

Report to: Personnel Committee



Date of Meeting 4th July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

HR Policy Proposed Changes

Report summary:

To seek Personnel Committee approval to changes to the Council's Recruitment and Relocation policies and to a new policy regarding Overseas Employment.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

To approve the proposed changes to the Recruitment and Relocation policies.

To approve that the Council's policy will be to not employ people who reside overseas due to the legal, cost and other issues associated with such an arrangement.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the Council's HR policies are up to date and fit for purpose.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Medium Impact

An equalities impact assessment is being finalised.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk; The policies for consideration are not widely used but providing clarity in the Council's approach ensures that when the need arises there is an agreed policy position.

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
 - A greener East Devon
 - A resilient economy
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Report in full

1. The Personnel Committee's remit includes approving the devising and development of overall employment policies and as such Committee are asked to approve changes to the Recruitment and Relocation policies and agreement of a new policy on the employment of people who reside overseas.

2. Recruitment Policy

- 2.1. HR have undertaken a review of the existing policy to refresh and streamline it and to ensure that it is user friendly and supports a positive candidate journey. The general intent of the policy remains the same, with some of the detail now included in the accompanying management guidance which is currently being developed.
- 2.2. The key proposed changes to the policy, as shown at Appendix 1, are:
 - 2.2.1. Further clarification around who is responsible and at what stage
 - 2.2.2. Further clarification of the probationary review process including how it applies differently to employees transferring in from within the local government sector, compared to new employees (this links to the NJC continuous service provisions) and the review requirements that managers must adhere to during the probationary period
 - 2.2.3. Inclusion of the Council's policy on the employment of people who reside overseas (see paragraph 4 below)
 - 2.2.4. Included links to various updated guidance, flow chart, forms and process templates, which will be available to managers on the intranet.

3. Relocation Policy

- 3.1. The Council has a longstanding Relocation Policy which has not been reviewed for some time. The following changes are proposed, as shown at Appendix 2:
 - 3.1.1. Clarification that the policy will only apply to permanent employees where there is a clear need due to the nature of the post and/or significant recruitment challenges (the policy continues to only apply with the prior approval of the Chief Executive and is only used in a very small number of cases).
 - 3.1.2. Inclusion of broadband connection as a cost that can be claimed, alongside telephone installation.
 - 3.1.3. Greater flexibility with regard to the Lodging Allowance element of the payment, taking into account variations in rental costs.
 - 3.1.4. Removal of the provision to allocate temporary Council housing as part of the policy, given the pressure on the housing stock.

4. Employment of people who reside overseas

- 4.1. The Worksmart Working Group have explored the implications of the Council employing people who reside overseas. There are no immediate queries regarding this, but determining our approach now will help us to deal with any future requests. It should be noted that this relates to where people reside and not the recruitment of people from overseas, which is covered by separate arrangements.
- 4.2. The proposed policy is that the Council will not employ people who live overseas because of the various HR, tax, resource, cost and other implications, with the costs and resource requirement to facilitate this being disproportionate to the staff who would benefit. Wording has been included in the draft Recruitment Policy to reflect this (Appendix 1, paragraph 2).
- 4.3. In particular, the following were considered by the Working Group:
 - 4.3.1. Employment law for employees living overseas must account for both UK law and the law of the country in which they are resident. This could apply to bank holidays, statutory minimum annual leave entitlement, minimum wage and rights on termination of employment. This would require research for each country an employee was to work from. Immigration and sponsorship requirements have changed following Brexit and would need to also be considered for staff working from overseas. HR would require specialist legal support to advise on matters relating to overseas employment law which would incur additional costs.
 - 4.3.2. Tax and National Insurance would be impacted. If an employee is working outside of the UK for less than 183 days in a tax year this would not normally affect their tax residency status, but consideration needs to be given to the country's tax rules that the employee is working from. If an employee was working overseas for more than 183 days in a year, or moved permanently, the Council would need to provide the employee with a letter and instruction to complete a form to notify their new status to HMRC. This may result in them being exempt from paying tax in the UK as they would pay it in their country of residence instead if a "double taxation agreement" exists between the UK and the country being worked from. An employee can apply to HMRC for a National Insurance exception certificate which would be an instruction to the Council to cease deducting NI contributions. If the employee lives/moves permanently to another country they would likely need to pay Social Security in their country of residence. The tax rules for working overseas, especially if more than the 183 days, are therefore complex and employees would need to seek independent advice before making any decisions as there are also implications on long term pension and social security benefits already accrued whilst in the UK. These arrangements would also be an additional burden on the Payroll Team.
 - 4.3.3. Data protection laws allow for staff working abroad so this would not present a significant risk to information security. However, the Council would need to ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place when exchanging personal data or providing access from outside of the UK, ensuring compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations, where this applies. If data transfer is likely to be outside the EU, this would need to be specifically referenced in relevant privacy notices(s) and, again, appropriate safeguards put in place. All of this would require additional resourcing.
 - 4.3.4. There are practical considerations as to the ease of sending ICT and other equipment overseas and delays or uncertainty in having equipment returned at the end of employment or during a disciplinary process. Items sent would likely be subject to Customs with associated costs. Any support for overseas users could be carried out on a reasonable efforts basis, and would be of a remote nature. Should Strata not be able to rectify an issue remotely, the device (i.e. laptop) would need to be returned to a Strata office location in the UK for

