

Recruitment and Selection Policy

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1. Policy Information

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2. Policy Statement

South Liverpool Homes (SLH) recognise that recruitment and selection play a crucial role in the organisation's continuing success and the services we deliver to our tenants. Our recruitment and the procedures that support it have been designed to promote high standards of recruitment practice, provide equality of opportunity, strengthen our services, and attract and retain the best talent.

Good recruitment practice is not only about attracting the best possible applicants from the broadest pool of talent available but also about compliance with legislation. Current legislation and best practice have been taken into account when devising this policy, and everyone involved in the recruitment process is responsible for ensuring they comply with the procedures it sets out.

3. Policy Aims

Through the effective implementation of this policy, SLH aims to attract and retain colleagues who demonstrate relevant skills and experience that make a valued contribution towards the organisation and the services we deliver to our tenants and the wider community. Every individual appointed should be selected on merit, and any selection exercise used should be to assist in finding the best person for the job.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Promote a positive image of SLH as an employer and service provider
- Support actions to promote local employment where possible
- Choose a method of recruitment and selection appropriate to the role
- Provide recruitment information that is clear, concise and appropriate to the job role
- Fill vacancies within an optimum timescale, efficiently and with the best use of resources
- Recruit the individual most suited to a job based on their abilities and individual merit
- Reach as vast a pool of potential applicants as practicable and encourage applications from underrepresented groups
- Create flexible work opportunities able to respond to the changing labour market, housing sector and corporate objectives

4. Recruitment and Selection Policy

Analysis of current and future workforce planning is undertaken each year by managers as part of the budget planning process to ensure value for money and continued delivery of service.

When roles become vacant within SLH, it is not our immediate response to backfill the position. We will identify how we can be more efficient in our delivery, identifying if there is a way we could deliver the role differently and whether there is a need to recruit.

4.1 Board and Committee member recruitment

Board and Committee members are recruited in line with the Board and Committee Member Recruitment and Renewal Policy.

4.2 Establishing if there is a vacancy

A resignation will not automatically mean there is a vacancy to be filled. The role and purpose of the job will be assessed, e.g., can the duties be reallocated, are they still relevant, or is there an alternative arrangement that would be more suitable? This is the time to review whether recruitment is the most appropriate solution or whether an alternative may be more beneficial and provide better value for money or a way of working.

The filling of all potential vacancies or changes to the structure must be signed off in advance through the completion of the 'Recruitment Authorisation Form' available on SharePoint or from the HR team. Once complete, this should be forwarded to Human Resources along with the job description and person specification.

4.3 Job Descriptions & Person Specifications

A Job Description (JD) will be produced/reviewed for any vacant post using the standard Job Description template. This will set out the duties and responsibilities of the role in a concise and accurate way. Where the vacancy is to replace a post, the previous job description and person specification should be reviewed and revised where necessary. For a new position, a complete job description and person specification will be required.

The Person Specification (PS) should define the qualifications, skills, experience and personal attributes that a person requires to fulfil the role. The criteria must be categorised as essential (the minimum standard to perform the role adequately) or desirable (the standards which will enable the person to perform the job more effectively). The criteria for this must be measurable.

To demonstrate our commitment to supporting equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace, the following criterion (or an equivalent criterion that is more specific and relevant to the post) are included within all person specifications.

- All colleagues: essential criterion of 'Commitment to supporting and knowledge of equality, diversity and inclusion'.
- Managers and above: essential criterion of 'Commitment to advancing our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion and maintaining knowledge in the subject area.'

Where a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check or professional registration is relevant and a condition of employment for a job, the requirements must be specified in the person specification.

4.4 Internal Opportunities

We recognise the importance of providing opportunities for development and career progression to enhance colleague retention and motivation, together with the need to achieve a recruitment balance between satisfying the aspirations of

existing colleagues and recruiting external candidates with differing experience and skills. We will therefore advertise all vacancies below Executive Management level both internally and externally. Where colleagues may be absent from work due to parental leave or for any other reason long term, managers should ensure that they are informed of vacancies.

Where it is clear that internal advertisement is most appropriate, i.e. we are aware of interested colleagues who meet the essential criteria for the post, we may advertise internally in the first instance.

4.5 Advertising

Decisions regarding the advertising of vacancies and the use of recruitment agencies will be based on several factors, including value for money, the seniority of the post and an assessment of the labour market at the time.

External advertisements will be placed on the SLH website and in other relevant publications/job boards as agreed between the HR team and the Recruiting Manager. In line with our Equality & Diversity Policy, we will ensure our advertisements reach as vast a pool of potential applicants as practicable and encourage applications from underrepresented groups to achieve this we may.

