

# POLICY REGISTER

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## RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY

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Policy adopted: Minute No. xxx.08.25

Reviewed:

File Ref: P13-1 , S12-1

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## DOCUMENT CONTROL

Issue	Prepared/Revised By and Date	Action/Amendment Description	Approved By and Date
1.0	Bradley Pascoe Divisional Manager Finance and Administration August 2025	First Edition	Council Minute No. xxx.08.25 (28th August 2025)

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## **PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

Warren Shire Council recognises the importance of adopting legally defensible, open, and transparent recruitment and selection practices.

This document provides clear guidelines to uphold Council's commitment to being a merit based and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) employer by defining the activities associated with the recruitment and selection of employees. By following this Policy, the best applicants for positions within Warren Shire Council will be attracted, selected, and retained.

This document relates to the recruitment and selection of individuals for employment with Warren Shire Council and affects existing employees who are eligible to compete for vacant positions on merit.

This Policy applies to all recruitment processes undertaken by, or on behalf of, Warren Shire Council.

## **RECRUITMENT PRINCIPLES**

Warren Shire Council strives to be an Employer of Choice, attracting and retaining quality employees. To this end, Council will base its recruitment and selection decision-making on the following Principles, in accordance with Section 348 to Section 351 of the Local Government Act 1993.

Council will –

- ensure that all recruitment decisions are based on merit; and
- support transparency in recruitment processes and the public advertising of positions.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

Any person involved with the recruitment decision-making process, e.g., interview panels, must declare any knowledge or relationship with an applicant / interviewee. Where a conflict of interest might arise, that person may be excluded from participation in an interview panel.

Where the Officer with a potential conflict of interest is the recruiting manager, that Officer may be allowed to remain on the interview panel, but an additional panel member will be sought to ensure that potential for undue influence is reduced. Where the applicant is a personal family member or close friend of the recruiting officer, they may take part in the interview process but must exclude themselves from the decision-making process in identifying a preferred applicant.

It is acknowledged that many Council Officers know other individuals through interactions or past employment in Local Government and within the local community, it is not intended that Council Officers should be excluded simply because they know or have worked with an applicant.

The final decision on action required to manage a conflict of interest related to recruitment will be made by the General Manager based upon the advice of the Payroll/HR Officer. The management of the conflict of interest must be documented to ensure transparency.

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## RECRUITMENT PROCESS

### Overview

The following provides an overview of what type of recruitment process should be used for different vacancy levels.

Position vacant for up to 2 weeks (e.g., annual Payroll/HR Officer)	Position vacant for between 2 weeks but less than 3 months (e.g., long service Payroll/HR Office)	Position vacant for between 3 months and less than 6 months (e.g., long service Payroll/HR Officer)	Position vacant for more than 6 months (e.g., maternity Payroll/HR Officer, new position, or resignation)
No recruitment. May utilise Higher Duties where backfill required.	Utilise Higher Duties or Secondment processes. Seek expressions of interest.	Utilise Secondment or defined recruitment process.	Must utilise defined recruitment process.
See Local Government (State) Award	See Higher Duties Policy & Procedure	Utilise this Policy & Procedure	Utilise this Policy & Procedure

### Planning for Recruitment

Prior to the General Manager's consideration of a request to fill a vacant position, the Divisional Manager must undertake the following:

- exercise the principles of effective workforce planning, including future workforce needs,
- review the need for the position and determine if it is still relevant to the current structure, or if the requirements of the position have changed,
- assess if the position is suitable for a trainee placement,
- assess if the position is suitable for a secondment opportunity (see 3.2.1 below),
- analyse and/or develop the skill set and position description to ensure that they reflect the position requirements, are outcome focused and incorporate Equal Employment Opportunities principles.

Identify additional requirements for the position such as provision of a motor vehicle lease back for private use or private garaging/limited private use for travel to and from work only), communication devices, credit cards, after hours site access, market components/change to position within salary system.

Complete the Recruitment Form with other relevant documentation to support the request and forward to the General Manager for approval.

### Secondment Opportunities

Secondment arrangements are an important internal personal development opportunity. All vacancies that are being advertised for a temporary or fixed term period ranging from more than 3 months to 6 months may be offered internally as a secondment opportunity. These positions may also be advertised externally depending on the specific circumstances.

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## **Documentation**

The staff member, who is responsible for the recruitment, referred to as the Recruitment officer (e.g., Supervisor/Departmental Manager/Divisional Manager) will need to ensure that all relevant documentation is completed, including a revised position description and skill set, remuneration and any additional requirements via the Recruitment Form for approval by the General Manager is then provided to the Payroll/HR Officer. Incomplete documentation will be returned.