investigation/fault resolution, incurring further cost. If a request is made for a user to access systems from a non UK location it would need to be logged via the Strata portal and the request assessed to ensure that the location does not give rise to a potential security risk. The Strata security team would need to give written approval for a new country to be added to the permitted list.

4.3.5. The UK's health and safety laws are currently EU laws (this has not yet changed with Brexit) so they would very likely cover staff working in the EU, although this would need to be checked. There would need to be a full assessment of laws in other countries outside of the EU. All of this would require resourcing and potentially incur additional costs, if external advice was required.

4.3.6. Different locations will have their own local legal requirements in respect of insurance liability cover. Advice would need to be sought on a case-by-case basis, dependent upon which country the employee was residing in. This would incur additional work and costs as each circumstance is investigated.

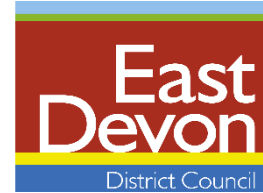
5. UNISON are aware of these policy proposals which will be considered at Joint Staff Forum on 29th June, with the outcome shared with Committee to inform the decision.

Financial implications:

No financial implications have been identified.

Legal implications:

It is important that our HR policies are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are in compliance with employment legislation and best practice.



Recruitment Policy and Procedure

1. ~~Effective recruitment and selection is fundamental to the achievement of the Council Plan.~~ **The Council is committed to delivering a timely and effective recruitment approach that ensures that it has** ~~The aim of this policy is to make sure that we have the right people with the necessary skills, expertise and qualifications to deliver the Council's ambition and priorities. This policy also sets out the Council's aim to make sure recruitment decisions are~~ **safe, legal, fair and reflect good practice. This policy takes into account the Council's policy and objectives on equality to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010, and safer recruitment practices where applicable.**
2. The following principles apply in support of this policy:
 - We will ensure that we use our financial resources wisely and before recruiting check that the recruitment is necessary, whether changes can be made and/or new approaches can be used, that the work still needs to be done or the work can be done differently and whether this is business as usual or new activity.
 - We will ensure that all recruitment is approved by the Chief Executive supported by the relevant Authority to Recruit (ATR). ~~As a council it is imperative that we keep a close eye on our headcount and review carefully the need to recruit. For this reason, recruitment will not be able to take place without explicit authorisation from the Chief Executive. The authority to recruit form can be found here. A manager who wishes to recruit will need to complete an authority to recruit (ATR) and submit this to Human Resources for approval at SMT+. This applies to any type of recruitment process including both temporary and permanent recruitment.~~
 - We will ensure that all Recruiting Managers receive training in **good and safe recruitment and selection practices, including the need to comply with the Equality Act and safer recruitment procedures.**
 - We will ensure that all jobs have been fairly evaluated and fit within the correct grade and salary level in line with our [Pay and Reward](#) and [Job Evaluation](#) policies.
 - We will ensure that vacancies are advertised internally to encourage employee development and career progression and when necessary will also use the most appropriate external recruitment methods to attract good quality candidates with the experience, skills and attributes suitable for the job.
 - **Due to additional tax, legal and resource implications, the Council will not employ people who reside overseas.**

3. Recruitment Procedure

3.1. The Recruitment Procedure is outlined in the Flow Chart. Particular note should be made of the following elements of the Procedure. Guidance is also available for Recruiting Managers.

3.2. Preparing for Recruitment

3.2.1. **A review of the job description, person specification and risk assessment profile will be carried out by the Recruiting Manager. Where significant changes are made to a job description, the Recruiting Manager will arrange for a job evaluation review to be carried out. Consideration should also be given to whether the job is**

