

TO:	Governance Sub-Committee
PREPARED BY:	Linda Sichi (Deputy CEO)
SUBJECT:	RECRUITMENT & SELECTION POLICY
DATE OF MEETING:	16 September 2024
APPROVED BY:	Paul Martin (CEO)

RECRUITMENT & SELECTION POLICY

LS/SEPTEMBER.2024/REF P58



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Registration No. HCB 161 SC Registered: Financial Conduct Authority - 1818 R(S).
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1. MILNBANK HOUSING ASSOCIATION (MHA) STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

MHA's mission is to provide excellent homes and services in a thriving community. We believe that people living in the MHA community should:

- Have warm, safe, and affordable homes, and receive excellent services from MHA.
- Live in neighbourhoods that are clean and well cared for, with real community pride.
- Have access to opportunities and services that promote a good quality of life.

2. MHA's VALUES

Working as 'One Milnbank' so that we offer the same quality of services, support and housing to all tenants and residents.

3. LEGAL & REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

The Management Committee leads and directs MHA to ensure good outcomes for its tenants and other service users. The Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework Financial & Regulatory, Standard 1 states that the governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users. MHA adheres to all relevant legal employment requirements associated with this policy.

4. POLICY INTRODUCTION

MHA recognises its staff are fundamental to fulfilling the strategic aims and supporting the core values of its business. MHA seeks to recruit the best candidates with the necessary skills and attributes to fulfil the roles. MHA conducts business underpinned by Equal Opportunities legislation and strives to maintain a diverse staff team. We encourage excellence at all levels in our organisation and are not influenced by age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins and citizenship), religion/belief, sex and sexual orientation nor any other factor irrelevant to achieving successfully and performing our jobs.

5. PRINCIPLES OF THE RECRUITMENT & SELECTION POLICY

MHA encourages good practice and equal opportunities in line with legislative requirements to which all staff are required to adhere to. During the recruitment and selection process, the aims of MHA are:

- To attract candidates with the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience for consideration for employment with MHA.
- Ensure that access to employment opportunities is based on fair, objective and consistent criteria in line with MHA's Equality & Diversity Policy.
- To ensure that recruitment and selection procedures are clear and adhered to by all staff and committee members involved.
- To develop a suitably qualified workforce committed to the aims, values and service delivery requirements of MHA.

6. IDENTIFYING THE NEED TO RECRUIT

- 6.1 When either a job becomes vacant or a new job is created, there is an opportunity to fully consider what MHA requires. The following questions should be considered:
- Is there a requirement for this post to be filled?
 - What would be the adverse effect/s of not filling the post?
 - If the post is to be filled, is this required on a like for like basis or are there alternative considerations?
 - Does this vacancy provide an opportunity to look at the wider team roles?
- 6.2 An agreement should be reached about the future of the post. If the vacancy will be filled or a new job is created, the procedure below will be followed prior to the recruitment and selection process taking place:
- A job description and person specification will be developed for the role detailing the duties, skills, knowledge and experience required. If a current job description and person specification exist, these will be reviewed by the line manager to ensure it accurately reflects the role.
 - If this is a new role or you deem an existing role to have significantly changed, job evaluation may be carried out to determine the correct salary/grade for the role. MHA may seek to engage specialists to carry out this work prior to the recruitment process taking place.
 - A recruitment panel will be identified and have delegated authority to make an appointment to the post.
 - A reasonable timescale for the entire recruitment and selection process should be agreed on by the recruitment panel. This will take account of selection checks and notice period for the successful candidate.
 - All paperwork required during the recruitment and selection process – the job advert, application paperwork, shortlisting and interview paperwork will be agreed on by the recruitment panel.
 - The same personnel should be involved throughout unless a conflict of interest arises at any point during the process when the recruitment panel will discuss if it is appropriate for an alternative individual to join the recruitment panel.
 - Depending on the seniority of the post, the recruitment panel may seek advice from recruitment advisors prior to progressing a recruitment and selection process if deemed necessary.
 - The recruitment panel will identify the most suitable individual to support the administration of the process.

