

Internal Audit Report

Recruitment and Selection

02 April 2024

CD2307

Overall Assessment	Reasonable Assurance
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This Internal Audit review is conducted for the City of Edinburgh Council under the auspices of the 2023/24 internal audit plan approved by the Governance, Risk and Best Value Committee in March 2023. The review is designed to help the City of Edinburgh Council assess and refine its internal control environment. It is not designed or intended to be suitable for any other purpose and should not be relied upon for any other purpose. The City of Edinburgh Council accepts no responsibility for any such reliance and disclaims all liability in relation thereto.

The internal audit work and reporting has been performed in line with the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and as a result is not designed or intended to comply with any other auditing standards.

Although there are specific recommendations included in this report to strengthen internal control, it is management’s responsibility to design, implement and maintain an effective control framework, and for the prevention and detection of irregularities and fraud. This is an essential part of the efficient management of the City of Edinburgh Council. Communication of the issues and weaknesses arising from this audit does not absolve management of this responsibility. High and Critical risk findings will be raised with senior management and elected members as appropriate.

Executive Summary

Overall
Assessment

Reasonable
Assurance

Overall opinion and summary of findings

Our review found that there is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place for the recruitment and selection process.

However, the following issues and non-compliances were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited:

- mandatory and regular refresher training should be completed by all recruiting managers prior to taking part in any recruitment process
- managers should consistently follow and comply with recruitment managers guidance and associated processes, standard template documents and authorised lists
- formal recording of redeployment processes in TalentLink is required
- essential qualification requirements should be subject to review prior to posting job vacancies to ensure that they are clear, fair and transparent.

The following improvement actions were also noted:

- more effective checks of approvers and job post codes to authorised lists are required prior to posting job vacancies
- more detailed guidance is needed covering records management and conflicts of interest
- an operational risk register to identify, capture, assess and manage the risks associated with recruitment processes requires to be developed.

Areas of good practice



Our review identified compliance at key stages of the process, for example:

- job descriptions and person specifications were added to vacancy requisitions in all cases, with reasons for all vacancies also recorded
- service directors had approved all vacancy requisitions within TalentLink
- all jobs were subject to open advertising via myjobscotland, and all applications reviewed had been submitted within posting dates
- interview invites reviewed were clear and timely, with a personal approach to notifying unsuccessful candidates, and opportunity to obtain feedback provided
- completion of pre-employment checks was confirmed before unconditional job offers were issued in all cases, with all job offers then issued same day. All processes were completed before employee start dates
- where applicable, salary placement forms had been completed.

The following was also noted:

- good working relationships between the HR recruitment team and recruiting managers
- some managers confirmed that they refreshed their knowledge of guidance at the start of any hiring process. Two managers were prompted to remind colleagues to also undertake refresher training as a result of the audit
- in one area reviewed, pre-recruitment workshop sessions were run on form filling and interview technique in advance of bulk recruitment exercises.

Audit Assessment

Audit Area	Control Design	Control Operation	Findings	Priority Rating
Compliance with recruitment and selection policy and procedures			Finding 1 - Non-compliance with recruitment managers guidance	Medium Priority
			Finding 2 - Effectiveness of HR process checks	Low Priority
			Finding 3 - Fair and transparent processes	Medium Priority
			Finding 4 - Data and records management	Medium Priority
			Finding 5 - Risk management	Low Priority

See Appendix 1 for Control Assessment and Assurance Definitions

Background and scope

This review was included in the audit plan at the request of Governance, Risk and Best Value (GRBV) committee following scrutiny of a 2022 whistleblowing case, which had identified multiple instances of non-compliance with policies and procedures across the recruitment process in a specific service area. Members were seeking assurance that the specific issues raised were not systemic or widespread.

The Council's [recruitment and selection policy](#) aims to ensure fairness and equality of opportunity at all stages of the Council's recruitment and selection process, and to meet the Council's commitment to attract the best candidates and recruit the highest calibre of employees. The policy directs recruiting managers to supporting guidance that must be followed in order to comply with the policy.

