



Recruitment Policy

1 Policy Statement

Friends and Places Together recognises its staff as being fundamental to its success. A strategic and professional approach to recruitment processes will help Friends and Places Together to attract and appoint staff with the necessary skills and attributes to fulfil its strategic aims and support Friends and Places Together values.

Friends and Places Together is committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of staff is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient and effective and promotes equality of opportunity.

This policy has been designed to provide a framework, which promotes good practice, adopts a proactive approach to equality and diversity issues and fully support Friends and Places Together core business.

The procedure has been designed to comply with relevant legislation. Any significant variations in practice must be discussed with the Board of Trustees to minimise risk to Friends and Places Together.

2 Aims

- ◆ To appoint the best person for each position
- ◆ To ensure equality of opportunity for all applicants and potential applicants
- ◆ To ensure compliance with Friends and Places Together Equality and Diversity Policy and relevant employment legislation
- ◆ To promote Friends and Places Together values
- ◆ To meet Friends and Places Together operational requirements and strategic aims
- ◆ To ensure that the recruitment processes are fit for purpose

3 General principles

All employees and Board of Trustees involved in the recruitment process should be aware of their responsibilities under the relevant legislation and be prepared to attend professional development training.

If a member of staff or Board of Trustees has a close personal or familial relationship with an applicant, they must declare this as soon as they are aware of the individual's application. It would normally be necessary for the member of staff or Board of Trustees to avoid any involvement in the recruitment and selection process.

Documentation will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (DPA). Applicants will have the right to feedback and to access any documentation held on them in accordance with the DPA.

Friends and Places Together / Break With Mates

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4 Procedures

This document details the procedures required to undertake the recruitment and selection process through to appointment of staff. It splits the process into a number of stages. It is necessary to ensure that the procedures are followed as described since they are derived from legislation, policy and good practice.

The stages detailed in the document are:

Pre-advertisement	Preparation prior to a position being advertised
Pre-interview	From promotion of vacancies through to short-listing of applications
Interviewing	Procedures relating to setting up interviews and selecting the most appropriate candidate
Post-selection	The administration required once a selection has been made
Record Keeping	A detailed summary is provided in the following pages

4.1 Justification for Recruitment

All new posts will be approved by the Chief Executive. Before recruitment begins for any new or vacant post, the following must be considered:

- is it necessary to fill the vacancy?
- does the role require changes in duties and responsibilities?
- is it appropriate to evaluate the grade of the post?
- could the work be accommodated in other ways?
- if this is a new post has it been defined, and where will it be accommodated? Is there sufficient resources to cover the costs of the post?
- what terms and conditions are being offered for the post? Are they appropriate and consistent with the rest of Friends and Places Together?
- are there any staff at risk of redundancy? Staff 'at risk' within Friends and Places Together who must be given first consideration for any vacancy prior to an external / or internal advertisement being placed.

4.2 Filling the Vacancy

To start the recruitment process, the recruiting manager must gain authorisation for recruitment from the Chief Executive. The following documentation must be completed for recruitment to all posts:

- * Job Description
- * Person Specification

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Job description and Person Specification

All new or vacant posts will have a written job description detailing the responsibilities and duties of the post holder and a person specification detailing the necessary experience and skills on which the applicant will be assessed. It is the responsibility of the recruiting manager for the post to draft or update these documents.

When a new job is created or where there are substantial changes to an existing job description the proposed job description and person specification must be approved by the Chief Executive.

Template format

Each job description and person specification should include the standard common items and be written according to the template guidelines.

Flexible working/Job Share

With each new or vacant post the suitability of being offered for job-share or flexible working should be considered. (See relevant policies).

Positive Action Measures

In addition, any positive action measures encouraging members of groups under-represented in the organisation in the previous 12 months and genuine occupational requirements will be considered.

Double Tick

Friends and Places Together should ensure that consideration is given to ensuring that people with disabilities are encouraged to apply for jobs, and to ensure that the workplace allows for their employment, e.g. layout of office, equipment available.

