

Insert:
Committee – 24 June 2026

Report by: Leanne Harfield, Head of HR and OD

Lead Cllr: Cllr Davenport-Ray
Portfolio Holder for Workforce



Wards
All

Open / Exempt
Open

Key Decision?
No

Employment Policies Update

Executive Summary:

HR have a programme of undertaking a programme to review and refresh current policies to ensure that they are accurate, legally compliant and reflect current practice within HDC. We are therefore bringing the next set of policies we have reviewed to you.

Recommendations

1.1. Employment Committee are requested to endorse these policies

Key Corporate Plan Priorities

1

Doing our Core Work Well

Report Author(s)

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 This report provides a summary the policies that are being submitted for endorsement.

2. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

2.1 The policies reviewed in this period are:

- Volunteering Policy (new)
- Overtime and Expenses Policy (new)
- Recruitment Policy (updated)

Summary of the changes:

Policy	Amendments
Volunteering Policy	This is a new policy which has been created as part o the workforce strategy to support staff who carry out volunteering roles
Expenses and Overtime Policy	This is a new policy to formalise the Overtime and Expenses practices that are currently employed across HDC
Recruitment Policy	Amendments have been made to section 18 to reflect current practices within the team

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED & NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 N/A.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

4.1 N/A

5. POST-DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Policies endorsed will be reviewed in line with the policy schedule.

6. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

6.1 Council Key Priorities and Performance

- Improving quality of life for local people
- Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations
- Doing our core work well

These policies support the organisation to ensure that they are legally compliant and have the right processes and procedures in place to support staff to do our core work well and to delivery the Council's key Priorities. This allows HDC to continue to work towards being an employer of choice.

6.2 Financial Implications

6.3 Expenses, Allowances and Overtime Policy - There will be no significant financial implications as this formalises current working practices and ensures consistency across all service areas.

Volunteering Policy – there will be a cost impact due to hours lost for the day, however as this will not be backfilled, it is expected to be absorbed internally by the team. We do not foresee any additional cost associated. Any decision to approve will need to be in line with service need.

Recruitment and Selection Policy – no additional cost associated.

6.4 Policy Implications

6.4.1 These have been amended to ensure that they are in line with legislative updates and best practice.

6.5 Legal & Constitutional Implications

6.5.1 These have been amended to ensure that they are in line with legislative updates and best practice.

6.6 Community Impact

6.6.1 Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out for each policy following endorsement

6.7 Environment & Climate Change Implications

6.7.1 N/A

6.8 Equality & Diversity Implications

6.8.1 Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out for each policy following endorsement

6.9 Implications on Resources

6.9.1 N/A

6.10 Health & Wellbeing Implications

6.10.1 N/A

6.11 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Implications

6.11.1 LGR is taken into consideration for all policies that are reviewed or updated in line with legal requirements, and where possible, taking into consideration what neighbouring Council's approaches are.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 These policies are designed to mitigate risk to the organisation and to allow consistent application across all service areas.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS– LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

8.1 N/A.

Time Off for Volunteering Policy

Version 1.1

<u>Version Control</u>			
<u>Version</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Changes</u>
1.1	Kiran Hans	April 2026	New Policy

Name of Policy:	Time Off for Volunteering Policy
Person/posts responsible:	Kiran Hans
Date Endorsed/adopted:	June 2026
Endorsed by:	Employment Committee
Review Date:	June 2028

1. Policy statement

- 1.1 This policy outlines how colleagues are encouraged and supported to undertake volunteering within Huntingdonshire. It also provides guidance to managers on how to consider and approve requests for time off for volunteering.
- 1.2 Volunteering supports local communities and individual wellbeing while enabling colleagues to develop new skills and knowledge. Through volunteering, colleagues contribute to HDC Corporate priorities - Improving quality of life for local people and creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations. Volunteering within communities provides opportunities to connect with residents and make a positive difference.
- 1.3 Undertaking volunteering benefits both colleagues and the organisation. Colleagues gain new skills, meet new people, and contribute directly to community outcomes, while the organisation strengthens its links with the communities it serves. Skills and knowledge acquired through volunteering can be applied within paid roles.

2. The Purpose

- 2 The purpose of this policy is to provide paid time off to enable employees to undertake volunteering activities during their normal working day.
- 2.1 Volunteering enables colleagues to develop skills, broaden experience, and contribute positively to residents and communities, while supporting the organisation through enhanced community connection and transferable learning.
- 2.2 Paid volunteering time is intended to enable volunteering during normal working hours only. It cannot be used to offset other commitments already undertaken outside contracted working hours.

3. Paid Time Off for Volunteering

- 3.1 Colleagues may request up to 3 days within a 12-month period. This entitlement is provided pro-rata for colleagues who work part time or who are on short-term contracts.
- 3.2 The 12-month time period runs from 1st April to 31st March.
- 3.3 These volunteering hours are separate from annual leave entitlement and any time off taken for public duties.

