Service Level Agreement

between

*LHT Group Ltd.*

and

*Beechwood & Ballantyne Community Housing Association*

for the provision of
HR Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement No :</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issue No :</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective From :</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latest Review Date :</td>
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</table>

Signed on behalf of the LHT Group Ltd and Beechwood & Ballantyne Community Housing Association:

**LHT Group Ltd......................... date ...............**

Job Title ............................ date ...............

**B&BCHA .............................. date ...............**

Job Title ............................ date ...............
Scope

This Service Level Agreement (SLA) records the commitment made by the LHT Group Ltd for the provision of services detailed in the Service Schedules attached to this agreement.

The agreement will remain valid for a period of five years with a two year notice period. Intermediate reviews during this time period will be undertaken as part of the quarterly service review meetings.

Overview of Services

The following gives an overview of the Human Resources (HR) services provided by the LHT Group Ltd

* _Professional advice and support on HR issues_

  * Dealing with day to day management and staff enquiries on HR matters
  * Monthly meetings with managers on HR issues
  * Production of HR newsletter for managers and staff on changes that will affect them e.g. Employment law, Best Practice

* _Payroll management_

  * Payment of staff wages on the agreed date
  * Processing of payroll documentation for all staff
  * Dealing with all associated payroll enquiries

* _Management of Recruitment and Selection process_

  * Guidance and support on recruitment and selection process
* Design and placement of adverts in conjunction with recruiting manager
* Responsibility for recruitment and selection administration, including the sending out of all recruitment material and the arrangement of interviews

**Training and Development**

* Provision of requested training for all staff where feasible
* Briefings for managers on Group HR policies and procedures
* Dealing with training enquiries from staff
* Inclusion of BBCHA representative on training steering group

**Legal Advice**

* Specialist advice on employment law issues eg TUPE, Employment Tribunals

**Health and Safety**

* Provision of Health & Safety advice and support
* Intermediary for LHT’s Health & Safety advisors

**Competency and Performance Development (CPD) Process**

* Advice and guidance for managers and staff on CPD process
* Audit of staff to ensure CPD’s are carried out
* Provision of staff competency levels to managers

**Employee Relations**

* Assist Chief Officer in the establishment of a management/union partnership
* Professional advice and guidance on employment relations issues
* Dealing with all recognised union representatives as and when required

**Personnel Management**

* Holding of all employee personal files
* Maintenance of employee information both manual and computerised

**Production of Management Reports**

* Provision of management information reports upon request eg staffing levels, salaries.

**Sickness Absence**

* Management of sickness/absence process
* Guidance and support to managers and staff
* Dealing with sickness/absence enquiries
Sickness and Labour Turnover Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s)

* Provision of monthly sickness and turnover KPI’s
* Dealing with associated KPI enquiries

Occupational Health and Staff Welfare

* Arrangement of occupational health appointments
* Facilitation of staff counselling service
* Guidance and support to managers and staff

Overall Responsibilities

The LHT Group Ltd is responsible for all the services outlined in the Overview of Services above. It will endeavour to keep BBCHA informed of progress at all times.

BBCHA is responsible for looking after all HR provided equipment and must abide by the guidance given by the LHT Group Ltd. It is expected that BBCHA will give as much notice of any problems or requests to allow the work to be planned into the LHT Group Ltd. HR Resource Plans.

LHT Group Ltd Responsibilities

Request Management

Problem Requests

The LHT Group Ltd. HR Team is provided as the point of contact for any service requests during normal working hours which are:

Monday to Friday : 9.00 am to 5.00 pm

(these times excludes Bank Holidays)

A voicemail service will record service requests during silent hours.

The LHT Group Ltd. HR Team will endeavour to resolve problems immediately over the phone if possible. If it cannot, then a timescale for dealing with the problem will be agreed by the member of the HR team and BBCHA.

Any problem which has not, or is not being resolved to the complete satisfaction of BBCHA should be escalated by them, initially to the HR Officer and then to the HR Manager, if necessary.

