed by all three panel members, a completed consensus grid, and an Interview Pro Forma completed. If not already agreed the interview date should be agreed and communicated to HR on the pro forma, as well as where the interviews will take place, and whether there are any tests. The panel is responsible for room bookings, refreshments, meeting and greeting candidates, checking and copying ID, qualification, etc. documents, etc.
- 6.6 For example, if candidates are to give a presentation the subject of this, expected duration, and availability of equipment such as a laptop and projector, must be decided so this information can be passed to the candidates. Applicants selected for shortlisting by the panel must be clearly identified when the packs are sent back to HR.
- 6.7 The interview date should be a reasonable time after shortlisting to allow enough time for candidates to be invited for interview, and for the references to be obtained. A suggested timescale is two weeks.

- 6.8 At this point interview questions can be finalised using the person specification. Specific and relevant questions you may wish to ask candidates relating to their application or references can be added later.
- 6.9 If any disabled applicants or redeployees have not been shortlisted, the panel must make it clear why this is the case. In the case of redeployees, the panel will need to arrange to feedback to the redeployee on why they were not successful.

7. Inviting for Interview

- 7.1 Candidates will now be contacted to invite them for interview. Candidates will be asked if they have any special requirements for the interview day, such as access requirements, HR will alert the panel of these in advance.
- 7.2 The letter will state that the interview will be used to explore the candidate's suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults, will outline the need for a DBS check, and will give details of the ID documentation and qualification certificates the candidate is required to bring with them. The ID documents are for the DBS check and to check eligibility to work in the country as required by the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996.

8. References

- 8.1 Reference requests will be sent out at the same time as the invite for interview letters to ensure all references are returned in time for the interviews. References will be chased if timely responses are not received.
- 8.2 The only exception is where the candidate has indicated on their application form that their referee cannot be approached. In these cases the panel should explain at interview that if they are successful, references will still need to be sought and may need to be discussed prior to any offer of employment being made.
- 8.3 **Please note that an offer of employment can only be made when there are two satisfactory references available for the preferred candidate.**
- 8.4 References will be from the most recent / current employers. One reference will be from the most recent employer where the candidate worked with children or vulnerable adults (as appropriate), and from one other source so that there are two

references. References are not acceptable from partners/spouses, family or friends, and verbal/open references and testimonials will not be accepted.

- 8.5 The references will address the candidate's suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults (as appropriate). The most recent / current referee will be asked to comment on any disciplinary offences (not unproven allegations) relating to children or vulnerable adults, and any child/adult protection concerns including the outcomes of any enquiries and disciplinary proceedings. The referee will be informed that information they give in this respect may be discussed with the candidate at interview.
- 8.6 The references will be made available to the Chair of the panel prior to interview as any relevant issues raised in the references must be shared with the interview panel and explored with the candidate during the interview. Relevant issues are legitimate areas of concern related to the nature of the work with children and/or vulnerable adults. The panel should also cross check the references with the application form to satisfy themselves they have the appropriate referees responses, and that there is no mismatch of information.
- 8.7 Any other queries arising from the references should be followed up with the referees.
- 8.8 If references are obtained after the interview because the candidate did not wish for them to be taken up beforehand, or if they had not been received before the interview, any issues raised in the references must still be pursued if necessary.
- 8.9 For posts in Children's Services, recruiting managers must follow up on references by telephone to confirm the referee and the reference they have provided is genuine.

9. Interviewing

- 9.1 Interviews must take place long enough after the shortlisting to allow time for references to be requested and received back. The interview pack will be available two to three days before the interview date to allow the panel to read through the applications. At this stage the front page is re-attached to the application form, but the equal opportunities monitoring form is still not included.
- 9.2 If any candidate has a disability, the panel will be made aware of the nature of this, in advance, so that any reasonable adjustments can be made to the room, access, tests, etc.

