



Policy Reference No: PM11

Recruitment and Selection Policy

St Helens Borough Council

Effective from: 01/01/2026



Recruitment and Selection

Policy Information

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01/06/2022	Jane Carter and Vicky Yates-McCowan	1	Policy Consolidation Review.
01/01/2026	Phil Ingham	2	Review.

Our Vision and Values

The Council has co-designed a clear vision for workplace culture and worked together with employees to identify values and behaviours for everyone. These will be at the core of how we work together to deliver our services. Employees will be empowered to deliver new ways of thinking and new ways of working, encouraging innovation and creativity in a learning environment.

Our vision, values and behaviours are underpinned by our Bonds for Working Together at St Helens which outline what employees can expect from working at the Council and what is expected of them.

Our Culture, vision, values, behaviours and Bonds for Working Together at St Helens



Introduction and Purpose

Staff are the most important and valuable resource and play a major role in the delivery of St Helens Borough Council's strategic objectives. The purpose of this policy is to support safe, fair and lawful recruitment practices that ensure a consistent approach to recruiting staff of the highest caliber.

This policy aims to ensure that recruiting officers follow a consistent and informed recruitment process that eliminates unlawful bias as far as is reasonably practicable, thereby maintaining the Council's credibility with the public.

The policy provides a framework of recruitment and selection tools that offers practical guidance on the processes involved in the recruitment, selection, appointment, and induction of employees. The guidance aims to:

- outline the process required to change, re-designate or fill a post;
- promote a planned, objective approach to recruitment
- enable recruiting officers to think clearly about the content of key recruitment documents
- help recruiting offers to objectively assess if a candidate meets the requirements of the post
- ensure that recruiting officers are aware of statutory responsibilities, the law, relevant guidance and good practice and any relevant safeguarding responsibilities in relation to recruitment and selection
- advise managers regarding the administration processes underpinning recruitment across the Council

Policy Statement

St Helens Borough Council is committed to ensuring fair, inclusive, and transparent processes in recruitment and selection which ensure objective recruitment decisions are made. Applications are welcomed and encouraged from all sections of society and we will ensure that no sections of the community are excluded from the process.

It is important that managers conduct recruitment and selection practices in a safe, fair, and equitable manner. Managers are responsible for recruitment and must ensure that they access and use the guidance provided and are equipped with the necessary skills to carry out this process effectively.

The Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Scope

This policy applies to the recruitment and selection of all staff within St Helens Borough Council except staff employed by governing bodies in schools. All employees involved at any stage of the recruitment and selection process must be aware of and adhere to the contents of this policy.

Definitions and Abbreviations

In the Policy, the following words and phrases mean:

Council - St Helens Borough Council

Employee - Those employed by St Helens Borough Council including agency/consultancy staff, secondees to the organisation and those employed under partnership arrangements but excluding those employed in schools.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Public Sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act 2010 applies to both employment at the Council and in the delivery of Council Services. The Council's Comprehensive Equality Policy sets out the duties and requirements of the Equality Act 2010, and other relevant legislation.

The Equality Act 2010 protects all people from discrimination, harassment and victimisation. The Council is committed to promoting equal opportunities in employment and all employees will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or caring responsibility.

The Council has a zero tolerance towards discrimination, harassment and victimisation. All employees must show due regard to acknowledge and value people's differences, and, as far as possible, where permissible in Council policy and practice, meet an individual's needs in accordance with their choices and preferences.

The minimum standard of behaviour and attitude expected of council staff is to ensure all people who employees come into contact with are given equal opportunities and treated fairly and respectfully.

To support equality of opportunity, the council's recruitment and selection policy and processes are compliant with the Equality and Human Rights Commission's (EHRC) statutory Codes of Practice in Employment, and in Equal Pay. As an equal opportunities employer, we welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons and all appointments will be made on merit. This means that the application of the policy may need to be adjusted to cater for the specific needs of an individual including the provision of information in alternative formats where necessary.

Disabilities

St Helens Borough Council is a Level 2 Disability Confident Employer. The Council is committed to recruiting and retaining disabled people. It seeks to address any barriers that may prevent or deter disabled people from working for the Council and is currently working towards attaining Disability Confident Leader status – Level 3.



