

## **CHIEF OFFICER APPOINTMENT PROCEDURE**

### **1. Report Vacancy**

All Chief Officer vacancies must be reported to the Town Clerk and the employing Committee for information. In the cases of the vacancies of Town Clerk, Chamberlain, Commissioner of Police, Comptroller and City Solicitor and Remembrancer, the employing Committee should inform the Court of Common Council immediately. A report setting out the resignation/retirement should go to the next appropriate Court of Common Council.

### **2. The Appointment Panel**

The panel for Chief Officer appointments should normally consist only of the following; the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Employing Committee or of each Employing Committee if more than one, the Chairman of the Establishment Committee and the Town Clerk. In addition, however, it may be appropriate for the panel to be supplemented by up to 3 further trained members, making the panel up to a maximum of 7. The Chairman of the employing committee and of the Establishment Committee and the Town Clerk would be members of this panel. The administration of the appointment should be undertaken by a qualified employee in Corporate HR (referred to below as the Administrator). For appointments where specialist knowledge is needed to guide the panel, external experts should be drafted on to the panel in an advisory capacity only. All members on the panel must have undertaken the City of London Corporation's recruitment and selection training or the e-learning recruitment and selection module. For the Commissioner of the City of London Police and the Recorder of London appointments, the composition of the panels has to be supplemented by appropriate external representatives as dictated by statute. The appointment procedure for these two posts may vary from these guidelines

### **3. Preliminary Meeting**

The Administrator arranges the preliminary meeting for the panel and in advance sends them drafts of the following; a job description, a competency based person specification and an advertisement. The panel will decide if these are satisfactory and may make amendments.

If the responsibilities of the post have changed to a significant extent then the Senior Management Job Evaluation panel will determine the appropriate grade before the post is advertised.

#### **4. Advertising**

The panel will decide how to fill the vacancy. If the panel decides that there is an obvious choice then they may make an appointment without further advertising. If there is more than one strong internal choice then the panel may opt to advertise the vacancy within the City of London Corporation only.

The panel may wish to gauge the strength of internal applicants against external applicants and decide that a vacancy should be advertised externally as well as internally. If a vacancy is to be advertised externally, then the panel should agree in advance dates for advertising, closing date, shortlisting, selection testing and interviews.

#### **5. Recruitment Administration**

If the panel decides to advertise a vacancy externally and have agreed the documents named in 3. above, then the preparation of the recruitment literature for applicants and the choice of media in which to advertise should be delegated to the Administrator. The recruitment literature is of a standard format with minor variations only required for each post and the Administrator should collate this. All applications will be recorded on a control sheet and numbered in order so that a record is kept of the stage reached with each applicant.

#### **6. Preliminary Shortlisting**

As responses to external advertisements can be high, the Administrator should undertake a preliminary shortlist to discount those applications that obviously do not meet the criteria in the person specification. The Administrator should list the discounted applications and specify why they have not been shortlisted. These should be brought to the shortlisting meeting (see below) and be available for the panel to examine if required.

#### **7. Shortlisting**

The panel should receive in advance of the shortlisting meeting copies of the applications that have passed the preliminary shortlisting. The applications should be numbered clearly for the panel for ease of comparison when shortlisting. The Employing Committee Chairman is the Chairman of the Panel. If there is more than one Employing Chairman involved then the Chairman of the Establishment Committee will be the Chairman of the Panel. The Panel will go through the applications and each panel member will express a view on each one. These will be sorted into 'Yes', 'No' and 'Maybe' piles. The 'Yes' pile are those applications that are unanimously agreed by the panel, the 'No' pile those that are unanimously rejected by the panel and the 'Maybe' pile those where there is majority support for inclusion but this is not unanimous. If there are

sufficient applications in the 'Yes' pile, then these will be invited for interview. If not, then the panel can supplement these with the agreed best of the 'Maybes'.

## **8. Assessment Methods**

Interviewing alone is now widely recognised as inadequate for making selection decisions. An assessment centre approach should be used which also includes psychometric tests and other job related tests and exercises such as an in-tray exercise, a written exercise and a verbal presentation.