Colleagues may undertake full days of volunteering or spread volunteering hours over a longer period such as regularly committing an hour per week to a volunteering role.

4. Team Volunteering

- 4.1 Teams could also decide to use their hours collectively to undertake team volunteering, working together on a volunteer project, could be part of team building but will need to be in line with business needs.
- 4.2 Teams proposing team volunteering should discuss the practical arrangements with their team manager or Head of Service, including the impact on service delivery. One team member should take the lead in organising the placement and securing approval.

5. Types of Volunteering

5.1 The volunteering you undertake must:

- Must be for an organisation based in or working in Huntingdonshire and volunteering needs to take place within Huntingdonshire itself (even if you live outside of the area).
- Must be for an organisation that is aligned with the Council's values.
- Should support our corporate priorities (more information available [Corporate Plan 2023-2028](#)).
- Volunteering hours must not be used to undertake political or activist activity or volunteer for an organisation whose primary focus is politics or activism.

5.2 Examples of volunteering opportunities that you can use this time for are:

- Supporting charities or partner organisations assisting individuals facing financial hardship (e.g. food banks).
- Contributing to organisations that provide care or support services.
- Participating in projects aligned with improving the environment we live in.
- Volunteering to support care-experienced young people and care leavers in Huntingdonshire.
- Assisting in council-run services involving volunteers (e.g. Countryside/Rangers).
- Committing regular time to volunteer in a Huntingdonshire school.
- Supporting the Cadet Movement as a Cadet Force Adult Volunteer or in a related supporting role.

6. Conflicts of Interest

6.1 Colleagues must agree the volunteering with their manager, who will consider the request ensuring there is no conflict of interest with their paid role. Where support is needed the Monitoring Officer can provide advice.

7. Process for Arranging Volunteering

7.1 The following process applies for arranging volunteering:

- Identify a suitable volunteering opportunity.
- Discuss the proposed volunteering and dates with your line manager **at least one month's notice in advance**.
- The manager will consider alignment with this policy, adherence to organisational values, conflicts of interest, and service delivery needs.

Requests will be accommodated wherever possible (for further advice contact HR or the Monitoring Officer).

- Arrange the volunteer placement with the host organisation.
- Any required induction or pre-engagement checks form part of the overall volunteering hours.
- Use performance and development discussions to reflect on volunteering experiences and how skills gained can be applied in paid roles.

8. Recording Volunteering Hours

- 8.1 Volunteering hours must be requested and recorded via iTrent system as an **Absence Request**, selecting **Special Leave (Paid)** and then **Volunteering Leave**. Colleagues should also clearly record volunteering time in their Outlook calendar.

9. Insurance

- 9.1 When volunteering within council teams, colleagues are covered by the Council's Public Liability Insurance. When volunteering for external organisations, colleagues must check that the host organisation provides appropriate insurance cover.

10. Expenses

- 10.1 When volunteering employees are responsible for any travel or other expenses that maybe incurred.

11. Advice

- 11.1 Colleagues with questions about this policy should speak to their line manager. Managers should contact their HR Business Partner for advice on applying the policy.

12. Review and Monitoring

- 12.1 This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains effective and appropriate. The organisation retains discretion to review the policy at any time and to consult as appropriate.

Expenses and Allowances Policy

1.1

Version Control			
Version	Author	Date	Changes
1.1	Leanne Harfield	December 2025	This is a new policy to formalise the Overtime and Expenses practices that are currently employed across HDC

Name of Policy	Expenses and Allowances Policy
Person/posts responsible	Head of HR
Date approved/adopted	June 2026
Endorsed by	Employment Committee
Review Date	June 2028

Expenses and Allowances Policy

1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 Huntingdonshire District Council's (HDC) Expenses and Allowances Policy complies with HMRC rules and is based on the following key principles:
- employees should be reimbursed for expenses incurred while travelling on Council business.
 - employees should neither 'profit' from the scheme nor 'subsidise' travel undertaken for Council business purposes;
 - employees must travel by the most cost-effective route and should only undertake business journeys that are absolutely necessary.
- 1.2 The Council applies the approved HMRC mileage rates. If the HMRC rates change, the revised rates will be applied accordingly (up or down).
- 1.3 All claims will be reviewed by line managers and reimbursement may be adjusted if the principles in 1.1 have not been followed.

2.0 Scope of the Policy

- 2.1 The Expenses and Allowances Policy applies to all those employed on Huntingdonshire District Council's terms and conditions of employment and, where appropriate, also applies to non-employees, e.g. student placements and volunteers.

