Recruitment, Selection and Retention Policy

July 2022

Purpose and aim of the policy

Healthwatch Cornwall, which will be noted as the organisation throughout this document, recognises that its employees are key to delivering services and its success. It is of paramount importance to recruit, select and retain the right employees with the necessary skills and attributes to enable the organisation to fulfil its business aims and objectives. To be able to do this the organisation needs to be able to attract and retain employees of the highest quality. Costs must be considered in obtaining employees, as there is a large outlay of the organisation's finances for the number and quality of employees needed to satisfy the needs of the organisation. Therefore, a strategic, professional approach to recruitment and retention is essential.

This policy aims to:

- Attract and select the best possible applicants for vacancies,
- Identify and reject prospective applicants who are unsuitable,
- Retain employees of the highest standard,
- Meet statutory requirements with internal policies,
- Treat all applicants and employees clearly and fairly
- Enhance the reputation of the organisation.
- Show that we live our values by supporting our staff

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote and support good practice, which gives clear guidance that is fair and effective for line and recruiting managers regarding recruitment,

selection and retention for all employees that will meet the standards of the organisation policies, Equality Act 2010, and all other employment legislation;
- Provide a framework for managers to support and encourage reliable recruitment, selection and retention practices;
- Communicate the organisation's commitment to active management and legislation; and
- Set out responsibilities of managers and employees regarding recruitment, selection and retention.
- Ensure we uphold our Board's commitment to excellence in governance.

Scope

This policy applies to all internal and external applications for the organisation vacancies and all the organisation's employees. For this policy and following procedures to be effective, it is essential that any employee who participates in the recruitment, selection and retention process is aware of this document and follows it.

Principles

1. The organisation ensures all new roles are open to all.
2. The organisation will seek to recruit the best candidate for the role based on merit and ensure the person is best suited for the job and the organisation.
3. The organisation will ensure that the recruitment, selection and retention of employees are conducted in a professional, timely and responsive manner and compliance with current employment legislation.
4. The organisation will provide proper training, development and support to those involved in recruitment and selection activities, so that they are appropriately trained and can comply with the requirement of this policy and procedures.
5. The organisation will treat all candidates fairly, equitably and efficiently with respect and courtesy aiming to ensure that each candidate's experience is positive, irrespective of the outcome.
6. The organisation will promote the best recruitment, selection and retention practices, as it will continuously develop its recruitment and selection process to allow for new ideas and approaches.

7. The organisation should ensure that its recruitment, selection and retention practices are cost-effective.
8. If a member of staff involved in the recruitment process has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant, they must declare this as soon as they are aware of the individual's application, to avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection decision-making process.
9. All applicants' details and all relating documents will be treated confidentially following the Data Protection Act and GDPR. It is the recruiting managers' responsibility to ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to maintain this.
10. It is the recruiting managers' responsibility to ensure all recruitment panel members are competent and have the right training, so that, they can make informed decisions in the recruitment process. We will provide refresher training to support this.
11. It is the Business Support Team's responsibility to measure employee turnover and retention to ensure efficacy of the policy.

Recruitment and Selection Procedures

This section will cover 11 fundamentals, which must be covered during the recruitment and selection process. It is essential for the recruiting manager and panel to follow this procedure because it details each process, which was developed from legislation, policy and good practice:

1. Preparation, Planning and Justification for Recruitment

Before recruitment begins, the line manager and the Business Support Manager must consider the following:

a) Whether it is necessary to fill the vacancy and/or does the role require changes to its duties and/or responsibilities? To do this a full evaluation of the specific needs of the role, against the organisation's strategic plans and budget requirements would need to be conducted.

b) To consider, whether this position could be completed by a lesser qualified candidate or accommodated in another way?

c) To consider, is there an opportunity to meet other needs with a shuffle of employees or to bring in new skills to the organisation?
d) The recruitment of new employees will take into account the organisation's need for new ideas and approaches.
e) All new or changed positions must be formally reviewed and decided on by line managers and the Business Support Manager, which level the post will be aimed at before advertisement. To ensure equal pay for work equals value whilst keeping to terms and conditions consistent with the ethos of the organisation.
f) Consider widening the team's diversity, including full-time, part-time or job sharing and appealing to audiences representative of all populations in Cornwall.
g) Formal authorisation from the CEO must be sought before commencing the recruitment process. In respect of senior roles (management team) the Chair must also approve recuruitment.