## **9. Selection Testing**

Before the interviews, a day should be arranged for the interviewees to either attend a consultant or the City of London Corporation's trained testers in order to undertake personality and job related psychometric tests. The results of these tests will be given to the panel in advance of the interviews. The tests may highlight areas about which the panel can ask supplementary questions at the interview stage.

## **10. References**

References should be taken up prior to interview unless interviewees specify otherwise. Should there be any concern over the content of a reference then the Administrator will attempt to obtain further clarification from the referee preferably before the interview.

## **11. Interview Preparation**

The Administrator will prepare an interview schedule and devise interview questions which the panel will discuss and agree in advance of the interviews. The schedule should allow for at least 15 minutes before the first interview in order that the panel can decide who is to ask which questions and any supplementary questions arising from the selection tests. 45 minutes should be allowed for each interview and the schedule should incorporate lunch and refreshment breaks and time after the interviews for the panel decision.

Applicants for interview should be written to advising them of the time, the date and the location of the interviews. Applicants should also be advised of the subject of any written exercise/oral presentation which may be required and confirm that they are going to attend the interviews.

## **12. Interviews**

Applicants should be asked the same core questions as devised by the Administrator and as amended by the panel. Supplementary questions relating to answers given to the core questions or issues arising from the selection tests

can be added but questions of a personal nature (e.g. are you married, do you have any children, what does your partner do, etc) must not be asked as these are not relevant to the selection and may give rise to claims of discrimination. Interview performance should be scored on the assessment forms provided by the Administrator either during or after each interview. There is room on these forms for the panel member to make notes but again care must be taken to avoid any comment of a discriminatory nature.

At the end of the interviews, the panel members should discuss their notes on the interviewees and reach a consensus on whom to appoint. This decision is subject to medical clearance and it is advised that a reserve interviewee should be selected as a back up in case the first choice can not be appointed on medical grounds.

Once medical clearance and satisfactory references have been received, and an offer has been made and accepted, then the employing Committee should be advised of the panel's decision.

The law and standing orders lay down rules for the appointment, discipline and dismissal of staff. Members must ensure that they observe these scrupulously at all times. Special rules apply to the appointment of assistants to political groups. In all other circumstances, if Members are called upon to take part in appointing an officer, the only question they should consider is which candidate would best serve the whole council. Members should not let their political or personal preferences influence their judgement. Members should not canvass the support of colleagues for any candidate and should resist any attempt by others to canvass their support.

### **13. Employing Committee Interviews**

The practice of interviewees attending for final interviews before the employing Committee will cease. The panel's decision is final and this should be reported for information only to the Court of Common Council. The reason for this is that only those who have been party to the whole selection process are in a position to make a valid assessment.

### **14. Court of Common Council Appointments**

In the cases of appointments to the posts of Town Clerk, Chamberlain, Commissioner of Police, Comptroller and City Solicitor and Remembrancer the current procedure of the final applicants appearing before the Court of Common Council should continue.

## **15. Appointment Letter, Employment Contract and Start Arrangements**

The Administrator is responsible for preparing the provisional offer letter and employment contract in line with the standard documents in the Policies and Procedures Manual. The Comptroller's department should be consulted where appropriate on contractual terms and the documents signed by the Town Clerk or the Director of HR acting on his behalf. Similarly, the Administrator is responsible for ensuring that pay and pension forms are completed, as well as bank or building society account details, tax forms and details of next of kin.

Once the signed employment contract has been received, the Administrator should obtain Freedom of the City forms from the Chamberlain's Court and consult the Town Clerk and the Employing Committee Chairman about sponsoring the appointee for the Freedom.

The Administrator should also notify the Invitations Officer in Mansion House, the Remembrancer's Department and Public Relations of the appointment.

The Administrator should arrange for the newly appointed Chief Officer to meet the Town Clerk, the Chamberlain and the Comptroller and City Solicitor, and other relevant senior managers soon after commencing with the City of London Corporation.