3.0 Associated Policies

- 3.1 When further information is needed on the application of allowances it is recommended that Human Resources (HR) advice is sought and that reference is made to the policies and/or guidance that cover the following areas.
- ⇒ Pay Policy
 - ⇒ The Driving Handbook

4.0 Objectives

- 4.1 This policy aims to deal with all HDC expenses and allowances and is to be followed in line with the Pay Policy. The objectives of this policy are to:
- ⇒ provide a transparent and consistent framework for allowances within HDC;
 - ⇒ provide guidance and a process for employees to claim expenses.

5.0 Responsibilities

- 5.1 Managers are responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the policy and procedure are correctly applied.

5.2 If an Employee uses a private vehicle (car or motorcycle) for Council business, they are responsible for ensuring that they are insured to drive it and that the vehicles insurance includes business use cover. Employees are required to provide annually to their line manager the following records in respect of any vehicle that they use on Council business, irrespective of whether they make any claim for reimbursement of mileage.

- MOT documentation
- Driving Licence
- Vehicle Insurance Policy

Managers shall keep a written record of the evidence provided and shall not authorise any mileage expenses claim until the records have been checked.

5.3 HR and Payroll are able to provide advice and support to Managers and employees on the application of allowances or payment of expenses.

5.4 Employees should select the most appropriate method of transport. Alternatives to single occupancy car use must be chosen wherever viable and practical. This includes:

- Audio and videoconferencing (where available)
- Public transport (bus, train, tube etc)
- Pool vehicles (where available)
- Cycling
- Walking (If reasonable)
- Taxi
- Car hire
- Car sharing

5.5 All claims are to be submitted within 3 months of the date incurred and any claims not submitted within this period will only be approved in exceptional circumstances and with the Head of Service's authorisation.

6.0 Travel Expenses

6.1 An employee's main work base is stated in their contract of employment, e.g. Pathfinder House, One Leisure St Ives. This is the work base that should be used for the purposes of deducting home to work mileage, when calculating mileage claims.

6.2 Where an employee has a 'notional' work base stated in their contract of employment, e.g. because they are required to work from various sites, the notional work base should be used for the purpose of calculating mileage claims. Only **excess** miles undertaken for the purposes of work related travel (business travel or travel for training purposes) can be claimed. Normal home to work mileage, e.g. from home to the employee's contractual work base, should be deducted on each occasion (this also applies to Variable staff)

6.3 Under HMRC regulations payments for business journeys are not subject to tax and National Insurance.

6.4 Where it is more beneficial for an employee to travel directly from home to a work appointment, or vice versa, rather than call into the workplace first, only mileage in excess of the normal 'home to work' mileage can be claimed.

- 6.5 Where an employee travels to work by car to attend a business appointment, even where this is not the normal method of travel to work, they can claim for excess mileage only - home to work mileage must be deducted.
- 6.6 Where an employee agrees to work on a day that they would not normally work, it remains their responsibility to get to work and home to work mileage will not be payable.
- 6.7 Where attendance at an evening meeting is required, the employee should make every effort to adjust their working day to avoid the need to travel home and then out again for an evening meeting.
- 6.8 Home-based employees will have an employment contract specifying that they will be based permanently from home but may be required to attend a designated office base for a small part of their working week. Permanent designated home workers can claim all mileage undertaken for work related purposes. This is because their contract of employment states that their work base is their home, i.e. no home to work mileage needs to be deducted.
- 6.9 The Council applies the current mileage rates in line with HMRC guidance.
- Please note:** The rate per mile will drop to the lower rate after an employee has travelled 10,000 business/training miles in a claim year (April to March).
- Any employees attending HDC funded training and subject to a training and qualification financial assistance agreement are paid at the lower rate.
- Mileage undertaken by non-employees (e.g. student placements, volunteers) is paid at the higher rate unless an alternative local rate has been agreed.
- Where an employees has an electric vehicle through a salary sacrifice scheme they are treated the same as any employee driving a company car for business travel. Therefore, mileage reimbursement is based on HMRC's Electric Rate.
- 6.10 Public Transport fares for journeys undertaken on Council business will be reimbursed on production of a valid VAT receipt. The most cost-effective type of ticket should be purchased in advance and only standard class travel will be reimbursed.
- 6.11 Employees can claim for the cost of fuel used for hire cars - a VAT receipt is required.
- 6.12 Employees in receipt of a standby allowance who are required to attend work in an emergency situation are able to claim home to work mileage and HDC will cover the cost of the additional tax element in this situation.
- 6.13 All claims should be authorised by the line manager, if they are not available, the claim should be authorised by an equivalent manager or a more senior officer and submitted manually to payroll.

7.0 Subsistence

- 7.1 Employees cannot claim for the cost of any meals or food and drink purchased while undertaking Council business, except where an employee is required to stay overnight and a meal is included in the accommodation price i.e. Bed and Breakfast rate or the

employee has agreed with the line manager in advance of travel that the overnight meal allowance rate is appropriate. Receipts will need to be provided.