~~suitable as an apprenticeship role. Prior to getting this authorisation, managers need to consider whether the work can be done without the need to recruit. It is important to consider also whether the job content has materially changed. If so the post will need to be job evaluated. Managers are encouraged to discuss their needs with the HR Business Partner prior to submitting the ATR. If a new post requires an evaluation before advertising, a new Job Evaluation Questionnaire should be completed. Alternatively, if the post is not evaluated before it is advertised it will be marked as 'subject to Job Evaluation'. The new postholder will be required to submit a Job Evaluation Questionnaire within three months of occupying the post. Any salary increase will be backdated to the employee's start date in the post. If the grade/salary is reduced, the normal protection arrangements will apply. Please refer to the Job Evaluation Policy which is on the intranet or can be found here. The recruiting manager is responsible for making sure that the job description, person specification and risk assessment profile are updated prior to advertising. Recruiting managers must take care to ensure that the criteria outlined in the job and person specification is measurable and is non-discriminatory. This is vital as this will be used to shortlist applicants and select the successful candidate. The recruiting manager should also consider whether the role could be offered on the basis of an apprenticeship. The council is committed to recruiting apprentices and 'growing our own' talent.~~

- 3.2.2. ~~The Recruiting Manager must complete the Authority to recruit form and submit this for approval to the Chief Executive. At this stage consideration should be given to whether it is appropriate to offer relocation expenses, for example if it is anticipated that recruitment will be from outside the South West and as an attraction strategy to bring suitable interest in the job. In such cases a clear rationale must be given and this must be approved by the Chief Executive. The recruiting manager must carefully consider whether the post should be advertised offering relocation expenses. This is generally offered for roles which are considered hard to recruit to. Authorisation needs to be granted by the Chief Executive as part of the ATR process.~~
- 3.2.3. ~~In some circumstances, interview expenses can be offered and this will have been previously agreed and authorised as part of the ATR.~~

3.3. Recruitment Advertising

- 3.3.1. ~~Once approved, the Recruiting Manager will agree the most appropriate recruitment advertising channels with the HR Business Partner. This may be internal only, external and internal and/or via an agency. The Recruiting Manager will draft a suitable recruitment advert and the HR Business Partner will obtain advertising quotes.~~
- 3.3.2. ~~Once agreed the HR Business Partner and Recruiting Manager will agree the timeline, including go live date, close date and interview date and the HR Business Partner will arrange for the advert to be placed. The timeline will be communicated to the Recruitment Co-ordinator and the HR Support team, with the latter arranging for the advert to be placed on the Council's website, in social media and in the Council's staff newsletter.~~

~~The council is committed to facilitating career advancement and to providing permanent employment opportunities for fixed-term employees. To this end it is generally our practice to advertise vacancies on the council's intranet and via email to all employees. However, in circumstances where legislation places an obligation to on us to offer suitable redeployment (to avoid a redundancy or other dismissal for example), the recruitment process may exclude an advert — Human Resources must be consulted. Line managers are responsible for ensuring that advertised vacancies are posted on local notice boards where employees who do not have access to email or the intranet can see them. Vacancies advertised externally will generally be advertised using appropriate digital media. Printed~~

~~media may be utilised for professional positions. We will also make use of advertising media that will help attract a diverse workforce such as Jobs Board Media. Adverts must be drafted and formatted according to corporate guidelines through our advertising agency unless there is an agreed exception. Vacancies which are restricted to internal candidates only will be clearly indicated on the advertisement. All internal candidates will be selected for interview on the same criteria as external candidates. Managers are responsible for ensuring that the advert is accurate, appropriate and non-discriminatory. Human Resources will also monitor all advertisements before they are released for publication. Sometimes it may be more effective to go to a recruitment agency to help with a recruitment campaign where there has been little interest in a previously advertised post or where a specific skill is needed. We use Temp Solutions as our preferred supplier for agency recruitment and if they are unable to help they will help source another agency. Please contact Human Resources if Temp Solutions are unable to help. An existing employee can be 'seconded' to cover a specific vacancy. The Council's secondment policy must be referred to and Human Resources consulted. It is important that equal opportunity is given to employees with appropriate skills and experience to be considered for secondment opportunities. The council's secondment policy can be found here. Employees who have been 'acting up' or 'seconded' to a position that subsequently becomes vacant / subject to permanent appointment do not have an automatic right to the post. The post should still be advertised and they will be required to apply for the post. It may be appropriate to advertise the vacancy internally only but this should be discussed with Human Resources. Employees on maternity leave will receive all advertisements for posts advertised in the council during the period of their maternity leave. Employees are responsible for ensuring the Human Resources have an up to date email address to facilitate this process. Feedback from our successful candidates outlines that it is helpful to put the interview dates in the advertisement so that people can make arrangements in advance to attend interviews.~~