HR Training Resources

BBCHA may wish to avail themselves of the various training and HR resources kept by HR at some stage to assist them in their normal duties. These can be accessed through any member of the HR team.
Use of Training Suite

BBCHA may wish to use the 4th floor training suite at LHT’s Head Office which should be booked via a member of the HR team.

Service Availability

The availability of service personnel is the HR team. Their hours of availability excludes Public Holidays and are subject to the usual constraints of staff sickness and leave. However, the aim is to provide a service between:

Monday to Friday :- 9.00 am to 5.00 pm

Management of Service Level Agreement (SLA)

The LHT Group Ltd will monitor and report performance against levels of services delivered. Where a failure to meet requirements has occurred, preventative action will be taken to ensure no recurrences.

Service Level Reviews will be held quarterly, or at the request of either party. The meeting will comprise of representatives from the HR Team and the Customer. The following subjects will be discussed:

* review performance against SLA Service Standards and budget (the HR Team will provide the report)
* review service related problems and identify service trends
* review current workload and priorities
* discuss future trends and planned requirements

Disaster Recovery

The LHT Group Ltd. has a formal disaster recovery plan. In the event of a major disaster, the HR Team will endeavour to provide an emergency service to critical areas of the business. The HR Team will liaise with BBCHA during the disaster recovery period.

Security

BBCHA is responsible for ensuring that they comply with the requirements of the BBCHA ”Code of Conduct” and the various LHT Group Ltd. HR Policies and Procedures.

Training

BBCHA HR training is arranged through the The LHT Group Ltd. HR Team.
Quality

The LHT Group Ltd. HR Team is committed to providing a range of services, that as a minimum, satisfy quality standards and the needs of BBCHA. The management system has been designed to comply with the conditions of the RSL. It is continually reviewed in order to maximise quality and efficiency and is regularly audited by approved bodies.

Beechwood & Ballantyne Community Housing Association Responsibilities

As part of this agreement, BBCHA is responsible for:

* following Group HR policies and procedures and the agreed timescales therein
* adhering to the recommended timescales of the LHT Group Recruitment & Selection Guide (see Appendix 1)
* submitting payroll documentation to the HR team by the required date to be advised by the HR Assistant
* any consequences of not following correct advice given by by the HR team
* raising all HR related enquiries through the LHT Group Ltd.HR Team
* giving the LHT Group Ltd. HR Team as much notice as possible for new work to enable resources to be allocated appropriately

HR Team Responsibilities

As part of this agreement the HR team will provide:

* accurate and timely information
* accurate processing of payroll information
* rapid response to staff enquiries within agreed timescales
Appendix 1

LHT GROUP

RECRUITMENT & SELECTION GUIDE
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INTRODUCTION

This section is intended as a practical guide to the process of recruitment and selection. Its main purpose is to provide practical advice and guidance to those involved in the recruitment and selection of staff in LHT Group.
For the group, recruiting the right people is a crucial first step in establishing and developing an efficient organisation. The line managers as well as the H.R Team, have a part to play in the recruitment and selection process and should undergo coaching to enable them to carry out their role effectively.

Careful analysis of the job to be done, and of the competencies required to do it, is essential if the best candidates are to be selected.

Having selected the best candidate for the job, the next stage is to ensure that the new recruit is successfully integrated into LHT Group through a well planned induction.

Induction need not be an elaborate exercise but it must be thought out in advance, carried out with care and evaluated to ensure employee’s needs are being met. The benefits of a well planned induction programme are a more settled employee, lower labour turnover, an effective and quicker response to training, and improved employee relations.
LHT Group Recruitment and Selection Policy

Policy Aims
The aim of this Policy is to promote and ensure best practice in all aspects of the Recruitment and Selection Process within LHT Group. In addition, this policy aims to enable LHT Group to attract and retain high quality candidates, regardless of market or demographic conditions.

Policy Coverage
This policy applies to all our staff, full-time and part-time, and to potential candidates, both internal and external.