- 7.2 The Council will not reimburse any hospitality costs.
- 7.3 The Council will not fund employee retirement/leaving parties.
- 7.4 Parking fees will be reimbursed on production of a valid receipt, only where it is incurred as an additional expense whilst travelling on Council business. For example where an employee travels to a business meeting away from their normal workplace and pays to park at that location. Car park timed tickets are acceptable as proof of expenditure.
- 7.5 Parking fees will not be reimbursed where an employee pays to park at their own place of work. Employees do not have a contractual entitlement to an on-site car parking space at any Council site. Therefore, parking costs incurred at an employee's own place of work are deemed a personal expense.
- 7.6 The Council will not reimburse parking/speeding fines or surcharges incurred by employees. Employees are personally liable for such fines/charges.
- 7.7 Where employees are required to stay overnight as part of a business appointment/course/conference, reasonable accommodation expenses will be reimbursed. Employees must demonstrate to their manager that the cost of overnight accommodation is reasonable for the area. Wherever possible, overnight accommodation should be pre-booked and paid for using a Huntingdonshire District Council Corporate 'Purchase Card'.
- 7.8 In order to meet HMRC audit requirements, employees claiming business mileage must obtain at least one VAT receipt for fuel purchased each month. It is important that a VAT receipt is requested - a card payment slip is not a valid VAT receipt and cannot be used to cover the VAT reclaim. VAT receipts should be retained by the employees department in case of a VAT audit.

8.0 Professional Subscriptions and allowances

- 8.1 HDC will not pay personal subscription fees for any professional bodies with the exception of the Section 151 Officer and Legal statutory positions.
- 8.2 Legal statutory positions such as Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer will receive an allowance of £5,000 per annum
- 8.3 Deputy statutory positions such as Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer will receive an allowance of £2,500 per annum

9.0 Reorganisation and Relocation Allowance

- 9.1 Reorganisation allowance is paid to employees to recognise the extra cost and inconvenience of travelling further to get to their new place of work where there is a requirement to change their work base location. No mileage allowance can be claimed for the excess mileage travelled where a reorganisation payment has been paid for the change in base. Any mileage above this can be claimed in line with HMRC rates.

9.2 The allowance is payable for a maximum 1-year period, provided that the employee continues to incur excess travel, i.e. the entitlement to reorganisation allowance will be reviewed if the employee moves home within the 1-year period (whether or not as a result of the reorganisation) or increases/decreases the number of hours/days worked per week, and will cease automatically if the employee:

- leaves the employment of HDC; OR
- voluntarily takes up a new post within HDC.

9.3 Reorganisation allowance is calculated, depending on the number of days worked per week, in accordance with the information and table shown in appendix A.

9.4 Relocation expenses are not normally paid by HDC. Any exceptions to this should be agreed by Corporate Leadership Team in advance of being offered to the preferred candidate.

10.0 Standby, Attendance and Closed Attendance Allowances

10.1 Standby, attendance and closed attendance allowance arrangements are utilised in some services to ensure 24/7 cover and/or to provide additional cover at particular peaks in demand and/or to undertake duties outside the agreed normal working week.

10.2 There are three different types of arrangement:

1. Standby Allowance may be paid where an employee is contactable outside of normal office hours and available to attend call-outs if necessary on a rota basis.
2. Attendance Allowance may be paid when an employee is required to carry out work outside of their contracted hours (i.e. beyond being on a call out rota on standby).
3. Closed Attendance Allowance may be paid when there is no contractual requirement for the additional work to be undertaken, but the employee volunteers to participate in a specific duty scheduled in advance.

10.3 The amount of standby allowance paid for a particular job role will be agreed by CLT prior to the implementation of any such allowance and will be in line with the remuneration for the particular job role.

10.4 Housing

Receive an allowance of £23.08 per month for being on rota to take calls out of hours.

10.5 ICT

Receive a standby allowance details of which are covered in the '*3C ICT – HDC One Leisure Out of Hours' Support Agreement*'

11. Shift Allowances

11.1 All staff on salary grades A-E, who are contracted to work on a Saturday, Sunday or Bank Holidays as part of their weekly contracted hours will be paid an 'unsocial hours'

enhancement of 10% on their hourly rate. This should be claimed by employees on completion of the shift through iTrent and authorised by their line manager.

11.2 **CCTV**

Monitoring Operators are eligible for a shift allowance of 10% of the basic salary to account for the 24x7 shift pattern that is carried out by CCTV. This applies only to staff who work a 24x7 shift pattern. This is paid monthly as part of their salary.

11.3 **Caretakers**

Caretakers are required to cover a 24/7 on call rota for which they will receive an 8% on call allowance. This is paid monthly as part of their salary.