3.4. Applications and Shortlisting

- 3.4.1. EDDC is a "Disability Confident" employer and as part of this commitment, applicants who indicate they have a disability on their application form and who meet the minimum essential criteria on the person specification, will be guaranteed an interview. Details of disability are not available to Recruiting Managers until after the shortlisting process has been completed. Shortlisted candidates with a disability will be asked if any reasonable adjustments are needed to attend interview so that they are not disadvantaged during the selection process.
- 3.4.2. Applicants will be asked to disclose any unspent convictions as part of the application process in line with the obligations under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and will be asked to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service check at the appropriate level for the job. Prior to submitting the ATR, the Recruiting Manager will have completed an assessment to ensure that disclosure is applied at the appropriate level for the job. Any disclosures that are made must be brought to the attention of the HR Business Partner.
- 3.4.3. To ensure a safe and fair process, any Recruiting Manager that has a personal or familial relationship with an applicant must declare it and will not be part of the selection process and will inform HR. In principle, EDDC does not allow individuals to be directly or indirectly in positions of authority over a relative or those with whom they have a personal relationship or close personal ties. Any such relationship will be identified to HR.
- 3.4.4. Recruitment Co-ordinators will support the Recruiting Manager in managing the administrative steps in the recruitment process to ensure that applicants are

communicated with at the various stages in the application process, from sending applications to Recruiting Managers for shortlisting once the recruitment close date has been reached, to regretting those not successful and inviting those shortlisted for interview.

- 3.4.5. The Recruiting Manager and interview panel will shortlist applications using the shortlisting form and pass to the Recruitment Co-ordinator who will arrange interviews. The shortlisting form should be retained and passed to HR who will hold for a period of 6 months for audit purposes. Applicants who do not meet the essential criteria will not be shortlisted for the job.
- 3.4.6. If there are no suitable candidates it will be necessary to review with the HR Business Partner and decide on next steps; which may include either re-advertise, review other options such as job design review, or approach an agency for specialist help.
- 3.4.7. All applicants will receive communication on the outcome of their application within 10 working days of the vacancy close date.

~~Candidates for all posts will be asked to complete the council's online application form which is accessed through the East Devon District Council recruitment web pages. Paper versions will be available on request. CV's are not acceptable except in circumstances of recruitment through an agency, in which case the successful applicant will still be required to complete an application form prior to commencing employment. All candidates will be provided with a Job Pack which will include a copy of the job description and person specification and risk assessment. This will include any details regarding any work-based interview assessments. The council has been awarded the 'Disability Confident' positive about disability symbol. As part of our commitment to this standard, applicants who indicate that they have a disability on the application form and who meet the minimum criteria as detailed on the person specification are guaranteed an interview. Details of a disability will not be available for recruiting managers until after the shortlisting process has been completed. Shortlisted applicants with a disability must be asked if any reasonable adjustments are required prior to attending an interview so that they are not disadvantaged during the selection process. Please discuss with HR if further advice is needed. In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct for Employees, any member of staff that has a personal or familial relationship with a candidate, except for a line management relationship, should not be part of the selection process and should bring this to the attention of Human Resources. In principle the council will not allow individuals to be directly or indirectly in authority over a relative or an individual with whom they have close personal ties. Applicants should bring any such relationships to the attention of the recruiting manager so that this can be taken into account during any recruitment and selection process. Applicants will be asked to declare any UNSPENT convictions as part of the application process. Only posts identified as EXEMPT from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act will be eligible for a standard or enhanced DBS Disclosure seeking information about spent convictions. Recruiting managers are responsible for undertaking an assessment of the role's eligibility for a disclosure in conjunction with their HR Business Partner and prior to submitting the ATR. If an applicant makes any convictions/warnings declaration on the application form the recruiting manager should seek advice from Human Resources before making a shortlisting decision. The short listing decisions should be recorded independently by panel members on the short listing record form which will need to be retained and passed to Human Resources. This will be kept for a period of 6 months. You can find the short listing form here If there are no suitable candidates who meet the short listing criteria it will be necessary to re-advertise the post and a review should be undertaken of the person specification, advertisement and publication used as well as the salary to ensure that it is appropriate for the post. Applicants who do~~

~~not meet all of the essential criteria should not be shortlisted for interview. All external applicants will receive an electronic notification of the decision made regarding their application within 4 weeks of the closing date. Recruiting managers are responsible for notifying internal candidates verbally within the same timeframe.~~

3.5. Selection Process

- 3.5.1. Interview panels will usually comprise of a minimum of 2 people, ideally gender balanced. In those areas such as Housing, where EDDC work directly with tenants, tenant participation is encouraged as much as possible on interview panels.
- 3.5.2. The selection process will be agreed between the Recruiting Manager and HR Business Partner in advance so that applicants invited for interview can be fully informed and prepared. This will include an interview with a combination of competency based, behavioural and attitudinal questions and relevant work based assessment(s) and/or psychometric tests as necessary.
- 3.5.3. Each applicant will be scored for the answers given to each question and summary notes should be kept as a useful prompt to enable accurate decision making at the end of the interview process. Interview notes should be retained and passed to HR within 10 days of completion of the interview process.
- 3.5.4. There should generally be a consensus on the interview panel for the preferred candidate, however where there is disagreement, the majority view will carry the decision.
- 3.5.5. At the end of each interview, the applicant should receive an indication of when they might expect to hear about the outcome of the recruitment process. All interviewed applicants should receive a telephone call from the Recruiting Manager to let them know the outcome of the interview within the agreed period and the offer of feedback if wanted; this should also be followed up in writing by the Recruitment Co-ordinator within 3 working days.