Service managers lead the recruitment process with the support of the HR recruitment and onboarding team. The [recruitment manager guide](#) sets out the six steps in the process:

- Approval and advertising
- Shortlist and schedule interviews
- Interview
- Selection
- Pre-employment checks
- Prepare for new start.

All policies, procedures, guidance and template documents to support these steps are accessible via the Orb [HR recruitment and selection home page](#). Prior to commencing a recruitment process, all recruiting managers and recruitment panel members must complete relevant compulsory training modules on [myLearning Hub](#). Following approval to advertise for a vacant post, details of recruitment processes, communications and supporting documents are recorded and managed within the TalentLink system. Progress in completing onboarding pre-employment checks is logged in the Council's askHR system.

Scope

The objective of this audit was to review recruiting managers compliance with specific aspects of the Council's recruitment and selection policy and procedures including review of pre-advertisement requirements, supporting documentation held, recruitment panels, training, advertisement, screening, and pre-employment checks. [For further details, refer to appendix 2.](#)

The audit did not cover all central HR processes; this was a focused review of a sample of appointments across all Directorates in line with the issues raised by the whistleblowing case to ensure that Council policies and procedures were being followed, and that any instances of deviation from standard processes were supported by sufficient levels of authorisation.

Risks and Business Plan Outcomes

The review also provided assurance in relation to the following Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) risks:

- Regulatory and Legislative Compliance
- Workforce
- Financial and Budget Management
- Service Delivery.

[Business Plan Outcomes:](#)

- The Council has the capacity, skills, and resources to deliver our priorities efficiently, effectively and at lower cost.

Limitations of Scope

A review of progress in implementation of recommendations arising from the whistleblowing investigation was not included in scope.

Reporting Date

Testing was undertaken between 30 November 2023 and 13 February 2024. Our audit work concluded on 20 February 2024, and our findings and opinion are based on the conclusion of our work as at that date.

Findings and Management Action Plan

Finding 1 - Non-compliance with recruitment managers' guidance

Finding
Rating

Medium Priority

1. Completion of Recruitment Training E-Learning Modules

Recruitment managers guidance requires all recruiting managers and recruitment panel members to complete two compulsory online modules prior to commencing a recruitment process and sitting on a recruitment panel: Recruitment and Selection Policy Overview, and Unconscious Bias.

- only 5 of 25 managers sampled had completed policy overview e-Learning within the past six years (the period for which records were available), and only 4 of 25 had completed unconscious bias e-Learning in the same period
- most lead recruiting managers stated that they had completed some form of online training, however some recognised that this may have been some time ago and they were unable to confirm dates of completion
- myLearning Hub noted a third compulsory training module for completion which was not outlined in recruitment managers' guidance. Following audit feedback, Hub content has been updated to align with guidance.

The lead recruiting manager is responsible for ensuring that all interview panel members have completed compulsory training before sitting on their panel however, only 2 of 8 lead recruiting managers had checked that other panel members had completed training prior to chairing an interview panel.

The whistleblowing report which prompted this audit recommended that 'All recruitment panel members sign a declaration that they have completed the mandatory recruitment training as part of the recruitment process and before sitting on a panel'. This recommendation was considered by HR but not implemented, with alternative actions as part of a wider policy review noted.

2. Requirement for Vacancy Approval Forms

Recruitment managers' guidance requires a vacancy approval form to be completed prior to vacancies being requisitioned and approved within TalentLink. This form does not have to be added to TalentLink. Jobs are approved in TalentLink on the basis of TalentLink approvals only.

Current practice does not reflect this guidance, as for 6 of 8 cases reviewed, alternative service processes and documents were outlined for pre-TalentLink approval in lieu of this form, for example, service workforce panels or business cases. For some services reviewed where bulk recruitment is required, completion of this form was advised as not being applicable. The vacancy approval form had only been completed for one of 8 cases reviewed.