12. Emergency Planning

12.1 HDC operates an Emergency Planning Response as part of the Civil Contingencies Act.

12.2 All staff on salary grades (with the exception of ICT and Communications) Grade I, SM and SM Plus are required to be on the Emergency Planning Silver or Gold Rota for which an additional payment of £1,250 per annum is paid once training has been completed. This is paid monthly as part of their salary.

12.3 Volunteers who are trained to work on the Bronze Response are entitled to a £250 call out payment in line with the Emergency Planning Policy. Payments are authorised directly to Payroll by the Emergency Planning Manager on completion of the incident.

12.4 Communications staff are required to work on the Communications Team out of hours rota and will be paid £3,000 per annum. This is paid monthly as part of their salary.

13. Overtime

13.1 HDC operates a flexi scheme which is managed under the Flexible Working Policy and therefore overtime should not be paid as standard as time accrued should be taken off in lieu in line with the Flexible Working Policy.

13.2 Where this it is not possible for time accrued to be taken off in lieu in line with the Flexible Working Policy, such as within the Operations Team, overtime payments may be approved in advance by Head of Service or budget holder.

13.3 Any time that is claimed as overtime but has not been pre-approved by Head of Service or budget holders will not be approved.

13.4 For part time workers, 37 hours must be worked in a week before overtime can be claimed. Any hours completed up to 37 hours per week can be claimed back at flat rate.

13.5 Approved overtime will be paid at the following rates:

Monday -Friday x 1 the usual hourly rate

Saturday – x 1.5 the usual hourly rate

Sundays and Bank Holidays x 2 the usual hourly rate

Appendix A : Reorganisation Allowance

- a. Reorganisation allowance is subject to Tax and NI deductions

- b. Where an employee does not travel to work on a fixed number of days per week, an allowance of 'best fit' should be agreed, by calculating an average number of days travelled per week. In each case a typical sample period of time should be used to calculate an average week, e.g. if an employee's work pattern changes over a 4-week period an average week would be calculated as follows:
 - Week 1 – travels to the office Monday/Tuesday/Friday (3 days)
 - Week 2 – travels to the office Tuesday/Thursday (2 days)
 - Week 3 – travels to the office Friday (1 day)
 - Week 4 – travels to the office Monday/Friday (2 days)
 - Average Week = 2 days

- d. Variable hours employees claim all payments and monies in arrears. Reorganisation allowance is calculated so that they are recompensed for extra travelling on each occasion that they do it.

- e. In exceptional circumstances employees may be required to move their main office base again, due to reorganisation by the Council, during the 1-year period in which they are receiving a reorganisation allowance for a previous office move. In these cases reorganisation allowances for the two office moves are treated as separate 1-year entitlements, but are amalgamated for the period of overlap. For example, an employee receives a reorganisation allowance (based on a total of 6 excess travel miles) from the 1st January 2026. On the 1st July 2026 the employee is required to move to a new office base and, as a result, incur a further 6 excess travel miles to and from the new work base. This would mean receiving 6 miles payment for the first 6 months, 12 miles for the next 6 months and 6 miles again for the last 6 months.

Reorganisation Annual Allowance

Total Excess Travel undertaken Each Day (both ways)	Annual Allowance (5 day week) £	Annual Allowance (4 day week) £	Annual Allowance (3 day week) £	Annual Allowance (2 day week) £	Annual Allowance (1 day week) £
1-10 Miles	£230	£184	£138	£92	£46
11-20 Miles	£673.7	£538.9	£404.2	£269.5	£134.7
21-30 Miles	£1133.7	£907	£680.2	£453.5	£226.7
31-40 Miles	£1478.1	£1182.5	£886.9	£591.2	£295.6
41-50 Miles	£1922	£1537.6	£1153.2	£768.8	£384.4
51-60 Miles	£2364.9	£1891.9	£1418.9	£946	£473
61-70 Miles	£2825	£2260	£1695	£1130	£565
71-80 Miles	£3169.4	£2535.5	£1901.6	£1267.7	£633.9
81-90 Miles	£3612.3	£2889.8	£2167.3	£1444.9	£722.4
91-100 Miles	£4056.2	£3244.9	£2433.7	£1622.5	£811.2

Section A: Declaration by Employee

Name

Address

Directorate

Section / Team

Payroll Number

I confirm that following the reorganisation of my work base on (date)

from (original work base)

to (new work base)

I am required to travel a total extra (the **total** number of excess miles travelled for the Journey to and from work each day)

I travel to my work base on (number of days) per week

Signature of Employee:

Date:

Section B: To be completed by Authorising Manager

I authorise the payment of a Reorganisation Allowance to be paid for a maximum of 1 year to the above employee, based on the additional miles travelled as stated above

Signature of Authorising Manager:

Date:

Section C: To be completed by HR Transactions Team

Total Extra Miles Per Day:

Number of Days Per Week:

Annual Allowance:

Start
Date:

