

Guidance Notes for Applicants

Thank you for your interest in employment with Fenland District Council. I hope that you find the enclosed information helpful when completing your application.

Fenland District Council's application form is used, as opposed to a curriculum vitae (CV), to ensure that information is presented in a standardised format and that you provide us only with the details we need. This ensures that all applicants are treated fairly and equally.

As the information contained on the Application Form is used during the selection process, it is essential that you complete all sections as fully as possible. If there is not enough space on the form please feel free to continue on a separate sheet of paper. On each extra sheet used please write your name, reference number and the post applied for, together with the section you are answering.

Should any of the sections on the form not apply to you please write N/A.

Please note that due to the high volume of applications we receive we are unable to contact unsuccessful applicants. If you do not hear from us within 3 weeks, please assume that your application has been unsuccessful on this occasion.

The following information is designed to help you complete our Application Form.

DATA PROTECTION

"Fenland District Council is registered with the Data Protection Act 1998 for the purpose of processing personal data in the performance of its legitimate business." Any information held by the Council will be processed in compliance with the principles set out in the Act.

The Council must protect the public funds it holds so any information you provide on this form may be used by the Council to prevent and detect fraud. This information may be shared, for the same purpose, with other organisations, which handle public funds.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Please complete all your personal details on the form. These will be used for equal opportunities monitoring and in case we need to contact you at short notice.

CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

This section requests the details of your current or most recent employment, including voluntary activities. You should:

- ◆ Include your employers name and address.
- ◆ Provide a brief description of the duties and responsibilities held during this work.

Include any duties you consider to be of particular relevance to the position for which you are applying.

- ◆ Provide your current salary or rate of pay per hour.
- ◆ Indicate if you have been previously employed with Fenland District Council and provide the appropriate detail.
- ◆ Include the notice you need to give your employer should you leave.

PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT

Provide details of all previous employment, including that of a voluntary nature. The information should be provided in date order, starting with the most recent. Do not include your current employment in this section.

EDUCATION

- ◆ **School/College/University attended** - give details of secondary education and any further education received, including dates, qualification(s) and grades attained.
- ◆ **Membership of professional bodies or other relevant qualifications** - provide details of the professional bodies to which you belong and any professional qualification(s) relevant to your application.
- ◆ **Details of relevant training courses** - include the details of any relevant short courses or evening classes attended, including dates.

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF APPLICATION

Use this section to provide any other useful information about yourself and to show how you meet the essential criteria of the person specification. You should show:

- ◆ Look at each criteria on the person specification in turn, and fully explain how you meet this criteria.
- ◆ Don't just repeat your career history – explain the skills you have developed.
- ◆ Give examples of how you meet the criteria. For example don't just say that you are good at working in a team, give examples of this, what you brought to the team, what results were achieved through effective team working.
- ◆ The short listing panel will not be able to make assumptions about your skills and abilities. If you don't tell us about them in this section, we won't know!
- ◆ To enable the short listing panel to assess your information effectively, please ensure that this statement is no longer than 4 sides of A4

OTHER INFORMATION

It is important that you complete all of this section.

- ◆ Sickness – indicate here the number of days you have been absent from work due to sickness over the last two years. If you have had no days sick, please indicate this.
- ◆ National Insurance Number – please state your full National Insurance Number here.
- ◆ Work Restriction – indicate here if there are any restrictions on you taking up paid employment in this country. For example a work permit or a working holiday visa.

REFEREES

- ◆ Please provide the details of TWO people, who may be approached for a reference, please include address, telephone number and e-mail where possible.
- ◆ If you are employed, one referee must be connected with your current employment, ie your manager or supervisor.
- ◆ A suitable second referee would be a previous employer, business associate or leader/organiser of a voluntary organisation.
- ◆ If you are a school or college leaver, please give details of a teacher or tutor.
- ◆ Family members, friends or people with whom you have any other significant relationship are not acceptable referees.
- ◆ If you do not wish us to contact either or both of your referees before interview, please indicate by ticking the box next to the name and address.

CANVASSING

- ◆ If you are related to any Councillor or employee of Fenland District Council please give full details.
- ◆ Canvassing of any Councillor or employee directly or indirectly to do with appointment or employment with Fenland District Council shall disqualify your application from this appointment.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

FDC operates an Equality Strategy and is committed to appointing the best candidate, regardless of any factor other than the ability to do the job. The Codes of Practice published by the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Commission for Racial Equality advise employers to monitor the outcome of selection decisions to ensure that unfair discrimination does not occur on any of these grounds within our recruitment and selection process. This information is requested for monitoring purposes only and will be treated as strictly confidential.