~~Interviews will be held by a panel comprising of ideally 3 people but a minimum of 2 people, gender balanced where possible. Interview questions should be agreed in advance by the selection panel and should be developed using the job description and person specification for the post. The panel will seek to develop questions which require the candidate to give examples of their previous relevant experience. Competency/behavioural based questions have been developed in line with the Council's behaviours framework and should be used consistently to gather evidence around the behaviours specifically required in the role. These are available from Human Resources. The panel will each have a set of questions and will score the candidate response independently of each other during the interview. Accurate, factual notes should be made by the panel and it should be noted that candidates can request access to all information written about them. All notes should be passed to Human Resources who will ensure the proper storage and destruction within the specified time scale of 6 months. The recruitment scoring should be applied to decide the successful applicant and where the panel disagree the majority view should prevail. Under no circumstances should the scoring be creatively fixed in order to favour a preferred candidate in securing the post. If unsure, the panel should not recruit. In addition to interviews, a range of other selection methods should be used which are work based and reflect the requirements of the job. Appropriate methods could include tests which simulate job activities as these are considered good practice and good predictors of performance. Other methods may include a presentation on a given subject or psychometric tests which assess verbal and numerical reasoning for instance and are administered by a qualified practitioner from Human Resources. Posts which have a people management responsibility must include a personality~~

questionnaire (Occupational Personality Questionnaire OPQ). Recruiting managers should liaise with Human Resources to arrange OPQ testing, which must be completed by the candidate so that results can be probed during the interview, and 30 minutes of feedback on the results of their personality questionnaire to candidates at some stage during the interview process. Managers may decide to vet an applicant's social media profile before offering a position. Sites such as LinkedIn are professional networking sites that can be used explicitly for recruitment purposes. There are risks associated with basing recruitment decisions on information gained solely from an individual's Facebook or other social forum profile. The main risk is the potential for indirect discrimination particularly if there is an over-emphasis on matters which relate to a protected characteristic. Managers should also be mindful that an applicant's activity on a social media forum may not be representative of their potential behaviour within the workplace and more emphasis should be placed on use of questions and workplace testing to assess their overall suitability for the post. All applicants should be advised in writing of the outcome of their interview within 2 days of the final interview; if this is not possible, candidates must be informed of when a decision will be made. Candidates attending an interview will be reimbursed any reasonable expenses incurred. Where an overnight stay is necessary, this must be agreed in advance by the Recruiting Manager. If the council has not arranged and paid for the accommodation, we will reimburse reasonable single occupancy bed and breakfast hotel accommodation up to £70.00 for one night. Expenses will need to be claimed using the interview expenses form which can be found here and will only be reimbursed as per the rates quoted and with receipts attached.

3.6. Job Offers and Relevant Checks

- 3.6.1. Following interview evaluation and decision making, the Recruiting Manager will make an offer of employment, usually verbally in the first instance, to the preferred applicant. In addition to the verbal offer an email offer should be sent as immediate follow-up so that the offer being made is clear.
- 3.6.2. As soon as an offer has been accepted, the Recruiting Manager will complete the Starters Form so that contract paperwork can be prepared and the necessary employment checks can be started.
- 3.6.3. The Recruiting Manager could liaise with the new starter to arrange appropriate onboarding and induction planning, including being available to respond to any queries from either the new starter or HR.

All employees requiring access to the Public Security Network (PSN) (usually through the allocation of a Government Connect Secure Extranet (GCSx) facility) must be able to pass the Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) check which seeks to ensure that the council has trustworthy employees accessing and processing PSN information. This check comprises of a check of the individual's identity, their nationality and immigration status (including entitlement to work in the UK), evidenced verification of employment or academic history for the past 3 years (if there are noticeable gaps in employment advice needs to be sought from HR), and a check of all unspent convictions through a Basic Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service. More information on this can be found in the Employment Screening policy here. All employees will be subject to a Basic Disclosure unless the post warrants a higher level of criminal record check; and the Council will use best endeavours to verify the last three years of employment/academic history of all other successful candidates / workers with access to the Council's computer network. In compliance with the Immigration, Asylum & Nationality Act 2006 ALL successful applicants will be required to provide documentary evidence of their right to work in the UK either prior to or on their first day of employment. In line with good practice, ALL offers of employment

