

Human Resources Policy No. 16

Recruitment and Selection

Last Reviewed and Updated July 2016

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Effective recruitment and selection is central and crucial to the successful functioning of the Broads Authority. It depends on finding people with the necessary skills, expertise and qualifications to deliver the Authority's strategic objectives and the ability to make a positive contribution to the values and aims of the organisation.
- 1.2 All Line Managers will need to advise the appropriate Director when a vacancy arises, or if there is a need for additional short term resource, in order that a discussion can be held at Management Team. Once permission has been given to recruit, the Line Manager needs to liaise with the HR Team to commence the recruitment process.

2. Advertisements

- 2.1 Vacancies will generally be advertised on the Authority's website and online at EDP Jobs 24. They may also be advertised in an appropriate newspaper or journal.
- 2.2 All vacancies will be posted on the Authority's Intranet website.
- 2.3 Such advertisements will also be circulated to the National Park authorities of England, Wales and Scotland (with whom the Authority has a collaborative agreement) and to other bodies to whom it is considered appropriate.
- 2.4 The Management Team may, on occasions, decide to restrict advertisement to internal candidates only, i.e. existing staff and volunteers.
- 2.5 Vacancies, which are restricted to internal candidates only, will be clearly indicated on the advertisement. All internal candidates will be selected for interview on the same criteria as external candidates.
- 2.6 Line Managers should agree with employees ahead of any statutory period of maternity leave whether they wish to be informed of any vacancies that arise within the Authority, other than those on the Authority's website.

3. Application Form

- 3.1 Candidates for all posts will be asked to complete a standard application form, in order that they can be judged on the basis of comparable information.
- 3.2 In applying for posts, all candidates will be provided with a job description, details of the appropriate conditions of service and details about the Authority. A brief statement about the appointment procedure will also be provided and, if possible, an indication of the date (or week) when interviews will be held. The job description will

include a list of the main duties and responsibilities of the post, together with an outline of the qualifications and experience which candidates are expected to possess.

- 3.3 In drawing up the job description and conditions of service the Authority will ensure, so far as is reasonably practical, that no job applicant receives less favorable treatment than another on the grounds of disability, gender, race, religion or belief, age, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, caring responsibilities or hours of work, and that no applicant is placed at a disadvantage unjustifiably by requirements or conditions which have a disproportionately adverse effect on a particular group.
- 3.4 Applicants will be asked to specify whether they have any disabilities, as defined in the Equality Act 2010, and whether there are any reasonable adjustments needed for them to attend an interview. All applicants with a disability who meet the essential criteria for a job will be interviewed, and considered on their merits
- 3.5 Applicants will be required to supply the names and postal or email addresses of two people from who references can be obtained, one of whom should normally be the applicant's current or most recent employer.
- 3.6 References will only be requested for candidates who are conditionally offered the post.
- 3.7 References should normally be made in writing, but those received by telephone will be accepted by the HR Team, provided that a note of the conversation is recorded and placed on file.
- 3.8 All candidates will be asked to declare on the application form 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.
- 3.9 For posts that involve working with children, applicants will be asked to reveal details of 'spent' and 'unspent' convictions. Successful candidates for such posts may 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.
- 3.10 Applicants will also be required to declare if they are related to any member or officer of the Authority. Canvassing of members or officers of the Authority is prohibited, and will be a disqualification. No officer should be put into a position where he or she is responsible, either directly or indirectly, for a person to whom they are related.
- 3.11 In view of the large numbers of applications received, it is the Authority's policy not to communicate further with applicants other than those who are shortlisted. A note to this effect is included in the details sent out to applicants.
- 3.12 All completed applications forms are private and confidential and will only be made available to those directly involved in the recruitment and selection process.
- 3.13 All application forms will be collated by the HR Team and passed to the recruiting Manager for shortlisting. A skills and experience matrix will be drawn up using the information provided in the application forms to indicate how each candidate meets the criteria.