Expected End Date for Allowance:

Date Recorded on Payroll:

Signature of HR Business Partner:

Date:

Recruitment & Selection policy

1.1

Version Control			
Version	Author	Date	Changes
1.1	Sam Sanderson	May 2025	Updated to reflect process change and included approach to secondments and internal moves. Included The Immigration Act 2016
1.2	Sam Sanderson	May 2026	Updated to reflect approach to references in Section 18

Name of Policy	Recruitment & Selection Policy
Person/posts responsible	Head of HR and OD
Date adopted	June 2026
Endorsed by	Employment Committee
Review Date	July 2028

Recruitment and Selection Policy

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) acknowledges that recruiting and retaining a skilled workforce is essential for achieving our goals. This policy promotes fair and consistent recruitment practices that support equality of opportunity, vital for service delivery.
- 1.2 Recruitment and selection are critical management functions representing significant investments. Our policy ensures effective recruitment practices to build a diverse workforce that enhances our service quality.
- 1.3 The policy is based on equal opportunities, emphasising equity, fairness, consistency, and merit-based appointments.
- 1.4 It aims to appoint the best candidates, support diversity, and ensure cost-effectiveness in the recruitment process.
- 1.5 HDC commits to ensuring hiring managers are trained and competent in managing recruitment and understanding equality standards.

2. Scope of Policy

- 2.1 Effective recruitment is key to HDC's success, requiring employees with the skills and qualifications to meet strategic objectives.
- 2.2 This policy applies to all permanent and fixed-term employees directly employed by HDC and serves as a guideline for recruiting temporary and contract staff.

3. Policy Objectives

- 3.1 We value diversity in our workforce and are committed to fostering diversity through our recruitment practices.
- 3.2 The recruitment policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure fair and equitable processes that do not discriminate unlawfully on various grounds.
- 3.3 All colleagues involved in recruitment must adhere to our Equality and Diversity Policy and Code of Conduct; violations may result in disciplinary action.
- 3.4 We will promote vacancies to a wide pool of candidates, encouraging applications from under-represented groups and considering positive action where appropriate.
- 3.5 Recruitment decisions will be based on merit, incorporating results from role-related assessments and interviews.
- 3.6 We will support career mobility by considering internal promotions and secondments.
- 3.7 Flexible working options will be offered where appropriate.

- 3.8 Agencies providing temporary workers must adhere to an open and transparent process aligned with HDC values.
- 3.9 Coaching and training on recruitment, equality, and diversity will be provided to all involved in the recruitment process.

4. Recruitment Steps

It is HDC policy to follow the steps below when considering the recruitment of new staff. Please refer to our Recruitment Processes Guide for Hiring Managers for more detail.

- 4.1 When an existing position becomes vacant, the hiring manager must review the requirements of the role and determine if the role is still required. If it is, considerations should be made to determine if a like for like replacement, or a revision of the role is required. If recruitment is necessary, the existing job description should be reviewed and any necessary changes made.
- 4.2 All new job descriptions must be evaluated before recruitment; existing posts should be re-evaluated if there are any changes made to the job description.
- 4.4 For any recruitment need, the hiring manager must complete and submit a vacancy authorisation form (VAF) to the recruitment team, for CLT approval.
- 4.5 Upon VAF approval, the hiring manager will provide advert copy along with a job description to the recruitment team, and a recruitment timetable will be established.
- 4.6 Job advertisements will usually close at least two weeks from publication, although the advertising period can be shortened, depending on business need. Hiring managers are encouraged to review applications regularly and can close the advert early, should sufficient applications be received. Shortlisting will be completed within five working days and the completed shortlisting matrix and interview schedule emailed to the recruitment team to action.
- 4.6 Secondment opportunities will be advertised internally.
- 4.7 Interview panel members must be informed of the timetable and collaborate and agreed on interview questions in advance.
- 4.8 Recruitment documentation will be retained for 12 months post-appointment and then destroyed.
- 4.9 If the successful candidate declines the offer or the post becomes available within six months, other suitable candidates will be contacted.

5. Advertising

- 5.1 We will ensure advertisements reach a diverse candidate pool, with all permanent and fixed-term posts advertised internally and externally as needed.
- 5.2 All vacancies will be posted on the HDC website, and advertising expenditures will be coordinated through the recruitment team.
- 5.3 The most effective advertising methods will be utilised, and positive action may be taken to encourage applications from under-represented groups.
- 5.4 Cost-effective campaigns may be run for specific posts.
- 5.5 In certain cases, vacancies may be offered to redeployees or as secondments instead of external advertising.