2. Job Analysis

Before the job description and person specification can be produced a job analysis must be undertaken to collect, analyse and set out the following information:

a) Explain why the job exists and what the post holder is expected to deliver.
b) The nature and scope of the new position in terms of tasks and operations to be performed; duties to be carried out and how will it add to the organisation's knowledge, skills and abilities in the output of results, including expected outcomes and responsibilities of the new position and for what they are accountable for.
c) A performance criterion must be established to measure and set indications of what enables an assessment to be carried out to ascertain the degree, to which the job is being performed satisfactorily.
d) The knowledge, skills, abilities and personal values required.
e) The responsibilities and amount of discretion allowed regarding making decisions, variety of roles, difficulty and complexity of tasks for the new position.

f) The reporting relationship i.e. to which line manager the role reports to within the organisational structure.
g) Consider the development of post, future promotion, career development or other opportunities.
h) Working conditions need to be considered, room availability, desk space and virtual working with the use of equipment, unsocial hours and mobility.

3. Job Description

The job description should be derived from the job analysis and should be produced by the line manager who collates the information in consultation with the Business Support Manager and where appropriate the CEO. The job description should accurately reflect the elements of the post including basic information about the position such as:

- Job title and role
- Overall purpose and scope
- Tasks and duties
- Salary scale
- Responsibilities and reporting relationships
- Scope of authority

4. Person Specification

The person specification should define both the essential and desirable criteria in terms of:

- Skills,
- Aptitudes,
- Knowledge,
- Qualifications,
- Special requirements, and
- Experiences to fulfil the role.

All of this should be directly related to the position and equally applied to all applicants. This should be based on the job description and any optional specialist components. It should be as exact as possible so that at the interviewing stage the interviewer can ask direct questions about what the applicant knows and can do. However, avoid overstating the qualifications required, as this can result in difficulties in attracting applicants and dissatisfaction amongst recruits when their talents are not being utilised. To avoid indirect discrimination we must also not exclude other experiences / transferable skills.

5a. Internal Recruitment

The organisation aims to identify opportunities for personal development. It is the line manager's responsibility to ensure that all staff has access to any vacancy information. Vacancies may be advertised internally only when:

1. It is thought that there may be a reasonable pool of staff with the appropriate level of skills, experience and qualifications to fill the vacancy;
2. Where staff are under threat of redundancy; or
3. Where there is an urgency to fill the vacancy.

5b. External Recruitment

The advertisement of posts should always be questioned and justified. If it is thought that advertisement is needed, jobs must be published on the organisation's website, indeed, Unlocking Potential website and other places where it is thought to be desirable.

The job advertisement should contain, the job description and the person specification, as well as information about the organisation. This information should convey a professional image and encourage potential applicants to read to the end to prompt a sufficient number of replies from good candidates. Other information to consider before publication:

1. All advertisements must be approved by the line manager and the Business Support Manager before publication.
2. Consideration should be taken on the timing of placing advertisements to ensure maximum benefit.
3. Closing date should be agreed upon between the line manager and the Business Support Manager to allow candidates sufficient time in which to prepare and submit their applicants. Ideally, closing dates must never be

less than two weeks after the advertisement or more than four weeks. Statutory holidays should be considered when determining closing dates.

4. It would not be best practice to use a recruitment agency. In such a need for this, a formal discussion should be undertaken between the line manager and the Business Support Team.
5. All applicants whether internal or external should be provided with sufficient information to make an informed decision regarding their suitability for the position.
6. All adverts must be approved by the Business Support Manager before being made public.
7. All adverts must be cost-effective and agreed upon by the Business Support Manager.
8. Applicants are normally collated by the Business Support team and anonymised before being reviewed by the line manager.
9. Healthwatch Cornwall volunteers will be contacted about vacancies to ascertain their potential interest in applying for the role.