Advertising Code of Practice
We will ensure that our recruitment advertisements reflect the reality of LHT Group, the role, responsibilities and terms and conditions.

Selection Methods
We are committed to using selection methods which give every candidate the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. All selection methods will be based on selection criteria outlined in the core competencies and on the candidates skills, knowledge and experience as demonstrated on their application form.

Commitment to training for Recruiters
Our recruiters will be coached in recruitment and selection skills and techniques. Only these staff will carry out interviewing and testing of candidates.

Commitment to Equal Opportunities
At all times we will encourage applications from all qualified candidates. We have an Equal Opportunities Policy in place to ensure that this happens. We have a commitment to interview all disabled candidates that meet the minimum criteria of the job competencies.

Quality Standards
All candidates who return completed application forms will be notified if they have been shortlisted or not within two weeks of the closing date. Candidates will be informed of the outcome of the process within one week of the selection interviews.

Induction Promise
We guarantee to provide any new employee (or internal transferee) with the training and development they need in order to be able to carry out their job effectively.

Point of contact
Any queries about this policy should be directed to Colin Gibson, Human Resources Manager.

18/7/01
THE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS
NEED TO RECRUIT

DEVELOP/REDEFINE ROLE PROFILE
(including key skills & experience)

ADVERTISE

SHORTLIST

INTERVIEW

DECISION

OFFER

TAKE/CHECK REFERENCES

MONITORING & EVALUATION

INDUCTION
**Equal Opportunities**

**Policy Aims**
LHT Group is committed to being an Equal Opportunities employer. We aim to provide a working environment which respects and protects everyone’s dignity and is free from direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation on grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, disability, marital status, hours of work, sexual orientation, age or religion. By providing equality of opportunity we contribute significantly to achieving LHT Group’s objectives more efficiently and effectively.

When drawing up the role profile you should concentrate on the competencies contained in the Competency Framework and the skills and experience required.

**Shortlisting**
Shortlisting criteria must be:
- justifiable in terms of the post
- clear to all applicants
- applied equally to each applicant throughout the whole process.
- carried out by interview panel members

**Interviewing**
We will look for clear evidence that the applicant satisfies all the specific competencies and has the skills and experience necessary to do the job effectively. To avoid accusations of bias or discrimination you must keep a record of the questions asked and the marks awarded and tick boxes used to demonstrate that the candidate has met the criteria, as you may have to explain our reasons for the non-selection of a particular candidate. If you cannot give a satisfactory explanation, an inference of discrimination may be drawn.
1. PREPARATION

1.1. Planning

Having a skilled and motivated team plays a crucial role in ensuring LHT Group’s future success. Finding the right people can result in reduced staff turnover, improved team and organisational effectiveness and ultimately in achieving our goals.

With so much at stake, choosing the right person shouldn’t be left to chance or to intuition. Instead, it needs careful management and the application of key recruitment and selection skills. We have a structured selection process to follow, this can be seen in the form of a flow chart (see chart 1).

Managers are encouraged to take a fresh look at roles when vacancies occur. This is to ensure that there is a continual check on whether roles are needed in their current form, and how they need to change. Think about whether you need to recruit. The role as it previously existed may no longer be needed, or could perhaps be absorbed into other role.

 đồng ý Remember, poor recruitment decisions can result in unnecessary:

- Administrative costs
- Replacement costs
- Induction costs
- Impact on existing employees
- Impact on public relations

Our recruitment process needs to be designed with the Four Es in mind, namely it needs to be:

**EFFECTIVE**
Our recruitment process is only effective if it produces the right person - that is the person with the skills, competencies, knowledge and personal attributes needed to carry out the job. It is also important that this person is available at the right time - when you need them.

**EFFICIENT**
Our process should encourage the use of the most cost-effective selection methods, not only in terms of money, but also in terms of management time and effort.

**EQUITABLE**
It is vitally important that our selection process is fair and legal - maintaining a good reputation both inside and outside the organisation and reflecting current employment legislation.

