



## Safer Recruitment Policy and Selection Procedure

### Introduction

The purpose of this Policy is to set out the requirements of the Safer Recruitment process which will apply to all roles at Better Lives Partnership (BLP). This procedure follows all the guidance contained in the joint SSSC and Care Inspectorate publication: *'Safer Recruitment, through better recruitment'* which should be read in conjunction with this procedure.

The aim of the Safer Recruitment Policy is to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse the vulnerable adults we support or are otherwise unsuited to working with them by having appropriate procedures for appointing staff.

BLP aims to maintain a competent, flexible and quality-conscious workforce, for both supported learning, skills development and employability provision. To this end, we intend to select the best available person for every vacancy, regardless of sex, race, colour, religion, marital status, ethnic origin, age, disability or sexual orientation. At the same time, we aim to provide all employees with the opportunity to develop long-term careers appropriate to their abilities and ambitions.

The aims of the BLP's recruitment policy are as follows:

- To ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- To ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently;
- To ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious-belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age;
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by SSSC, Care Inspectorate, our own Adult Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and any guidance or code of practice published by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) PVG Scheme; and to ensure that BLP meets its commitments to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the vulnerable adults we support by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks and the recording of these on the Safer Recruitment checklists for each candidate;
- To ensure that employees are given the maximum opportunity to develop their careers and achieve their work potential.

Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the provisions of this policy.

BLP has a principle of open competition in its approach to recruitment and will seek to recruit the best applicant for the job. The recruitment and selection process should ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job at BLP based on the applicant's abilities, capabilities, potential, qualifications, experience and merit as measured against the Job Description and Person Specification (where created).



In filling any vacancy, we will encourage applications from suitably qualified internal candidates wherever possible in line with our commitment to succession planning. All employment opportunities will be posted on our social media channels and via local/national job recruitment websites. and communicated directly to all employees via email, with details posted on staff Shared Drive. Where possible, promotion will come from within our current staff teams and existing employees with suitable experience and qualifications will always be given consideration.

On occasions, such as during periods of reorganisation or restructuring, it may not always be possible to advertise every position internally. There will also be instances when vacancies are not advertised because a suitable candidate has been identified. Often, vacancies will be simultaneously advertised externally if it is perceived that there may not be sufficient internal expertise available.

Vacancies for all senior staff are approved by the Board of Trustees and vacancies for operational staff are approved by the Senior Management Team. Vacancies are normally posted internally and externally.

Adverts and Job Descriptions for operational staff are approved by the Senior Management Team and for senior management by the Board of Trustees.

**Application Process:**

All new candidates applying for a vacancy at BLP must submit an Application Form. Candidates attending for interview will be interviewed by a minimum of two staff members, one of whom will be a Senior Manager and Team Officer or Programme Leaders - will always be part of the recruitment and selection process.

It is unlawful for BLP to employ anyone who is barred from working with vulnerable groups. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with vulnerable groups to apply for a position at BLP. All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and will result in the application being rejected, or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and referral to the police and /or the DBS.

**Job Description and Person Specifications:**

The Job Description is a key document in the recruitment process, and must be finalised prior to taking any other steps in the process. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role as well as describe how the job meets the requirements & expectations of BLP, and its' vision, values and mission statements.

The Person Specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. The Person Specification will include a specific reference to suitability to support vulnerable adults in a structured environment.



### **Interviews and Selection:**

The recruitment and selection of staff will be conducted in a professional, planned and timely manner and in compliance with current employment legislation and relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.

Selection techniques will be determined by the nature and duties of the vacant post, but all vacancies will require an interview of short-listed candidates. With the candidate's permission, we will request to take up references during the selection stage or make an offer subject to successful references and PVG membership. All references will be sought directly from the referee and be in writing. No verbal references will be accepted.

For all successful candidates we will obtain two satisfactory written references which will be held in their personnel & training files along with all other evidence required to prove safer recruitment practice. Qualifications and training records will be verified and copies retained in their personnel & training files. All recruiting managers are required to complete a new starter form, proof of ID check and PVG application with the new employee and forward to the Administration Officer/Head of Business Support for inclusion in the Personnel & Training file.

### **Confirmation of Appointment**

All appointments are subject to the satisfactory completion of a 3-month probationary period (6 months in the case of the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer/Senior Manager).

