**Recruitment freeze applicable from 23 October 2023**

SLT have agreed that until the budget position is finalised, we implement a recruitment freeze on all roles that do not meet an agreed criteria. It is anticipated that the recruitment freeze may be in place until the end of December, but we will review this regularly and provide updates to managers and staff throughout the next couple of months.

**Roles that we will continue to recruit to:**

* There is a Legal or Statutory requirement for the role.
* There is a Regulatory requirement for the role.
* There is a Health and Safety requirement, including possible risk to life, for the role.
* There is time limited funding attached to the role and failure to progress would result in loss of funding.
* There are savings targets dependant on the role being appointed to deliver and failure to progress would result in risk to savings delivery.
* The role is vital to supporting the council deliver its Transformation agenda.

If there is a vacancy in a team that meets any of the above criteria, it will continue to proceed through the recruitment process following a review from SLT on the 1 November. If it does not meet any of the criteria, the recruitment process for the above post should be paused until SLT have agreed to end the recruitment freeze.

**What happens next?**

Over the next two weeks, colleagues from HR are working with each Directorate Management Team to review all posts that are currently being recruited to within directorates against the above definitions to determine which posts should be ‘frozen’ and which can continue to be recruited to.

Please note – recruitment **will not be** ‘frozen’ even if the post does not meet the criteria in the following circumstances:

* An offer of employment has been made.
* Interviews have taken place.
* Invites to interviews have been sent.

As you will be aware, this is not a decision that SLT have taken lightly, and we appreciate the impact this may have on service delivery and the workload of colleagues across the council. The health and wellbeing of all of our employees is a priority. Managers will support teams to prioritise / reprioritise work where required.

**Following the 1 November…**

If you have a vacancy in your team that meets any of the above criteria, you can continue to proceed through the recruitment process an amended HR01 is being developed to identify how posts meet the criteria for recruitment and will be available shortly.

If it does not meet any of the criteria, the recruitment process for the above post should be paused where the role is in the advertising stage only until SLT have agreed to end the recruitment freeze.

HR Business Partners will be working closely with you and your management teams to review all active recruitment within services and to determine the correct course of action for each campaign under the freeze.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: Does this freeze apply to internal jobs?**

**A:** Yes – the freeze applies to all types of recruitment activity irrespective of the internal / external status of the advert.

**Q: What happens if there’s a disagreement over the role and if it meets the criteria?**

**A:** Directors will need to ensure all roles are discussed in DMTs and take forwards a full list of posts and recommendations to SLT on 1 November where SLT will make final decisions.

**Q: Where adverts are currently live, and we are accepting applications these should be put on hold?**

**A:** Where there is a strong likely hood that the post meets one or more of the criteria adverts will remain open and reviewed on 1 November. Mangers are asked to be mindful of progressing recruitment activity to the next stage where the criteria may not be met and await outcomes of the SLT review on 1 November before setting up any interviews.

**Q: Where adverts close and will be at interview stage before the 1 November, should we carry on as normal with these?**

**A:** Where posts do not meet the criteria, managers are asked to discuss these interviews with their Assistant Director and hold any which do not meet the criteria.

**Q: Can the council still use agency/EPW staff?**

A: There is an ongoing piece of work to reduce the number of the Externally Provided Workforce (EPW) across the council, therefore if a vacancy does not meet the criteria listed above, an EPW will not be able to cover the role, unless they were engaged prior to the start of this recruitment freeze.