

Test Valley Borough Council
Equality Impact Assessment Form

1. Strategy / policy / function / project / plan / procedure
Recruitment & Selection policy & procedure

2. Officer(s) completing the EQIA
HR Policy Officer

3. Is the strategy / policy / function / project / plan / procedure:

Existing	
Changing / being updated	x
New / proposed	

4. What are the main aims and objectives of the strategy / policy / function / project / plan / procedure?
To provide equality of opportunity and accessibility to job vacancies in the Council for all applicants throughout the complete recruitment and selection process; from the decision to advertise the job to the first day at work with the Council for the newly appointed employee.

5. Who implements or is responsible for the strategy / policy / function / project / plan / procedure?
Human Resources Councillors Senior Management Heads of Service Staff with responsibility for short listing, interviewing and appointing staff

6. How and by whom is the implementation monitored?
Human Resources has the overall responsibility for the policy and procedure and its execution. Advice and guidance on the procedure and adherence to the policy is provided by an HR Assistant whose job function is recruitment. In addition further advice and support is provided by the HR Officer and HR Manager. The HR Assistant collects and collates the recruitment and selection equal opportunities data for the applications that are received for each post, those short listed for interview and those appointed. It is analysed after each recruitment campaign, on a quarterly and annual basis by the HR Assistant and HR Officer and presented to SMT by the Head of HR.

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7. Who will be affected by / are the main beneficiaries of the strategy / policy / function / project / plan / procedure?
The general public All applicants All employees of the Council Council services Members

8. Are other organisations involved in the delivery of the strategy / policy / function / project / plan / procedure?
Lawton Ware (recruitment advertising company) Recruitment consultants and agencies Occupational test providers Occupational Health

9. a) What are the potential negative / adverse / unhelpful impacts, effects or limitations on the following groups and/or communities? b) What are the potential positive / helpful impacts or effects on the following groups or communities? (explain any measures which are in place to mitigate potential discrimination)
Age e.g. under 16, 16-25 yrs, 25-65 yrs, and 65+
a) negative / adverse / unhelpful impacts, effects or limitations An individual's perception about how age influences performance at work may be a barrier to recruitment. These perceptions, conscious or subconscious, have the potential for a negative impact on younger and older applicants and when allowed to influence recruitment decisions that result in unfair treatment, unlawful discrimination. Examples of potentially discriminatory perceptions include the view that an applicant who is younger than the majority of applicants for a job would be insufficiently experienced to fill a role and therefore is rejected for interview despite having the qualifications to do it, or an older person is potentially not worth the investment in time and training to improve the way a job is carried out because older people find coping with new technology and change more difficult than younger people.
b) positive / helpful impacts or effects The HR Assistant (recruitment) reviews the job and person specifications and the job advert to ensure that the wording is appropriate and age neutral and in the event that it is necessary to have a reference to age, that this is objectively justified. Recruitment and selection advice and support provided by HR emphasises that the short listing selection decision is made against the job and person specifications that were drawn up to advertise the vacancy and the final decision against these documents and performance at interview.

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Gender

e.g. man (inc. boys), women (inc. girls, transgendered people and transsexual people)

a) negative / adverse / unhelpful impacts, effects or limitations

Similar to age, it is an individual's perception about how gender influences performance at work that is a potential barrier to recruitment. In particular, issues relating to the recruitment of women, such as the likelihood of maternity leave, needing to take time off to look after children making them less flexible or because of their married status, following their husband's career e.g. Armed Forces with the potential for not staying in a job for more than two years, are examples of perceptions that result in a negative impact on the recruitment of women and the potential for unlawful discrimination where the perception leads to a recruitment decision which amounts to unfair treatment.

b) positive / helpful impacts or effects

The HR Assistant (recruitment) reviews the job and person specifications and the job advert to ensure that the wording is appropriate and gender neutral. Recruitment and selection advice and support provided by HR emphasises that the short listing selection decision is made against the job and person specifications that were drawn up to advertise the vacancy and the final decision against these documents and performance at interview.

Disability

e.g. people with a disability as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995

a) negative / adverse / unhelpful impacts, effects or limitations

Vacancies at TVBC are placed on the TVBC website, Intranet and in recognised newspapers and journals as appropriate for internal and external advertising. The choice of media has the potential for a low level negative impact for disabled people with a visual impairment. Commonly held perceptions about disabled people, such as that a disabled person is likely to have higher sickness levels, is going to find doing the job difficult, and the legal requirement to carry out adjustments for interviews and in the workplace may also be a barrier to recruitment as these issues can create an impression that it is too difficult / complicated to appoint a disabled person.

b) positive / helpful impacts or effects

The HR Assistant (recruitment) reviews the job and person specifications and the job advert to ensure that the wording is appropriate and disability neutral.