### **Internal Candidates:**

All internal candidates will be required to complete a selection procedure, which will assess against a range of specified criteria. The selection process is based primarily on several carefully considered factors such as individual job performance, appraisal and/or manager's evaluation of capability to assume more responsibility, experience, knowledge, skills and related qualifications, and career interests. These factors will be considered against the availability of openings and the relative qualifications of other candidates.

### **Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG):**

All employees are required to complete a PVG Scheme application or PVG Scheme Update (whichever is relevant) from Disclosure Scotland. Although no records are held on site, BLP does operate a tracker form (see Disclosure Scotland policy), the Scheme is 'live' and BLP is alerted to any changes or notifiable events. It is imperative that we are able to evidence our initial notification from Disclosure Scotland and this is both recorded on the Safer Recruitment checklist and the notification included in the Personnel & Training file. Employment is subject to a clean report being obtained and maintained from Disclosure Scotland in view of the contact staff will have with the vulnerable adults we support during normal duties. New PVG Scheme applications or PVG Scheme Updates are administered by the Admin Officer/Head of Business Support.



## **The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974**

BLP complies fully with the Code of Practice, issued by Scottish Ministers, in connection with the use of information provided to registered persons, their nominees and other recipients of information by Disclosure Scotland under Part V of the Police Act 1997, for the purposes of assessing applicants' suitability for employment purposes, voluntary positions, licensing and other relevant purposes.

We undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly and not to discriminate unfairly against them on the basis of the subject of a Disclosure, conviction or other information revealed. However, all staff working at BLP have direct access to Vulnerable Adults in providing support in their learning and skills development, therefore, all posts within BLP are considered exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

In practice this means that all applicants must disclose all previous and pending convictions, even if they are considered "spent" or be liable to prosecution. This includes driving offences. With the exception of offences against anyone considered to be in a vulnerable group, a previous conviction will not automatically preclude an applicant from working at BLP. All decisions will be made based on careful consideration of all the information available to us.

Applicants who have a conviction for a criminal offence must declare it in a letter to the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Senior Management Team which will then be destroyed. They will then consider the following:

- Whether the conviction is relevant to the post;
- The length of time since the offence occurred;
- Whether the applicant has a pattern of convictions;
- Whether the applicant's circumstances have changed since the offence was committed.

At interview, or under separate conversation, we undertake to ensure an open and measured discussion on the subject of any offences or other matters that might be considered relevant for the position concerned. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or post-employment termination.

An Applicant will not be considered suitable for employment if they have been found guilty of a serious offence involving violence or dishonesty, any sexual offence, any offence involving Class A drugs or the supply of any other illegal drug.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in Disclosure Scotland PVG Certificate with the subject of that Disclosure before considering withdrawing a conditional offer of employment. We ensure that all those at BLP who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of Disclosure information.



Guidance is sought in the relevant legislation relating to employment of ex-offenders (e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974). SSSC/Care Inspectorate 'Safer Recruitment through better recruitment'.

**Ongoing Employment:**

BLP recognises that safer recruitment and selection is not just about the start of employment but should be part of a larger policy framework for all staff. We will, therefore, provide ongoing training, learning, development and support for all staff, as identified through the Review & Plan process. Staff will be asked to abide by the BLP Code of Conduct & Practice at all times and to agree their acceptance of the BLP vision, values and mission statements on joining; ensure they continue to subscribe to these during their employment and attend related training as required.

**Contractor and Agency Staff:**

Consultants or Agency staff engaged by BLP must complete the same checks for their employees that we are required to be completed for our staff and require confirmation that these checks have been completed before employees of the Consultants or Agency can commence work at BLP. We will independently verify the identity of staff supplied by consultants or an agency.

**Induction and Training:**

All new employees will participate in the BLP Induction Training Programme suitable for their role led by the Senior Management Team and Team/Programme Leaders and other allocated colleagues. All staff will be required to participate in the following training and regular updates to include: Safeguarding and GDPR training.

**Review of these Procedures**

These procedures form part of our Safer Recruitment Policy and will be reviewed annually to be amended in line with changes to statutory requirements and operational changes as part of the programme of policy and guidance review.

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**Appendix**

**SAFER RECRUITMENT RECORD**

Name:

Position: Support Worker

Job Advert	Interview Date	Offer Letter	Acceptance	Start Date

PVG Scheme Membership No:

Employer Reference Requested:	Employer Reference Received:	Filed (P&T File)

Character Reference Requested:	Character Reference Received:	Filed (P&T File)

SSSC Register Updated:	PVG Received:	Filed (P&T File)

Induction Programme Started	Induction Programme Completed

Probation Completed:	

Other Notes: