

# **South Oxford Community Association Staff Recruitment and Employment Policy (for paid staff or unpaid regular volunteers)**

## **Introduction:**

This document is a statement of how South Oxford Community Association recruits its staff. SOCA sets out to have an effective and consistent strategy for recruiting staff, and to ensure that the process involved is fair, transparent and non-discriminatory.

## **1. Equal Opportunities**

All aspects of the staff recruitment process will comply with South Oxford Community Association's Equality and Diversity Policy. This seeks to comply with the relevant legislation and avoid unfair discrimination.

## **2. Advertising vacancies**

South Oxford Community Association uses a range of strategies and publications for advertising vacancies. SOCA tries to achieve a balance by publicising vacancies locally in the immediate neighbourhood and in publications which are likely to reach potential applicants throughout Oxford / Oxfordshire.

Local publicity may include the following

- Publicity in various key places in the locality (notice-boards in / outside the Community Centre, GP surgery, shops etc)
- Publicity in the SOCA newsletter, web-site and face book page

Wider publicity may include the following:

- Advertisements in *The Oxford Times* and *The Oxford Mail*
- Advertisements in *Daily Information*
- Use of internal City Council and County Council vacancy bulletins (inc websites and intranets)

The precise balance of publicity will vary from post to post depending on the nature of the post, the timescale involved, the requirements of funders and the cost of advertising.

## **3. Application forms**

Applicants for paid employment with South Oxford Community Association are required to complete and sign a written application form. A similar form is available for applicants wishing to undertake regular voluntary work for the Community Association.

## **4. Person specification**

A written person specification will be drawn up in respect of each post advertised. Details of this person specification will be sent out to applicants along with the application.

## **5. Job description**

A written job description will be drawn up in respect of each post advertised. Details of this job description will be sent out to applicants along with the application and will form part of the terms and conditions of employment for the successful candidate.

## **6. Short-listing and interviewing**

This process is the responsibility of the SOCA management committee. The recruitment process must be undertaken by a minimum of two people of whom at least one must be a SOCA Committee member. It will have an appropriate balance of Committee members, staff and, if appropriate, representatives of partnership agencies. One member of the panel will chair the interviewing process. The SOCA Committee will appoint the recruitment panel.

All application forms received by the relevant deadline will be considered for short-listing. Candidates will be short-listed for interview according to their suitability for the post as assessed in relation to the relevant job description and person specification.

Candidates who have been short-listed for interview will be given reasonable notice of the date, time and venue for interviews.

The interviewing panel will draw up a standard list of questions that will be put to each candidate. Interviewees' suitability for the post will be assessed on their performance in interview, together with the information contained in their application forms, and the content of references etc. As with the short-listing process, a candidate's suitability for the post will be considered in conjunction with the job description and person specification.

The interview panel will notify the successful candidate as soon as possible, and arrange for further checks and references to be taken up (see below). Candidates who have not been successful will also be notified as soon as possible, and offered the opportunity to discuss the reasons why their application was unsuccessful.

## **7. References**

Every applicant for employment (paid or voluntary) will be required to provide details of two referees (usually on the standard application form), including their current / most recent employer. SOCA will always take up written references and ensure that these are satisfactory before a formal appointment is made.

## **8. Qualifications**

Applicants must provide documentary evidence of qualifications upon request.

## **9. Entitlement to work**

SOCA has a legal obligation to ensure that staff are entitled to work in the UK. The SOCA management committee will require documentary evidence of identity, nationality, residency and 'right to work' status before an applicant can be formally appointed.

## **10. DBS checks**

SOCA takes very seriously the need for Criminal Record Bureau checks, in order to protect children and vulnerable adults. Where appropriate, applicants are informed at application that an enhanced DBS will be required as part of the post, and will be asked to complete a self-disclosure form as part of the application. The checking process will be carried out once a formal offer of employment is made and this will require an applicant to provide such personal details and evidence of ID, address etc. as are necessary to complete the check. If the post involves significant contact with children or vulnerable adults, SOCA will request an enhanced disclosure.

## **11. Employment of ex-offenders**

SOCA aims to balance the various needs of people involved with South Oxford Community Centre. Whilst taking into account the needs of ex-offenders seeking voluntary or paid employment, South Oxford Community Association has to balance these with the needs, safety and well-being of other staff and the users of the Centre, many of whom are children and young people. Achieving this balance includes a duty of care and a commitment to our Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar applicants from working with us, but any offer of employment, whether paid or voluntary, will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of candidates' offences.

### **12. Induction, development and support**

SOCA will endeavor to provide appropriate induction, development and support for its staff. This will take the form of 'on the job' induction and support from other staff and members of the SOCA Committee and (where relevant and affordable) external training. Training will be provided as necessary for tasks to be carried out well and safely. Where possible opportunities will be provided for further training e.g. fire safety training or food hygiene as relevant to the post.

### **13. Contracts**

All paid employees with SOCA will receive a formal letter of employment and a written contract. These will specify the hours to be worked, the rate of pay, the period of notice, and other relevant information. It will also name the person who is responsible for supervision and support. The contract will also refer to various policies, including the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults and Health and Safety policies, with which all employees are expected to comply during the course of their work. In addition, the contract will specify the length of probationary period relevant to the post.

### **14. Probationary Period**

**All new employees will be expected to satisfactorily complete a probationary period of work of no less than 3 months.**

### **15. Review of Conditions of Service**

Conditions of Service will be reviewed annually with support from Oxford City Council HR and / or Community Matters / "Community" magazine (as appropriate), with a view to keeping up to date with changes in employment law and practice.

This Policy was adopted by Committee on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2009 and reviewed on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2010; amended and reviewed on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2013; reviewed July 2015; reviewed 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016

**Signed on behalf of SOCA Committee:**

**Title: Chairperson BOB PRICE**

**Date: 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016**