- 9.3 If any candidate is a redeployee the panel will be made aware of this, and will need to consider the redeployee against the minimum criteria for the post, with a view to giving the redeployee prior consideration for the post.
- 9.4 If a declaration has been made by any candidate on their criminal convictions declaration form that reveals they have any convictions or cautions, that candidate's declaration will be given to the panel. This will allow for discussion around this declaration at interview, and advice can be sought from HR in this area.
- 9.5 Because a DBS check is required for the post, copies of original identity documents must be taken for each candidate at the start or end of the interview, and a checklist completed. The original documents should also be examined to check as far as possible that they are genuine. The ID must also cover the required check under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996. These documents will be used to support the DBS disclosure application for the preferred candidate.
- 9.6 Candidates should be told what the checking process entails, the likely timescales involved, as well as the fact that clearances are needed before the Council can confirm any appointment.
- 9.7 Copies of any relevant qualifications certificates must also be taken as appropriate, having checked they appear genuine.
- 9.8 The interview questions and any tests must be designed to test whether the applicant is suitable for the role, and this will include their motivations and suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults.
- 9.9 Any apparent gaps in employment history, education, qualifications, etc. should be identified by the Chair of the panel and explored with the candidate at interview, as should any anomalies in the information provided on the application form. Frequent or sudden job changes should be questioned.
- 9.10 The content of references should be explored, particularly if there are any causes for concern in the references relating to the nature of the work with children and/or vulnerable adults. If references are not available, the candidate must be asked if there is anything likely to come up in their reference that they feel should be discussed.
- 9.11 Each panel member must complete interview grids so there is a clear record of the chosen candidate and how they met the criteria, and the consensus grid must be completed. Every

candidate for all posts should be assessed against all the criteria from the person specification using a grid, indicating Met, Part Met, or Not Met, to ensure consistency and fairness.

- 9.12 At the end of the interview, the successful candidate will become the preferred candidate. If the preferred candidate had not given permission for referees to be contacted prior to interview, s/he should now be told they are the preferred candidate (this is not an offer of employment) and asked if the references can be taken up. References will then be requested by HR as soon as possible. An offer cannot be made unless both references are returned and satisfactory.
- 9.13 If the references provided are not adequate, or if there is a need to check back further, the panel can request that HR follow up other references pulled from the employment history provided on the candidate's application form.

10. Tests

- 10.1 If it is intended to ask candidates to undergo a test it is important that the test is based on the criteria of the person specification. For example, if typing is a requirement of the job a typing test would be appropriate, but you must decide if you need to test accuracy, speed, presentation, or a combination of these, and design the test accordingly.
- 10.2 If you intend to use a test please let your HR contact have a copy of it at the earliest opportunity, preferably along with your Advert Request form. This allows time for the test to be checked against the criteria in the person specification, and also to determine if there are any biases that would breach equal opportunities.
- 10.3 Tests may need to be adjusted to meet the needs of disabled applicants. HR can offer advice in these circumstances.

11. Preferred Candidate - Good References and Declaration

- 11.1 If the references, ~~and~~ convictions declaration ~~and disqualification from childcare declaration~~ for the preferred candidate are satisfactory, all interview packs should be returned to HR, with interview and consensus grids completed by all three panel members, signed, and clearly indicating the preferred candidate, along with the ID document copies, the checklist, any copies of qualification certificates, and a completed New Starter Form.
- 11.2 The preferred candidate can be contacted to tell them they are the preferred candidate, but no offer can be made at this stage.

12. Preferred Candidate - Poor References or Declaration

- 12.1 If one or both references for the preferred candidate are unsatisfactory, refer back to HR for advice. In most cases further investigation is required before a candidate can be accepted or rejected. All interview packs and grids should be returned to HR.
- 12.2 If the declaration for the preferred candidate contains information about convictions or cautions the matter must be discussed with HR and referred to the appropriate Head of service, using a standard form held by HR. The Head of Service will discuss the case with the Lead Officer and decide whether or not the person is suitable to appoint. All interview packs and grids should be returned to HR.
- 12.3 If the disqualification from childcare declaration indicates the person is disqualified from the relevant setting, the matter must be discussed with HR in the first instance.
- 12.4 In some cases it may not be possible to appoint the preferred candidate due to unsatisfactory references or declarations. In such cases it may be possible to appoint the second placed candidate, subject to the same reference and disclosure checks already outlined. If the second placed candidate is not suitable a re-advertisement may be required.

