

## Individual Executive Decision Notice

<b>Report title</b>	People Services Update: Revisions to Recruitment and Selection Policy and Managers Guide		
<b>Decision designation</b>	GREEN		
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Paula Brookfield Governance and Equalities		
<b>Wards affected</b>	N/A		
<b>Accountable Director</b>	David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer		
<b>Originating service</b>	People Services		
<b>Accountable employee</b>	Sukhvinder Mattu	Head of People Services	
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<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	Core Services	21 February 2024	
	Strategic Executive Board	27 February 2024	
	Cabinet Member Briefing	4 March 2024	
	Governance		

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### Summary

The Recruitment and Selection Policy and Managers Guide have been revised to incorporate recent operational changes, including the update to the applicant tracking system used at the council from Talentlink to Tribepad, recent Right to Work amendments and the council's position on allowing a non-diverse interview panel under exceptional circumstances and with appropriate senior manager approval.

Approved at Cabinet Member Briefing for Governance and Equalities on 4 March 2024.

SEB have agreed to proceed with these revisions for approval via IEDN.

### Recommendation for decision:

That the Cabinet Member for Governance, in consultation with the David Pattison, Chief Operating Officer.

1. Approve the revised Recruitment and Selection Policy and Managers Guide for adoption within City of Wolverhampton Council.

## **1.0 Background**

### **1.1 Diverse Panels**

1.2 The requirement for every council recruitment process to be overseen by diverse recruitment panels was introduced in 2021 to ensure the approach is fair and in line with the council's values, including that of fairness and inclusion.

1.3 Feedback was received from senior managers on challenges encountered by recruiting managers when arranging a diverse panel if unexpected situations occur – i.e. unexpected sickness or emergency leave of diverse panel members.

1.4 As recruitment processes are often the first impression candidates build on an organisation, inefficient, poorly designed recruitment processes can negatively impact the employer brand and the ability to attract candidates. It is important to ensure delays in the recruitment process are minimised because long and drawn-out processes can discourage and disengage candidates resulting in poor candidate experience and ideal candidates looking elsewhere. ([Firms missing out on the best job applicants because of too many interviews, research finds, People Management 2023](#))

1.5 To reduce delays in the recruitment process and the possibility of losing candidates because of the need to rearrange interviews at the last minute, it was proposed that the Council introduce the ability to waive the diversity requirement for interview panels in exceptional circumstances and when all alternatives have been exhausted, with prior approval from the Chief Operating Officer and/or Deputy Director of People and Change.

1.6 The council remain committed to ensuring Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is integral to every stage of the recruitment process to ensure it is fair and transparent and therefore only in exceptional circumstances will this request be considered and approved. People Services will monitor the requests to identify possible trends and determine if further manager support or training is required.

1.7 No changes are proposed to other diverse panels used across People Service processes, such as disciplinary, grievance and management of attendance.

### **1.8 System Changes**

1.9 The council's current applicant tracking system (Talentlink), used during recruitment processes, is procured via the West Midlands Employers' (WME) framework. The contract between Talentlink and WME is ending on 31 March 2024.

- 1.10 Following the procurement exercise conducted by WME in May 2023, the council's new applicant tracking system – Tribepad will go live from April 2024.
- 1.11 The Recruitment and Selection Policy and Managers Guide currently refers to Talentlink throughout and will therefore require updating to Tribepad.
- 1.12 Right to work amendments
- 1.13 In January 2024, the Home Office issued '[Illegal working penalties: codes of practice for employers](#)'. This code of practice sets out the prescribed checks that employers should conduct to avoid a civil penalty in the event of illegal working. The code comes into force from 13 February 2024.
- 1.14 The code provides information on determining liability and calculating the penalty amount should a company be fined for hiring someone who is not allowed to work in the UK. For a first offence, the penalty has been increased from a maximum of £15,000 to £45,000 per illegal worker. For any subsequent breach, the maximum fine increased from a maximum of £20,000 to £60,000 per illegal worker. The actual penalty amount depends on the employer's history of compliance and their co-operation with the Home Office's investigations.
- 1.15 On 27 February 2024, SEB approved the revisions and agreed to proceed with approval via IEDN.
- 1.16 This IEDN seeks to make the revised policy and guide live for adoption within the City of Wolverhampton Council.

## **2.0 Progress- Policy/Guide engagement process**

- 2.1 For the review of the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Managers Guide, legislation and best practice guidance have been considered.
- 2.2 People Services have engaged with the following stakeholders on the revisions to the Recruitment and Selection Policy:
  - Trade Unions
  - People Services Leadership Team
  - Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
  - Chief Operating Officer and Executive Director - Families
- 2.3 People Services did not engage with the wider organisation, as the information contained within the policy is based on amendments to operational processes already in place.

- 2.4 Any feedback received has been considered and changes made as a result. Trade Unions and SEB have confirmed their approval to proceed to the next stages of the approval process.
- 2.5 Below details the main amendments to the policy and guide and recommendations SEB agreed. Draft revised policy and guide and policy amendment record detailing the changes are available in appendix 1 and 2.
- 2.6 Recruitment and Selection Policy and Managers Guide review and amendments**
- 2.7 Both the policy and guide have been amended to include that in exceptional circumstances authorisation can be sought from the Chief Operating Officer and/or Deputy Director of People and Change, to waive the requirement for a gender or race diverse panel. Requests will be considered on a case by case basis.
- 2.8 Both the policy and guide have been updated throughout to remove reference to Talentlink and replace with Tribepad.
- 2.9 The guide has been updated to include the increased penalty charges as stated in the new Home Office code of practice for employing a candidate that does not have a legal right to work in the UK.
- 2.10 SEB have endorsed these changes and approval is now sought via this IEDN.

### **3.0 Evaluation of alternative options**

- 3.1 The revisions to reflect operational changes ensure employees and managers are up to date with how to manage recruitment and selection processes. Without these changes, errors and delays in the process could result.

### **4.0 Reasons for decision**

- 4.1 People Services review policies and procedures on a regular basis to ensure they are innovative, promote best practice, are reflective of our diverse workforce and legally compliant. The revised policy and guide ensures the information available to managers and employees is up to date and reflective of recent operational changes.
- 4.2 Ensuring our recruitment processes minimise delays wherever possible will positively impact on our employer brand of being an employer of choice.

### **5.0 Financial implications**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report. [GE/29022024/K]

### **6.0 Legal implications**

- 6.1 There are no direct legal implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

[TC/29022024/A]

## **7.0 Equalities implications**

- 7.1 The Council is committed to equality and fairness for all employees and will not discriminate because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 7.2 Equality Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the review of the Recruitment and Selection policy. The Council is committed to promoting equality and recognising the diversity of our communities and will work to ensure all parts of our community are treated fairly.

## **8.0 All other Implications**

- 8.1 People Services implications have been discussed throughout the report.

## **9.0 Schedule of background papers**

- 9.1 None

## **10.0 Appendices**

- 10.1 Appendix 1: Draft Recruitment and Selection Policy
- 10.2 Appendix 2: Draft Recruitment and Selection Manager Guide
- 10.3 Appendix 3: Policy amendment record