Recruitment and Selection Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. Nechells POD recognises the fact that it's employees/workers are its greatest asset and that Nechells POD's success depends on recruiting and selecting the right person for the job.

1.2. This policy aims to:

- Provide a systematic process, that assesses the role to be filled and the type of skills and abilities, knowledge and experience, needed to fill it.
- Ensure a fair, non-discriminatory recruitment and selection process

2. Purpose and Scope

2.1. This policy and procedure covers the recruitment of all employees, permanent, fixed term and temporary.

2.2. All appointments will be made in accordance with this policy, unless classed as a special circumstance as listed in 7.5.

2.3. The policy sets out the principles and practices to be followed. Any variation in the procedures outlined must be agreed in advance by the Chair of Trustees and the Project Manager.

2.4. The Project Manager is responsible for ensuring that all employees involved in the recruitment and selection process are aware of this policy and have received proper training on how to implement it.

The Recruitment Process

3. Decision to fill posts

3.1. When a vacancy arises, it presents an opportunity to re-assess the requirements of the job and the conditions applicable to it.

3.2. Where there is a straightforward replacement to the agreed Establishment staffing and/or minor changes to the requirements of the job are made the Project Manager must discuss the changes with the Trustees prior to obtaining authorisation from the Chair of Trustees.

3.3. Where salary changes or significant changes to the job description/person specification are envisaged and/or a new post is created, the Project Manager should agree the requirements of the post and the applicable terms and conditions with the Trustees in consultation with the Chair of Trustees.

4. Requisition to fill posts.

4.1. In 3.3 above, all requests for employee recruitment should be made on a Recruitment Authorisation Form. The form must be signed by the Project Manager and the Chair of Trustees.

4.2. The recruitment process and contractual arrangement will then be coordinated by the Project Manager and Finance Manager.

5. Job Description

5.1 Every post must have a written job description detailing the purpose, tasks and responsibilities of the job. Employees with responsibility for writing job descriptions must ensure that the duties and responsibilities specified are based solely on the genuine requirements of the post.

5.2 It is the responsibility of the Charity Development Trustee before the post is advertised with support from the Project and Finance Manager. The job description must be agreed by the Chair of Trustees before the post is advertised; any issues of inconsistency of salary scales must be addressed at this point and referred to the Chair of Trustees for sign off if appropriate.

6. Person Specification

6.1 This profiles the ideal person to fill the job.

6.2 This must be prepared by the Project Manager with support from the Finance manager. Before the post is advertised and should include the following requirements:

- Qualifications
- Experience
- Skills, knowledge and abilities
- Personal qualities
- Special factors that may exist

6.3 The person specification will be used to list the criteria against which an advertisement will be prepared and applicants assessed at the shortlisting and interviewing stages. It must be strictly relevant to the post. Any requirements that are restrictive and could exclude or disadvantage any particular group or individual must be justifiable.

6.4 Care must, therefore, be exercised when requesting specific qualifications rather than evidence of ability to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the post.

6.5 Criteria contained in a person specification must be measurable in that it should be possible to determine whether an applicant possesses the qualifications, skills and abilities, experience and training appropriate to the post. It should also advise the candidate on when and how they will be assessed for example, through the application form, at interview or using a test etc.

7. Advertisement

7.1 All advertisements will be placed by the Charity Development Trustee/Project Manager They will contain information in an appropriate format. All external advertisements will contain:

- Details and requirements of the post, including essential qualifications and salary
- A reference to Nechells POD's commitment to equal opportunities
- Details of any unlawful restrictions to the post.
- Notification of whether a disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is required.
- Method(s) of applying
- The date by which all applications must be received and if applicable the interview date(s)
- Nechells POD's name, logo and registered charity number
- Website address and e-mail addresses.

7.2 All vacancies will be advertised internally using the internal vacancy notice system. It will contain similar information to an external advertisement and will have the same closing date on it. Details will be posted to staff on maternity leave/adoption leave or long-term sickness.

7.3 Externally, all posts will be advertised using the most appropriate method for the type of post, or a combination method. These may be Job centres, local and national press, specialist publications, community places, recruitment websites, social media, colleges and universities, to be agreed between the Project Manager and the Trustees.