In addition, to assist job applicants, documents in large print and help to complete application forms are available and offered. The TVBC website provides 'Say It' and text only facilities for those who need to hear the information or read it in large print.

Recruitment and selection advice and support provided by HR emphasises that the short listing selection decision is made against the job and person specifications that were drawn up to advertise the vacancy and the final decision against these documents and performance at interview.

The Council complies with the '2 ticks' and offers interviews to disabled applicants who satisfy the minimum requirements of the person and job specifications.

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Racial Group

e.g. Asian or Asian British people, Black or Black British people, Chinese people or other ethnic group, people of mixed race, White British people or people from other White backgrounds

a) negative / adverse / unhelpful impacts, effects or limitations

The media choice of where an advertisement is placed has the potential for a low level negative impact on these groups because an assumption is made about the level of competence in written and spoken English and having access to the Internet for the TVBC website.

When considering the potential for unlawful discrimination, the assumptions and perceptions held by the person responsible for the selection decision about an applicant's racial group may be a barrier to recruitment.

b) positive / helpful impacts or effects

The HR Assistant (recruitment) reviews the job and person specifications and the job advert to ensure that the wording is appropriate and race neutral.

Recruitment and selection advice and support provided by HR emphasises that the short listing selection decision is made against the job and person specifications that were drawn up to advertise the vacancy and the final decision against these documents and performance at interview.

Religion / philosophical belief

e.g. Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim/Islam, Sikh, Buddhist, Humanist, other religions, people of no religion

a) negative / adverse / unhelpful impacts, effects or limitations

Perceptions and assumptions that are made about how people from different religions and with different philosophical beliefs behave and conduct themselves can be a barrier to recruitment and have an influence on the decision to recruit.

b) positive / helpful impacts or effects

The HR Assistant (recruitment) reviews the job and person specifications and the job advert to ensure that the wording is appropriate and religion / philosophical belief neutral.

Recruitment and selection advice and support provided by HR emphasises that the short listing selection decision is made against the job and person specifications that were drawn up to advertise the vacancy and the final decision against these documents and performance at interview.

Sexual orientation

e.g. gay men, lesbians, bi-sexual, heterosexuals

a) negative / adverse / unhelpful impacts, effects or limitations

Assumptions that are made about a person's actual or perceived sexuality can be a barrier to recruitment and have an influence on the decision to recruit because of the personal views and experiences of the person making the decision.

b) positive / helpful impacts or effects

The HR Assistant (recruitment) reviews the job and person specifications and the job advert to ensure that the wording is appropriate and sexual orientation neutral.

Recruitment and selection advice and support provided by HR emphasises that the short listing selection decision is made against the job and person specifications that were drawn

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up to advertise the vacancy and the final decision against these documents and performance at interview.

Equal Opportunities / community cohesion

a) negative / adverse / unhelpful impacts, effects or limitations

Not applicable.

b) positive / helpful impacts or effects

Not applicable.

10. Do any of these potential negative / adverse / unhelpful impacts effects or limitations amount to unlawful discrimination?

Yes	x
No	

If yes, please give details below, including a reference to the relevant legislation:

All the potential negative impacts described above would amount to unlawful discrimination in recruitment and selection decision making i.e. who to interview and who to appoint. The prevention of direct and indirect discrimination is contained in the following legislation:

Age: The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.

Gender: The Sex Discrimination Act 1975.

Disability: The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Race: The Race Relations Act 1976

Religion or philosophical belief: The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003.

Sexual Orientation: The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

11. Do any of these potential negative / adverse / unhelpful impacts effects or limitations amount to a low level or minor impact which should be addressed?

Yes	x
No	

If yes, please give details below:

The implementation and execution of the recruitment and selection policy and procedure is subject to the human factor because of the views, attitude and perceptions held by the individuals involved in making the selection of those to be interviewed and appointed. All of the aspects of the procedure, from the decision to recruit, when, where and how a job advertisement is placed, the short list process, interviews and final choice selection are vulnerable to the potential for discrimination against any of the groups leading to a negative effect.

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This in turn has the potential for negative media interest concerning the Council, direct and indirect discrimination claims made to Employment Tribunals, where the level of compensation is uncapped, and a negative effect on employee morale.

12. How do you intend to monitor, minimise and / or remove any potential for unlawful discrimination and / or low level or minor negative impact?

See: (1) Summary of Recommendations and (2) Action Plan.