6. Shortlisting

The purpose of shortlisting is to drill down into each candidate's criteria to prepare a small group of applicants to interview. That number will depend upon the quality of applications.

1. A shortlisting panel may be drawn up which may involve all or some of the following: line manager, CEO, and Business Support. This would depend on the number of available vacancies.
2. Notes of the shortlisting candidates should be provided with details of the selection process in writing/email which may include any tests, with as much notice as possible and a minimum of 5 working days before the interview. They must also be asked if any adjustments should be made so that the applicant can participate fully in the selection process under the Equality Act 2010.
3. Whether the candidate is internal or external they must be assessed objectively against the selection criteria within the person specification and only candidates who meet all the essential criteria should be shortlisted. Assumptions must not be made.

4. Further selection may be undertaken from the desirable criteria to drill down on how to decide who to interview.
5. Following the shortlisting, selected applicants must be invited to an interview by the Business Support Team or line manager. This can be face to face or virtual over teams.

7. Interview

The purpose of the interview process is to guide the selection of the most suitable candidate for the post. Although it should be recognised that this is only one part of the selection process. The following points should also be considered:

1. Interviews should be conducted courteously and professionally.
2. Interviewing should normally be carried out by an interview panel of a minimum of two people, including the line manager however, this would depend on the position.
3. Selecting the right candidate should be a two-way process. Candidates should assess the role for their needs as well as the interview panel selecting the right candidate for the position.
4. Candidates who reach the interview stage, at the time of the interview should be offered a short induction to Healthwatch Cornwall. This should enable the candidate to gain a better insight into the role within the organisation.
5. It is recommended that a range of selection techniques should be used for assessing both the essential and desirable criteria in the person specification because this will help with the objective decision as some skills cannot be assessed in a formal interview alone.
6. The interview structure and questions should be consistently applied to each candidate with a standard format of questions. This must also follow what is required in the person specification. The interviewing panel must determine before the interview the questions and areas of discussion which will be put to each candidate. Care must be taken to avoid any discriminatory questions.
7. Notes of each interview should be undertaken by the panel, so these can be referred to when assessing the candidates against the person specification

and making any decisions. These notes should be stored in accordance with Healthwatch Cornwall data retention policy.

8. If the candidate requests feedback about their performance in the selection process this should be arranged with the Support team and sent within 5 working days of the request, when appropriate.
9. Unsuccessful interviewed candidates must be informed courteously and sensitively and at a minimum, they should receive a telephone or written notification of the outcome of the selection process within 5 working days of the interview.
10. Where there is an exact scoring between an internal and an external candidate the internal candidate should be the preferential choice.
11. All candidates at the end of the interview should be advised on what happens next.
12. If the candidate does not take the offered position the second choice is considered by the interviewing panel.

8. References

1. Taking up references is the responsibility of the Business Support Team.
2. Employment references should be obtained from the last or current employer. Personal, as well as professional references, are acceptable for a second reference.
3. Information that is sought from references must be structured around the requirements of the vacancy and the job description/person specification. Some organisations may only provide basic references just providing the name of the previous position, and how long they have been in the particular role.
4. References should be contacted after the interview stage.
5. If there is an urgent need for a reference this can be done verbally or by telephone for the successful candidate.
6. References should not be contacted without the candidate's consent and the information given, should be treated as confidential by the organisation.

9. Offering and Making the Appointment

It is important for securing the foundation of a good relationship with the successful candidate; the following options should be considered and acted upon:

1. The choice of candidate will be determined by the majority view from the formal interview panel.
2. It is recognised that in some cases to speed up the recruitment process it is desirable to make a verbal offer. In such a case the verbal offer should normally be made by the line manager or another member of the interview panel. This should only occur once the CEO has approved the appointment along with the Chair if appropriate.
3. Once a selection decision has been made the Business Support Team are informed and between them and the line manager will produce a written offer of employment, which will include the employment contract, salary and job description/person specification.
4. Offers of employment are normally subject to references, proof of qualifications and DBS checks. These are normally arranged by the Business Support Team.
5. The new appointment will be offered: a contact person, start date and a suitable probationary period.

