



HILLINGDON

LONDON

Corporate Services and Partnerships Policy Overview Committee Major Review Scoping Report 2016/17

Human Resources & Recruitment

BACKGROUND TO THE REVIEW

Aim of the Review

The Human Resources department organise the recruitment of new staff and supply numerous policies and extensive guidance to assist with different stages of recruitment. It is proposed that this review considers the effectiveness of current practices, in an attempt to identify improvements to current practices that may benefit (among other areas):

- Advertising roles and reaching appropriate candidates
- Interview methods, and helping officers to assess candidates
- Staff retention
- Equalities

The review is intended to consider whether there are any simple improvements to the process of recruitment that will help to Council to continue to attract high calibre staff and improve our attractiveness as an employer. The benefits of the review are more widely dispersed than this, with the potential to improve the branding of the Council, the selection process, and ensure that the right staff are identified to fill a role for a long-term period.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The following Terms of Reference are proposed:

1. To understand how recruitment is currently undertaken, and learn more about current areas of success which could be more widely replicated;
2. To look at suggested models of best practice internally, in local and regional government, and in private and third sector employers, as appropriate to the aims of the review;
3. To consider, and recommend to Cabinet, any improvements to the Council's present approach.

PART I - MEMBERS, PUBLIC AND PRESS

INFORMATION & ANALYSIS

It is proposed that the review be broken into four key themes. The structure is offered as a broad outline in order to ensure that all key aspects of the review are covered. Members are welcome to revise this structure and to add additional themes as they see appropriate. Witnesses will be encouraged to contribute to any theme of relevance to them, as well as help to identify any gaps in the review as it proceeds.

Advertising roles and reaching appropriate candidates

The review will consider whether posts are advertised in a suitable way to reach the necessary audience, and whether applicants are given the right information to prepare for an application or interview. This encompasses 'where' we advertise roles (websites, media, etc), but also the presentation and content of Council advertising. It is expected that this theme will include reference to Council use of social media and other business networking sites to attract candidates.

In previous years, HR attention has been devoted to Social Worker recruitment and offering an improved portal of information for potential candidates. In a departure from the usual job specifications, the role description is enhanced by portraits of existing Social Workers and discussions of their job, hosted on a bespoke website (see <http://www.hillingdonswjobs.co.uk/> for more information). The website provides dedicated pages describing the Council, social care roles and careers and also the benefits of working for the Borough. The first recruitment campaign for managers was considered a success, and a second campaign is currently being planned. One line of enquiry will be to establish whether there are aspects of this rebranding and campaign which could be easily transferred to general recruitment.

As the most visited page on the Council website is the jobs page, this theme offers an opportunity to assess a key aspect of Council branding and interaction with our residents.

Interview methods, and helping officers to assess candidates

A one-size-fits-all approach to recruitment is unsuitable given the wide variety of functions undertaken by the Council, and the requisite skills necessary. However, the review will give consideration to the methods in place to help Managers in deciding a framework for appointing staff.

The HR policy suggests a framework for scoring candidates, and additional options for weighting the most important characteristics. This guidance does not, however, extend to the method by which these results are obtained. The Committee may seek a greater understanding within recruiting officers of how different tests, questions and best practices can help to ensure that, on the one hand, candidates are given the opportunity to demonstrate the necessary capability, and on the other, an appropriate level of differentiation between candidates emerges.

External witnesses to the review will be encouraged to contribute alternative, innovative interview and assessment techniques.

The Committee may wish to investigate further how we seek out ensuring good ICT competencies of staff joining the Council.

Staff induction

The recruitment process should also ensure that candidates understand the role and the responsibilities it entails. The review will consider ways in which a candidate can be helped to understand the role they are applying for beyond a candidate specification, i.e. they know what to expect in the day-to-day job, and ensuring that the induction introduces new staff to the key policies, benefits and opportunities of the Council.

PART I - MEMBERS, PUBLIC AND PRESS

Equalities

HR policy is clear that candidates declaring a disability who meet the person specification in full are guaranteed an interview in line with council policy and the two ticks disability scheme, and that additional appropriate arrangements will be made to accommodate applicants who consider themselves disabled. Furthermore, the advice given is that disabled candidates are welcome to discuss their impairment, though should be reminded that it has no bearing on their appointment.

There are clear structures in place to help ensure that recruitment is conducted in a fair manner, concentrating on factors relevant to undertaking a job. However, the review will consider whether these structures have proved sufficient, and whether the Council has a positive record in assisting disabled applicants. This theme should ensure that the recruitment process represents the Council's commitment to equalities.

WITNESS, EVIDENCE & ASSESSMENT

The table below sets out the possible witnesses that could be invited to present evidence to the Committee. Members are reminded that this is not an exhaustive list and that additional witnesses can be requested at any point throughout this review.

Meeting	Action	Purpose / Outcome
CSPPOC: 26 September 2016	The scoping report will be presented to the Committee. Members will have the opportunity to agree and/or propose alternative witnesses/topics.	Information and analysis
CSPPOC: 11 October 2016	Witness Session 1 Hillingdon's Current Recruitment Practices Mike Talbot, HR Interview trainer (tbc)	Evidence and enquiry
CSPPC: 8 November 2016	Witness Session 2 External Best Practice Other local government (tbc) Private (tbc)	Evidence and enquiry
CSPPOC: 5 January 2016	Agree Final Report and Recommendations	Consider Draft Final Report
Cabinet: TBC	The draft final report will be presented to Cabinet by the Chairman of the Committee.	Cabinet may approve, amend or reject the report's recommendations.

ASSESSMENT

As is standard practice for a Policy Overview Committee review, once a report's recommendations have been agreed by the Cabinet, officers will be asked to begin delivering the necessary changes. The monitoring of officers' work is a fundamentally important aspect of the Committee's work and, as such, regular reports on progress can be requested by Members and a full update report will be added to the future work programme of the Committee.

RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

This review will be undertaken within current resources. The plan set out above will be coordinated and delivered by Democratic Services. The additional resource of staff time required to present, collect and format evidence for witness sessions, will also need to be considered.

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