- Include statements encouraging applications from under-represented groups.
- Target advertising to reach under-represented groups.
- Consider more flexible-working patterns.

Adverts will be prepared by the HR team and will include the following as a minimum.

- Closing date
- Job title
- Hours
- Salary and any relevant benefits specific to the role (e.g., car allowance)
- Summary of role and candidate requirements
- Job description/person specification
- Intended date of interviews (wherever possible)
- Whether a Disclosure & Barring application is required
- Commitment to EDI

4.6 Shortlisting

The HR team will provide applications and a shortlisting matrix and supporting guide to the recruitment panel. The recruiting panel will not have access to any of the applicant's personal information including name until after the shortlisting process has been concluded. Shortlisting decisions will be based solely on evidence provided in the application form and how that evidence meets the

Person Specification criteria.

Shortlisting should be undertaken by a minimum of two people from the recruitment panel. Each person should assess applications individually to help prevent bias, after the initial sift, a final shortlist should be agreed and submitted to HR. HR will then conduct a quality check to ensure no bias has influenced the shortlisting.

Unsuccessful external candidates will not usually be provided with specific feedback on their application but will receive confirmation via email from the HR team to confirm that their application has been unsuccessful.

4.7 Selection Methods

For Executive Director appointments, a panel will be set up whose membership will be determined by the Chief Executive. The Governance & Remuneration Committee will support the SLH Board Chair to complete any necessary recruitment and selection of the Chief Executive.

For all other appointments a panel will be set up whose membership will be determined by the recruiting manager and the relevant executive team member but will always include the recruiting manager and a member of the Human Resources (HR) Team. Panel members must ensure they can attend every part of the selection process (presentations, interviews etc.) for the duration of the process, to maintain consistency and to provide fair treatment of all candidates. HR and the recruitment panel must remain mindful of and challenge potential unconscious bias which could play into decision making at interview and assessment stage.

A competency-based interview will be used to determine who should be appointed. Interviews can also be complemented by other methods such as presentations and practical assessments.

Where it is considered appropriate for the recruitment and selection process to include an assessment centre HR will assist the Recruiting Manager in developing and coordinating assessment. Assessment Centres are attended by six to ten candidates and involve a combination of tasks and activities that test a candidate's suitability for the job.

4.8 Disability Confident Employer

In line with our Level 2 commitment to recruiting and attracting disabled candidates under the 'Disability Confident scheme' all candidates who meet the essential criteria and who have indicated that they have a disability and wish to make an application under the scheme as part of their application form, will automatically be shortlisted for interview. Information regarding applicants who have applied under the scheme will only be shared by HR once shortlisting has been completed and essential criteria have been met

Before interview attendance, all candidates are contacted by the HR team to establish if they require any adjustments/support on account of a disability. Any candidates with a disability will not be excluded from the recruitment and selection process unless it is clear they cannot perform a duty that is intrinsic to

the role, having taken into account reasonable adjustments that could be applied. HR will ensure that reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process are made to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged because of a disability.

4.9 Ethnic minority guaranteed interview scheme

We understand that applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds can experience additional barriers when applying for roles. To address this we offer all candidates from an ethnic minority background a guaranteed interview should they wish to apply under the scheme and meet all the essential criteria outlined in the person specification. Information regarding applicants who have applied under the scheme will only be shared by HR once shortlisting has been completed and essential criteria have been met. It is hoped that this will encourage diversity within our workforce and enable candidates to recognise our commitment to creating an inclusive and diverse environment.

4.10 Closely Connected Candidates

In cases where an applicant for employment has close connections to a Board or Committee member, involved resident or colleague, SLH will ensure, prior to any shortlisting exercise, that:

- There is disclosure of the individual's connection
- Consideration of the application is based solely on merit and suitability in relation to the requirements of the post
- No person having any personal knowledge of the applicant plays any part in the assessment or decision

A definition of close family members and close connections can be found in the Declaration of Interest Policy Appendix A, Section 2 of the Accompanying Guidance to the Declarations of Interest Form. A copy of which can be obtained from the HR team.

Sector best practice suggests that the presumption is against offering employment. However, provided the applicant can demonstrate that he or she fully meets the post's requirements, we may decide to offer employment. Where this concerns a senior post, the absolute assumption is against offering employment.

Should a Board or Committee member wish to apply for employment, they must:

- Immediately declare their interest and resign from the Board(s) or Committee(s) on which they serve, and
- Understand that there will be no presumption that the applicant would necessarily be reappointed to the Board(s) or Committee(s) if unsuccessful in their application for employment

Where the employment of a relative or other closely connected person to a Board or Committee member is approved, measures will be put in place to ensure that the supervision and appraisal of the member of staff is not compromised. Relatives and others closely connected with the member of staff should not be involved in their direct line management.

