



RAMSGATE TOWN COUNCIL

RECRUITMENT POLICY

Adopted	5th April 2023
Due to review	As deemed necessary, Reviewed 8th July 2026
Note	Based upon the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman's template document

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 The Council understands the value of recruiting a diverse, multi-cultural workforce and is committed to meeting our social and legal obligations to maintain and encourage diversity through our recruitment practice.
- 1.2 Our recruitment policy will be reviewed **regularly** to ensure that our 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.
- 1.3 We require all colleagues involved in recruitment to adhere to our policy on equality and diversity, **Code of Conduct** and our Staffing Handbook. Failure to do so may result in this being treated as a disciplinary matter.
- 1.4 We will ensure that vacancies are advertised to the widest possible pool of potential candidates and seek to encourage applications from groups who may be under-represented. We will consider 'positive action' where appropriate.
- 1.5 Recruitment decisions will take account of the results of all testing, presentations and interviews and appointment decisions will be made on merit.
- 1.6 As part of our commitment to developing our own colleagues, we will consider internal **recruitment**, secondments and acting up arrangements where appropriate.
- 1.7 We also offer a range of flexible working opportunities such as job sharing, part time working, agile working and home based working.
- 1.8 If a contractor is used to provide all or part of the recruitment process, we will verify that the agency has an appropriate policy on equality and diversity and will agree with the agency how the personal data handled by the contractor will be used and disclosed.

- 1.9 Coaching, training and/or advice on the recruitment and selection process including equality and diversity issues will be provided to all colleagues involved in the recruitment process.

2. THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

- 2.1 Each recruitment exercise is owned and led by the recruiting manager. Where an existing position becomes vacant, the Town Clerk (in conjunction with the relevant line manager) and Finance & General Purposes Chair should first review whether the post is still required and whether there needs to be some revision to the role and responsibilities. Any changes should be approved by the relevant committee. **If there is a need to recruit, the person specification and job description should be reviewed or produced as appropriate.**
- 2.2 The Council / Committees can create new posts for their area of responsibility within the given budget. Any post that requires a virement of the budgets must be approved by the Council. When creating a new post, approval must first be obtained from Council / Committee (as appropriate) in advance, which includes approval of the job description, person specification and budget implications.
- 2.3 Responsibility for Human Resources of all staff sits with the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
- 2.4 Secondments and acting up opportunities will be advertised internally and should be for a specific period and purpose. These will be recruited to in line with the relevant policies and will not normally be **subject to consultation**.
- 2.5 The Town Clerk & RFO will have responsibility for ensuring that this Policy is followed and the timetable for recruitment.
- 2.6 Adverts will be placed with a closing date of at least two weeks from the date of publication, five days should be allowed for short-listing and seven days prior to interviewing. This is to ensure that there is enough time to contact candidates and for them to ensure their availability and to carry out any pre-interview testing.
- 2.7 Interview panel members should be informed of the recruitment timetable and the recruiting manager should liaise with them to agree the interview questions at least five days before the interview/s.
- 2.8 Recruitment information relating to the appointment will be retained on file for 6 months from date of appointment and will then be destroyed.
- 2.9 If the successful candidate fails to take up the offer of employment or the post becomes available within 6 months of the original appointment, the organisation may approach the next most suitable candidate with an offer of employment.

3. ADVERTISING

- 3.1 The Council is committed to ensuring that advertisements are placed so that they reach a diverse range of potential candidates. All permanent and fixed-term posts will be advertised internally for two weeks. The Town Clerk in conjunction with the Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee can stipulate that a post should be advertised externally, even if there are internal candidates.
- 3.2 All vacancies will be advertised on the Kent Association of Local Councils website and expenditure on advertising will be subject to the approved budget.

- 3.3 Subject to paragraph 3.2 above, the most appropriate means of advertising for the position will be identified e.g. national/local press, specialist press, job centres, recruitment agencies, internet, specialist websites, publications or agencies. If a particular group is under-represented we may, under 'positive action', seek to encourage applications by advertising in a publication targeted towards that group.
- 3.4 Campaigns may be run to recruit to a pool of staff for some posts where this provides the most cost effective solution.

4. INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

- 4.1 All candidates will receive information about the job, this will include:

How to apply

- An Equal Opportunities monitoring form
- A job description and person specification for the post
- A summary of the relevant terms and conditions of employment
- Relevant background on us or the job
- Any additional information relevant to the post

5. SHORT LISTING

- 5.1 Applicants should be short listed against the criteria as set in the job description and person specification. Telephone tests or other tests may be used as part of the short listing process.
- 5.2 The Interview Panel will complete and agree the short listing and any tests/assessments.

6. INTERVIEW PANEL

- 6.1 The recruiting manager chairing the panel must be familiar with our equality and diversity and recruitment policies. All panel members should have received training on good recruitment practice and equality and diversity.
- 6.2 All members of the panel should contribute to scoring and selection.
- 6.3 Where possible the panel should be diverse in relation to race and gender.
- 6.4 The Interview Panel will normally consist of the Line Manager or Town Clerk, the Chair* of the relevant committee with primary oversight of the post and Chair* of the Finance & General Purposes Committee. *Vice Chair's if required.