will be subject to receipt of a minimum of 2 references satisfactory to the Council. External references will be requested by Human Resources using an employment screening company, and will not be taken up without the prior approval of the applicant (given on the application form). Managers are responsible for obtaining internal references where the successful candidate is an existing employee / worker and must take care to ensure that they have cross referenced the reference with details provided in the application form to ensure there are no discrepancies. It is acknowledged that some employers do not provide references as quickly as we would like. If an individual commences employment without references in place, a considered effort must be made to ensure that we obtain references as soon as possible and within 2 months of the applicant starting employment. If despite efforts a reference has not been obtained, the line manager must clearly document for the HR file whether this condition of employment is to be waived or whether the employee should be dismissed as a result of not being able to satisfy this condition. Advice should be sought from Human Resources. An occupational health assessment for all new employees must be obtained prior to commencement of employment to assess fitness for the role and to establish whether any reasonable adjustments are needed. Where an applicant is deemed unfit and there is no opportunity for reasonable adjustments to be implemented the offer should be withdrawn. Advice should be sought from Human Resources prior to making this decision. Job applicants will be advised early in the recruitment process of our methods of verification. In cases where there is a discrepancy or the applicant is unable to produce original documents, the successful applicant will be asked to give their consent to verify their academic qualifications with the issuing institution. Human Resources will contact the issuing institution if qualifications are not produced within a week of starting employment with the council. If consent has not been given by the successful applicant and they have not produced original certificates then the relevant manager will meet with the applicant and give them a further opportunity to give their consent or to produce originals of qualifications subject to a deadline. Where Human Resources have been unable to verify the qualifications by a revised deadline, the relevant manager must decide whether they wish to waive this particular condition or end the employment for the failure to satisfy an express employment condition. Decisions must be explained and documented and placed on the employee's file. Posts which require the post holder to have a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service check should be undertaken as soon as practically possible and preferably before the applicant commences employment. If the applicant does start working for the council prior to receipt of a satisfactory check under no circumstances will a post holder be able to work unsupervised or alone where contact with a vulnerable group is likely. For further guidance please refer to the employment screening policy or [click here](#). When making an offer of employment the line manager must expressly advise the candidate that the offer is conditional upon satisfactory results of: an Occupational Health medical assessment, 2 satisfactory references, verification of the last 3 years of employment/academic history (if applicable and not already in receipt), confirmation of the right to work in the UK, satisfactory check of essential qualifications as stated in the person specification, valid driving licence check (if listed in the person specification as essential to the post), independent check of unspent convictions acquired through a basic check from the Disclosure and Barring Service, Disclosure and Barring Service standard or enhanced (if applicable to the post). Human Resources will ensure that a written contract of employment subject to the stated conditions is issued upon receipt of a starter's form which can be found [here](#). The line manager must ensure that once an offer has been accepted that the starter's form is completed with their HR Business Partner to ensure accurate details are provided for the issuing of the employment

~~contract and to progress the appointment as soon as possible. Candidates must be advised that they must verbally confirm their acceptance within 2 working days of the verbal offer so that if necessary the panel can move onto their second preferred candidate. On making the offer, candidates will be advised not to hand in their notice until they have received confirmation from Human Resources or the line manager that a satisfactory medical assessment has (and standard or enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check if applicable) have been received. The applicant will be advised that the offer of employment is still subject to conditions such as 2 satisfactory references, verification of 3 years of employment, Basic disclosure; and a check of original documentation confirming identity, right to work, driving licence and qualifications which must be provided either prior to or on their first day. It is really important that the recruiting manager should maintain contact with the successful candidate during the time it takes for them to work their notice and for a start date to be arranged. This communication is vital to the process and reduces the potential for issues to arise or the candidate to drop out prior to commencing employment.~~

3.7. Starting Employment

3.7.1. The Recruiting Manager will make arrangements and allow time for the corporate induction process as well as arranging a suitable local induction and familiarisation with the department and team. It is also recommended that the new employee be provided with a “buddy” within the team who can act as local support and help settle in the new recruit.

3.7.2. New recruits should be booked on the Corporate Welcome session. The corporate welcome training and other induction activities must be completed within the first month of the employee commencing employment with the Council.

~~New employees are expected to read our employment policies. Managers should ensure that employees have read and understood these policies during their first month of employment and have signed the welcome process record of completion form to signal that they have read and understood the policies. This is available here. All employees are required to attend the welcome session, regardless of whether the post is fixed term or permanent. Recruiting managers are responsible for putting in place a local induction to provide familiarisation with the department and team. Human Resources recommend allocating an employee as a ‘buddy’.~~

3.8. Probationary Period

3.8.1. All new employees to local government are subject to a probationary period of 6 months where their suitability for the post is assessed. The Recruiting Manager is responsible for ensuring that any learning needs or gaps in knowledge or experience that have been identified as part of the recruitment and selection process are reflected in the new employee’s induction plan and performance is regularly assessed, including the setting of clear SMART objectives.