- 3.14 A shortlist of candidates will be drawn up for interview, based entirely on merit and suitability for the post but taking account of the Authority's responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010. Other than in exceptional circumstances, reasonable notice will be given to ensure that candidates have sufficient time in order to prepare for and make the necessary arrangements to attend the interview.

4. Selection Methods

- 4.1 Interviews will be held by a panel comprising of a minimum of two persons, gender balanced wherever possible. The Authority's policy is to encourage candidates, where possible, to be at ease during the interview, in order that they can give a fair and accurate impression of themselves.
- 4.2 A representative from the HR Team will be present on all interviews for posts at Section Head level and above.
- 4.3 A set of questions will be agreed by the interview panel in advance and will be developed from the current job description for the post. Candidates will be provided with a copy of the interview questions to refer to, but these must not be retained at the end of the interview.
- 4.4 All candidates will be asked the same questions in the same order, and their responses rated between 0 to 5. The panel will each have a copy of the questions and will score independently of each other during the interview. Time is allocated between interviews for the panel to discuss each candidate and to award a total points score. Additional notes may be made by the panel during the interview, however it should be noted that candidates will have access to all information should they request it.
- 4.5 It should be remembered that an interview is a two way process, and where possible candidates will be given every opportunity to view the offices or location where they will work and ask questions about the Authority, to ensure that they have a full understanding of the post for which they are applying and the way the Authority operates.
- 4.6 In addition to interviews, a range of other selection techniques may be used. In such circumstances reasonable notice and relevant information will be given to ensure that candidates have sufficient time and information to prepare.
- 4.7 Candidates attending an interview will be reimbursed their expenses incurred in attending the interview. A claim form can be requested from the HR Team.
- 4.8 For travelling expenses this would normally be the appropriate second-class rail fare. Candidates from within Norfolk and Suffolk may alternately be reimbursed at the Inland Revenue mileage rate if they use their own private transport. Other expenses may include overnight accommodation, if appropriate and a meal allowance, based on the rates payable within the Authority.
- 4.9 A candidate who withdraws or refuses an offer of appointment for reasons considered by the Authority to be inadequate will not be reimbursed his/her expenses.
- 4.10 All appointments will be made strictly on merit and related to the requirements of the job.

- 4.11 The Chief Executive has delegated powers to make appointments to posts below Director level or equivalent. For Director level posts the Chief Executive will consult with the Chairman to determine Member's level of involvement.
- 4.12 All interviewed candidates will be notified of the outcome of the selection process as soon as possible, either by telephone or email. Unsuccessful candidates can request feedback if they wish to do so. A member of the interview panel will provide an accurate and unbiased summary as to the reason for non-appointment and indicate any areas where it was considered that the candidates skills or experience were not yet at the required level. A written summary of the feedback provided should be held on the recruitment file.
- 4.13 All unsuccessful candidates' application forms and interview notes will be retained for 6 months from the date of interviews taking place. After this date they will be securely destroyed.

5. Selection and Appointment of the Chief Executive

- 5.1 The selection and appointment of the Chief Executive will be made by a panel of Members in consultation with Natural England. The panel has the opportunity to seek advice on the process from the HR Team, as they consider appropriate.

5. Relevant Checks

- 5.1 All offers of employment are conditional upon the satisfactory result of the following:
- completion of Medical Enquiry Form. In exceptional circumstances the Authority may request further details from the candidate's General Practitioner or request that the candidate be examined by the Authority's Occupational Health provider;
 - two satisfactory references;
 - evidence of a 'secure' document under the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. Details are included in the conditions of service provided to all applicants with the application form; and
 - Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (if appropriate to the post).

6. Probationary Period

- 6.1 All permanent appointments into the Authority will be subject to a probationary period of six calendar months. After three months a review meeting will take place between the post holder and their Line Manager to discuss progress. Employees appointed to temporary posts may have a shorter probationary period, commensurate with the length of their contract. At the end of the probationary period, and subject to a satisfactory report by the appropriate head of section or Line Manager, employees will be verbally notified that they have successfully completed their probationary period.
- 6.2 If there is any cause for concern regarding an employee's early progress and capability a review meeting will be held to discuss the areas requiring improvement and further training, guidance or support will be given. This will be followed up in writing. If the agreed improvements are not met by the date of the six month review, the probationary period may be extended by a maximum of three months. If the required standards are not met by the end of the extended period of probation, the employment may be terminated on notice.