3. Vacancy job descriptions and person specifications

Job descriptions (JDs) and person specifications (PSs) are added to TalentLink to provide additional information to support job adverts. Current templates are held on the Orb with links from recruitment managers' guidance, and these versions have been in place since 2017/18. JDs only require to be updated where a role has been subject to job evaluation, however, PSs added to TalentLink should be prepared using the current template.

3 of 8 published PSs reviewed reflected older formats and referenced a Council framework no longer in place; 2 of these included broken links to this superseded document

Risks

- **Service Delivery** - recruiting managers and recruitment panel members do not comply with Council policies and procedures in their recruiting role, guidance does not reflect current practice, and person specifications may be published which do not reflect accurate or current information about the job role or the organisation.

Recommendations and Management Action Plan: Non-compliance with recruitment managers' guidance

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Lead Officers	Timeframe
1.1	<p>A corporate communication should be circulated to remind all recruiting managers of their roles and responsibilities, covering the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all recruiting managers must complete all mandatory training prior to undertaking any part in the recruitment process • lead recruiting managers must check that all other panel members have also completed their learning prior to taking any part in the recruitment process, confirmation should be retained as part of the recruitment documentation • all recruiting managers should regularly refresh their knowledge of current processes and guidance in place • all recruiting managers should ensure that person specifications added to TalentLink have been prepared using the current template located in the Orb and linked to recruiting managers' guidance. 	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>HR have recently introduced a quarterly HR deep dive communication for all managers. In response to this audit one of the deep dives will focus on recruitment.</p>	Executive Director of Corporate Services	<p>Service Director, Human Resources</p> <p>Lead HR Consultant, Employee Life Cycle & Reward</p>	31/12/2024
1.2	<p>The corporate communication issued should remind all recruiting managers that they are also actively encouraged to regularly refresh their knowledge of other non-compulsory, but highly recommended topics outlined in recruitment managers' guidance, such as equality, diversity and discrimination learning, to help managers and panel members to understand and support the Council's commitment to creating an equal, diverse and inclusive workplace.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>HR have recently introduced a quarterly HR deep dive communication for all managers. In response to this audit one of the deep dives will focus on recruitment.</p> <p>It should also be noted that all staff are required to undertake Essential Learning on Equalities and Diversity.</p>	Executive Director of Corporate Services	<p>Service Director, Human Resources</p> <p>Lead HR Consultant, Employee Life Cycle & Reward</p>	31/12/2024

1.3	<p>Consideration should be given to adding a statement to TalentLink requiring each job requisitioner / lead recruiting manager to confirm completion of training and confirm checks for other panel members as part of the job set up process.</p>	<p>The Council is currently implementing a new HR and Payroll system which incorporates a recruitment module. The new recruitment system will be launched in 2024/25 and the Council is therefore not investing further resources in developing Talentlink.</p>	Executive Director of Corporate Services	No Action Required	Not Applicable
1.4	<p>The approval section of recruitment managers' guidance, and the associated vacancy approval form and pre-TalentLink approval process, should be reviewed to ensure that they reflect current processes.</p> <p>A decision should be taken to whether the vacancy approval form is still required and if the form is to be retained, managers should be required to add this to TalentLink to evidence compliance with processes.</p>	<p>The primary aim of the vacancy approval form was to give Service Directors sufficient information before approving a vacancy. As identified by the audit team, Service Areas have developed their own assurance processes and as noted in the Good Practice section (Page 3) <i>reasons for all vacancies</i> were added to Talentlink before the vacancy was approved by the appropriate Service Director. The vacancy approval form will continue to be available, but Service Areas will still be able to develop their own assurance process.</p>	Executive Director of Corporate Services	No Action Required	Not Applicable

Finding 2 - Effectiveness of HR process checks

Finding
Rating

Low Priority

1. TalentLink Approval Processes

A recruitment approval list is maintained by HR and held on the Orb, with links from recruitment manager's guidance. This details the names of senior managers within each Directorate with authority to approve vacancies in TalentLink.