13. What consultation has taken place, or is planned, with the groups / individuals potentially affected by any impact?

None

14. Summarise the existing research / consultation / information / performance management data in this section.

Human Resources has the responsibility for supporting the Service that is carrying out the recruitment campaign. The HR Assistant responsible for recruitment provides documentation and instructions on the procedure that is to be followed. To assist applicants, documents in large print and help to complete application forms are offered. The choice of advertising is made by the Service in the majority of vacancies and occasionally advice is sought from Lawton Ware (recruitment advertising agency) as to the most appropriate publication for specialist vacancies, e.g. Tree Surveyor. The website provides 'Say It' and text only facilities for those who need to hear the information or read it in large print. The decision on which applicants to shortlist, interview and appoint is made by the Supervisor / Manager in the Service concerned with the requirement to provide written reasons to Human Resources for short listing, not short listing and not appointing. The short listing decision is made against the job and person specifications that were drawn up to advertise the vacancy. The job specification is based on the principal accountabilities taken from the evaluated Job Description Questionnaire. The decision to appoint is made against these specifications and the applicant's performance at interview together with any additional tests and presentations that are conducted. Human Resources are not routinely involved in the shortlist, interview or appointment decision making process unless requested by the Service or advice has been sought.

A total of 67 jobs with TVBC were advertised in the financial year Apr 06 to Mar 07. With the exception of Commercial Services (non-salaried) vacancies which are in the process of being evaluated, all jobs have been evaluated under the Hay Job Evaluation scheme. The breakdown of vacancies by Service was as follows:

Service	No. of vacancies	Service	No. of vacancies
Planning	12	Revenues	3
Leisure	11	IT	2
Environment & Health	8	Housing	3
Commercial Services (non-salaried)	7	HR	1
Commercial Services (salaried)	5	Legal	2

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Chief Executive's	4	Finance	1
Technical Services	4	Estates	1
Administration	3		

By job grade (Hay) the vacancies were divided as follows:

Hay Grade	Vacancies	Hay Grade	Vacancies	Hay Grade	Vacancies
CSMW	7	HG06	14	HG10	1
HG02	3	HG07	8	SM1	1
HG03	4	HG08	3	SM2	1
HG04	8	HG09	7	HC02	1
HG05	9				

A total of 840 applications were received for 67 vacancies. For these, 55 appointments were made with 10 posts not being filled and 2 were designated as casual contracts. For those who supplied Equal Opportunities forms the information was as follows:

Equal Opportunities Information	Number of applicants	Number recruited
Gender		
Males	361	20
Females	345	35
Declared disabled	13	Nil
Ethnicity		
White	645	53
White other	38	2
Asian	6	nil
Black - African	4	nil
Black - British	1	nil
Black - Caribbean	1	nil
Black - Other	1	nil
Pakistani	2	nil
Other	2	nil
Age		
Up to 20	56	1
21 - 24	114	6
25 - 29	89	14
30 - 34	63	9
35 - 39	77	6
40 - 49	181	11
50 - 59	101	6
60 - 64	19	1
65 and over	3	1

Of the 840 applications, 83% completed an Equal Opportunities monitoring form. Of this 83%, 97.6% were from those whose declared ethnicity is White or White Other and 2.4% from ethnic minority groups. The equal opportunities information that is collected from applicants is

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analysed and reviewed on a regular ongoing basis after each recruitment campaign and quarterly to highlight and examine where groups may be disadvantaged. The information is presented as a report to SMT on a quarterly basis.

TVBC Employees

As at 31 March 2007 there were 597 employees employed by TVBC. The employee profile was as follows:

Gender		Ethnic Origin		Age		Disability
Males	Females	Asian	0	Up to 20	3	19
304	293	Black African	0	21 - 24	43	
		Bangladesh	1	25 - 29	62	
		Black British	4	30 - 34	64	
		Black Caribbean	0	35 - 39	48	
		Black Other	0	40 - 49	158	
		Chinese	1	50 - 59	161	
		Indian	2	60 - 64	45	
		Pakistani	0	65 and over	12	
		White British	573	Not found	1	
		White Other	8			
		Other	0			
		Not found	8			

The total economically active population in Test Valley is currently 67657. Of this population 1419 belong to the economically active ethnic minority population group. This is equivalent to a percentage of 2.1%. The number of applications for vacancies at TVBC from ethnic minority groups is in line with the economically active ethnic minority percentage in the population.

15. How do you plan to address any gaps in information, research or consultation?

Equal opportunities data (age, gender, ethnic origin and disability) has been collected from each applicant for a job vacancy by the HR Assistant responsible for the recruitment procedure in HR. Concerns about the accuracy of the data collected have been addressed and a quality assurance procedure put in place.

Reference has been made to the 2001 Census information available from the Office of National Statistics on the total economically active population and the economically active ethnic minority in the authority area. These figures will next be reviewed in the 2011 Census unless an independent survey is conducted by the Council.

It is not planned to conduct any further research or consultations and comparative data will be reviewed following the 2011 Census.

16. Summary

The recruitment and selection policy, procedure and function have the potential for a negative effect on the groups concerned and unlawful discrimination in the following areas:

- Job and person specifications – requirement to be written as age, gender and disability neutral with identification of skills and, where essential to be able to carry out the role, professional qualifications to ensure that selection decision is based on merit.

