
Report To:	Policy & Resources Committee	Date:	22 March 2016
Report By:	Head of Legal & Property Services	Report No:	RMcG/LP/038/16
Contact Officer:	Rona McGhee	Contact No:	01475 712113
Subject:	Recruitment and Selection Policy – Request by Councillor Jones		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Policy & Resources Committee to consider a request from Councillor Jones.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Councillor Jones has requested that a report be prepared by the Head of Organisational Development, HR & Communications in relation to gender balance in all appointment panels. A copy of the letter from Councillor Jones is attached (**APPENDIX**).

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the Committee consider the request from Councillor Jones.

Rona McGhee
Legal & Property Services

Councillor Vaughan Jones
Ward 4 – Inverclyde South
Municipal Buildings
Greenock
PA15 1LX

Mr. G Malone
Head of Legal & Property Services

Direct Line: 01475 712727
Fax: 01475 712976
Email: vaughan.jones@inverclyde.gov.uk
Our Ref: vj/sc
Your Ref:
Date: 29 February 2016

Dear Gerard

**Recruitment & Selection Policy
Policy & Resources Committee**

Please find attached a copy of my response to Wilma Bain's letter in respect of the above.

I shall be grateful if you would now arrange for a report on this matter to be placed before the next Policy & Resources Committee for discussion.

Yours sincerely

Vaughan Jones
Councillor

Enc.



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Working
Lives**



Councillor Vaughan Jones
Ward 4 - Inverclyde South
Municipal Buildings
Greenock
PA15 1LX

Mrs. W Bain
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

Direct Line: 01475 712727
Fax: 01475 712976
Email: vaughan.jones@inverclyde.gov.uk
Our Ref: vj/sc
Your Ref:
Date: 29 February 2016

Dear Wilma

Recruitment & Selection Policy

Thank you for your letter dated 24 February in respect of the above subject. Although I appreciate your response, I am not satisfied with the terms of your reply.

I am writing separately to the Head of Legal & Property Services to request that this item be placed with its relevant background correspondence on the agenda of the Policy and Resources Committee for its meeting on 22 March.

My request is, in the interest of equalities in the critical area of recruitment and selection of staff, that the Council should strive for gender balance as the priority element in all appointment panels, and for that purpose, a report should be prepared by Steven McNab as Head of Organisational Development and Human Resources to ensure that this can be given effect to in the future.

Yours sincerely

Vaughan Jones
Councillor

Our ref: WB/SMcN

Your ref:

Date: 24 February 2016

**Education, Communities &
Organisational Development**

Corporate Director: Wilma Bain

Municipal Buildings
Clyde Square
Greenock
PA15 1LY

Tel: 01475 712748

Fax: 01475 712731

Wilma.Bain@inverclyde.gov.uk

Councillor Vaughan Jones
Ward 4 Inverclyde South
Municipal Buildings
Greenock
PA15 1LX

Dear Vaughan,

Recruitment and Selection Policy

Thank you for your letter dated 23 February 2016 in respect of above subject.

Firstly, I would like to confirm the current position in relation to the Council's existing Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures which apply to all employee groups, including Chief Officers. The current policy states that in respect of equal opportunities; "every effort should be made to have an appropriate panel composition in relation to the gender of the candidates to be interviewed. It is the Council's policy to make every effort to ensure that interview panels are balanced with at least one male and one female member." This policy assists the Council in meeting its equality objectives and also the requirements set out in the ACAS good practice guides on Recruitment and Equality.

In relation to the composition of the short listing and interview panels selected to appoint the Corporate Director of Education, Communities & Organisational Development, I can confirm that consideration was given to attaining a gender balance of this panel through the potential co-option of a female Chief Officer from a neighbouring authority. However it was not possible to finalise arrangements in respect of this for the agreed interview date.

As part of the Chief Officers recruitment process, candidates are asked to deliver a presentation and respond to questions from a group of approximately 20 of their peers. In respect of the recruitment to the Directors post which you have highlighted I can confirm that 11 members (58%) of the peer panel were female and 8 members (42%) were male. All candidates are evaluated by individual members of the peer group as part of the recruitment process and this information is used to inform the selection of the successful candidate.

The Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures are currently under review and discussions are being progressed with the recognised trade unions to ensure our policy continues to meet all legislative requirements and reflects best practice. As part of this review I would be happy to ensure that your proposal to consider female officers and elected members, internally or from an outside resource, as panel members is appropriately considered. This would emphasise the Council's commitment to strive to achieve a gender balance on all interview panels.

I trust this is helpful in clarifying the current position and identifying a suitable way forward but would be happy to discuss this further with you if you wish.

Yours sincerely,

Wilma Bain
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

Councillor Vaughan Jones
Ward 4 – Inverclyde South
Municipal Buildings
Greenock
PA15 1LX

Inverclyde
council

Mr. G Malone
Head of Legal & Property Services

Direct Line: 01475 712727
Fax: 01475 712976
Email: vaughan.jones@inverclyde.gov.uk
Our Ref: vj/sc
Your Ref:
Date: 23 February 2016

Dear Gerard

It recently came to my attention that the composition of the short-listing and interview panels selected to appoint the current Director of Education and Communities for Inverclyde Council was entirely male. I found this surprising and disappointing, as it is my understanding that Inverclyde Council would strive to ensure that recruitment is perceived as a gender-neutral process, thereby removing the possibility of any unintended gender bias.

It is my concern that this practice, if repeated, could lead to the Council's recruitment process being exposed to accusations of gender bias. Unconscious bias is understood to affect the decision of interview panels and this can be addressed through diversifying the profile of interview panels. A gender balance is good for governance and leads to better decision-making. At present does the composition of short-listing and interview panels within Inverclyde Council meet equality objectives?

In the light of this, I would like a proposal to go to Policy and Resources Committee to request that a report be developed to ensure that in future, Inverclyde Council would strive to achieve a gender balance on the short-listing and interview panels for the appointment of all Chief Officers, whenever possible, by the co-option of female Officers and Elected Members selected internally or from an outside resource where necessary in order to promote equality of opportunity within the Council and remove any possibility of unintended gender bias.

I am aware that at present, men outnumber women within the Corporate Management Team and that this is also the case with Elected Members. I wish to stress that I hope that this policy would be applied in the reverse should it ever be the case that the number of females outnumber males.

Thus, the focus of my proposal is the composition of a gender balanced interview panel in the recruitment of Chief Officers. This is important because although the number of female employees within the Council far exceeds those of male employees, the top five percent of earners within the Council do not correspond to the gender balance across the Council. However, in the interests of fairness it would be my expectation that this policy be also applied in the recruitment process throughout the Council and a gender balance sought on panels at every level whenever possible.

Yours sincerely

Vaughan Jones
Councillor