A three-step vacancy request approval process in TalentLink requires each request to be approved by an authorised service manager and service director, with HR approval following review of the two directorate approvals.

While all 8 cases reviewed had been subject to service director approval, two had been approved in the first instance by managers not on the current or previous versions of the approvers list:

- one request had been approved by a senior manager who while being a direct report of the service director, and part of a central team who reviews vacancies in their service area, was not included in the authorised list
- one request had been approved in the first instance by a finance manager. While it is understood that finance approval formed part of a previous process, this was not reflected in the authorised list.

2. Position Code Checks

Post titles and job codes need to exist in the iTrent system for vacancies to be posted. Lead recruiting managers are required to enter the full position code into TalentLink as part of the vacancy requisition process and can reference a master list of codes held in the Orb if unsure of this. HR processes require the recruitment team to check that the iTrent position code has been added and is correct prior to posting the vacancy.

For 1 of 8 cases reviewed, a code input for an existing job role in a new team had not been created or added to the posts and positions list prior to the job being advertised. This was identified by the onboarding team in the latter stages of the recruitment process, and a new position code created. While the job role was valid, reliance on retrospective checking could have delayed onboarding.

Risks

- **Governance and Decision Making** - vacancies are advertised that have not been approved.
- **Service Delivery** – retrospective checking could delay onboarding of new employees.

Recommendations and Management Action Plan: Effectiveness of HR process checks

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Lead Officers	Timeframe
2.1	<p>The HR recruitment team should be reminded to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • check all approvers against the authorised list prior to posting any job adverts and challenge the inclusion of any approvers who are not on the current recruitment approvers list before proceeding with the job advert 	<p>As noted by the audit team in the <i>areas of good practice</i> (Page 3) all vacancies were approved by a Service Director. Although the managers guidance will remain the same (2 manager to sign off a vacancy), requests will not be rejected by HR if the appropriate Service/ Executive Director has approved advertising the vacancy.</p>	Executive Director of Corporate Services	No action required	Not Applicable

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> check all post titles and job codes added by job requisitioners prior to posting any job adverts and challenge any codes that are not included in the current recruitment posts and positions list before proceeding with the job advert. 	<p>The assigning of a “Trent Code” is an administrative task and will not delay the overall recruitment time for onboarding a new colleague. The role in question had already been correctly evaluated and the vacancy approval had been signed off by the Executive Director. The risk outlined by audit is noted but no further action is required.</p>			
2.2	<p>Directorates should be reminded to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> regularly review their recruitment approvers and advise HR of any updates as necessary ensure that post and position codes are in place, or have been created for any new roles, prior to commencing a recruitment process. <p>This recommendation should be progressed in line with recommendation 1.1</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>HR have recently introduced a quarterly HR deep dive communication for all managers. In response to this audit one of the deep dives will focus on recruitment.</p>	Executive Director of Corporate Services	Service Director, Human Resources Lead HR Consultant, Employee Life Cycle & Reward	31/12/2024

Finding 3 - Fair and transparent processes

Finding
Rating

Medium
Priority

1. Redeployment Processes

Managers' guidance states that jobs will be advertised on the Orb redeployment vacancies page for a week before being advertised on myjobscotland. There are some exceptions to this, for example, for specialist roles or where it is known that no employee currently redeployed will match a role posted.

Where a job has been added to the redeployment vacancies page, a confirmatory note and dates are entered in a free text comments field in TalentLink. However, confirmation of posting to the redeployment list was only recorded for 2 of 8 vacancies reviewed. As there is no requirement to record reasons for not applying the redeployment process within TalentLink, it was not possible to establish if the 6 other cases were appropriate exceptions or not.