3.8.2. The Manager will arrange to book informal reviews at 1, 3 and 5 months with their new employee, this could be as part of or in addition to one to ones.

3.8.3. If during the probationary period, concerns or issues arise, they should be discussed and actions agreed with the new employee to remedy them. Regular probation reviews/one to ones will help to tackle any issues early on and early guidance should be obtained from the HR Business Partner. If during the probationary period concerns in relation to behaviour, attitude or performance are raised and not resolved, the manager should address under the Managing Performance Policy.

3.8.4. Towards the end of the 6 month probationary period, the manager will arrange a meeting to discuss progress and review performance and objectives. If conduct

and performance are at the required standard, satisfactory completion of probation can be confirmed.

~~All appointments are made subject to a probationary period of 6 months. After 3 months a review meeting should take place between the employee and the line manager to discuss progress. At the end of the probationary period, and subject to a satisfactory report by the line manager, employees will be notified in writing that they have successfully completed their probation period. The probationary period can be extended by a further 3 months if this is considered to be appropriate. Guidance and advice should be sought from Human Resources early on in the probation period if there are performance problems which need to be resolved. Employees who have continuous service will still be required to pass a probationary period and will still be subject to an employee assessment. Performance issues during this period should be discussed with Human Resources and dealt with using the Managing unsatisfactory performance policy. Existing employees who are appointed to a higher grade through a selection process may be subject to a probationary period. If a probationary period is to be applied to an internal promotion this will be discussed, together with the specifics of a development plan and objectives, at the point the offer is made. Employees are not permitted to apply for other vacancies or make a flexible working request whilst still within their probationary period without the approval of Human Resources.~~

3.9. Grading and Salary

~~3.9.1. As stated in the [Pay and Reward](#) and [Job Evaluation](#) policies, managers will not approve a starting salary outside the grade advertised for the job. New starters will generally be placed on the first spinal column point for the job grade. Managers may not approve a starting salary outside of the grade advertised for the post as this may lead to an equal pay claim. It is vital that the correct starting salary is included on the Starters Form. Any recruitment problems due to salary issues should be first discussed with Human Resources who will assess whether there is justification to increase the salary or whether a market supplement recommendation should be made to SMT+.~~

Policy administration

- **Equality impact** – Medium provided that policy and procedures are followed. Human Resources will monitor implementation of this policy.
- **Who authorised the policy/strategy and date of authorisation** - This policy was agreed with SMT+ on xxx, UNISON on xxx and Personnel Committee on xxx and takes effect from xxx.
- **Policy date for review and responsible officer** - Corporate HR Manager 2026.

Relocation Expenses Policy

1. East Devon District Council aims to ~~improve the quality of life of our customers now and for future generations by providing them with good quality services and support. For this reason it is vital that we~~ attract and retain the best employees to ensure the provision of high quality services and recognises that relocation can result in both financial and domestic pressures on new employees. Our policy is to provide financial assistance and support for the costs and disruption that can be associated with relocation, **when recruiting to certain permanent key roles where it would** ~~The objective of this policy is to~~ assist new employees to adapt to a new area and to their new role as quickly as possible.
2. The Policy aims to enable staff to maintain their overall standards of living but recognises that this will not always be possible, particularly for those moving from a low cost housing area to East Devon, a high cost housing area.
3. This Policy also ensures that costs claimed are reasonable and in line with HMRC requirements.
4. **What is the Council's policy?**
 - 4.1. An employee taking up employment within the Council must satisfy the following criteria to qualify for the reimbursement of relocation expenses, including any lodging ~~and commuter~~ allowances, up to a maximum of £8000 inclusive of VAT. This reflects the current HMRC limit applied to relocation expenses, which are exempt from being classed as a benefit in kind (**called qualifying expenses**). **Further information can be found on the GOV.UK website.** This qualifying expense limit may be subject to review by the Inland Revenue and the following rules will apply:
 - Relocation expenses must have been agreed by the Chief Executive for the particular post prior to the commencement of the recruitment process. This should be done via the authority to recruit form (ATR).
 - The appointment must be to a permanent post **which is identified as a key role within the Council and/or where there are significant recruitment challenges, which the offer of a relocation package may help to mitigate against.**
 - The employee's current residence must be 30 miles or more from the boundary of East Devon.
 - The employee's new residence must be located within East Devon or within 5 miles of its boundary.
 - **The employee's new home must be their primary residence where they travel to work from.**
 - 4.2. Payment will only be made if the relocation is brought about as a direct result of the employee's appointment and payments will not be made to two members of the same household in the employment of the Council.
 - 4.3. **Expenses are only payable once up to the £8,000 limit, regardless whether a sale falls through and further costs are incurred.**
 - 4.4. **Payroll Services are responsible for all reimbursement of claims approved by a Director/Assistant Director and for ensuring the limits of this policy are applied. Queries regarding the limits and what can be claimed should be to your manager or Payroll Services.**

