



George Town Council

EMPLOYMENT AND RECRUITMENT

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Introduction

This Policy establishes a transparent framework and provides guidelines for the General Manager by the Council in the recruitment and selection of applicants for vacant and new positions, including internal applications from existing Council employees and external applicants.

Policy Statement

Effective employee selection and management of employees is crucial to the successful operation of Council and the services it provides to the Community. This success depends on the Council's ability to attract highly skilled and motivated employees who will aim to meet agreed objectives and performance improvement goals.

In accordance with Section 63(2) of the Local Government Act (1993) George Town Council will continue to ensure that its recruitment and employment process is fair and equitable without discrimination and that all existing employees will receive fair and equitable treatment without discrimination.

Statement of Principles

a) Equal Employment Opportunity and Merit Principle

Selection to positions within the Council is to be based on the principles of appointment of merit and the provision of equal employment opportunity and must be made on the individual's capacity having particular regard to the knowledge, skills, qualifications, experience and potential for future development of that person in their employment.

Selection on the basis of merit means that the grounds for the decision must directly relate to the inherent requirements of the position and prevents those decisions being made on unjustified discriminatory grounds such as:

- Race, colour, national or ethnic origin or nationality;
- Gender/sex, marital status, relationship status, parental status, pregnancy, breast feeding, family responsibilities
- Religious activity, religious belief or affiliation, political activity, political belief or affiliation, industrial activity or irrelevant criminal record.
- Age, physical features, disability, irrelevant medical record, lawful sexual activity, sexual orientation or association with a person who has, or is believed to, have, any of these attributes or identities.

b) Encouragement of Existing Employees to Apply for Vacancies

The objective of internal recruitment utilises talent that already exists in the Council work force and existing employees are encouraged to apply for vacancies to advance and develop to their full potential. This may include direct selection/appointment.

Should it be determined by the General Manager that the required skills do not exist internally, this will be reflected in the recruitment strategy (Refer: Recruitment Strategy).

c) Confidentiality

Applications for employment contain personal and confidential information and will therefore be made available only to the Interview Selection Panel or authorised officers. Applicants have a right to expect that their application will remain confidential. The General Manager will nominate an officer who will be responsible for coordinating security and confidentiality of applications.

d) Conflicts of Interest

Where an application for a vacancy is received from a person directly related to an employee of the Council or where some other conflict of interest may exist, no person shall be appointed, other than by a merit selection process.

Members of the Interview Selection Panel must declare any form of relationship, including business relationships, in relation to candidates.

Link to Strategic Plan

Key Area 1 - Governance

Objective: Provide and maintain adequate staff and resource levels to meet changing needs.

Legislation

The following legislation should be considered in conjunction with this Policy:

- *Local Government Act (1993) (Tasmania)*
- *Fair Work Act 2009 (Commonwealth)*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 (Tasmania)*
- *Equal Employment Opportunity Act 1984 (Commonwealth)*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Commonwealth)*
- *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)*
- *Aged Discrimination Act 2004 (Commonwealth)*
- *Work Health & Safety Act 1995 (Tasmania)*
- *Archives Act 1983 (Tasmania)*
- *Personal Information Protection Act 2004 (Tasmania)*

Definitions

Council means the George Town Council.

Recruitment refers to the process commencing with the decision to recruit an individual through to attracting and seeking a pool of applicants.

Scope of Policy

This Policy covers all employees involved (at the direction of the General Manager) in the recruitment or selection of applicants for positions with the Council.

Functions and Powers of General Manager

To ensure alignment with Council's strategic goals and budget allocations, all new or replacement positions identified as requiring recruitment, must be authorised by the General Manager.

Section 62(1)(c) of the Local Government Act (1993) stipulates that the General Manager is responsible for the day-to-day operations and affairs of the Council and in accordance with Section 63(1) of the Local Government Act (1993), the General Manager of a Council may:

- (a) appoint persons as employees of the Council; and
- (b) allocate duties to employees; and
- (c) control and direct employees; and
- (d) suspend or dismiss employees.