Any applicant with a declared disability, who meets the essential criteria outlined in the person specification, will be guaranteed an interview. Reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process will be made where necessary to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged because of their disability. In practical terms, this means that consideration will be given by recruiting managers to the accessibility of venues, appropriate methods of assessment, and accessibility

of information throughout the process and they will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate people with disabilities wherever required and possible.

Armed Forces / Reservists

In line with our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant and our [Armed Forces and Reservists Employment Policy](#) St Helens Borough Council offer a guaranteed interview for all ex-forces and reservist personnel who meet the essential criteria of job posts.

St Helens Care Leavers

St Helens Borough Council supports applications from St Helens Care Leavers. Any application from a St Helens Care Leaver, who meets the essential criteria outlined in the person specification, will be guaranteed an interview. It will be the decision of the individual Care Leaver as to whether they wish their status to be known during the recruitment process. If they do, their status should be endorsed by a letter from the Council's Futures Team.

Safer Recruitment

Safer recruitment is a set of practices to help make sure our staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children and young people. The concept of safer recruitment also applies to agencies working with vulnerable adults, for example those with learning difficulties. Safer recruitment is about ensuring that only those suitable to work within organisations working with children, young people and families are recruited into such positions. These principles should be adhered to for all positions, whether they are paid or voluntary.

Recruitment Process and Planning

A Recruitment and Selection Toolkit has been developed to support those with the responsibility of recruiting and selecting employees. The Toolkit includes:

- Recruitment Process and Planning
- Job Description & Person Specification Guidance
- Recruitment Advertising
- Shortlisting
- Selection Process
- Feedback
- Pre-employment Checks

Moving Expenses

For employees who are joining the Council and moving to St Helens it is possible to be recompensed for some of the expenses. Further information can be accessed [via this link](#).

Our Wider Workforce Ecosystem

The Council recognises that beyond our directly employed workforce services engage workers to support the delivery of the Council's business. These include:

Here we provide links to relevant guidance documents to support managers.

Volunteers

Volunteers provide a unique contribution to the local community. St Helens Borough Council believes that such a valuable resource must be appropriately supported. Further guidance in respect of volunteers is available [via this link](#).

Agency Workers

Some Council services rely on agency workers to during periods of change, absence or recruitment to ensure that service delivery can continue to run smoothly. The Council has engaged in a contract with Matrix SCM who provide online access to a number of employment agencies that provide agency staff. Managers who are required to engage agency staff should follow the guidance available [via this link](#).

Contractors, freelancers, Consultants and IR35

IR35 relates to the situation where an individual (e.g. a contractor, freelancer or consultant) supplies their services to an organisation via an intermediary (e.g. the individual's own personal service company). IR35 is also known as the off-payroll working rules and the intermediaries legislation. The Council must determine whether or not the contractor would have had employee status had they been engaged directly rather than through their intermediary. When carrying out this determination, the client is required to take "reasonable care" in reaching its conclusion. Guidance relating to Contractor, Freelancers, Consultants and IR35 is available [via this link](#).

Complaints

The recruitment and selection process aims to ensure fair and transparent processes that are free from discrimination. However, the Council recognises that, on occasion, the service may fall short of expectations. Internal complaints should be made through the Council's Dispute Resolution Policy.

Where any external candidate or potential candidate has a complaint about the way in which they have been treated during a recruitment process, they will be directed to the Council's Corporate Complaints Policy.

Record Keeping and Data Protection

In line with policies on data retention, personal data, applications from unsuccessful candidates and notes relating to any interview will be destroyed in a confidential manner after a period of time when it is safe to assume that the risk of complaint or challenge has passed; this will usually be after six months.

The Council processes personal data collected during the recruitment process in accordance with its data protection policy. In particular, data collected as part of the recruitment process is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purpose of managing the recruitment exercise effectively to decide to whom to offer the job. Inappropriate access or disclosure of data constitutes a data breach. Any breach will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's data protection policy. For full details about how personal data is processed as part of the recruitment and selection process, please see the [Privacy Notice](#).

Induction

New employees will be properly inducted into the Council by following an appropriate [induction procedure](#). This will include regular formal and informal meetings, relevant training, feedback, and coaching throughout their [probationary period](#).

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored to ensure that it is fair, consistent and effective and reflects the Council's culture, vision, values, behaviour and bonds for working together at St Helens. The policy will also be reviewed in the light of operating experience and/or changes in legislation.