4.3 Internal applications and Advertising

It is normal practice that all vacancies are advertised both internally within Friends and Places Together as well as externally. However, where it is considered that existing staff have the pre-requisite skills consideration may be given to advertising posts internally only.

If managers agree that there are current post holders who meet the person specification for the new post, then the post will initially be opened up to internal applicants before being advertised externally to the organisation. If a post is advertised externally first, existing staff may still apply. The person specification stands for any internal applicants and internal applicants need to be made aware that they will not be treated differently from any external candidate if they go for an internal recruitment process.

In situations when redundancies are likely or fixed term posts are coming to an end, then any vacant posts must be considered if they are suitable for the post holders affected first. If they are suitable they must be ring fenced for those post holders.

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The advertisement should include:

- The title and brief description of the job, including a summary of the skills and qualifications (if any) required.
- Details of the salary, pension, hours of work and nature of post i.e. permanent, interim, open to job share.
- The name, address, telephone number and contact for requesting further information
- The web address for more information and downloadable application materials
- The closing date for completed applications.
- Interview date if possible
- The statement that " Friends and Places Together is an Equal Opportunity Employer"
- The Charity number
- Friends and Places Together logo

In addition to the Equal Opportunities statement, advertisements should clearly state that we positively welcome applications from black and ethnic minority candidates, and women

The ad should be drafted and placed by the recruiting manager in liaison with the Chief Executive.

It is important to place the advertisement in places where as many suitable applicants as possible can see it, and advertising should be as cost-effective as possible. Adverts should always be placed on the Friends and Places Together website.

4.4 Enquiries

All enquirers will receive a recruitment information pack detailing the requirements of the post. Wherever possible, this will be provided in electronic format. Application packs should be prepared to include:

- Standard Letter, personalised
- Standard application form
- Job description, and person specification
- Guidance on filling in the form
- Friends and Places Together equal opportunities statement and monitoring form
- Vision, mission and values statement
- A summary of conditions of employment as appropriate
- Deadline for applications and the interview date
- Access details

Responses should remind applicants of the closing date for applications and give approximate notice of the short listing and interview dates. Curriculum Vitae will not be accepted and candidates will be advised accordingly.

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Receiving Applications

All postal applications received will be date stamped and numbered. Applications returned by email will be stored in the relevant post folder in Outlook/Recruit. The details of each applicant will be added to the recruitment Schedule form. An applicants list file will also be created.

The Chief Executive will keep all completed application forms secure and discreet during the recruitment process. The Chief Executive will be responsible for the removal of the front sheets giving personal details and kept secure. It is important under Data Protection principles to ensure that personal data (such as application forms) is shared only with those that need to know and who are involved in the recruitment process.

Where it is necessary for applications to be taken off site for consideration, the utmost care should be taken regarding their security. For example, applications should not be left unattended in a vehicle or in any public place.

The equal opportunity monitoring forms will be removed and analysed prior to passing all applications to the Recruiting Manager responsible for the post. After analysis the individual forms will be destroyed, a copy of the analysis form will be passed to the Chief Executive for information and a copy kept centrally.

4.5 Selection

Shortlisting

It is the responsibility of the recruiting manager of the post to convene a short listing panel, as appropriate. The panel should ideally include people who will be working most closely with the new employee but not be managed by them. Short listing must be undertaken by at least two individuals who are experienced in the recruitment process and who will go on to be involved in the interviewing process. Panel members should be given a copy of this Policy and Procedure for information. Wherever possible, the selection panel should be made up of individuals of different races and gender.

Adequate time should be given for the short listing process.

Each member of the panel should read each application form (minus the front page) and they should individually assess each application according to the criteria of the person specification as agreed. A record on each applicant should be kept on the standard form. The panel shall designate one member as a chair person. The role of the chair person will be to facilitate all meetings and decisions of the panel and to introduce and make candidates welcome on the day. They will be in charge of ensuring the short listing goes smoothly and that all follow the same pattern and that the decision making process is followed carefully and according to the policy at the end of the day.