For every recruitment and selection decision, the General Manager will aim to ensure that the best person for the job is appointed.

Application of Policy - Recruitment Authorisation

No recruitment for vacancies is to be undertaken without authorisation by the General Manager.

When a vacancy arises or a new position is identified, the General Manager shall review the position description, selection criteria, classification and remuneration applying to the position, taking into account the Council's strategic and operational management plans.

The following support documentation should be reviewed for each position:

- a) Position Description and Selection Criteria

An up-to-date position description reflecting the requirements of the position, which properly adheres to the principles of merit and equal employment opportunity.

Selection criteria identifying the knowledge, skills, qualifications and experience required of the candidate to fulfil the functions of the position.

The selection criteria will facilitate an accurate and merit based assessment against the applicant's skills and abilities.

b) Classification and Remuneration Assessment

The remuneration of the position will be adjudged against either Award classification/EBA assessment or market value analysis to determine appropriate classification or level.

Application of Policy - Recruitment Strategy

The General Manager will determine the most appropriate strategy for recruitment to ensure the timely and effective use of resources and to maximise audience potential and response. The recruitment advertising exercise will be determined by a range of elements including the role, required skills and abilities, existing skill base and organisational needs.

At the General Manager's discretion, the vacant position may be filled by:

- a) An internal recruitment process;
- b) An external recruitment process involving external advertising or the use of a recruitment agency;
or
- c) By direct selection.

Application of Policy - Direct Selection

The General Manager may, at his/her discretion, select a prospective employee (internal/external) on merit for appointment to a position without advertising the vacancy. Generally a position will be advertised however direct selections may be made in the following circumstances:

- Where the position requires a high degree of specialist knowledge or skill;
- Where a major organisational re-structure has been undertaken and existing employees must be accommodated within that new organisational structure.
- Where a short term casual or temporary employment assignment has arisen.

Application of Policy - Internal Recruitment

The General Manager may elect to fill the vacancy by inviting applications from existing Council employees deemed to possess the required specialist knowledge or skills previously identified.

The advertising of all internal vacancies will be co-ordinated through the General Manager or a nominated officer. Internal positions will be advertised on staff notice boards at the Council office and Council Depot. Existing employees will be given at least five (5) working days to apply for internally advertised positions.

Internal applicants are to address the selection criteria of the vacancy and provide a current resume.

Application of Policy - External Advertising of Vacancies

The General Manager may elect to recruit persons externally through placing an advertisement in a major newspaper, industry guide or Council website or by listing the vacancy with a specialist recruitment agency.

A nominated officer will be responsible for compilation of the advertisement and employment information packs. The nominated officer will also be first point of contact for any initial enquiries regarding the vacancy. The officer must have a good knowledge of the requirements of the position and treat each enquiry with discretion and professionalism in a non-discriminatory manner.

All externally advertised positions will also be advertised on staff notice boards with internal applications invited from current employees.

Application of Policy - Acknowledgement of Applications

All applications will be immediately acknowledged by the nominated officer. The acknowledgement will also contain an outline of the recruitment process.

All applications are to be retained by the nominated officer in a confidential file until such time that the recruitment process is finalised.

Application of Policy - Short Listing of Applicants

At least two members of the Interview Selection Panel will be involved in the short listing of applicants. Applications are to be assessed on their ability to meet the selection criteria; however it is not necessary that every applicant who meets the selection criteria be interviewed.

Application of Policy - Interview Selection Panel

The Interview Selection Panel will consist of the General Manager, direct Manager of the vacancy and at least one other nominated officer.

The direct Manager of the vacant position or a nominated officer is to develop a matrix/assessment using the selection criteria and other appropriate measures of the vacancy for approval by the General Manager.

A copy of the interviewee's application and resume together with the interview assessment guide is to be provided to all members of the Interview Selection Panel including the General Manager at least 1 working day prior to the first scheduled interview.

All Interview Selection Panel members must be aware of their responsibilities under Anti-Discrimination Legislation.

Application of Policy - Interviews

All vacancies will require at least one round of interviews prior to the final selection being made and all interviewees must be subject to the same line of questioning.

