

## **West Bletchley Council**

### **Safer Recruitment Policy**

#### **Vision & Aims:**

*West Bletchley council aim to: -*

- involve local people more in what is happening in the community
- improve communication;
- engage everyone in local issues, by providing you with more information.

#### **Rationale**

We aim to achieve this by ensuring that all paid staff are recruited and committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults and children. This will be reflected in our recruitment policy, appointing people who have undertaken a vigorous recruitment procedure and ongoing suitability scrutiny.

All activities supported by or being run from West Bletchley Council buildings will be required to operate to safer recruitment standards, have relevant adult safeguarding and child protection policies in place, undertake safeguarding training and sign annually to say they will meet these standards.

#### **Section 1: General Principles**

- 1.1 Principles within this policy can be used for the safer recruitment of all staff.
- 1.2 All recruitment will follow all relevant employment legislation that is in place at the time of recruitment.
- 1.3 All recruitment activity will be carried out in line with the equal opportunities and safer recruitment principles and all those involved in the process will have been given a copy and reminded to update themselves on the content prior to involving themselves in the recruitment.
- 1.4 All decisions made with regard to the recruitment process will take into consideration any legislation and best practice that are in place at that time.
- 1.5 Throughout the recruitment and selection process all candidates will be treated with respect and dignity.
- 1.6 Full regard will be given to adult safeguarding & child protection and welfare issues in appointing new staff.
- 1.7 Full consideration will be given to the behaviours or personal qualities required to support safeguarding and promote the welfare of adults and children.

#### **Section 2: Prior to advertisement**

- 2.1 A full job description and person specification will be agreed by West Bletchley Council.
- 2.2 The job description will clearly state the main duties and responsibilities of the post.
- 2.3 The person specification will include:
  - 2.3.1 the qualifications and experience together with any other requirements needed to perform the role in relation to working with adults and children.

- 2.3.2 the competencies and qualities the successful candidate should be able to demonstrate;
- 2.3.3 Detail the need for DBS checks and references being taken up, before employment involving children and adults at risk can commence.
- 2.4 An information pack, content variable depending on the nature and seniority of the post, will be sent to candidates. The following will be sent as a minimum for:
  - 2.4.1 Application form and explanation notes
  - 2.4.2 Job and Person Specification
  - 2.4.3 Vision and Aims of West Bletchley Council
  - 2.4.4 Copy of Safeguarding Adults/Child Protection Policy
  - 2.4.5 Referencing and DBS checking procedure
  - 2.4.6 Any other details appropriate to the position such as working hours

### **Section 3: Recruitment Advertising**

- 3.1 The recruitment advertisement will include a statement about West Bletchley Councils commitment to safeguarding Adults and protecting the welfare of children, in addition to reference to the need for the successful candidate to be DBS checked & exemption from Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.
- 3.2 The recruitment advertisement will be drafted to sell the job, promote the safeguarding agenda and discourage unsuitable candidates. It will be in appropriate publications / websites / places for the skills and abilities required for the position. This will be done with consideration of best value and budget arrangements.
- 3.3 Posts aiming to attract local volunteers will be advertised locally.
- 3.4 Applicants will be asked to give details in an envelope of all convictions or warnings, this will not be opened until the final stages of recruitment. A conviction or warning does not automatically exclude a candidate, a risk assessment will be undertaken to gauge suitability

### **Section 4: Short listing**

- 4.1 Short listing will be carried out by assessing the information provided in the individual's application against the essential knowledge, skills and abilities on the person specification.
- 4.2 Applications will be scrutinised to ensure they are properly and fully completed; information that is consistent, and any gaps are identified. Any gaps will, be clarified by telephone, e-mail or at interview using value-based interview techniques.
- 4.3 Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps in employment should not exclude the candidate from interview but must be investigated in interview, be noted to as part of the consideration or whether to appoint the applicant.
- 4.4 Repeated changes in employment or obvious gaps, without clear career or salary progression will also need to be explored and verified at interview.
- 4.5 Previous offences must not be considered at this stage.