## **Approvals**

The General Manager is the only officer who has delegation to approve end to end recruitment for all positions and to approve changes to a position or its placement within the approved organisation structure.

## **Ongoing Casual or Contracted Work**

The relevant Divisional Manager/Departmental Manager may make recommendation to the General Manager to offer casual or contracted work without advertising, if there is organisational need, and provided that the contract remains within the allocated budget.

## **Advertising**

When it is proposed to make an appointment to a position within the organisation structure of Council, the position must be advertised in a manner sufficient to enable suitably qualified and experienced persons to apply.

The Payroll/HR Officer will recommend the advertising media and consult with the Divisional Manager/Departmental Manager as to placement and duration.

All positions will be advertised either internally and/or externally, in accordance with the following:

- All long-term vacant positions (i.e., where recruitment is for 6 months or longer) must be advertised both internally and externally.
- Vacant positions of less than 6 months, may be advertised internally, but consideration should be given to whether a better outcome might be achieved through external advertising. This is at the discretion of the Divisional Manager/Departmental Manager.
- Where a temporary or acting position becomes permanent, this must be advertised externally and internally.

The Payroll/HR Officer will prepare advertisements for internal and external media in line with Council's branding principles, in consultation with the Divisional Manager/Departmental Manager.

The Payroll/HR Officer will distribute the internal positions vacant notice to ensure notice is provided to all staff.

## **Child-Related Work**

If the position involves child-related work, this must be included in the advertisement.

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## **Applications**

Applications for positions will be required to be completed and submitted according to Council's 'Application Cover Sheet' form.

Applications must be kept confidential, including the identity of applicants and the information contained within therein.

The contact person for the position should be available during the advertising period and give factual information and the position, informing prospective applicants that the recruitment and selection process is based on merit and Equal Employment Opportunity principles. The contact person will be the Divisional Manager/Departmental Manager unless this has been delegated by the Divisional Manager to the immediate Manager or Supervisor.

Applications will be acknowledged within five working days of receiving the application.

Applicants will be contacted within 10 working days following the closing date. This will take the form of personal contact for an interview, an email or letter to inform the applicant they were unsuccessful for interview, or an email/letter advising of a re-evaluation of the vacancy.

## **INTERVIEW PREPARATION**

### **Interview Questions**

Interview questions will be developed by the Supervisor and/or Departmental Manager/Divisional Manager, who will act as members of the Recruitment Panel. The Payroll/HR Officer can be contacted for advice.

Interview questions should be focused on behaviour, selection criteria for the position, and organisational fit, as well as Council's values and guiding principles. Questions should be returned to the Payroll/HR Officer with the short-listing information within 1 week of the application closing date.

### **Interview Panels**

The interview panel is selected by the Departmental Manager/Divisional Manager. The panel should be selected from Council employees and must not change during the interview process, unless unavoidable. Inclusion of external interview panel members may be considered where expertise is required that is not available internally.

All interview panels must have gender equity balance and include both male and female members. A single gender panel will only be accepted when all interviewees are of the same gender as the panel.

Responsibilities of an interview panel will be confirmed by the Departmental Manager/Divisional Manager but should include:

- be impartial and unbiased in the selection process (consider any unconscious bias that may present).
- declare any conflict of interest prior to applications being reviewed in detail.
- declare whether they have been nominated as a referee for any of the applicants.

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- maintain confidentiality throughout the recruitment process, including disclosing applicants or outcomes of interviews.
  - take care not to give cause to the perception by an applicant that they successful/unsuccessful before the process is complete.
  - the Divisional Manager/Departmental Manager will keep all panel members informed throughout the recruitment process.

Interview panel composition should be:

- preferably a minimum of three panel members including the Supervisor/Divisional Manager/Departmental Manager.
- female and male representation.
- if possible, one panel member should be from a different department than the one which is recruiting.

The Payroll/HR Officer will arrange all aspects of the interview, including organizing the venue, preparing interview packs, and scheduling the interviews with the shortlisted applicants.

The Payroll/HR Officer will notify Council office front counter staff of interviews that are being conducted in the Council offices.

#### **Conflict of Interest Declarations Prior to Shortlisting**

Prior to the shortlisting process, the Payroll/HR Officer will provide applicant names to the interview panel members.

After reviewing the list of applicants, all panel members must declare in writing to the Payroll/HR Officer, or nominee, of any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest they may have prior to the commencement of the shortlisting process, in accordance with Council's Conflict of Interest Procedure.

Any documentation relating to conflicts of interest will be stored on the position file. Clarification on declaring conflicts of interest as they relate to the recruitment process can be obtained from the Payroll/HR Officer.