2. Essential Qualifications

Essential qualifications were included in person specifications (PSs) posted for 7 of 8 vacancies reviewed. Evidence of these qualifications was provided to Audit for 3 of these employees. The following was noted for other cases reviewed:

- a successful candidate appointed as part of a bulk recruitment did not hold an essential qualification detailed in the PS, which required the post holder to hold 'or attain' this qualification. The job description (JD) required post holders to commit to securing this within 36 months of appointment. The manager stated that elements of the qualification deemed essential for the role are completed in-house by any new employee before they carry out their role
- for one internal appointment, a manager had not re-checked essential qualifications as they also applied to the employee's previous role. HR colleagues confirmed that this is acceptable, however this is not outlined within managers' guidance
- for one case, evidence was provided for one of two qualifications that were listed in the job profile as essential. It was unclear from the profile if both or only one of the two listed qualifications needed to be held

- for one case, only verbal confirmation was provided that the panel reviewed qualifications
- in one case where the PS did not require any essential qualifications, a desirable qualification noted was included in the associated JD knowledge and skills section as something that the post holder 'should have'.

3. Recruitment Guidance for Conflict of Interest

Recruitment managers' guidance in relation to conflicts of interest notes *'If you're related to an applicant or have a close relationship outside work, you must declare your relationship and take no further part in the selection process'*. It is not clear if this means that panel members should just step back from conducting interviews for which a conflict is identified, or if an alternative panel member should be assigned to all interviews relating to a specific post. HR colleagues confirmed best practice is consistency of panel members and panel questions for all candidates being interviewed where practicable.

Risks

- **Workforce** – colleagues on the redeployment list are not notified of posts prior to being released for open advert and jobs are offered to candidates who do not meet the approved profile for the vacant role / do not meet the necessary qualifications for the role
- **Reputational Risk** – potential candidates are discouraged from applying for Council roles due to a lack of clarity in required qualifications for posts advertised
- **Service Delivery** - lack of clear guidance covering recruitment conflicts could result in inconsistent panel arrangements.

Recommendations and Management Action Plan: Fair and transparent processes

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Lead Officers	Timeframe
3.1	<p>The feasibility of developing drop down lists within TalentLink to formally record the following for all recruitment processes should be explored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> confirmation of whether the redeployment process has been applied or not where relevant, reasons for the process not being applied. <p>If it is not possible to amend the system, then a note should be recorded within Talentlink to record the above for all vacancies.</p>	<p>The Council is currently implementing a new HR and Payroll system which incorporates a recruitment module. The new recruitment system will be launched in 2024/25 and the Council is therefore not investing further resources in developing Talentlink.</p> <p>HR have dedicated colleagues who support the redeployment process and this mitigates the risk identified by Audit. An email will, however, be issued to the recruitment team confirming that they should now update Talentlink for all vacancies.</p>	Executive Director of Corporate Services	<p>Service Director, Human Resources</p> <p>Lead HR Consultant, Employee Life Cycle & Reward</p>	31/07/2024
3.2	<p>Directorates should be requested to review all person specifications prior to posting these to TalentLink to ensure clarity in essential and desirable qualifications outlined, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reviewing any essential qualification not required on starting in a role, and recording these as desirable rather than essential to ensure that the requirement for formal qualifications does not deter or discourage any potential candidates ensuring that all essential qualifications listed in person specifications align to those detailed in the current job description ensuring that where more than one essential qualification is included in person specifications, that it is clear whether one or all of the listed qualifications are required. 	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>HR have recently introduced a quarterly HR deep dive communication for all managers. In response to this audit one of the deep dives will focus on recruitment.</p>	Executive Director of Corporate Services	<p>Service Director, Human Resources</p> <p>Lead HR Consultant, Employee Life Cycle & Reward</p>	31/12/2024