## **Section 5: References**

- 5.1 A minimum of two references should be sought and obtained directly from the referee on all short-listed candidates before interview or immediately after a conditional offer is made (dependent on the applicant's position). One must be their current or last employer.
- 5.2 Permissions must always be given to request references from current employer.
- 5.3 Any issues arising from references will be further explored with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview.
- 5.4 Where a reference has not been obtained on the preferred candidate before the interview, it must be received and scrutinised and any concerns resolved satisfactorily before the person's appointment is confirmed.
- 5.5 All references will seek objective verifiable information and not subjective opinion.
- 5.6 A copy of the job description and person specification for the applicable post will be included with reference requests.
- 5.7 All reference requests will ask:
  - 5.7.1 the referee's relationship with the candidate; ask for specific comments about the applicants' suitability and capability for the job in question and how he/she has demonstrated that he/she meets the person specification;
  - 5.7.2 whether the referee is completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with adults and children and if not, for specific details of the reasons why the referee believes the person might be unsuitable.
- 5.8 References will also seek confirmation of details of the applicant's current post, salary, performance history and conduct including any disciplinary procedures and current disciplinary sanctions. Confirmation of any allegations or disciplinary procedures involving issues relating to behaviour towards adults at risk, children or young people, or the health and safety and welfare of adults at risk, children or young people, including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired and the outcome of those.
- 5.9 Information about past disciplinary action or allegations should be considered.
- 5.10 The referee will be reminded that they have a responsibility to ensure the reference is accurate and does not contain any material misstatement or omission and that relevant factual content may be discussed with the applicant.
- 5.11 References will be checked against the application form to verify consistency and specific questions have been answered. Any vague or unspecific answers should be followed up by telephone and written answers should be requested. Any discrepancies will be taken up with the applicant.

## **Section 6: Selection process**

- 6.1 The selection process will be fully planned and managed.

- 6.2 The selection process will be designed to test all candidates' knowledge, practical experience, philosophies, interpersonal skills and understanding of current local initiatives and legislation.
- 6.3 The selection exercises will be designed to bring out the best in all candidates and give them the opportunity to show their strengths.
- 6.4 All members of the selection panel will be given the opportunity to express their opinion and challenge others.
- 6.5 Local residents may be involved in the selection process.
- 6.6 Candidates should bring qualification certificate, proof of identity x 3 (one with address), evidence that they have right to live and work in UK to interview. If they have a portable DBS, they should bring this as well.
- 6.7 Any prewritten letters or references will not be considered and will be followed up by the interviewers.
- 6.8 Any previous convictions and warnings can be considered at this point. Panel must risk assess if they are willing to employ individual. There are very few offences that bar someone from working with children. Organisation is required to consider each application individually.

#### **Section 7: Completion of process**

- 7.1 Feedback will be offered to all candidates and will be constructive and developmental.
- 7.2 All notes and paperwork with regard to candidates will be handled sensitively and in line with the GDPR 2018.
- 7.3 All checks required will be completed i.e. DBS, qualifications and Asylum and Immigration Status. These will normally be overseen by the Clerk.
- 7.4 Post can be offered conditionally based on successful references, DBS checks and a successful probation period.

#### **Section 8: Induction & Probation Period**

- 8.1 Following confirmation of offer and agreement of start date, preparation for induction can take place.
- 8.2 Induction will include:
- 8.3 Training and information about West Bletchley Council policies and procedures (including those relating to Adult safeguarding and promoting welfare of children.
- 8.4 Supporting people in the way that is appropriate for the role.
- 8.5 Details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 8.6 Overview of safeguarding adults and child protection policy, which should be signed to say they have read, understood and abide by these policies.

- 8.7 Information on their expected conduct, within a code of conduct that must be read, understood and agreed on. This must be signed by appointee and revisited regularly.
- 8.8 The opportunity for line managers to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately.
- 8.9 Opportunities for the individual to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities.
- 8.10 Induction period, probation period & goals to be agreed before commencement of employment or volunteering but will typically be reviewed 4 weekly and completed at 13 weeks.
- 8.11 Following probation period post is either made permanent or ended. This can be ended on either side.

### **Section 9: Monitoring**

- 9.1 The recruitment process and induction arrangements will be monitored to allow for future recruitment practices to be better informed. It will normally cover staff turnover and reasons for leaving, exit interviews and attendance of new recruits at appropriate training.
- 9.2 Staff and volunteers will be monitored continuously during employment via staff meetings, supervision & appraisals.
- 9.3 Staff and volunteers will be required to sign a declaration annually stating that they are not aware of any reason why they should not be able to work or volunteer with vulnerable adults or children.