This form will be separated from your application and will not be used or seen by those selecting candidates for interview.

An explanation of these categories is given below. You should only select your ancestral origin, not your nationality or place of birth.

Description	Tick	Description	Tick	Description	Tick
<u>White</u>		<u>Black or Black British</u>		Any other Asian background - please specify below**	
British		African		<u>Dual or Multiple Heritage</u>	
Irish		Caribbean		White & Asian	
Romany		Any other Black background - please specify below**		White & Black African	

Irish Traveller		<u>Asian or Asian British</u>		White & Black Caribbean	
Any other White background - please specify below **		Bangladeshi		Any other dual/multiple heritage - please specify below**	
<u>Chinese</u>		Indian			
Chinese		Pakistani		Other Ethnic Origin - please specify below**	

If you are successful at interview, by virtue of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 you will be required to produce documentation to confirm that you are entitled to work in the United Kingdom.

Monitoring of Gender and Marriage

We are monitoring these groups in accordance with the Council's Equal Opportunity Policy 1975 and the Sex Discrimination Acts 1986 and guidance from the Equal Opportunities Commission to ensure that discrimination does not occur on any of these grounds within our recruitment and selection process.

Monitoring of Age

Although, at present, no legislation exists to prevent age discrimination, the Council recognises that your age could potentially be used to discriminate against you. To ensure that this does not occur within our recruitment and selection process we are committed to monitoring the age of applicants and appointees

DISABILITY

Monitoring of People with Disabilities

We are monitoring these groups in accordance with the Council's Equality Strategy and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to ensure that discrimination does not occur on any of these grounds within our recruitment and selection process.

Although there is no longer a requirement for people with a disability to register as disabled, this information will ensure that the Council meets its obligations to all disabled people under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The Act defines a disabled person as anyone who has or has had a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Long-term is defined as an impairment, which has lasted or will last at least 12 months after the first occurrence.

REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS ACT

When applying for this post with FDC you must disclose any convictions/cautions/binds-over or similar, that you have received, including any prosecutions that are pending against you.

Disclosure of criminal convictions will not automatically exclude you from employment with FDC, but we must be made aware of any convictions. Failure to do so could result subsequently in the termination of your contract if you were appointed.

Under the **Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974**, an individual who has had a conviction (or convictions) for an offence may, with certain exceptions, be rehabilitated and allowed to treat the conviction as if it had never occurred. A conviction will become "spent" where the individual has not, after a period of time, committed another serious offence.

Rehabilitation Period

Rehabilitation periods vary depending on the type and length of conviction originally incurred.

Sentence	Rehabilitation Period
1. Imprisonment or corrective training for more than six months but less than thirty months	10 years
2. Cashiering, discharge with ignominy or dismissal with disgrace from HM's Service	10 years
3. Imprisonment for six months or less	7 years
4. Dismissal from HM's Service	7 years
5. Detention in respect of a conviction in Service disciplinary proceedings	5 years
6. Fine or other sentence for which the Act does not provide a different rehabilitation period	5 years

The rehabilitation periods given above may be reduced by half for a person under 17 at the time the sentence was passed.

Where a person is convicted as a young offender, certain other sentences may be passed.

Sentence	Rehabilitation Period
1. Borstal Training	7 years
2. Detention for more than six but less than thirty months passed under s53 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 or s57 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1937	5 years
3. Detention for six months or less under either of those provisions	3 years
4. Order for detention in detention centre made under s4 of the Criminal Justice Act 1961 or under s7 of the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 1963	3 years

There are various other rehabilitation periods as follows:

Sentence	Rehabilitation Period
1. Absolute discharge	6 months
2. Probation: conditional discharge or binding over; fit person orders, supervision orders or care orders under the Children and Young Persons Acts	Until order expires (1 year minimum)
3. Remand home orders, approved school orders and attendance centre orders	1 year after order expires
4. Hospital orders under the Mental Health Acts	2 years after order expires (minimum 5 years from date of conviction)

The rehabilitation period runs from the date of sentencing.

Suspended Sentences

All suspended sentences are treated for the purposes of rehabilitation periods as if they had been put into effect.