7.4 A post may not automatically be advertised, or be advertised internally only in one of the following 'special circumstances':

- When it is identified as potentially suitable for employees needing to be redeployed on medical/welfare grounds.
- When it is identified as potentially suitable for employees affected by restructuring or possible redundancy.
- When it is identified as potentially suitable for employees wishing to return to work following maternity leave or adoption leave.
- When the timescales for the recruitment of the post do not allow for an external process to be conducted due to the nature of the post or the arrangement with the funder.
- Where a similar vacancy has been advertised within the preceding six months and a previous applicant was identified as appointable.
- If the post could only be filled by an existing employee or group of employees due to the duties and responsibilities required.
- Where the post has been identified as regraded due to increased responsibility or a change in organisational circumstances.
- Where other special circumstances decided by the Project Manager pertain, for example: changes to current job description that have become custom and practice for a period of at least 12 months: funding restrictions. This list is not exhaustive.

7.5 An **Internal Applicant** is anyone employed on a permanent. Fixed-term or temporary basis who, at the time the post is advertised, has undertaken work in the previous six months or a volunteer that has been supporting Nechells POD regularly for a period of at least six months.

8. Recruitment Packs

8.1 Application Forms

8.1.1 An application form and supporting details will be sent out to all persons as requested.

8.1.2 Applicants seeking employment with Nechells POD whether internal or external, must complete the appropriate application form in full.

8.1.3 Applicants with a disability that physically prevents them from completing an application form may be sent the same information in a different format.

8.1.4 An applicant's inability to complete the application form will not necessarily exclude them from consideration. If applicants are given appropriate assistance, then a note of this should be made on the form.

8.2 Information to applicants

8.2.1 Persons requesting further information should be directed to the website and advised that the information sent out is the information considered appropriate for applicants and that no further information is available.

8.1.2 The post information on the front of the application form marked 'for office use only' should be completed by the Project and Finance Manager prior to sending out to applicants.

8.2.3 The applicant is generally not permitted to visit during the interview process. However, if it is considered that it would assist both parties with the process it may be considered, as long as all candidates are given the same opportunity.

8.2.4 The following documents will be sent out with the application form:

- Guidance note for applicants
- Equal opportunities policy
- Recruitment monitoring form
- Job description
- Person specification
- Covering letter referring to interview date(s) if applicable
- Other useful background information as appropriate.

9. Receipt of Application Forms

9.1 In the covering letter sent with each recruitment pack we explain we are a registered charity and in the interests of economy, will not acknowledge receipt of completed applications. The letter also states that if the applicant has not heard from us by a specific date, they may assume they have been unsuccessful.

9.2 Late applications should be considered if the shortlisting process has not been completed.

9.3 The recruitment monitoring form will be detached from each application form and used in evaluating the recruitment process.

10. Shortlisting

10.1 The selection Panel

10.1.1 If appropriate, a selection panel will be convened. The composition and size of the panel will depend on the nature of the job. In every case the panel should include the Project Manager and another representative of the management team and a trustee. Only in exceptional circumstances should the panel composition change during the recruitment process. If, for example, a representative from a partnership project or the funding body must be present, this should be agreed by the Chair of Trustees. A member of the panel should be nominated chairperson.

10.1.2 It is Nechells POD's policy that all members taking part in the selection process shall have been appropriately trained and have been given a copy of this policy.

10.1.3 The panel; is required to shortlist and interview and will take an active part in both. Shortlisting may be done by individual panel members reviewing application forms before agreeing the shortlist with the rest of the panel, or the panel meeting in full to agree the shortlist.

10.1.4 The Project and Finance manager will provide each panel member with a copy of the:

- Job description
- Person specification
- Advertisement
- Application forms
- Shortlisting forms

10.1.5 If, at any stage in the process, a panel member becomes aware that they are related to an applicant for the job or have a close relationship with the applicant, they must advise the chair and where judged necessary, take no further part in the process.

10.1.6 In advance of any interviews, the panel must agree the interview format, the questions that will be asked of all candidates and to whom these will be assigned. The list of questions will be agreed with the Project Manager who will arrange to have them transposed onto a candidate record and assessment sheet to be used at the interview. Likewise, details of any additional form of assessment (for example, a presentation or a written test) must be agreed by the panel and given to the Project Manager.

11. Drawing up a Shortlist

11.1 Panel members must deal with applications and shortlisting as soon as possible after the closing date and should not unreasonably delay the process.