5. Relocation expenses

5.1 Relocation expenses, which can be reimbursed, include:

- removal expenses in accordance with the amount of the lowest of three competitive estimates, copies of which must be supplied
- the disconnection and reconnection of appliances and **installation cost of a broadband connection (but not monthly rental)**, telephone installation or transfer charge
- legal fees connected with the sale and purchase of a residence. This includes:
 - estate agent fees
 - solicitors' fees
 - mortgage valuation fees
 - mortgage redemption fees
 - survey fees
 - furniture storage.

5.2 Please note that stamp duty fees are not included and the reimbursement of relocation expenses will only be made on production of the original receipts.

5.3 A standard sum of a maximum of £1,000 will be paid on moving into rental or purchased accommodation. This amount is payable only once and is intended to cover soft furnishing and the alteration of fixtures and fittings (receipts need not be supplied). This amount of £1000 is included in the overall maximum of £8,000 allowable for relocation expenses.

5.4 You may claim this allowance once contracts have been exchanged and a completion date has been agreed using the [Relocation Expenses and Miscellaneous Expense Claim Form](#).

5.5 Please note that resettlement must be within twelve months of taking up the appointment in order to qualify for reimbursement of relocation allowances. All expenses must be claimed within eighteen months of commencement of employment to meet the HMRC qualifying tax rules.

6. Lodging allowance

6.1 For new employees who are unable to sell their property and/or do not move immediately, lodging allowance is payable **for a period of up to 6 months to a maximum sum of £4,000** ~~for a maximum of 6 months in payable at the rate of £73.25 per week.~~ Proof of payment for lodgings in the form of a signed tenancy agreement or letting agent confirmation letter is required. ~~Up to £73.25 may be paid in respect of daily travel in lieu of lodging in approved, exceptional cases. Receipts must be provided. If the employee is provided with Council owned accommodation, the lodging allowance is reduced to the amount of rent charged by the Council.~~

6.2 Payment of a lodging allowance applies whilst the employee's property is empty and waiting to be sold to ensure compliance with tax treatment of the allowance. If the property is rented out then a lodging allowance will not be paid.

6.3 Monthly claims must be submitted to the relevant Director/Assistant Director for approval using the standard expenses form. Payroll Services will monitor the payments as they form part of the £8,000 limit.

~~Leave allowances — one day's special leave of absence to enable the employee to look for permanent accommodation and one day's special leave of absence to move. Further leave in respect of relocation should be taken from the annual leave entitlement.~~

7. Employees leaving the Council

7.1 Where an employee leaves the Council (for any reason except redundancy) within three years of appointment, proportional repayment of the expenses are required.

7.2 The proportional repayment is as follows:

- last day of service within 12 months of the date of appointment – 100% repayment
- last day of service between 12-24 months of date of appointment – 75% repayment
- last day of service between 24-36 months of date of appointment – 50% repayment.

Allocation of temporary council housing for newly appointed employees

The provision of temporary Council housing may in some exceptional circumstances be available to new employees, where there is a need for assistance. Any such accommodation will be provided for a maximum of 12 months.

Employees who are allocated temporary Council housing will be charged the full rent while they are in this accommodation.

Please note that no guarantees can be provided by the Housing and Social Inclusion Service that they will be able to meet a request, as this is dependent upon accommodation being available.

Normally, 'harder to let' properties will be made available to employees.

Individuals should only request temporary accommodation via Human Resources who will contact the Housing and Social Inclusion Service to forward any appropriate forms and make subsequent arrangements.

Fixed term contracts and temporary employment

Where employees are appointed on fixed term contracts or on a temporary basis, relocation expenses will not normally apply. However, in exceptional circumstances, where the fixed term contract is for a minimum of two years, assistance of up to £4,000 may be agreed by the Chief Executive or Strategic Lead at their absolute discretion. The elements of relocation expense that will be reimbursed are as outlined in the Relocation Expenses section of this policy.

Reimbursement will be made on the production of original receipts and will be repayable in full should the individual leave before the end of the fixed term or temporary appointment.

Policy administration

- **Equality impact** – Low provided that policy and procedures are followed. Human Resources will monitor implementation of this policy.
- **Who authorised the policy/strategy and date of authorisation** - This policy was agreed with SMT+ on xxx, UNISON on xxx and Personnel Committee on xxx and takes effect from xxx.
- **Policy date for review and responsible officer** - Corporate HR Manager 2026.