7. INTERVIEWS

- 7.1 Candidates must be given reasonable notice for interviews and of any tests they will be expected to do. The recruiting manager should ensure that reasonable adjustments are made where the candidate has a disability, for example provision of specialist equipment or allowing more time.
- 7.2 The interview panel should allow sufficient time to meet in advance of the interviews to discuss and agree the process. Questions should cover all areas relating to the requisite skills, knowledge or experience as well as any matters arising from the candidate's application form and from any profiling. For the purpose of consistency and fairness, all candidates should be asked the same core questions.
- 7.3 The length of the interview should be the same for all candidates. The recruiting manager is responsible for ensuring that interviews keep to the time allocated.

- 7.4 Brief notes should be taken during the interview by each panel member. All notes should be returned with the application forms and test papers to Deputy Town Clerk for retention at the end of the recruitment process.
- 7.5 Where appropriate, **assessments may** be held to test a range of competencies relevant to the post. These may include verbal reasoning, report writing, IT, presentation, numeracy, analytical, management, technical or specialist skills. Any tests used within the recruitment process must be able to be validated, relevant to the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to carry out the job role and must not be discriminatory.

8. SELECTION

- 8.1 At the end of the interview the panel should compare each candidate's answers against the person specification and decide whether there is sufficient evidence to indicate to what extent they meet the skills, knowledge and experience required and how well their experience fits our needs.
- 8.2 Panel scores should be agreed and recorded on the interview marking sheet. Decisions to appoint will be by consensus based on evidence provided through the assessment tests (if applicable) and subsequent interview. Where none of the candidates is considered suitable, the post may be re-advertised.
- 8.3 The recruiting manager will advise internal candidates of the outcome and write to all external candidates to advise them of the outcome.
- 8.4 All candidates should be given feedback on request about their performance at interview and any testing or assessments carried out, normally by the recruiting manager.

9. EXTERNAL APPOINTMENTS

- 9.1 The recruiting manager will contact the selected candidate to make a conditional offer of employment subject to receipt of satisfactory references. Before any offer is made, the Deputy Town Clerk will obtain confirmation of the candidate's right to work within the UK. The candidate should be asked to confirm their acceptance in writing and indicate their earliest start date.
- 9.2 Contracts are issued on receipt of satisfactory references and any other relevant checks where applicable.
- 9.3 In the event of references not appearing to be satisfactory, the matter must be referred to the Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and Town Clerk before any conditional offer may be withdrawn.

10. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY MONITORING

- 10.1 Applicants are asked to complete an equality and diversity monitoring form as part of the recruitment process. These forms are detached from applications and are not seen by panel members. The information is stored securely.

11. VETTING PROCESS

- 11.1 It is a legal requirement that checks are made on all new colleagues to establish their right to work in the UK. These must be carried out in a clear and consistent manner. We must comply with our legal obligations as well as ensure that the candidates are suitable and competent for the job and that the information they have provided in their application is verified.

- 11.2 The following checks are to be used to vet all new colleagues, prior to offering employment.
- Proof of identity and right to work in the UK
 - Reference checks for the whole of the previous 3 years of employment
 - Proof of qualifications, if relevant to the role
- 11.3 All candidates must have the proof of identity confirmed by the Town Clerk's office before they are offered employment. They must submit original documents (on the [right to work checklist](#)) to prove their identity and their right to work in the UK.
- 11.4 Candidates are required to disclose any unspent criminal convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Possession of a criminal record does not necessarily preclude the candidate from employment. Information which has a bearing on the requirements of the post will normally be discussed with the candidate at interview.
- 11.5 If information given during the application process is found to be untrue, the offer of employment will be withdrawn.

12. ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

- 12.1 The Immigration Act 2016 created a duty for public sector employers to ensure that each person who works for them in a customer facing role speaks fluent English.
- 12.2 Fluency relates to an individual's ability to speak with confidence and accuracy, using accurate sentence structures and vocabulary, all without hesitation and appropriate to the situation in hand. It does not relate to regional accents, dialects, speech impediments or the tone of conversations.
- 12.3 The person specification for customer facing roles explains what our fluency standard is for those roles.
- 12.4 Job applicants will demonstrate their level of fluency by competently answering interview questions in English.

13. REFERENCE CHECKS

- 13.1 Employment references are required for each new colleague to cover the whole of the previous three years. If relevant work experience is not covered in the three-year period, additional references may be required. One must be from their current or most recent employer.
- 13.2 Where the candidate has no previous employment record, a reference from their school or other educational institution should be obtained where relevant. Other personal references will **not** be accepted.
- 13.3 Where the candidate was self-employed, they will need to provide evidence that their business was properly conducted, i.e. references from clients, bank manager, or accountant.
- 13.4 The Town Clerk's office will take up references and contact the recruiting manager once received to confirm they are satisfactory. If there are concerns about a reference, the recruiting manager will contact the referee for further information. If this is not possible or there is difficulty obtaining references the recruiting manager will contact the candidate for another referee and alert the recruiting manager.

13.5 If satisfactory references are not received within a reasonable timescale, the conditional offer of employment may be withdrawn.

14. HEALTH CHECKS

14.1 Successful applicants who declare a disability or may require adjustments to their work or working environment may be referred to our Occupational Health provider. Where reasonable adjustments are agreed these must be recorded in writing. The candidate should also receive written confirmation of whatever adjustments have been agreed.