6. Information for Applicants

All advertised roles must include:

- Application instructions
- Job description and person specification
- Contract length and salary/grade
- Closing date and potential interview dates
- Location
- Working hours
- Background information on HDC and/or the role
- Any conditional offer requirements (e.g., DBS checks, Drug and Alcohol screening)
- Equality and diversity statement

7. Shortlisting

- 7.1 The application forms received by the closing date will be longlisted by the hiring manager. Applicants **must** be chosen against the essential criteria. It is the responsibility of the hiring manager at this stage to record on the shortlisting matrix scores for all applicants. The completed shortlisting matrix and interview schedule must be returned to the recruitment team who will invite selected candidates for interview. This will include timetabling the interviews and arranging any pre-employment checks if appropriate. Candidates who have not been shortlisted will also be informed by the recruitment team.
- 7.2 HDC is a Disability Confident employer. Being a Disability Confident employer means actively committing to attracting, recruiting, retaining, and developing a diverse workforce, including disabled people. A key component is the "guaranteed interview" aspect, where if an applicant with a disability meets the essential criteria (minimum requirements) outlined in the job description, they are guaranteed an interview. It is the responsibility of the hiring manager to ensure disabled candidates who meet the essential criteria, are shortlisted for interview.
- 7.3 The appointing manager will approach suitable colleagues to assist with **shortlisting and interviewing**. At least two people should be involved in shortlisting and sit on the interview panel. The same people should be involved in all interviews where possible to ensure consistency. If a panel member feels there is a conflict of interest with a candidate, they should seek advice from the recruitment team at the earliest opportunity.

8. Interviews

- 8.1 The hiring manager must lead the interview panel, familiar with equality, diversity, and recruitment policies. All panel members should have received relevant training.
- 8.2 The interview panel should ideally consist of two members, ensuring diversity. More senior positions may require three members.
- 8.3 Candidates will be given reasonable notice for interviews and any required tests, with adjustments made for disabled candidates.
- 8.4 The panel will discuss questions in advance, covering requisite skills and HDC values. Consistency is essential; all candidates should be asked the same core questions.

- 8.5 Interview durations should be consistent, and notes should be taken and retained for 12 months.
- 8.6 Appropriate selection methods will be used, including assessment centres or tests as needed.
- 8.7 The panel will score candidates based on their performance, considering both technical competence and alignment with HDC values.

9. Selection and Offer

- 9.1 Following interviews, the panel will compare candidates' answers against the person specification and decide on suitability.
- 9.2 Panel scores will be recorded, and appointment decisions will be made by consensus. If no candidates are suitable, the post may be re-advertised.
- 9.3 The hiring manager will inform the successful candidate and agree on a start date and salary.
- 9.4 Feedback will be provided to all interviewed candidates within 48 hours of the final interview. For external candidates, the recruitment team will facilitate this on behalf of the hiring manager. For internal candidates, the hiring manager is responsible for communicating the outcome and feedback.

10. External Offers

- 10.1 It is the responsibility of the hiring manager to extend the verbal offer. Once accepted, the hiring manager will complete a preferred candidate form and email it along with the interview notes to the recruitment team.
- 10.2 The recruitment team will contact the selected candidate with a written conditional offer, subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks.
- 10.3 The recruitment team will ask the candidate for evidence of their right to work in the UK at point of offer. The hiring manager will verify the original right to work in the UK documentation on the candidate's first day and email it to the recruitment team for our records. HDC does not hold a Sponsorship Licence and is unable to provide a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) or take over existing sponsorship.
- 10.4 Employment commences upon receipt of satisfactory references and required pre-employment checks, including an occupational health fit certificate.
- 10.5 The Recruitment team will manage DBS/BPSS checks, with costs covered by HDC. If the new starter requires a BPSS, the hiring manager will need to request this from the recruitment team.
- 10.6 Any unsatisfactory pre-employment checks (as laid out in section 16.1), may lead to a withdrawal of the conditional offer.

11. Internal Offers

- 11.1 It is the responsibility of the hiring manager to extend the verbal offer. Once accepted, the hiring manager will complete an internal mover's form and email it along with the interview notes to the recruitment team.
- 11.2 The recruitment team will contact the selected candidate with a written conditional offer, subject to any necessary pre-employment checks.

- 11.3 Hiring managers are advised to follow the guidelines as set out in the Guidance for Secondments and Internal Moves.

12. Redeployees

- 12.1 The Council is committed to minimising compulsory redundancies and redeploying employees who are no longer able to fulfil their current role. One way of achieving this is to redeploy employees who are at risk to other jobs within the Council.
- 12.2 Redeployees need only to demonstrate during the shortlisting and interview process that they meet the essential criteria in the person specification in order to be appointable to the job. The post must be deemed a suitable alternative employment.
- 12.3 Please see the Redundancy Policy for more details.