When completing the conflict-of-interest declaration form, panel members should consider whether there could be an actual or perceived conflict and, if so, should they remain as part of the process.

#### **Shortlisting**

In accordance with Section 349 of the Local Government Act 1993, only a person who has applied for appointment to the position may be selected for interview and from among the applicants eligible for appointment, the applicant who has the greatest merit is selected.

The merit of the person eligible for an appointment to the position is determined according to the nature of the duties of the position and the abilities, skills, qualifications, experience and standard of work performance of those persons relevant to those duties.

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Shortlisting must be conducted by the panel members within five working days of applications closing.

Applications must be shortlisted against the selection criteria and based solely on the application. It is an essential requirement that applicants address the key selection criteria in their application. Only those applicants who have applied for the position by the closing date will be eligible for shortlisting.

Unsuitable applicants should be excluded after comparing all applications, taking into consideration the essential qualifications criteria, relevant work history and if there is a reasonable fit to the position and organisation.

Selection of applicants to be interviewed must be logical, transparent, legally defensible and ensure that gender equality and equal employment opportunity principles are met. Applicants must have met all of the selection criteria as advertised.

It is recommended that a maximum of five applicants are shortlisted for interview. This number is wide enough to give the organisation a fair view of the applicant pool and narrow enough to ensure resources are not wasted. If a large number of applications meet the selection criteria, it may be decided to carry out shortlisting on the basis of the most competitive applications. The onus is on applicants to prove they meet the specific requirements of the job (selection criteria).

The Shortlisting Form must be completed, and this information is referred to if an applicant questions why they were not successful for an interview. If the completed form is returned with insufficient information, the documentation will be returned for completion. If all applicants are unsuitable, the recruitment strategy will be assessed by the Departmental Manager/Divisional Manager in consultation with the Payroll/HR Officer.

The Payroll/HR Officer is responsible for arranging a face-to-face meeting with internal applicants who have not been shortlisted for an interview and provide feedback, including information on their application and potential areas for development. The recruitment process will not continue until this has occurred and the Departmental Manager/Divisional Manager are notified.

### **The Interview**

Interviews will be conducted in a structured and professional manner, with the same questions asked of each applicant, with probing or clarifying questions being asked as required. Confidentiality must be maintained regarding applicant identity and information.

Individual panel members should ensure that their scoring rationale is consistent for all applicants. It is not necessary for all panel members to score applicants the same.

Before concluding an interview, the Recruiting Officer should confirm the applicant's referees, including that they have as referee their most recent supervisor in employment or study. If an internal applicant has provided a referee who is on the interview panel, at least one other referee must be provided.

At the conclusions of all interviews for the position, the panel will determine a preferred applicant using the results of the interview scoring. The preferred applicant must be that with the greatest merit and will provide the best fit for the position and organisation. The questionnaire form will



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provide details on the applicant's performance in the interview and justification on the decision by the panel.

Before progressing the recruitment process further, the Payroll/HR Officer must contact any internal applicant not selected as the preferred applicant and provide face-to-face feedback on why they were unsuccessful.

After all reference checks have been completed, the Recruiting Officer must contact the other panel members and advise of the results to ensure that the panel agrees on the preferred applicant. All the panel members must agree on the preferred applicant before the recruitment process proceeds to the next stage. The completed questionnaire form should be returned to the Payroll/HR Officer.

If a panel cannot decide on a preferred applicant, and a second interview is unlikely to determine an outcome, the Recruiting Officer should consult with the Departmental Manager/Divisional Manager.

A second interview may be appropriate if the panel agrees that a second interview is necessary to further investigate one or more applicants to determine a preferred applicant.

The panel for a second interview must consist of the original panel members.

### **Reference Checks**

Reference checks on the preferred applicant should be conducted by the Recruiting Officer. Factual information should be obtained from past employers about the applicant's work experience, performance, and behaviours. This information will confirm the applicant's suitability to the role.

Two recent work-related referees must be supplied by the applicant. At least one of the referees must have supervised or managed the applicant in recent employment or study. The referee is not to be given any information or impression that the person may be a preferred applicant.

An internal preferred applicant must provide at least one current referee from Council, other than any referees who comprised part of the interview panel.

If two or more applicants perform similarly in the interview and a decision cannot be reached, referee checks should be undertaken for all of these applicants to assist in the decision-making process.

Information from the referee checks must be recorded on the Reference Check Form and provided to the Payroll/HR Officer.

### **Unable to Decide**

If a preferred applicant cannot be agreed upon, panel members should record their choices on the recommendation form. At this stage, it is critical to consult the Payroll/HR Officer to determine the next stages in the process.