13. Unsuccessful Candidates

- 13.1 Candidates who have been unsuccessful at interview should be notified of this as soon as possible, either by the Chair of the panel, another panel member, or HR. Candidates should be offered the opportunity for feedback from either the Chair or a member of the panel.
- 13.2 All papers relating to the recruitment exercise will be kept confidentially and securely for six months, in case of query, and then confidentially destroyed. This includes the DBS/right to work ID papers copied from candidates at interview.
- 13.3 In some cases there may be a preferred candidate plus a candidate in a close second place. It may then be prudent that the second placed candidate isn't immediately rejected in case the preferred candidate cannot be appointed for any reason, or rejects the offer. The second placed candidate may then become the preferred candidate, at which point references and the declaration must be checked.

14. Appointment Process

- 14.1 Once a preferred candidate has been selected, the New Starter paperwork must be sent to HR as soon as possible.
- 14.2 HR will then carry out the background checks required. A medical questionnaire and DBS disclosure application form will be sent to the preferred candidate, with an offer of employment letter, for completion as soon as possible. Once returned the medical form will be sent to the Occupational Health provider for review.
- 14.3 Once the DBS application has been returned and checked, it will be sent off to the DBS and HR will carry out a List 99 or Adultfirst check, as applicable. Please note, DBS disclosures from other employers are not transferable and so cannot be used as evidence of clearance by RBC.
- 14.4 At this stage a **Risk Assessment** can be carried out if there is a critical need for the new recruit to start in post before the DBS disclosure has been received, and clearance given. The considerations are: How much is known about the individual? Have they declared any cautions or convictions and have these been explored with the individual? If allowed to work prior to clearance, can s/he be given full supervision during work time? HR will issue a form for this purpose to the manager, a completed copy of which must be sent back to HR.
- 14.5 For a Risk Assessment to be valid, the declaration of convictions form must have been reviewed, **if applicable the declaration that the employee is not disqualified from childcare**, the DBS application form correctly completed by the candidate and sent off to the DBS, List 99/Adultfirst checked, both references received and considered satisfactory, and medical clearance given. **Note that managers are required to sign to say they are satisfied with the references, and in the case of Children's Services managers sign to confirm they have verified the referee/references.**
- 14.6 Once the DBS certificate is returned if something is revealed on the disclosure certificate, HR will contact the appropriate Head of Service. S/he will liaise with HR and the manager to come to a decision over whether the applicant is suitable to work with children/vulnerable adults.
- 14.7 If medical clearance is not given, or health based recommendations are made over the employment of that person, HR will contact the relevant manager to discuss this.

- 14.8 Once clearance is given on medical and DBS grounds, a start date can now be agreed with the individual, if they haven't already started under a risk assessment.
- 14.9 On appointment it is the line manager's responsibility to ensure a first day induction is carried out, directorate and corporate inductions are attended, Health and Safety training is attended and that the probation process is established and followed if applicable. The new recruit must also now be included in the regular round of staff appraisal.
- 14.10 The induction process at team level must include general orientation, relevant policies and procedures, expectations in the area of conduct, and any safeguarding policies, procedures, and practices in place relating to vulnerable groups.

15 Confidentiality

- 15.1 During the recruitment and selection process Managers and Lead Officers will find themselves in possession of a great deal of personal information about candidates. While the panel are in possession of this data it must be stored securely, released only to authorised persons and, when no longer needed, returned to the HR team in full.

16 Volunteers

- 16.1 Whilst it is recognised that volunteers may not be recruited in the same way as staff on permanent or temporary contracts of employment, it remains important that safe engagement practices are followed. In particular a decision will need to be made about whether a DBS check is required for the individual who is volunteering. This decision will be based around whether the volunteer will have direct and unsupervised access to vulnerable groups, and how often they will be in that environment. Where the volunteer is working regularly it is advisable that a DBS check is made. For any volunteer the List 99 check must be requested via HR, as appropriate

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