

## Involving Residents in Permanent Housing Staff Recruitment Policy

### 1 Scope

- 1.1 This policy applies only to permanent roles being recruited specifically within Hammersmith and Fulham Council Housing Services directorate, as agreed by the Director of Housing (appendix 5). It does not apply to agency or fixed term positions, secondments, or roles being advertised by partner contractors of Housing.
- 1.2 When used in this policy the term “resident” is generic and includes tenants and resident leaseholders of Hammersmith and Fulham Council

### 2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 The Resident Involvement Strategy 2016-2018 emphasises a commitment to ensuring that all residents have the opportunity to get involved. **Objective 1** of the strategy is, “Placing greater control and influence at the hands of our residents, making us more accountable for the housing services they receive”
- 2.2 Keeping residents involved and at the heart of what we do is key to delivering excellent customer focused services.
- 2.3 Involving residents in the recruitment of permanent housing staff will ensure that:
  - we recruit staff who reflect the council’s ethos and commitment to working in partnership with our residents,
  - we have increased transparency in our recruitment process
  - we recognise and welcome residents’ skills and experience and wish to create opportunities to build on and develop these through training and support.
- 2.4 This is one way in which such involvement can be embedded in our organisation.
- 2.5 This policy seeks to ensure that there is a consistent approach and that clear principles are in place for staff and residents to follow.

### 3 Policy Aims

3.1 The aims of this policy for involving residents in the recruitment of permanent housing staff are:

- To provide a consistent approach as to how residents are involved in the recruitment of housing staff and for which roles (Appendix 5).
- To set out the criteria for how residents should be involved in the staff recruitment process.
- To ensure that individual residents and staff understand their roles and responsibilities.
- To clarify the support and training that is provided for residents.

#### **4 Regulatory Code and Legal Framework**

4.1 The Homes and Communities Agency is the Social Housing Regulator. This policy adheres to the standards outlined in the framework.

4.2 The standard of direct relevance to this policy is the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard.

#### **5 The Role of Residents in the Recruitment Process.**

5.1 For certain roles, an assessment panel will be established. During the assessment panel, residents will be involved in reviewing a presentation by each candidate. Up to 5 residents can participate in the assessment panel. Residents will ask candidates questions following the candidate's presentation. The presentation will be based on a scenario or set of questions that are agreed before the first assessment begins. Residents will need to complete a scoring sheet for each candidate, based on the agreed format.

5.2 After the assessment, residents are required to feed back their scores and comments to the moderating officer. The feedback will be taken into account alongside that of the joint officer and resident formal interview to determine the successful candidate. The aim is to have a more rounded and holistic view of the candidates through both processes.

5.3 After the assessment panel discussion, or where it has not been necessary for an assessment to take place a resident who was not a part of the resident assessment panel will attend the formal interview that is led by recruiting manager for the post. They will get to observe the interview and ask the candidate a question that is specific to resident involvement. The resident participant will score all of the candidate's answers using the same scoring system as the officer panel.

- 5.4 The resident member on the interview panel will be asked to leave the interview before the final question from the interviewing panel of officers, in case this requires any personal information regarding the candidate's circumstances to be provided as part of the question or answer.
- 5.5 The recruiting manager will always have the final decision in the event of any dispute over the successful candidate.
- 5.6 All staff recruitment activities are undertaken in accordance with Hammersmith and Fulham Council Human Resources departmental procedures and guidance. Resident members of the presentation assessment will be informed of the outcome of the recruitment process at the earliest opportunity when the most suitable candidate has confirmed their acceptance of the role and HR has undertaken appropriate checks.

## **6 Criteria for Resident Assessment Panel members**

- 6.1 Applicants are required to meet the following criteria before becoming eligible to join the resident assessment panel and formal interview panel:
- Must be a tenant or a resident leaseholder of the London Borough of
  - Hammersmith and Fulham for a minimum of 12 months;
  - No outstanding rent, garage service charge arrears for which there is not an agreement to repay in place;
  - No outstanding Notice of Seeking Possession, legal action, or eviction pending;
  - No outstanding breaches of tenancy or lease agreement under investigation;
  - Attending all identified training sessions is required;
  - Not on Violent Incident and Assault list (VI&A list);
  - Not to be included on interview panels of family members or friends;
  - Sign up to the council's confidentiality agreement, code of conduct, equality and diversity, declaration of interests protocols.

## **7 Which roles will residents be involved in recruiting to?**

- 7.1 Residents will be involved in the recruitment of roles to be agreed by the Director of Housing (Appendix 5).

## **8 Resident Training and Support**

8.1 All residents taking part in staff recruitment must have successfully completed London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham's recruitment and selection training courses. The training course subjects include:

- Competency based interviewing;
- Data protection & confidentiality;
- Equality and diversity;
- Presentation and communication skills;
- Working as a team.

8.2 Residents taking part in staff recruitment process will receive support and information from Hammersmith and Fulham's Resident Involvement Team and the recruiting manager. Such support includes:

- Information about the role that is being recruited to;
- Opportunities to discuss and ask questions about the recruitment prior to the interviews;
- Assistance with preparing relevant presentation scenarios and questions for the role and questions related to the assessment;

8.3 Feedback will be provided to residents on their contribution during the presentation assessment process and joint interview process;

8.4 Residents can claim appropriate expenses, as set out in the Resident Involvement Expenses Policy

## **9 Confidentiality and Data Protection**

9.1 Involved residents will not have access to candidate's personal information.

9.2 All participating residents are required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

## **10 Declaration of Interest**

- 10.1 Panel members must declare any declaration of interest to the moderating officer as soon as it is recognised. Examples of conflicts of interest are included in the declaration of interest guidance document. (Appendix 1)
- 10.2 A panel member who has made a relevant declaration of interest may be asked to:
- Leave the assessment panel;
  - Leave the assessment pool of residents assisting with recruitment.

For further information, please see the declaration of interest guidance document (Appendix 1)

## **11. Review and monitoring of this Policy**

- 11.1 This policy will be reviewed annually in conjunction with the Involving Residents in the Recruitment Process Resident Recruitment Pack.