	This recommendation should be progressed in line with recommendation 1.1				
3.3	Consideration should be given to including further detail in managers' guidance outlining the circumstances where evidence of essential qualifications should or should not be checked for internal candidates.	Agreed. The Council is currently implementing a new HR and Payroll system which incorporates a new recruitment module. The new recruitment module will be launched in 2024/25 and prior to its launch a review of all recruitment guidance will take place	Executive Director of Corporate Services	Service Director, Human Resources Lead HR Consultant, Employee Life Cycle & Reward	31/03/2025
3.4	For greater clarity, recruitment guidance covering conflict of interest should be expanded to note that where a conflict is identified for any panel member, they should withdraw from all interviews, in line with best practice that the same panel should interview all candidates in the process (outlining any exceptions, such as bulk recruitment processes).	Agreed. The Council is currently implementing a new HR and Payroll system which incorporates a new recruitment module. The new recruitment module will be launched in 2024/25 and prior to its launch a review of all recruitment guidance will take place	Executive Director of Corporate Services	Service Director, Human Resources Lead HR Consultant, Employee Life Cycle & Reward	31/03/2025

Finding 4 - Data and records management

Finding Rating	Medium Priority
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1. Retention Guidance for Recruitment Records

An interview scoring form template for use by recruiting managers includes guidance on recruitment records retention. This template is the only reference to records management within recruitment managers' guidance and the template is not consistently used by managers.

Consistent feedback from recruiting managers who participated in the audit was that they were unclear of the records retention rules and felt that the guidance could be clearer or more detailed.

Managers' lack of knowledge was evidenced by differing retention periods and trigger dates being applied in practice. In one service area, recruitment documents were being held for a significantly longer retention period, in line with local arrangements. The HR recruitment lead confirmed that there should not be any exceptions to the 6-month retention period in place Council wide.

2. Privacy Issues

For one recruitment process reviewed in Corporate Services, MS Teams interview invites had not been marked as private when sent out, and the names of interviewees included in the title line were accessible to other colleagues in panel member calendars. The Information Governance Manager confirmed that this was a minor reportable breach. The breach has been recorded, and action taken by the service to rectify it.

Risks

- **Regulatory and Legislative Compliance** - recruiting managers and recruitment panel members do not comply with required records management processes and data protection requirements and failure to ensure candidates' details are private.

Recommendations and Management Action Plan: Data and records management

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Lead Officers	Timeframe
4.1	Consideration should be given to adding a section to recruitment managers' guidance to provide greater detail and clarity with respect to records management principles, timescales and trigger dates for disposal of key recruitment documents.	Agreed. The Council is currently implementing a new HR and Payroll system which incorporates a new recruitment module. The new recruitment module will be launched in 2024/25 and prior to its launch a review of all recruitment guidance will take place.	Executive Director of Corporate Services	Service Director, Human Resources Lead HR Consultant, Employee Life Cycle & Reward	31/03/2025
4.2	Updated guidance should be rolled out to all managers via a corporate communication, emphasising best practice, for example, the use of standard templates and the need to securely dispose of any electronic or paper	Agreed. The Council is currently implementing a new HR and Payroll system which incorporates a new recruitment module.	Executive Director of Corporate Services	Service Director, Human Resources Lead HR Consultant,	31/03/2025

	<p>copies of any recruitment documents held out with the TalentLink system.</p> <p>This recommendation should be progressed in line with recommendation 1.1</p>	<p>The new recruitment module will be launched in 2024/25 and prior to its launch a review of all recruitment guidance will take place</p>		<p>Employee Life Cycle & Reward</p>	
4.3	<p>A reminder should be added to recruitment guidance covering the need for recruiting managers to ensure appropriate safeguarding of the privacy of candidates at all stages of the recruitment process, including when online interviews are set up.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The Council's Digital team issue monthly training modules for all colleagues to complete and this include modules on how to handle sensitive information securely. This is the main mitigation to the minor data breach identified in this audit.</p> <p>The Council is currently implementing a new HR and Payroll system which incorporates a new recruitment module. The new recruitment module will be launched in 2024/25 and prior to its launch a review of all recruitment guidance will take place</p>	<p>Executive Director of Corporate Services</p>	<p>Service Director, Human Resources</p> <p>Lead HR Consultant, Employee Life Cycle & Reward</p>	<p>31/03/2025</p>

Finding 5 - Risk Management

Finding Rating	Low Priority
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Effective risk management of recruitment is essential to ensure that risks associated with recruitment are actively monitored, managed, reviewed, and escalated to the appropriate directorate level.