The Interview Selection Panel is to reach consensus on the preferred applicant. A representative of the Interview Selection Panel is to then compile responses to the scoring process and provide a formal selection report.

Where consensus cannot be reached, the relevant information is to be referred to the General Manager for further interview or final determination.

Application of Policy - Record keeping

All applications are to be recorded and stored appropriately. Upon completion of the recruitment process and an appointment has been confirmed, internal applications are to be transferred to personnel files. External applications are to be stored in accordance with the *Archives Act 1983* and *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*.

The report recommending the appointment of the successful applicant will be filed to ensure transparency of the process if a dispute should arise.

Application of Policy - Reference Checks and Academic Results

Referee checks of at least two recent employers or educational based referees must relate to the requirements of the position and will be coordinated by the General Manager, direct Manager or a nominated officer.

Applicants may also be requested to provide copies of academic records, work related licences and/or professional qualifications.

Application of Policy - Pre-employment Checks

Applicants may be required to undertake the following pre-employment checks:

- Criminal History Record Check
- Bankruptcy Check

Application of Policy - Pre-Employment Health Assessment

A non-discriminatory pre-employment health assessment is required by Council as part of the recruitment process for all positions.

The pre-employment health assessment will relate exclusively and directly to the particular duties of the job and will not discriminate against people with disabilities.

The health assessment is to be undertaken by a medical examiner of Council's choice. Council will be responsible for payment of the medical examiner's fee.

Application of Policy - Appointment of Successful Candidate

Upon approval of the General Manager and completion of all the required pre-employment assessments, the successful applicant will be offered the position.

All successful applicants will receive a letter of appointment (Award/EBA based employee) or a letter of offer and employment contract (Common Law contract).

The offer of appointment/employment should contain as a minimum:

- The position title and duties together with a copy of the current position description;
- Employee's wage classification, wage rate and payment arrangements;
- Commencement of employment;
- Duration of employment (contract);
- Hours and place of work;
- Superannuation details;
- Leave entitlements
- Probationary period and review mechanisms;
- Termination mechanisms; and
- Reference to applicable award/EBA, industrial agreement and employees policies and procedures.

All employment documents must be signed and returned by the applicant prior to commencement of employment.

Should any changes or variations to any of the original terms and conditions of employment need to be made during the period of employment, a new contract of employment should be completed and the employee must agree prior to the variations or changes taking place.

A nominated officer will create a personnel file containing the employee's application for employment, interview reports, letter/contracts of employment and pre-employment checks. All personnel information will be kept on this file and will be made available to the individual employee to view on request.

Application of Policy - Notification of Appointment

The appointment to positions will be notified when confirmation of acceptance has been received and all unsuccessful applicants have been notified.

Application of Policy - Probationary Period

All new employees will be appointed subject to a six (6) month probationary period.

The employee's performance should be reviewed at least once during the six (6) month probationary period and again at the conclusion of the period. The direct Manager should provide the employee with feedback on their work performance and any areas where unsatisfactory performance has been identified.

Should a probationary period employee be demonstrably not suited for the position on the basis of their capacity and abilities, their employment may be terminated subject to the provisions of the relevant employment legislation, the relevant Award/EBA or contractual entitlements and Council's staffing policies.

Implementation of Policy

This Policy will become effective upon approval by Council. It will be reviewed annually or in accordance with changes to relevant legislation.

Reporting Obligations

The General Manager will provide relevant advice and reports to the council on the exercise and performance of its powers and functions as reasonably requested by council.

Audience

This Policy applies to all employees of the George Town Council and people applying for employment.

Exceptions

In regard to the appointment of a General Manager, Council may consider the appropriateness of appointing a recruitment consultant to advise Council on the recruitment process including advertising, short listing and assisting with the selection of a suitable applicant.

Related Internal Documents

- Right to Information Strategy (Procedures)
- Computer Use Policy (Electronic Media)
- Anti-Discrimination Policy
- Occupational Health & Safety Policy
- Employee Confidentiality Agreement
- Code of Practice for Councillors and Staff
- Employee Induction Package