

## LITTLETON & HARESTOCK PARISH COUNCIL (LHPC)

### Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy

<b>Author:</b>	Parish Clerk
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#### Introduction

Effective recruitment and selection are central and critical to the successful functioning of Littleton and Harestock Parish Council (LHPC). LHPC depends on finding people with the necessary skills, expertise and qualifications to deliver the council's objectives and the ability to positively contribute to the council's values and aims.

The Council is committed to being a fair and equitable employer with good working conditions, delivering the highest standards of service, and providing value for money to our residents.

#### Equality

1. LHPC is committed to equality of opportunity and all recruitment and selection processes will take place within the framework of equal opportunities legislation and the LHPC Equality and Diversity Policy. Every possible step will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated respectfully and fairly and that decisions on recruitment and selection are based solely on merit.
2. LHPC welcomes applications from a wide and diverse range of job applicants based on their skills, suitability, qualifications and experience. No job applicant or employee will be treated less favourably than another.
3. This recruitment policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that the recruitment and selection processes are operated fairly and equitably and do not discriminate unlawfully against any candidates on the grounds of age, disability, sex, gender assignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership; nor on the grounds of their membership or non-membership of a trade union.

#### Recruitment and Selection Responsibilities

4. LHPC is permitted under the Local Government Act 1972, section 112 to employ officers as they think necessary to properly discharge the council's functions.
5. LHPC has delegated staffing matters, including staff recruitment, to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
6. When a role becomes vacant or there is an identified staffing need LHPC will authorise the recruitment process and a selection panel will be identified comprising of the Parish Clerk and at least two Parish Councillors from the Finance and General Purposes Committee, one of whom will act as the Chair of the Selection Panel.
7. The Selection Panel will be delegated to:-
  - 7.1. Review the required role and its associated duties, consider the number of hours necessary to undertake the job and the appropriate grade and salary, in consultation with other members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
  - 7.2. Consider any changes to roles and responsibilities for existing positions which become vacant.
  - 7.3. Revise or produce the required recruitment documentation, including the job description, the person specification, the job advert, advertising materials, and the application form if one is required.

- 7.4. Identify if any specific checks need to be made such as Criminal Record and/or Disclosure & Barring (DBS) checks.
  - 7.5. Act as both the shortlisting and interview panel.
  - 7.6. Manage the whole selection process, and make appointment decisions.
8. Financial Considerations
- 8.1. Where the recruitment is to replace an existing LHPC staff member, it is anticipated the budget for the role will already be in place.
  - 8.2. Where the recruitment is for a new staff role, the Parish Clerk will be consulted for funding advice, and a budget for the role will be approved by LHPC in advance of the recruitment process.
  - 8.3. Where external recruitment is the chosen option, the budget for the recruitment process must be approved by LHPC in advance.

## **Recruitment Documentation**

### **9. Job description**

Each job will have an up to date job description that accurately reflects the main duties and responsibilities of the post; it should be written clearly and concisely and should be reviewed, discussed and decided upon before the commencement of the recruitment process.

### **10. Person Specification**

A person specification will be prepared for every job reflecting the qualifications, experience, skills and qualities required to undertake the job; it should be written clearly and concisely and reviewed and agreed upon before the recruitment process begins.

### **11. Application Form**

It is advised that a job specific application form is designed so that applicants can be judged fairly, based on comparative information. A standard application form can ensure consistency and assist in the shortlisting process.

### **12. Candidate Information Pack**

A candidate information package appropriate to the post should also be put together. The pack should promote the professional image of Littleton and Harestock Parish Council, particularly avoiding the reuse of outdated or poorly presented information.

The information Pack should include:

- 12.1. a covering letter which sets out the timetable for the recruitment and appointment process
- 12.2. job description and person specification
- 12.3. information on the job role and its place in the Council
- 12.4. information on the Council itself
- 12.5. key terms and conditions of employment, including hours of work and salary
- 12.6. application form, where one exists.
- 12.7. any other information relevant to the post.