Exceptions

A conviction cannot be spent under the Act if it incurred a sentence of more than 2½ years in prison or was a life sentence, preventative detention or their equivalent for young offenders.

CODE OF CONDUCT & DECLARATION

The Council's Employee Code of Conduct specifies the following standards of behaviour that the Council expects from its employees. You must:

- ◆ Tell the truth on your application form and during any interview;
- ◆ Disclose any criminal convictions as previously indicated;
- ◆ Disclose links or membership of any secret society or organisation whose aims may be thought to conflict with Council activities; and
- ◆ Disclose friendships or relationships to Councillors/Council employees.

You will not:

- ◆ Try to get Councillors or Council employees to show you undue favour before or during the selection process; or
- ◆ Conceal any material facts that you should disclose.

Please note that failure to follow the Code of Conduct will disqualify you from appointment, or if appointed, you may be dismissed without notice.

Benefits for Employees

Fenland District Council is committed to ensuring that Fenland develops in a way that retains local values, whilst moving forward and embracing new challenges.

In order that we can deliver an exceptional service to our customers we need a top-class, well motivated team of employees. Everyone who works within the District Council is a valued member of the team and we have developed a range of employee benefits to help us motivate and retain our staff. These include:

FINAL SALARY PENSION & LIFE ASSURANCE

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is a statutory, funded pension scheme. As such it is very secure because its benefits are defined and guaranteed in law. Highlights of the benefits provided by the LGPS are:

- ◆ A tax free lump sum when you retire
- ◆ A guaranteed pension based on your final salary
- ◆ The ability to increase your pension by paying extra contributions

- ◆ A death in service lump sum of two times final pay
- ◆ The index linking of benefits to ensure that they keep pace with inflation

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

We are committed to developing our employees. Our approach is simple, if you are happy doing a good job then that's fine with us, for those who want to develop further, gain relevant skills and progress, we try to encourage you and create an environment where this is possible.

We believe that we learn and develop in many different ways, formal training being just one way. Your manager will work with you to explore learning opportunities whether formal (such as attending a course) or informal (such as shadowing a more experienced colleague) that will support you in doing the best that you can in your new job.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

The Council recognises that every employee has a contribution to make towards the overall success of the Council. To develop this contribution, the Council is committed to a process of reviewing individuals' progress, setting objectives and providing development opportunities. Our appraisal system is called LEAP which stands for Learning, Evaluating and Performance. The Council requires that all staff are given the opportunity to have an annual LEAP discussion. This is an opportunity to look at achievements and to set new objectives for the year ahead. Any training and development needs arising from the new objectives can be discussed and planned for at the same time as the appraisal is carried out. Managers and staff will be invited to briefing sessions for (re)training to enable them to carry out this function successfully.

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Investors in People is a national standard. Accreditation is awarded to organisations that can demonstrate commitment to staff development and can show that systems are in place to enable this to take place. Fenland District Council has achieved accreditation throughout all its services.

FLEXIBLE WORKING

Flexible working enables employees to have a greater degree of control over the pattern of their working hours. Wherever the service allows, all employees should be given the opportunity of flexi time working. In adopting this framework, it is recognised that the service to the public and all our customers and the general level of efficiency is paramount.

FAMILY FRIENDLY LEAVE SCHEMES

Our leave schemes help you plan time out for your home life and personal development:

- ◆ Adoption Leave
- ◆ Maternity Leave

- ◆ Parental Leave
- ◆ Paternity Leave

STAFF HEALTH & WELFARES

Our aim is to provide for the continual overall improvement of our employees' health by means of health-related policies and provisions, including:

- ◆ **Employee Assistance Programme** - Certain employees may need some form of counselling during their life. Depending on the circumstances, this can be provided by line managers, personnel officers or through an external counselling service.
- ◆ **Occupational Health** – Fenland District Council employs the services of the an Occupational Health Nurse who assists employees with any issues related to their health and well being.
- ◆ **Leisure Facilities** - Fenland District Council operates three leisure centres throughout the District, employees are offered corporate membership to use these facilities.
- ◆ **Dignity at Work** - All employees have the right to work in an environment that is safe and to be protected from all forms of abuse, violence and harassment. Fenland District Council is committed to ensuring all employees are treated with dignity and respect.
- ◆ **Equality Strategy** - The Council is an equal opportunities employer. Employees must participate in any mandatory Equal Opportunities training as requested and ensure that they facilitate service delivery to all service users, fairly and without discrimination.