4.11 Rehabilitation of Offenders

SLH will not automatically refuse to employ a particular individual just because they have a previous criminal conviction.

If an applicant has a conviction that is not spent (as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) and if the nature of the offence is relevant to their suitability for the job for which they have applied, we will review the individual circumstances of the case following a discussion with the person and may at our discretion, decline to select the individual for employment.

Should an individual secure employment with SLH having failed to disclose information relating to unspent convictions when requested, they may be subject to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Policy

In certain circumstances, candidates must disclose spent and unspent convictions. These circumstances are contained in the Rehabilitation Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order) 1975.

If the job we are recruiting is one of the excluded jobs listed in the Exceptions Order we will request the applicant to disclose all convictions, whether spent (and unprotected) or unspent. Even in these circumstances, however, we will still consider whether the nature of the conviction has some relevance to their suitability for the job for which the individual has applied. If the position is exempt, at the time of offering the post, we will seek documentary evidence about that person's criminal convictions and the applicant's agreement to make an application to the Disclosure and Barring Service for a basic, standard or enhanced disclosure (as appropriate).

We are committed to ensuring that all information provided about an individual's criminal convictions, including any information released in disclosures, is used fairly and stored and handled appropriately and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Data on file about an individual's criminal convictions will be held only as long as it is required for employment purposes and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised person.

When considering an applicant with a conviction we will carry out an objective assessment and will take into account:

- A person's age at the time of the offence
- How long ago the offence took place
- Whether it was an isolated offence or part of a pattern of offending
- Any other relevant considerations about the person's conduct before and since the offence
- A person's abilities, skills, experience and qualifications
- The nature of the conviction and its relevance to the job in question
- The risks to the business, tenants, clients and colleagues

We will also:

- Be confidential and discrete when requesting and handling criminal records

- Advise applicants to submit confidential records separately from the usual application form and to the Executive Director of Culture & Communications
- Comply with data protection law, including GDPR (and the Information Commissioner's Employment Practices Code).

Should an applicant disclose a criminal record, we will risk assess the nature of the conviction against the role being applied for. This will consider:

- An examination of circumstances leading up to an offence
- Repeat offences
- The length of time since an offence(s) took place
- The nature of the job, workplace environment, exposure to money, property and vulnerable people
- The extent of job supervision
- An individual's attempt to rehabilitate

4.12 Unsuccessful Candidates

We understand and appreciate the time, effort, and commitment that candidates go through when searching for jobs. We are also aware that failing to get any form of acknowledgement from us may have a demotivating effect on candidates' continuing job searches. We will contact all unsuccessful candidates to thank them for their interest, inform them of the outcome of their application and offer personal feedback on interview performance where this is requested.

4.13 Complaints

Job applicants, at any stage of the Recruitment and Selection procedures, wishing to make a complaint should be referred to the HR & OD Manager who will ensure that the complaint is acknowledged, investigated and a response given to the complainant.

4.14 Appointment

Successful candidates will receive a written provisional offer of employment from the HR Team. Confirmation of employment will be subject to the following;

- Satisfactory receipt of references covering a period of three years
- Sight of original qualification certificates
- DBS certificate confirmation (for applicable roles only, please refer to the Disclosure & Barring Policy for more information).

4.15 Temporary Recruitment

All temporary recruitment must be approved in the same way as permanent/fixed term recruitment via a completed Recruitment Authorisation Form.

The HR Team will take responsibility for engaging with recruitment agencies where this is required.

As temporary recruitment usually arises unexpectedly e.g., due to long term absence it is important that a prompt process is followed to minimise impact upon the team and/or business. Assessment of candidate suitability will therefore be made via review of CV and a remote or face to face interview. This will be conducted by the Recruiting Manager and a member of the HR Team.

All temporary roles will be continuously reviewed as they are expected to be short-term and should not be used to provide a long-term solution.

Guidance should be sought from the HR team with regards to agency workers' rights which are effective from 12 weeks.

4.16 Apprenticeships

Where possible we will create, work with and support local enterprise initiatives which provide apprenticeship opportunities for people to gain valuable work experience. This will include on-the-job training alongside professional training, enabling them to achieve a nationally recognised qualification.

Whilst this policy details our approach to recruitment and selection within SLH, our offer to local people including apprenticeships is channelled through Reach.

4.17 Recruiting Volunteers

SLH has a Volunteer Policy to support opportunities for those living in our communities to improve life and work skills through work-based placements. The Volunteer Policy sets out in more detail how this will be achieved.