### **13. Shortlisting Criteria Scoresheet**

A shortlisting scoresheet will be created to aid the shortlisting process, and used for monitoring purposes. The same score sheet can be used as the basis for the Interview Report Form.

### **14. Interview Report Form**

A form which includes the shortlisting criteria from the shortlisting process which will be filled in again for each interviewed candidate. The form will also include sections for the Selection Panel to include feedback on questions asked during the interview.

15. Applicants will also be required to declare if they are related to any Councillor or member of staff within LHPC. Canvassing of councillors or employees of LHPC is not permitted. No one should be put into a position where he or she is asked to shortlist or interview a person to whom they are related.

## 16. Criminal Offences

- 16.1. All candidates will be asked to declare whether they have ever been convicted of any criminal offence which cannot be regarded as 'spent' in terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- 16.2. For posts that involve working with children and vulnerable adults or finance work, applicants will be asked to reveal details of 'spent' and 'unspent' convictions. Successful candidates for such posts will be required to provide the necessary documentation in order to complete a standard criminal records disclosure. Posts, which require such a disclosure, will be clearly indicated on the conditions of service and appointment procedure.
17. All completed applications are private and confidential and will only be made available to those directly involved in the recruitment and selection process.
18. Applicants will be notified that details in their applications will comply with Data Protection legislation. This means that information is confidential and can only be used for assessment and selection, and for employment records if their application is successful.
19. All recruitment and selection records will be retained on file and disposed of in accordance with the Council's document and retention policy.

## Advertising the Role

20. All advertisements should be as cost-effective as possible, welcoming applications from the whole community and should contain sufficient clear information to explain the job role, though leave the details of the position to the candidate information pack, supplied by further enquiry.
21. The advertisement must be consistent with the person specification and job description and all requirements stated must be justifiable and objective. The closing date for receipt of applications and a contact for LHPC, normally the Clerk, will be included in the advertisement.
22. Staff vacancies will normally be advertised externally and placed on the LHPC notice boards, on the website and through an article in the Enewsletter. The following options should also be explored:
  - An article in the Downs Benefice Parish Magazine
  - Adverts or news items in other local Parish Council websites, and/or newsletters.
  - Adverts in local social media, e.g. Community Facebook or WhatsApp groups.
  - Advertisements with HALC, NALC or SLCC.
  - External advert within the job centre
  - External advert in the local press
  - External advert in the appropriate technical/professional Journal
  - External adverts on Employment websites such as Indeed.

## Shortlisting

23. Applications received by the closing date will be forwarded to the Selection Panel for shortlisting.
24. The Selection Panel will draw up a Shortlisting Criteria Scoresheet, based on the person specification, which will be used to assess every application. Applications will be ranked in order of suitability for appointment, based solely on information given in the application.
25. Particular care should be taken to avoid discrimination. It is essential for monitoring purposes and for defence purposes in the event of a claim for unlawful discrimination that the Council keeps records of reasons for not shortlisting candidates.
26. Except in exceptional circumstances, no more than three candidates will be invited for an interview.
27. Candidates who have not been shortlisted for an interview will be informed, and feedback will be given, on request, as to the reasons why their application was not taken forward.

28. Shortlisted applicants will be asked if they wish to make the Council aware of any disabilities, as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and whether there are any reasonable adjustments needed for them to attend an interview.

### **Selection Interview**

29. The aim of the interview is to ascertain who is the most suitable candidate for the job and to ensure that candidates have a clear picture of what the post entails.
30. At this stage the applicant will be asked to provide one of the following documents to verify their ID and their right to work:
- UK British passport or Full UK Birth Certificate and Proof of NI Number.
  - EU Passport or ID Card.
  - Non EU-Passport and Visa.