7. Recruitment Monitoring

- 7.1 The Broads Authority seeks to recruit employees on the basis of their ability and the requirements of the post.
- 7.2 The Authority wants to ensure that all applicants receive equal treatment irrespective of their disability, gender or gender identity, ethnicity, religion or faith, age, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status or pregnancy.
- 7.3 In order to meet this commitment, all candidates are asked to complete a recruitment monitoring form. All completed monitoring forms will be treated as confidential. The form will be separated from the application form on receipt and those involved in the selection process will not have access to it. The information given by candidates will be solely used for the purpose of monitoring the recruitment process.

Appendix A Employment of Persons with Criminal Convictions

1. Introduction and Policy Statement

- 1.1 As an equal opportunities employer, the Broads Authority undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly and equitably. The importance of equality of opportunity for all is recognised, as are the benefits of having diversity of talent, skills and potential. As such the Authority welcomes applications from as wide a range of applicants as possible, including those with criminal records.
- 1.2 The Broads Authority is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff and users of its services, regardless of disability, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, religion or faith, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital or parental status, caring responsibilities, hours of work, trade union membership or non-membership or offending background.

2. Employment of Persons with Criminal Records

- 2.1 All individuals are assured that the presence of a criminal record will not necessarily exclude them from employment with the Broads Authority. Any criminal background will be assessed by reference to the circumstances and nature of offences and how these relate to the nature of the position.

3. Recruitment Process

- 3.1 All candidates will be selected for interview on the basis of their skills, qualifications and experience in relation to the requirements of the job.
- 3.2 All applicants are asked to declare all 'unspent' convictions unless the nature of the position being applied for is exempt as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 2001 and it is a requirement that an entire criminal record (including spent convictions) is declared. This will be made clear in the recruitment literature.
- 3.3 For certain positions, a check from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will be required. If this is the case it will be made clear in the recruitment literature. It follows that offers of employment to such positions will be conditional upon further assessment of the relevance of any convictions to the job in question before being confirmed.
- 3.4 The HR Team holds a list of identified posts in the Authority requiring a DBS Check; the list will be reviewed annually in consultation with the Management Team.
- 3.5 It is requested that information declared be sent under separate cover to the Head of Human Resources who will use this information only to assess the individual's suitability for the position being applied for.
- 3.6 Where applicable, applicants will be given the opportunity at interview to discuss any declared offences or other matters which may be relevant to the position applied for.
- 3.7 Appropriate guidance on identifying and assessing the relevance of the content of criminal records is provided to those involved in the recruitment process.

3.8 Any information revealed in a DBS Check, which gives cause for concern to the Broads Authority, will be discussed with the individual before any conditional offer of employment already made is withdrawn.

3.9 Failure to reveal information that is relevant to the position sought will lead to the immediate withdrawal of any offer of employment.

4. Handling of Disclosure information

4.1 Disclosure information is never kept on an applicant's personnel file and is always kept separately, in lockable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties. Any information should only be released through the Human Resources Section, and the individual concerned will also be advised of the requirement for viewing the information.

4.2 In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties.

4.3 Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

4.4 Once a recruitment decision has been made, the Authority does not retain Disclosure information for any longer than is absolutely necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months after the date on which recruitment or other decisions have been made.

4.5 Once the retention period has elapsed, all disclosure information will be destroyed by shredding. The Authority will not keep any photocopies or other images of the DBS Check. However, notwithstanding the above, the Authority may keep a record of the date of issue of a DBS Check, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure requested, the position for which the DBS Check was requested, the unique reference number of the DBS Check and the details of the recruitment decision taken.