11.2 Applications should be assessed against the skills outlined in the person specification.

11.3 Job descriptions and person specifications must be used in determining the shortlisting criteria.

11.4 The Equality Act 2010 aims to provide an effective legal framework for preventing discrimination at all stages of the employment relationship. It makes it unlawful for employers to discriminate against job applicants because of protected characteristic. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity.

11.5 Only applicants who most closely meet the essential criteria for the post will generally be shortlisted. (this will depend on the amount of responses received) In the unlikely event that the number of applicants who meet the essential criteria is in excess of the number that can reasonably be considered, shortlisted applicants will be selected against the desirable criteria.

11.6 The disclosure of a criminal conviction will not in itself debar an applicant from a post. The panel must take into account the relevance of the conviction to the post, how long ago the offence took place, the age of the applicant at that time (if known) and the number of convictions.

11.7 Reasons for rejecting applications at the shortlisting stage must be recorded on a shortlisting form.

12. Invitation for Interview

12.1 Once the shortlist has been determined all applicants on that list will be invited, by the Project and Finance Manager for an interview. Applicants will be given adequate notice and will be told of the location and time of the interview.

12.2 With the invitation for interview should be sent:

- Details of where the interview will be held, including a location map if appropriate
- An outline of any selection activities and assessments to be used in addition to an interview
- The approximate time to be allowed for interview
- A note asking for any special requirements to be notified to the Project and Finance Manager prior to the interview date
- A request that they confirm their attendance by telephoning the Project and Finance Manager as soon as possible.

12.3 The interview will be held at a venue that is accessible to all applicants

13. Information for Unsuccessful Applicants

13.1 Applicants will not receive a letter of rejection at the shortlisting stage as they have been informed that if they have heard nothing from Nechells POD within a stated period of the closing date they should assume that they have been unsuccessful.

13.2 Internal applications shall be informed that they have not been successful at the same time as the shortlisted applicants are notified.

14. Preparing for the Interview

14.1 Panel members should prepare for the interviews by reading the application form, job description and person specification to identify areas which need further exploration and person specification to identify areas which need further exploration and clarification. They should also try to anticipate candidate's questions or additional information they may seek.

14.2 The Project and Finance Manager will liaise with the chair of the panel regarding arrangements for the interview, in particular if special arrangements or adjustments are required.

14.3 Panel members meeting applicants during the selection process must ensure that any questions or comments they make during the informal process cannot be misinterpreted by candidates as an attempt to gather inappropriate information which be used in the decision-making process. An example of this would be asking about family or domestic circumstances.

14.4 There should be no attempt made by the panel to research applicants thorough social media, once an initial offer has been made it may be that checks into use of social media are made for some positions.

15. Questions

15.1 Questions to be asked at the interview must be prepared and agreed by the panel in advance.

15.2 The Project and Finance Manager will prepare a candidate assessment sheet showing the questions to be asked together with the desirable answers and the scoring system agreed, for use during the interview.

15.3 Questions must be relevant to the post. Panel members must not ask questions about current or future personal and family circumstances. Neither should they ask questions which refer to the applicant's gender, sexuality, age or ethnic origin unless it is a genuine occupational requirement.

15.4 Applicants should be treated equally and not subjected to more rigorous (or lenient) questioning because of a protected characteristic as outlined in 11.4.

16. Assessment Activities

16.1 Applicants selected for interview, who will be subjected to an assessment of their knowledge, skills and abilities, must be informed in advance that such an assessment will form part of the process.

16.2 The assessment may take the form of a test, written report, demonstration or presentation, whichever is the most appropriate to the post and must be relevant to the job.

16.3 The assessment method chosen must be capable of being assessed and applied equally to all applicants.

16.4 All members of the panel should agree on the assessment method used and the weighting of points awarded.

17. Conduct of the Interview

17.1 The most senior member of staff on the panel will act as the chair if appropriate. The panel should maintain a candidate assessment sheet showing responses and reasons for appointment or non-appointment. These will be attached to the application form and retained by Nechells POD.

17.2 It will be ensured that the interview room is accessible and laid out in an appropriate manner, taking into account such things as a bright light or sunlight, the height and position of chairs and the need for candidates to see the interviewers' faces. Any equipment needed should be tested prior to the interview.

17.3 Panel members must ensure they are free from distractions and other commitments during the interview process and that enough time is allowed for decision making at the end.

17.4 Panel members must avoid preconceptions and assumptions about individuals because of a protected characteristic as outlined in 11.4.