10. Disclosure and Barring Service

The organisation complies with Disclosure and Barring Service DBS rules and regulations.

This code of practice is intended to ensure that disclosure information is not used unfairly and discriminated against the subject of the disclosure and that the handling and storage of disclosed information are dealt with appropriately and confidentially.

11. Induction procedures

This is the final stage of the recruitment process. Once the successful candidate has accepted the offer of employment and a start date has been agreed upon. It is the responsibility of the line manager and the Business Support Team to prepare a comprehensive induction programme for the new employee to make them feel welcome, valued and settled into their new role. This will form the basis from which new employees can quickly get used to their new surroundings and get up to speed and perform their duties effectively and begin to contribute to their team and the organisation. This will follow the process of:

- **Pre-arrival**

Some induction information can be provided in advance of the start date once the candidate has accepted the offer of employment. This will enable the new employee to begin familiarisation with the organisation. This will include providing reading materials about our work and that of Healthwatch England, arranging computer login details, accounts and basic computer training, as this is fundamental to any position within the organisation. Other areas could be meeting other staff in the organisation in key roles such as finance and organising bank details.

- **Job Induction**

Induction into the job for which the individual has been employed is an essential part of the new employee process and should not be rushed. The induction will consolidate the new employees' understanding of the duties, and responsibilities of the role and understand the expectations of them in the form of the organisation's protocols and how their work performance will be monitored. They will also develop key networking contacts available to them for information and support. This induction will also highlight where training and development would be appropriate.

1. Induction will depend on the role undertaken as well as the skills and knowledge the individual brings to the team.
2. Job induction activities are likely to take place within the team the individual will work in.
3. Responsibility for induction falls with the line manager through specific activities or responsibilities delegated with allocated time put aside.
4. The line manager needs to keep detailed records as to what is covered at induction.

5. All new employees will be expected to be proactive and take ownership of their induction, which will form the initial stage of their personal and professional development.
6. Individuals will be enabled and supported in doing this throughout the induction process beginning at the pre-arrival stage.
7. It is also important that the induction period covers all areas of the staff handbook including confidentiality, rules and regulations and health and safety.

Temporary positions

Occasionally, an opportunity may arise for a short-term temporary position to be created within the organisation. This situation may be due to:

1. The provision of funding to allow a specific piece of work to be undertaken;
2. An identified need to provide additional temporary support to existing the organisation staff to relieve excessive workloads during busy periods, to cover parental leave or long-term sickness;
3. Where a short-term promotional opportunity is identified for existing staff, i.e., as in 'acting up' duties.

Temporary positions should be advertised internally in the first instance. Consideration may be given to appointing existing permanent, fixed-term, casual staff or volunteers. A decision may be taken to ring-fence a temporary position, if appropriate. This may be the case when previous experience or a minimum level of expertise is required within a specific field to carry out the role effectively.

Once an appointment has been made for a temporary position, this should be confirmed in writing, outlining the length of the contract and the date of the review. If necessary, a temporary appointment may be extended (for no more than 18 months). Again, this should be confirmed in writing outlining the date of the review.

Where there is a need to extend the contract for a further period, consideration must be given as to whether the position could become permanent. If this is the case the post must then go through the recruitment process once again before any further appointments can be made. This may be internal only or both internal and external recruitment in line with the guidance set out in this policy.