7. THE RECRUITMENT PANEL

It is recommended that three individuals make up the recruitment panel where possible and they are suitable depending on the post being filled. Below is an example:

POST	RECRUITMENT
CEO	Management Committee & appropriate advisors
Officer 2 level to Depute CEO & Director of	Management Committee & CEO
Officer 1 level & below	The CEO to decide

For recruitment on a temporary basis, MHA reserves the right not to adhere to the following process or amend it as required to meet our business needs.

MHA recognises that the MC will require support when recruiting the Senior Officer. They will seek support from an independent organisation prior to commencing the recruitment and selection process. The MC will decide who will be involved in the process with the Chair. Any individual serving on a recruitment and selection panel will have undergone relevant recruitment and selection training along with equality and diversity awareness training.

8. ATTRACTING CANDIDATES

MHA understands the importance of attracting suitable candidates through the most appropriate and cost-effective means. The panel should discuss the best internal and external advertising methods in line with the agreed advertising budget. The knowledge and skills required for the job should ensure suitable candidates are attracted to apply for the job and the advert should outline the main details of the post:

- Job title
- Salary/ Grade
- Hours per week
- Location (*indicate if hybrid working forms part of the role*)
- Nature of the contract – permanent, fixed term
- Main duties
- Closing date and proposed interview date
- Information on how to apply and any other relevant information.

8.1 Advertising

Permanent Recruitment

MHA will advertise all permanent posts via a variety of methods:

- Internal advert – this will be in conjunction with another advertising method.
- Specialist recruitment sites demonstrating our commitment to Equal Opportunities.
- MHA's website and social media platforms.

All candidates will receive an application pack that will include the following:

- An application form
- Equal opportunities monitoring form
- Job description and person specification
- Any other relevant information deemed necessary for the post e.g., summary statement of terms and conditions of employment, relevant information about MHA which cannot otherwise be accessed via our website and is relevant to the role.

The only exception to this will be in cases of restructuring or redundancy where it may be necessary to appoint candidates into vacant posts as

alternatives to redundancy rather than advertising the vacant posts. If this situation arises, MHA will seek HR advice on the process.

Temporary Recruitment

Short-term appointments of less than one year (e.g., maternity leave cover), may be advertised internally and filled by a current employee where appropriate or by candidates engaged from suitable employment agencies. Temporary posts more than one year should be advertised internally and externally simultaneously.

Internal Recruitment

All existing staff will be notified of permanent and long-term temporary vacancies. MHA will ensure that those employees on sick leave or any type of other leave are notified and will be eligible to apply for any post advertised.

For very short-term posts of a few weeks, internal advertising will not normally take place as line managers have discretion to seek a temporary candidate from an employment agency if there is no suitable internal candidate identified.

Modern Apprenticeships

Candidates for modern apprenticeships will also be required to submit application documents, which will be subjected to fair shortlisting procedures. Successful shortlisted individuals will be invited to attend an interview, and the most suitable individual/s will be selected.

8.2 Shortlisting

Once the post has closed, shortlisting will take place by the recruitment panel. At least one panel member must possess skills, experience or knowledge most closely related to the post for which candidates are to be shortlisted and interviewed. The individual responsible for the administration of the process will number all applications, remove all personal and equal opportunities information making applications unidentifiable before passing all applications to the recruitment panel.

Each panel member must complete the shortlisting assessment form independently in relation to each candidate. If a panel member can identify a candidate via the information contained in the application form, resulting in a conflict of interest, they should declare this to the other members of the panel then exclude themselves from the panel if the candidate is to be shortlisted. This decision will be made prior to progressing to the next stage and where possible, another person will be appointed to the panel.