4.18 Roles and Responsibilities

Executive Management Team members must ensure that this policy is acted on through a process of policy dissemination and implementation in collaboration with their managers.

The HR Team are responsible for establishing a fair and effective recruitment and selection process for all applicants and will provide specialist advice, guidance, support and training as required to managers and colleagues.

4.19 Data Protection

We use all the information provided by applicants during the recruitment process to progress their application with a view to potentially offering employment.

We will not share any information provided by applicants with any third parties and we will use the contact details provided by applicants to make contact and progress their application, this information will only be available to HR and provided to the recruiting manager for the purpose of contacting a candidate to discuss the outcome of their interview. Other information provided as part of the application process will be used to assess their suitability for the role.

We do not collect any more information than we need to fulfil our stated purposes and will not keep it longer than necessary. Application details are stored in secure electronic files where only the HR Team and recruiting

Managers have access. Recruiting Managers will not have access to equality and diversity information, this anonymised data will only be used to produce monitoring information to demonstrate the diversity of our candidate pools and identify any potential barriers for people with a protected characteristic(s). Applicant data will not be accessible by any other employees of SLH not involved in the recruitment process.

Six months after the date shortlisting (for non-shortlisted candidates) and six months after the interview date (for shortlisted but unsuccessful candidates) all information will be permanently destroyed and no record of applications will be held by SLH. For successful candidates offered employment with SLH, personal information, application and interview documents will be transferred into our HR system where a personal secure record is set up and recruitment documents are stored securely.

4.20 Modern Slavery

Our recruitment processes under this policy are designed to ensure that all prospective employees are legally entitled to work in the UK and to safeguard employees from any abuse or coercion. Due diligence in relation to our HR onboarding activities is well developed, with pre-employment checks such as eligibility to work in the UK and Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks conducted as appropriate.

5. Customer Standards & Performance Monitoring

The following standards apply to this policy:

- All candidates who apply will be contacted by email or telephone based on their preferred method of contact as their application progresses through the various stages of the recruitment and selection process including:
- On receipt of their application (via automated reply)
- To confirm whether they have been selected for interview or not. All unsuccessful candidates will receive written notification within 15 working days of the decision to deselect, to thank them for their interest in SLH and inform them of the outcome of their application.
- We welcome feedback on the recruitment process to help us learn and improve, we may therefore send out feedback surveys to candidates to support with this.

6. Policy Review Considerations

6.1 Equality Analysis

An equality analysis was carried out whilst writing this policy to ensure that no groups were excluded or disadvantaged when applying to work for SLH or for a promotional post within the organisation.

SLH is committed to applying its equal opportunities policy at all stages of recruitment and selection for permanent, temporary and apprenticeship positions. Job Design, Shortlisting, interviewing and selection will always be

carried out with regard to the protected characteristics of the Equality Act and all equal opportunities information is separated from application forms and held by the HR Team for monitoring purposes only. It is not used during any point of the recruitment or selection process.

As part of the Disability Confident Accreditation, we guarantee an interview to any disabled person who meets the essential criteria required. We are committed to supporting a good work life balance for colleagues and will offer the opportunity to work flexibly where possible. We will also work to support any candidates requiring adjustments with the recruitment process which would enable them to perform at interview and not be unfairly disadvantaged on account of a disability.

6.2 Policy Assessment

In order to achieve its corporate objectives, SLH places high importance on the effective management of risk. A risk management system has been adopted which looks at all the risks facing the business, including strategic and operational risks and those involving resources, legal and financial risks.

SLH is committed to being proactive in managing risk rather than reactive. The adoption of this policy will ensure that we maintain acceptable standards and support our colleagues to perform to the best of their ability.

The HR Team is responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of any information provided by candidates in their application form and any additional information they provide by completion of the equal opportunities form and health check form.

6.3 Customer Influence

Colleagues from different teams and positions were involved in the development of the policy and were able to provide feedback to support the final version. A review of best practice was also undertaken to ensure its effectiveness.

7. Statutory and Legislative Framework

- Equality Act 2010
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Act 2002
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- The Race Relations Act 1976
- The Employment Equality Regulations Act 1995
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

8. Associated Policies

- Fraud & Bribery
- Equality Diversity & Inclusion
- Flexible Working
- Probity Framework
- Declarations of Interest
- Whistleblowing
- Disciplinary
- Grievance
- Capability
- Safeguarding Adults
- Safeguarding Children
- Rehabilitation of Offenders
- Volunteer
- Work and Life Balance
- Code of Conduct
- Disclosure & Barring
- Redeployment & Redundancy