18. The Interview

18.1 It is the responsibility of the chair to welcome the candidate, facilitate the introductions of the panel (panel members may introduce themselves, as appropriate) and outline the format of the interview.

18.2 The prepared questions will be asked in the agreed sequence.

18.3 The candidate will be given an opportunity to ask questions or to make a statement before the interview is conducted. The use of prepared notes is allowed.

19. The Decision-making Process

19.1 Panel members will have a candidate assessment sheet available to them for each candidate on which they will record their personal notes as to how each candidate meets the specifications of the post.

19.2 The sheet provided space for recording scores against each question. Scores may be weighted depending upon the importance of the attributes being scored to the role. Care should be taken when considering the results. A high overall score should not make a low score in a crucial area.

19.3 Researching a decision is a two-stage process. The panel must first of all decide which of the applicants meet the person specifications and are therefore appointable. The chair will first ask members if there is one candidate or more who can be eliminated from further discussion. Where it is unanimously agreed that there is such a candidate, there will be no further discussion on that candidate. The panel must then discuss the suitability of each appointable candidate and decide on the most suitable. The panel should aim for consensus on the most suitable candidate. If this cannot be reached the option of a further stage to the process should be agreed. If no further stage can be added to the process and consensus after the period of reflection cannot be reached the chair will decide.

19.4 The chair will collate the comments of the panel members to determine an appointment and if appropriate reserve appointees. The combined score for each candidate should be recorded on an interview score sheet.

19.5 Should the most suitable applicant be a person with a disability after the formal interview and before any decision is made, the Project and Finance Manager will discuss with the applicant any modifications to the workplace required or adjustments to the job description needed. These and other measures will be considered by all appropriate parties, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

19.6 All application forms, interview notes and other paperwork will be passed to the Project and Finance Manager. And will be stored. In respect of unsuccessful applicants these documents will be destroyed after a period of six months.

19.7 All documents relating to the appointee will be placed together and entered onto the personnel file when the appointee commences work.

20. After the Interview

20.1 All interviewees must be informed whether or not they have been successful. Unsuccessful external applicants should be informed by the Project Manager as soon as possible after the successful applicant has been provisionally offered the post and indicated their acceptance, which may be done verbally by a member of the panel and will be confirmed in writing by the Project Manager. Unsuccessful internal candidates will be informed personally by a member of the panel.

20.2 Feedback will be given to unsuccessful candidate upon request.

21. Offer of Employment

21.1 Without exception, only a provisional offer of employment will be made in the first instance. It must be explained to the candidate, that the offer is **subject to the receipt of satisfactory clearances**. This offer may be made verbally in the first instance, by a member of the panel clearly stating to the candidate the salary, hours of work, duration of the contract, sickness and holiday entitlement and any benefits associated with the role and will always be promptly followed by a letter. The letter will list the clearances required and advise the candidate not to submit notice to their current employer until they have been informed that all clearances have been satisfactorily received and the formal offer has been confirmed in writing.

22. Pre-employment Clearances

22.1 Nechells POD will liaise directly with the successful candidate regarding pre-employment clearances, once a provisional offer has been made and accepted.

22.2 The type(s) of clearance(s) necessary will depend on the nature of the post, the applicable client group(s) and current legislation and may include some or all of the following: Proof of identity, employment history, references, medical questionnaire, disclosure from the Disclosure and banning Service (DBS), qualifications. Details of these can be found in paragraphs 22.3 and 22.8 below.

22.3 Proof of identity

This is required for all posts by the Government under sections 15 to 25 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 92006), the Prevention of Illegal Working. The type of proof acceptable is governed by this act.

22.4 Employment History

A minimum of five years employment history is desired by Nechells POD but it is essential for posts involving access to, or working with children and vulnerable adults in order to comply with the standards of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Ofsted. Any gaps in the employment history must be identified. Depending on the job and the circumstances of the individual, it may be necessary to cover additional years' employment history.

22.5 References

The Project and Finance Manager will liaise with the successful candidate over appropriate referees and will, with the candidate's permission, send for references at the earliest opportunity.

A minimum of two written references (covering more than three months) will be requested, depending on the employment history, one of which will usually be the last or most recent employer. Character references may be requested in addition to the above, providing the referees are appropriate. Relatives and close friends are not appropriate referees.