Once a photocopy has been taken original ID can be returned to the applicant. LHPC must annotate the photocopies with the date the right to work check was completed. For further information see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checks-employers-guide> and <https://www.gov.uk/legal-right-work-uk>

31. To ensure equity, all candidates should be asked similar questions, with supplementary questions structured around each candidate to enable individuals to demonstrate their relevant skills and abilities. Interviewers must keep adequate notes of the interview in order to be able to make a fair comparison between candidates. This will be recorded on an interview report form.
32. When interviewing, the Chairman of the Selection Panel will ensure that Equal Opportunities legislation is strictly adhered to, with no discrimination shown, mindful that applicants have a legal right of appeal if they believe their application has been subject to discrimination, including an appeal to an Employment Tribunal.
33. Interviewers should be careful not to imply discrimination by asking questions about personal circumstances which are unrelated to the job. Fluency in the English language will not be used as a selection criterion unless it is a bona fide requirement of the job.

### **34. Selecting the preferred candidate**

- 34.1. When all candidates have been interviewed the Selection Panel should compare their formal decisions about each candidate taking care to ensure that comparison should be primarily against the defined criteria in the person specification rather than against the other candidate/s.
- 34.2. If any member of the Selection Panel feels that discrimination has occurred in the selection process, the matter must be reported immediately to the Chairman of the Selection Panel. No selection decision should be made until the issue is resolved.
- 34.3. Once a decision has been made on whom to appoint, the reasons for not offering the post to the other candidates should be recorded. This information is for the Council's monitoring purposes and is essential for reference in the case of a claim of unlawful discrimination. The reasons given should relate to the comparison against the person specification.

### **Post Interview**

#### **35. Informing the preferred candidate**

- 35.1. The Chair of the Selection Panel will contact the preferred candidate, making a verbal offer and if accepted, agree on a commencement date and starting salary.
- 35.2. If accepted, a conditional offer letter will be sent, subject to receipt of satisfactory references and a satisfactory right to work check.
- 35.3. Should the verbal offer not be accepted, the Selection Panel will reconvene to determine the best course of action.

### 36. Informing the unsuccessful candidates

- 36.1. Following acceptance of the offer by the preferred (or reserve) candidate, the Chair of the Selection Panel will contact unsuccessful candidates with the interview outcome; this will be confirmed in writing.
- 36.2. Reserve candidates may be kept 'on hold' for some time and should be notified of the delay in finalising the outcome of their application
- 36.3. All letters sent to unsuccessful candidates will be issued as soon as practicably possible after the selection decision has been made.
- 36.4. Candidates should be given feedback, on request, about their performance at the interview by the Parish Clerk, or the Chair of the Selection Panel.

### 37. Pre-Employment Checks

- 37.1. The references from the selected candidate must be reviewed and checked.
  - 37.2. Proof of relevant qualifications must be checked.
  - 37.3. A Disclosure & Barring (DBS) check (if appropriate) should be completed.
  - 37.4. If not already checked, LHPC must ensure that the successful candidate is legally entitled to work in the UK (Restriction on Employment Order 2007). See: <https://www.gov.uk/legal-right-work-uk>
  - 37.5. A contract will be issued on satisfactory completion of the above checks, however, should any of the above checks not be satisfactory then any conditional offer of work may be withdrawn.
38. The successful candidate will be required to sign and return a copy of the employment contract to confirm agreement to its terms and conditions
39. The Parish Clerk will initiate a personnel file for the new member of staff and arrange an individual programme of induction for the new starter.

### Revision History

**Table 1:** Revision History

Version (major.minor)	Date	Author	Modifications made
Draft 0.1	18 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	LF	Original – using material from the previous policy and best practice from other Parish Council recruitment policies.
Approved 1.0	10 <sup>th</sup> June 2024	LF	No changes – <b>Approved at the LHPC Parish Council meeting dated 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024.</b>

Note: The revision number should be updated every time this document is modified, significant changes should result in the major number being updated, and any other minor changes should result in the minor number being updated.