13. Secondments and Internal Moves

- 13.1 We encourage the use of secondment arrangements as a valuable means of providing cost-effective career development opportunities for our employees. Secondments are also a way of effectively covering the need for resources on a fixed term basis and for resourcing project work. Managers are advised to follow the guidelines as set out in the Guidance for Secondments and Internal Moves.
- 13.2 Hiring managers are advised to conduct a formal interview process ensuring fairness and transparency by ensuring all interested parties are asked the same interview questions.
- 13.3 Applications shall be accepted from internal applicants who are: not subject to a current capability action plan concerning performance, not subject to current disciplinary proceedings or not subject to a live formal disciplinary sanction.

14. Acting Up

- 14.1 It is the responsibility of the Hiring Manager to determine the need for an acting up arrangement, usually in response to a temporary vacancy, absence, or project requirement. This assessment should involve consultation with your HR Business Partner.
- 14.2 The hiring manager must clearly communicate the acting up opportunity to all members of the team, outlining the reasons for the arrangement, the role's responsibilities, and the expected duration. This can help to manage expectations and encourage suitable candidates to apply.
- 14.3 Where more than one expression of interest is made, or there is more than one suitably qualified member of staff, hiring managers are advised to conduct a formal interview process ensuring fairness and transparency by ensuring all interested parties are asked the same interview questions. If there is only one expression of interest, it is the hiring manager's decision as to whether to conduct a formal interview process.

15. Equality and Diversity

- 15.1 HDC recruits based on ability and job requirements.
- 15.2 The Equality and Diversity statement is included in all external advertisements and is available on HDC's careers page.

- 15.3 Applicants will complete an equality and diversity monitoring form, securely stored to ensure fairness in recruitment.

16. Employment Checks

- 16.1 The following checks are to be used to ensure suitability of all new colleagues, prior to commencement of employment at HDC.
- Proof of identity and right to work in the UK
 - Reference checks for two previous employers, or previous three years of employment, or character/education references if no employer references are available.
 - Occupational Health fit certificate
 - Proof of qualifications (if relevant to the role)
 - Valid UK driving licence (if relevant to the role)
 - DBS (if relevant to the role)
 - Drug and Alcohol screening (if relevant to the role)
- 16.2 All candidates must have the proof of identity confirmed by the hiring manager and recruitment before they are offered employment. They must submit original documents (on the [approved list](#)) to prove their identity and their right to work in the UK. HDC does not hold a Sponsorship Licence and is unable to provide a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) or take over existing sponsorship.
- 16.3 Candidates are required to disclose any unspent criminal convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Possession of a criminal record does not necessarily preclude the candidate from employment. Information which has a bearing on the requirements of the post will normally be discussed with the candidate at interview.
- 16.4 If information given during the application process is found to be untrue, the offer of employment will be withdrawn.

17. English language

- 17.1 The Immigration Act 2016 created a duty for public sector employers to ensure that each person who works for them in a customer facing role speaks fluent English.
- 17.2 Fluency relates to an individual's ability to speak with confidence and accuracy, using accurate sentence structures and vocabulary, all without hesitation and appropriate to the situation in hand. It does not relate to regional accents, dialects, speech impediments or the tone of conversations.
- 17.3 The person specification for customer facing roles explains what our fluency standard is for those roles.
- 17.4 Job applicants will demonstrate their level of fluency by competently answering interview questions in English.

18. References

- 18.1 Employment references are required for each new colleague to cover the last two employers or previous three years of employment. One must be from their current or most recent employer unless suitable reason is given.

- 18.2 Where the candidate has no previous employment record, a reference from their school or other educational institution should be obtained where relevant. In exceptional circumstances, where no employment or education reference we will accept character references.
- 18.3 Where the candidate was self-employed, they will need to provide evidence that their business was properly conducted, i.e references from clients, bank manager, or accountant.
- 18.4 The recruitment team will take up references. If there are concerns about a reference, we will contact the referee for further information. If this is not possible or there is difficulty obtaining references, we will contact the hiring manager for authorisation to proceed without the required references.
- 18.5 If satisfactory references are not received within a reasonable timescale, the conditional offer of employment may be withdrawn.

19. Health

- 19.1 All employees at HDC are asked to complete an occupational health questionnaire via our occupational health provider. This is to ensure the employee is able to undertake all of the duties expected of them in line with the job requirements.
- 19.2 Successful applicants who share they are disabled or may require adjustments to their work or working environment may be referred to our Occupational Health provider. Where reasonable adjustments are agreed these must be recorded in writing using the adjustment passport. The candidate should also receive written confirmation of whatever adjustments have been agreed.

20. Use of Agencies

- 20.1 In circumstances where there is deemed a business need, HDC shall use an agency to assist with finding the right candidate for a role.
- 20.2 Recruitment is responsible for all contact with the agencies and for negotiating the recruitment fees. Managers or other employees should have no contact with agencies unless agreed by Recruitment and all enquiries from agencies should be re-directed to Recruitment. Equality and inclusion policies of all agencies shall be verified by Recruitment.