Retention Procedures

This section will cover 4 fundamentals, that the organisation carries out to retain essential employees. It is necessary for all line managers, employees and the Business Support Team to follow this procedure because it details the processes, which were developed from legislation, policy and good practice:

1. Training and development

The organisation recognises the importance of training development for employees is paramount to retention. The following should be considered:

1. The organisation ensures that the employees are given regular training and opportunities to help employees to develop and grow.
    - If employees would like to attend specific training, they must communicate this to their line manager and the Business Support Team.
    - If line managers and the Business Support Team would like employees to attend specific training, they must communicate this to the employee and arrange it with the Business Support Team
2. Expenses for any work-related, and necessary courses can be claimed back by employees, to the organisation by following the Finance Policy.
3. The organisation encourages its employees to experiment with new mechanisms to bring change to outdated routines. This must be communicated with line managers, fellow colleagues and the Business Support Team if appropriate.
4. Line managers and Business Support must enable and understand employees' career development and progression expectations, so that, employees' career expectations are managed. These will be gleaned through quarterly 1-2-1s and annual appraisal.

2. Comfortable working environment

The organisation recognises the importance of a comfortable primary, working environment for employees is paramount for retention. The following should be considered:

1. The organisation understands that the company premises are located in the centre of Truro, in a small office, with plenty of windows and lights.
2. The organisation will provide office equipment, within reason, so that, the employee's primary working environment is comfortable.
3. Line managers should conduct DSE assessments with employees if changes are made to the primary working environment in line with the organisation's health and safety policy and health and safety legislation.
    a. DSE assessments should be sent to the Business Support Team and saved in employee electronic files once completed.
    b. If any alterations need to be made to the working environment employees must notify their line manager and the Business Support Team immediately to redo/update the DSE assessment.
4. The organisation provides the necessary hygiene facilities for employees to use on the company premises in line with, legislation and policies.

3. Communication

The organisation recognises the importance of clear and concise communication for employees is paramount to retention. The following should be considered as the organisation believes that communication is key for the organisation to function:

1. All employees must be communicated to in a clear and concise manner which accommodates accessibility requirements.
2. The organisation provides all employees multiple ways to communicate, it includes, but is not restricted to Microsoft Teams, Outlook, phone and face-to-face.
3. Employees must be consulted, by the organisation, to ensure that employees have a voice and are updated when appropriate.

   a. Line managers must conduct a 1:2:1 with their reports on a quarterly basis. Employees will have an annual appraisal with their line manager.
   b. The organisation carries out a yearly employee survey to gather feedback about the organisation and how it can improve. This includes feedback about line management.

4. If employees manage difficult conversations, the organisation provides Team Talk and Support Meetings for the engagement and project team members each month to discuss difficult conversations and solutions.
   a. If employees require further support, employees must speak with their line manager and/or the Business Support Team.

5. There will be all team meetings each quarter along with occasional development/activity days/events

4. Remuneration and benefits

The organisation recognises the importance of remuneration and benefits for employees as a means of retaining valuable employees. The following should be highlighted:

1. The organisation offers all employees flexible working hours where employees can work from home and/or in the office where appropriate.
2. The organisation offers Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) services for employees to use via Health Assured.
   a. Line managers must help and manage issues and report instances of workplace stress and absenteeism with the Business Support Manager, if appropriate.
3. The organisation provides all employees with a pension in line with policy and legislation
4. All employees must be treated fairly by line managers and the organisation.
5. Salaries will be banded. All employees will commence at the bottom of their respective band and will have the opportunity to move up one band level each year subject to them being able to demonstrate full achievement of their objectives for that year. The process for undertaking this along with the

banding levels will be subject to full consultation with our staff and will be set out in a separate document.

Monitoring

The line manager and Business Support Team will from time to time monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of this policy and procedure and its performance and if there are ways that this process could be improved.

Line managers will carry out a 1:2:1 appraisal to make sure recruitment, selection and retention processes are adequate for use.

The Business Support Team will monitor absence and return-to-work interviews will take place with the employee and their line manager following a sickenss absence of more than five days.

If a member of staff submits their resignation the Business Support Team or another member of senior staff should conduct an exit interview to gain intelligence on retaining employees and why employees seek other employment. The interviews should answer questions regarding the following information:

- Why do employees leave?
- Who are leaving?
- When do employees leave, regarding the length of service?
- What roles are being left?

A standard set of exit interview questions will be prepared so that trends can be tracked over time.

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