The panel together should then look at assessments of each individual panel member and attempt to reach a consensus on assessment. A shortlist should then be drawn up of these applicants who meet the defined criteria. It is necessary for the panel to keep a

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record of why each applicant is and is not shortlisted. The chair is responsible for co-ordinating the process.

Application forms from the unsuccessful applicants, together with the short listing notes, a copy of the person specification and the recording sheet of job applicants should be placed together and passed to the line manager for filing. The forms will be kept secure for not less than 6 months after the process is completed in case an unsuccessful applicant makes a case for unfair treatment. (Note: it is also useful to hold onto the forms for a period in order to answer any queries from unsuccessful candidates). After 6 months the forms will be destroyed.

Unsuccessful applicants at this stage should be notified, and their applications kept secure for not less than 6 months after the process is completed in case an unsuccessful applicant makes a case for unfair treatment.

Candidates will only be shortlisted for interview if they meet **all** the essential criteria defined in the person specification.

Comment [SE1]: This is a bit harsh, we've certainly shortlisted where people meet most but not all!

Members of the short listing panel are obliged to declare an interest to the Chair if they do business with, are related to or are a close friend or partner of any of the applicants (panel members may only become aware of a candidate's identity when they receive the interview papers with the names of the shortlisted applicants). The Chair of the selection panel must decide whether the panel member should withdraw or continue to be involved in the selection process. Where a member withdraws the provisions the chair will try and find a replacement. Where a replacement is found they will be able to interview even if they have not been involved in the short-listing. The panel must not go back to the beginning.

Pre-Interviews

A schedule of interview times should be devised by the Chief Executive.

Comment [SB2]: Is this an onerous task for Alex?

Letters should be sent to short listed candidates inviting them to an interview at Friends and Places Together or an outside venue as appropriate. The letter should inform candidates of the date, place and time of the interview, accessibility of the venue, interview room, its approximate length, travel details and that travel expenses can be claimed. A map showing the location of Friends and Places Together and including access details should be included. Details or notice of a test should be sent to candidates. Candidates may also be telephoned in order to confirm the appointment.

Interviewing

The interview panel should consist of the Chief Executive or delegated representative such as the post holder's line manager, and the Chair or Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees (or other delegates of the Board of Trustees). The majority of the panel should have some previous experience of recruitment and selection processes.

Comment [SE3]: Surely Senior Manager, CEO isn't involved in all recruitment

Comment [AM4]: Add Shared Lives carer or service user where possible and relevant

It is desirable that the panel members should have had equal opportunities training and at least one panel member ideally should be familiar with the recruitment process.

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The recruiting manager should give each panel member a complete application form for each candidate to be interviewed, together with the job description, person specification, the question areas and details of any test that the interviewee has been asked to do.

Care should be taken by the panel to create as relaxed an atmosphere as possible. A panel member should act as chair to start and conclude each interview. The panel should be introduced to the candidates. There should be time available at the end of the interviews for the candidates to ask questions.

Question areas

Candidates must be asked the same question areas, which should both be clearly put, and able to be re-phrased if not understood by candidates. Prompt questions may be asked if the candidate has not given a full answer. All candidates will be asked a standard format of questions, which will have been decided by the interview panel prior to the interviews. All questions must be related to the job requirements and the candidate's suitability to undertake the role. How each candidate matched the criteria set out in the specification must be recorded. It is essential that the Panel consider equal opportunities implications for example, do not ask questions of women that are not asked of men.

Interview times will vary depending on the nature and complexity of the post being recruited for. However, an interview should ideally not last for more than one hour, although extra time may be needed for some candidates; for example job sharers will need to be interviewed separately and then together.

All interviews for one post must be conducted by the same panel.