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If the position requires re-advertising, the following:

- whether the advertising strategy needs review.
- whether the rate of pay or conditions need reassessment
- any other matters that would increase the job attraction workforce planning issues, and job content and scope.

An appointment should not be made if no suitable applicant is available.

### **Additional Recruitment Tools**

The Payroll/HR Officer can arrange services in addition to compulsory assessments that can be used as part of the recruitment and selection process. Additional assessments / checks may be determined by the Departmental Manager/Divisional Manager in consultation with the Payroll/HR Officer.

The following assessments or services may be used as part of the overall recruitment strategy to assist in better hiring decisions:

- Qualifications checks.
- Behaviour checks (e.g., Myer Briggs, Disc Profile).
- Criminal records check.

Where considered appropriate to enhance the recruitment process, additional assessments and checks will be arranged by the Payroll/HR Officer. All associated costs from assessments and checks will be funded by the recruiting division.

### **Approval**

All relevant recruitment documentation will be submitted to the Payroll/HR Officer, who will then collate the Appointment Recommendation Report for consideration and approval by the General Manager.

### **Remuneration**

Employees will be appointed at entry level, unless otherwise negotiated. If the applicant or Divisional Manager/Departmental Manager/Supervisor wants to negotiate the remuneration, the Divisional Manager/General Manager must be consulted prior to any negotiations.

The following issues should be considered when determining if remuneration negotiations should be conducted with a preferred applicant:

- The job evaluation process only reflects grade relativities within Council and does not consider external or market trends.
- The grade of the position reflects the level of authority, responsibility and skills required for the role within Council.
- Any fringe benefit tax implications need to be considered and minimised where practicable.
- Each situation must be treated on its merits to ensure no precedents are created.
- The use of incentives or benefits must only be used to secure an outstanding job applicant in those areas where supply/demand and external market forces have a significant impact.
- Following approval by the General Manager.

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After approval by the General Manager, all recruitment documentation will be returned to the Recruiting Officer. The Recruiting Officer will then contact the preferred applicant and verbally offer the position to the applicant, gain acceptance, and determine a start date and starting salary.

As soon as possible after receiving verbal agreement from the preferred applicant, the Payroll/HR Officer will contact the unsuccessful applicants from the interviews and verbally advise of the outcome. If requested, the Recruiting Officer must provide constructive feedback on their application and interview.

Once the process is complete, the Recruiting Officer must return the completed selection report, interview paperwork and other documentation to the Payroll/HR Officer.

### **Offer of Employment**

The offer of employment (verbal and written) is a legally binding contract between an employer and employee and this stage of the recruitment and selection process is critical.

The Payroll/HR Officer will prepare all related correspondence to successful and unsuccessful applicants and obtain required copies of licences and qualifications from the successful applicant, if not already obtained, prior to commencement.

Recruitment commencement is also subject to satisfactory police checks for all positions and Working with Children checks where the role will be working with children or young people under 18 years of age.

The supervisor of the position will begin preparations for the arrival of the new employee and familiarise themselves with the responsibilities outlined in Council's Induction Program.

### **Difficulty in Filling a Vacancy**

On some occasions, it may be identified that there has been, or is likely to be, a difficulty in recruiting for a specific position. In such circumstances, discussions will be held between the Divisional Manager/Departmental Manager, Payroll/HR Officer and General Manager regarding the options available in terms of alternative recruitment strategies and/or incentive packages.

The services of a specialised employment agency may be engaged in situations involving recruitment challenges. This decision will be made by the General Manager in consultation with the Divisional Manager/Departmental Manager.

### **Candidate Feedback/Appeal**

Unsuccessful applicants have five working days to lodge an appeal, after being notified that they are unsuccessful. The appeal must be based on the process being unfair with demonstrated evidence, not upon the person's disappointment at being unsuccessful.

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## **REFERENCE & RELATED DOCUMENTS**

Conflicts of Interests Declaration Procedure

Recruitment Form

Position Description

Advertisement Council's website

Advertisement media

Application Cover Sheet

Application Questionnaire

Acknowledgement of Application

Short Listing Form

Offer of Interview

Interview Timetable

Interview Questionnaire

Reference Check Form

Appointment Recommendation Form

Unsuccessful Applicant (Interviewed)

Unsuccessful Applicant (Not Interviewed)

Letter of Appointment

## **RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

Local Government (State) Award

Fair Work Act 2009

Workers Compensation Act 1987 (NSW)

Long Service Leave Act 1955 (NSW)

Industrial Relations Act 1996 (NSW)

Defence Reserve Services (Protection) Act 2001

## **REVIEW**

This Policy should be reviewed every four (4) years or within 12 months following an election of Council. The Policy may be reviewed and amended at any time at Councils discretion (or if legislation changes occur).