References subsequently received are regarded as confidential and therefore will not be divulged to the applicant. However it may be necessary for the Project and Finance Manager to discuss any general concerns with the applicant as appropriate. The Project Manager may see the references.

Verbal telephone references are acceptable in extenuating circumstances, as long as the Project and Finance Manager record the name and job title of the person spoken to, note when the reference was taken and follow the format of the reference request form, writing down what the referee said about the applicant.

If appropriate, references will be verified by the Project and Finance Manager. Verification details will be recorded as appropriate, in order to comply with CQC standards and Ofsted.

Where the post requires it, the Project and Finance Manager and the Project Manager shall both examine references and sign these off as cleared for employment. Any disagreement shall be referred to the Chair of Trustees before confirmation of the offer of employment is sent.

In all cases the Project and Finance Manager may judge whether appropriate referencing has been conducted.

22.6 Medical Questionnaire

Medical clearance is required by Nechells POD for all posts and by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) for posts involving work with children or vulnerable adults.

In order that, where possible, medical clearance may be obtained without the necessity for a medical examination, a medical questionnaire will be issued.

It is completed by the successful candidate and returned to the Project and Finance Manager, in an envelope marked confidential.

22.7 Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service

It is a legal requirement that all persons working with or having access to children under the age of 18 or vulnerable adults, have been issued with a disclosure from the DBS which checks their suitability to work with these client groups.
The Project and Finance Manager will request the appropriate level of disclosure depending on the client group and the actual work carried out and will assist the candidate in completing the necessary Disclosure application form.
These posts are 'exempted' from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. 1974.
Upon receipt of a Disclosure that shows criminal convictions or other information the Project and Finance manager will discuss the details with the Project Manager and a decision will be made and a record will be kept.
Criminal convictions and other information will not necessarily be a bar to employment. It will depend on the details of the offence and the type of work carried out.

22.8 Qualifications

Where the Person Specification identifies a particular qualification as essential for the post, the candidate's original certificate of qualification should be seen and verified by the Project and Finance Manager. This is a requirement under the CQC standards and Ofsted, where the post involves working with children or vulnerable adults.

23. Reaching a Decision

23.1 The Project and Finance Manager will keep the Project Manager informed of the progress in getting candidates cleared and will discuss any problems identified.

23.2. Once all clearances have proved satisfactory, the Project and Finance Manager will discuss a possible start date with the candidate and the Project Manager. A letter from the Project and Finance Manager to the candidate will be sent, confirming Nechells POD's original offer and enclosing a statement of Nechells POD's terms and conditions of employment. New starter form will also be sent at the same time.

23.3 In the event that clearances prove unsatisfactory, the Project and Finance Manager will discuss the details with the Project Manager. Should the recommendation be that the provisional offer is rescinded the Project and Finance Manager will prepare a letter from the Project Manager to notify the candidate as appropriate.

24. Information and Paperwork

24.1 All paperwork relating to a person's employment will be retained on their personnel file with the exception of the completed medical questionnaire which is stored separately in a confidential file.

24.2. Paperwork in respect of candidates who were not confirmed in post will be stored in the applicable recruitment file and retained for approximately six months.

24.3. Disclosures from the DBS are stored in accordance with their policy on safe storage for a period of six months or until after the next inspection by the CQC or Ofsted, as applicable. This information will be shredded as applicable.

24.4. Personal and sensitive information is retained and/or used in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

25. Complaints Procedure

If at any stage of the recruitment process an applicant is unhappy about the way they have been treated, the matter should be taken up with the Project and Finance Manager in the first instance, who will investigate the complaint and advise appropriate action.

Should the applicant still be unhappy with the outcome they would be referred to Nechells POD's Grievance Procedure.

26. Sessional Workers and Consultants

A sessional worker is someone who undertakes to complete a specific and usually planned piece of work for Nechells POD. The person may be employed or self-employed if satisfactory proof of genuine self-employment is forthcoming.

External consultancy projects are liable to sign off by the Project Manager or the Chair of trustees and where appropriate, at least three consultants will be approached to submit plans and costs before a decision is made.

The Project Manager will discuss terms with the sessional worker or consultant and inform the Finance Manager of the details.

Although a self-employed sessional worker or consultant will not be subject to Nechells POD's full recruitment procedure, appropriate clearances must be obtained. Suitable correspondence, confirming the agreement will also be exchanged. This will be prepared by the Finance Manager and signed by the Project Manager.