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- Choice of advertising for vacancies – requirement for choice of advertising (newspapers, journals and TVBC website) to ensure that it reaches the widest audience and does not exclude or disadvantage any group, addressing the assumptions made around the level of competency in written and spoken English and access to the Intranet / TVBC website and any disabled people with visual impairments.
- The influence of the individual's views, attitudes and perceptions on the recruitment and selection decision.

17. Recommendations

1. At the decision to recruit stage of the procedure:
 - Review the job and person specifications to ensure that the essential and desirable criteria are reasonable and appropriate for the job and that the language is age, gender and disability neutral.
 - Consider and review as required where the advertising is to be placed to ensure that the widest audience possible is reached.
2. To provide initial training in interview and selection skills for all relevant employees before they are involved in the recruitment process.
3. To provide refresher training for all relevant employees who are involved in the recruitment and selection process, including interviewing at three yearly intervals
4. To continue to provide initial training on equalities and diversity on the Corporate Induction course for all employees, in particular those with a responsibility for recruitment and selection in their services, and make refresher training available for appropriate staff every three years or as required by changes to equalities legislation.
5. Continue to collect, collate and analyse recruitment and selection data on:
 - the numbers of applications received for each post advertised by:
 - gender
 - ethnic origin
 - age
 - disability
 - the numbers of successfully appointed employees by:
 - gender
 - ethnic origin
 - age
 - disabilityafter each recruitment campaign and on a quarterly and annual basis and report to SMT.
6. In regard to disability, to collect and analyse the numbers of applicants declared disabled who met the minimum criteria to be guaranteed an interview.
7. HR to regularly review the recruitment and selection policy and procedure to ensure that access and opportunity to apply for vacancies at TVBC is genuinely made available to the widest audience as possible and the risk potential for unlawful

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discrimination is low.

18. Attached documents / evidence

Recruitment & Selection Policy – Feb 07
Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy – Jan 07
Dignity at Work Policy – Jan 07
Management Guide No. 1 – Recruitment & Selection – March 07
Recruitment timelines guide 07
Request to fill vacancy form – May 06
Terms & Conditions Form – May 06
Interview Assessment Grid – 06
Occupational Health Consideration Form
Employing Migrant Workers Guidance
Criminal Record Bureau Checks
Preventing Illegal Working Guidance for Managers
Leavers Form & Letter (re: swipe card)

See also:

Human Resources Service pages on TV Screen
<http://tvscreen/default.aspx?page=7673>

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ACTION PLAN ARISING FROM EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

Issues or adverse impact identified	Proposed action to address issues or adverse impact	Timescale	Responsibility
Use of inappropriate language and terms in the job description and person specification.	To review and revise the job and person specifications and advertisements to comply with equality and diversity legislation and best practice for each job vacancy.	Ongoing.	HR and the appropriate Supervisor / Manager responsible for the recruitment into the vacancy.
Choice of media advertising restricts the size and diversity of the potential recruitment pool for the vacancy in question.	To review and revise the choice of media for advertising the vacancy to comply with equality and diversity legislation and best practice. Explore free / low cost websites and journals.	Ongoing.	HR
The influence of the views and perceptions on equality and diversity issues held by the person(s) making the recruitment decision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide initial training on equality and diversity issues on the Corporate Induction Course for all new employees and, in particular, those who will be responsible for carrying out recruitment and selection duties as part of their job role. • To provide refresher training for appropriate staff every three years or as required by changes in equalities legislation. • Collection and analysis of equal opportunities data from applicants for each vacancy, those short listed and those appointed. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Thereafter on a three year rolling programme</p> <p>After each recruitment campaign, on a quarterly and annual basis</p>	<p>Equalities Board</p> <p>HR Assistant / HR Officer</p>

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Issues or adverse impact identified	Proposed action to address issues or adverse impact	Timescale	Responsibility
<p>The influence of the views and perceptions on equality and diversity issues held by the person(s) making the recruitment decision.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the recruitment and selection process for job applicants who declare themselves as disabled, in particular the application of the minimum standard / guaranteed interview scheme. • To provide initial training for all relevant employees before they are involved in the recruitment and selection process, including interviewing. • To provide refresher training for all relevant employees who are involved in the recruitment and selection process, including interviewing at three yearly intervals. 	<p>After each recruitment campaign, on a quarterly and annual basis</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Thereafter on a three year rolling programme as required.</p>	<p>HR</p>
<p>Potential risk for unlawful discrimination through the implementation of the recruitment and selection policy and procedure.</p>	<p>HR to regularly review the recruitment and selection policy and procedure to ensure that opportunity and access to apply for vacancies at TVBC is genuinely made available to the widest audience as possible and that the policy and procedure are legally compliant.</p>	<p>Every two years and as required by legislative changes.</p>	<p>HR Policy Officer</p>