Essential criteria will be applied in the first instance to shortlist candidates. Candidates who do not match this will not be called to interview. Candidates who do not possess all the desirable criteria may still be called to interview. However, desirable criteria will only be applied, where there has been a large response to the advert, to reduce fairly the number of candidates called for interview.

The panel will meet collectively after completing their own shortlist and then decide on the final shortlist of candidates for interview. The panel will record their collective reasons for those candidates who have not been shortlisted.

Those candidates shortlisted will be invited to interview. MHA will also contact candidates not shortlisted advising their application will not progress to the next stage. These candidates have the right to request feedback on their application and the reasons for not being shortlisted. Any requested or appropriate, information which has been provided by MHA to a candidate will be made available to all other candidates invited to interview.

8.3 Skills Assessment

As part of the process, MHA may ask candidates to carry out a test/skills assessment. This is not applicable for every role, but the panel will decide what is necessary to determine suitability for the role. (e.g. a practical exercise, management test or presentation to the recruitment panel). Where this is required, candidates will be informed in advance of their interview to allow suitable time to prepare as necessary.

8.4 Interview

Shortlisted candidates will be offered an interview, the process is:

- Each candidate will be asked the same questions, based on the job description and person specification.
- Each candidate will be asked the questions in the same order by the relevant members of the recruitment panel.
- If appropriate candidates will carry out a suitable skills test and/or presentation topic.
- Typically, interviews will be 30-60 minutes duration depending on the nature of the post.
- Each panel member will complete an interview assessment form for each candidate, recording brief notes to assist with panel deliberations upon the conclusion of the interviews.

The panel will decide the Chair the interviews on the day. The Chair will be responsible for:

- Introducing the panel members to candidates.
- Explaining the format of the day, ensuring timings are adhered to.
- Informing candidates about when they should expect to be contacted about the outcome of their interview.
- Completing an overall assessment form combining all panel member scores for each candidate interviewed.
- Ensuring panel members state and document justifiable reasons for the rejection of each unsuccessful candidate.
- All interview paperwork being accurately completed.

Upon conclusion of the interviews, the panel will score each candidate and discuss them in turn to identify if they have an appointable candidate. Where candidates are judged to be equal, they may be called back for a second interview.

8.5 Job Offer

Once the panel has decided, a conditional offer will be issued to the successful candidate subject to the following terms:

- Receipt of two satisfactory references.
- Original qualifications stated on the candidate's application form being verified.
- Proof of eligibility to work in the UK being provided.
- A satisfactory PVG membership/Disclosure Scotland check where appropriate.

Appointment will normally be made at the bottom of the salary scale; otherwise, an appointment will be made on a suitable salary within the scale paying due consideration to a candidate's skills, experience and current job role. The initial offer can be verbal and followed up in writing. The terms of a written contract of employment will be confirmed and issued noting that the conditions must be satisfied before confirmation of the job offer can be issued.

If the job offer is declined, the panel should indicate if the second highest scoring candidate was suitable and may be offered the post subsequently. If there is not a suitable candidate, the recruitment process should be revised, and a rerun of the whole recruitment process should be considered.

Once the job offer has been accepted, the interview outcome should be issued to unsuccessful candidates as soon as possible and within a few days of the interview.

8.6 Feedback

The panel will record their collective reasons for unsuccessful candidates and agree the feedback at the end of the interview process. All candidates will be advised of the outcome and constructive feedback on their interview can also be made available to them, if they desire via telephone.

8.7 Selection Checks

References - MHA will carry out reference checks for the successful candidate only once the verbal offer has been made and the candidate has confirmed that it is suitable to do so. Two references will be required, one from the candidate's current employer and another from a previous employer. These will be requested in writing along with a copy of the job description. This will provide the referees with the knowledge and skills required for the post to allow them to give an informed opinion about the preferred candidate. All references will be checked on return to ensure employment dates match and there is no information which would make the reference unsatisfactory.

Right to Work in the UK - MHA has a responsibility to prevent illegal working therefore we will carry out a right to work check before confirming employment for the successful candidate. This will ensure the candidate is not disqualified from carrying out the work in question by reason of their immigration status. The successful candidate will be informed what is required to satisfy this check.