An operational risk register to identify, capture, assess and manage the risks associated with recruitment processes has not been developed for the service. Any risks currently identified are only recorded in the Divisional risk register.

Discussion with the Corporate Risk Team established it is best practice to have risk registers at team, service, division and directorate levels to support effective risk management.





Risks

- **Service Delivery** - risks identified may not be managed, may reoccur and may not be escalated appropriately.

Recommendations and Management Action Plan: Risk Management

Ref.	Recommendation	Agreed Management Action	Action Owner	Lead Officers	Timeframe
5.1	<p>In line with the Council's risk management framework, a risk register should be developed for the recruitment team and maintained on a quarterly basis, ensuring that current and emerging risks are captured, documented, assessed, with mitigating action identified and implemented, and risks escalated to the Directorate and Council's Corporate Leadership Team risk committees where required.</p> <p>In developing the register, the service should consider the issues raised in this report and if required, seek support and advice from the Corporate Risk Team (CRT) and develop the register using the new template in place.</p> <p>A risk workshop should also be arranged with the CRT if required.</p>	<p>As HR is one division/service a single risk register is in place and reviewed regularly by the HR Leadership Team, this approach is in line with the feedback from the Corporate Risk Team.</p> <p>Specific recruitment related risks will be incorporated into this Register which is monitored and reviewed monthly by the HR Leadership Team.</p> <p>The Corporate Risk Team has attended a session with the HR Leadership Team and this is being rolled out to local teams to review all risks.</p>	Executive Director of Corporate Services	Service Director, Human Resources	30/09/2024

Appendix 1 – Control Assessment and Assurance Definitions

Control Assessment Rating		Control Design Adequacy	Control Operation Effectiveness
Well managed		Well-structured design efficiently achieves fit-for purpose control objectives	Controls consistently applied and operating at optimum level of effectiveness.
Generally Satisfactory		Sound design achieves control objectives	Controls consistently applied
Some Improvement Opportunity		Design is generally sound, with some opportunity to introduce control improvements	Conformance generally sound, with some opportunity to enhance level of conformance
Major Improvement Opportunity		Design is not optimum and may put control objectives at risk	Non-conformance may put control objectives at risk
Control Not Tested	N/A	Not applicable for control design assessments	Control not tested, either due to ineffective design or due to design only audit

Overall Assurance Ratings	
Substantial Assurance	A sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Reasonable Assurance	There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Limited Assurance	Significant gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance were identified. Improvement is required to the system of governance, risk management and control to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
No Assurance	Immediate action is required to address fundamental gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance identified. The system of governance, risk management and control is inadequate to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

Finding Priority Ratings	
Advisory	A finding that does not have a risk impact but has been raised to highlight areas of inefficiencies or good practice.
Low Priority	An issue that results in a small impact to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Medium Priority	An issue that results in a moderate impact to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
High Priority	An issue that results in a severe impact to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Critical Priority	An issue that results in a critical impact to the achievement of objectives in the area audited. The issue needs to be resolved as a matter of urgency.

Appendix 2 – Areas of audit focus and control objectives

Audit Area	Control Objectives
<p>Compliance with recruitment and selection policy and procedures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All recruiting managers and recruitment panel members complete all required training prior to commencing recruitment • Vacancy approval processes are completed prior to jobs being advertised • Vacancies are only advertised where there is a post in the organisational structure, with a current job description and an evaluated salary grade • Job descriptions and person specifications posted with the vacancy match agreed profiles for the post • Applications are received and interviews held prior to any candidate being considered for a vacancy • Appropriate panel arrangements are in place to ensure a fair and transparent process, open to all Council colleagues • All relevant pre-employment checks are completed before the successful candidate starts their employment with the Council • Job offers are only made in respect of pre-approved and advertised vacancies, to candidates who meet the necessary qualifications for the post • Appropriate documentation is held to evidence compliance with policies and processes.