Where a job involves specific start and finishing times or attendance at some late meetings this must be stated clearly in the job description and reflected in the person specification. At the interview, candidates must be asked directly whether or not they are willing and able to work the specified hours and attend occasional late meetings

Skills assessment

An appropriate selection procedure should be used for each post. Procedures may vary, at its simplest this may involve straightforward interview and skills testing. Any skills tests (e.g. presentations, in-tray exercises, computer software tests) must be directly related to the role and measured against objective criteria.

As part of the selection process, candidates may do skills tests or presentations. These tests must be directly related to the role in question and must be measurable against objective criteria. Candidates must be informed of the details in the letter inviting them for interview. Details of any skills tests, including the criteria to be measured and the method of measuring must be provided in advance to the manager in charge of recruitment.

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Interview notes should be taken by each interviewer. These notes should then be used by each panel member to rate each candidate according to the person specification criteria. (N.B. not against each other). A system of ranking e.g. using "met", "part-met", "not-met", should be used within each criteria and recorded on the standard interview form.

Deciding

The following method will be used by all Friends and Places Together selection panels to select the candidate:

At the end of each interview each panel member will use the Interview Assessment Form to independently assess the extent to which she/he believes the candidate demonstrated that they meet the person specification requirements. The panel member must enter a 'score' for each person specification criterion and must specify whether each applicant is or is not appointable.

After all the candidates have been interviewed the Chair will list all the candidates assessed as appointable by individual panel members. The panel will then consider the entire list, deliberate and arrive at a collectively agreed and ranked list of candidates.

The post will be offered to the highest ranked appointable candidate and, if she/he refuses, to the next highest ranked, and so on.

The Chair of the panel must use the Decision sheet to specify the reasons for appointment and rejection of each of the interviewed candidates.

The Chair of the panel must inform the Chief Executive (or the Chair of the Board, in the case of selecting the Chief Executive) of the decisions of the panel and must pass her/him all the interview papers and notes for safekeeping.

If the Panel cannot reach a decision it may be necessary to re-interview. If so, it is useful to reconsider the interview process to ensure that all the important aspects of the person specification have in fact been covered.

The Panel may decide that no candidate is appointable and re-advertise the post.

In the case of appointing the Chief Executive, the selection process will be handled by the Board.

5 Confidentiality

All application details are treated with the utmost confidentiality. It is the responsibility of the recruiting manager to ensure that suitable arrangements are made for confidentiality to be maintained.

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6 Documentation

At all stages of the recruitment process, it is the responsibility of the Chair of the panel to ensure that notes are kept detailing the reasons for selection or rejection of candidates. These notes could be called upon as evidence of the fairness of the process, either through an internal assessment or to support an external investigation. The notes should therefore be relevant to, and necessary for, the process itself. All records must be handed to the Line Manager (if the Line Manager is not the Chair) by the Chair of the panel.

At the end of the recruitment process, all records will be retained in case of requests for feedback or the threat of litigation.

Successful candidates should be notified as soon as possible and offered the post subject to receipt of satisfactory references and other appropriate checks, e.g. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. The successful candidate will receive the offer formally in writing and be asked to accept in writing.

In the event that a DBS disclosure is required, the successful candidate may commence work prior to the disclosure being received by Friends and Places Together, as this can take several weeks. It will be clearly stated that appointment is subject to a satisfactory disclosure, and that anything deemed inappropriate revealed by the disclosure may result in termination of employment. Friends and Places Together will also require the new appointee to restrict his/her duties pending the return of the disclosure.

Unsuccessful candidates should be written to as soon as possible.

Consideration of the satisfactory nature of the references should lie with the original selection panel.

7 Monitoring and review of policy

Annual reports on trends and statistics relating to recruitment and appointments will be provided to the Board of Trustees in order to review compliance and the effectiveness of the policy.

We hereby confirm and agree the Policy

Signed:
Denise Nygate CEO

Dated:

Signed: Dated:
Neil Woodbridge Trustee

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