Disclosure Scotland Criminal Records Checks - The successful candidate will be asked to complete a criminal convictions declaration form. Depending on the

nature of the role, they may also be asked to undergo a PVG/Disclosure Check. If these checks show information arises which the candidate has not disclosed or raises concern with MHA, we will discuss this with the candidate prior to a decision being made about whether the selection check has been satisfied.

Interview Expenses - Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed for non-local journeys in accordance with MHA's Expenses Policy.

9. INDUCTION

MHA staff will welcome a new staff member by providing initial induction training which will be organised by the line manager in advance of the successful candidate taking up post. This will help to settle the new staff member, convey our aims, objectives, policies and procedures thereby encouraging the individual to make a valuable contribution to our work.

10. COMPLAINTS

If a complaint is received about any stage of the recruitment and selection process it should be resolved promptly in the first instance and verbally where appropriate to do so. If the complainant wishes to further pursue the matter, they should be advised to put the complaint in writing and address it to the CEO who will investigate the matter and further liaise with the complainant.

11. EXIT INTERVIEWS

Employees who have resigned from their post will be invited to attend an exit interview prior to their termination date. They will be carried out by a manager who is not the line manager of the departing employee. The purpose of the exit interview is to allow MHA to gain further information about the employee's reason for leaving. It also provides additional information in relation to,

- The employee's perception of MHA in relation to its employment practices.
- Management style and treatment perceived by employees as being unsatisfactory or unfair.
- Identifying reasons for turnover and improvements MHA can make in the future.
- Whether there are any learning points or improvements the organisation can make on the working environment and culture.

12. EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

MHA's is committed to equal opportunities, and we will respond to the different needs and service requirements of individuals, and we will not discriminate against any individual for any reason outlined in Equality & Human Rights Legislation.

For recruitment & selection, equal opportunities are aimed at removing barriers to access and opportunity, with positive results for individuals and MHA. We refer to equality in attracting and selection of candidates, promotion or training in line with our conditions of employment.

MHA's recruitment decisions will be based completely on the merits and abilities of candidates in line with the job description and person specification and no other criteria will be used. To achieve this, equality and diversity practices will be integrated into every stage of the

recruitment and selection process. MHA will ensure that all staff involved in recruitment and selection receive equality and diversity awareness training to ensure there is no discrimination either knowingly or unknowingly by asking any questions which may lead to discrimination. MHA has an equality & diversity policy in place, and we are affiliated to Disability Confident Employer.

As part of MHA's recruitment process, equal opportunities monitoring will be undertaken from any completed equal opportunities forms and reported. MHA will analyse the report to inform future recruitment

12.1 Data Protection/Retention

Candidates will be entitled to access any notes taken during the recruitment process, presuming that they contain personal data which will relate to them. If any candidate asks for access to this information, their enquiry should be directed to the relevant line manager.

- 12.2 All recruitment documentation will be stored confidentially for a period of no more than 6 months. After this time, all documents will be confidentially shredded. The successful candidate's recruitment documentation and all associated paperwork will be kept in a recruitment file and retained in line with our Data Retention Policy.

Special consideration will be given to storing the results of any criminal record check or health questionnaire/medical report. MHA will make a record of all checks and whether the result was or was not satisfactory. The original will then be promptly destroyed. The record will then be stored in accordance with our Data Retention Policy. There may be exceptional circumstances where this information should be kept if it is clearly related to the ongoing employment relationship.

MHA's Employee Privacy Notice outlines how we will process your personal data.

13. DATA COLLECTION

MHA will manage all personal data in accordance with our obligations under the GDPR regulations and the Association's Policy.

14. POLICY MONITORING & REVIEW

The Recruitment & Selection Policy will be reviewed by the Governance Sub-Committee every two years or in line with EVH updates, or as otherwise deemed necessary.