**ENDURING**
Finally, our recruitment process needs to be consistent over time and across the organisation.
1.2. Questions To Be Asked When A Vacancy Occurs

All vacancies should be seen as opportunities. It is a chance to reconsider the workload and allocation of roles within a department. It may also provide an opportunity for promotion, role enlargement, or giving someone a sideways move to obtain useful and additional skills.

Some of the questions to be considered when recruiting are as follows:

**Why has the vacancy occurred?**

The answer may be as simple as promotion, leaving LHT Group or retirement. However, if there has been a high degree of turnover in this particular role or in the department as a whole, it may be worth asking whether there is something about the nature of the role or its responsibilities or the style or supervision which has been contributing to this turnover.

**Is the position still necessary?**

Line managers are often reluctant to relinquish a post but it is always worth considering whether the money and other resources saved by not recruiting for a particular position and allocating duties elsewhere might be more effective for the benefit of the organisation.

**Will you be able to recruit to the position?**

This is a question which should be asked particularly about new positions or posts which have been extensively revised or re-designed. It is not unusual when a new position is created for everybody in the department to take the opportunity to offload the more unpleasant parts of their job onto the role profile for the new post, thus creating a vacancy for which it is impossible to attract applicants.

**Can the vacancy be used to accommodate an employee redundant elsewhere; to provide easier work for an employee approaching retirement or in failing health; as an opportunity for promoting someone; or as a training position?**

A vacancy in one department may often provide an opportunity for the relocation of someone in another department to the mutual benefit of both.

**Would it be better to fill the vacancy internally or externally?**

Vacancies can be advertised internally first. If a suitable field is not found then they can be advertised externally.


1.3. Role Profiles

The role profile should contain the following:
* purpose of the role
* competencies from the Competency Framework
* job dimensions
* key skills and experience

Since a clear role profile will form the foundation for effective recruitment and selection, it is important that the development of the role profile is robust.

Roles need to be much more flexibly defined, representing a balance between the needs of the business and the capability of the individual.

When drawing up or reviewing a role profile, please check to see if the documentation already exists (see table 1). Any new role profiles need the salary to be agreed by the Role Evaluation Panel.

1.4. Competence Based Selection

LHT Group use competencies when recruiting. This aims to ensure that we select the right people for the job, cost effectively and in line with our Equal Opportunities Policy and best practice.

The competencies we use are grouped into the following areas and can be found in the Competency Framework:

* People/Money Management
* Leadership and Team Working
* Communication and People Skills
* Strategy and Service Delivery
* Analysis, Problem Solving and Process Improvement
* Customer Care & Other Stakeholder Focus

The competencies are broken down into different levels for each job.

1.5. Benefits of Competence Based Selection

The key benefits are:

An objective process with clear standards, which enables people to be appointed to the right jobs. This will allow us to make best use of the skills of our people and lead to improved performance.

Open and fair competition for jobs in the same and different pay bands, with selection based on the competence to perform the role in question.

The ability to justify selection decisions to applicants.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITUATION</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>TIME SCALE</th>
<th>WHO</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A need to recruit a new staff member arises</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter decides on time scales of process based on projected start date of new applicant.</td>
<td>Approx. 3 months for most posts and up to 6 months for a senior managerial post (to allow for advertising, interview etc.)</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw up competencies</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter checks to see if there are existing competencies or if a new post, contacts HR Manager for assistance in drawing some up.</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter if existing. HR &amp; Manager/Recruiter if new post.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draw up or review an existing role profile</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter checks to see if documentation exists and if it needs amending.</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>HR &amp; Manager/Recruiter if new post.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set salary rates</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter discuss salary level for the job with the HR Team, based on LHT Group’s salary structure and role accountabilities. If it is a new post then it must be formally evaluated to decide on salary level.</td>
<td>At the point when the job is to be advertised (need to allow at least 4-6 weeks for external applications and interviews that are advertised in the press).</td>
<td>HR &amp; Manager/Recruiter if new post.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. ADVERTISING

2.1. Internal and External Advertising

Vacancies can be advertised both internally and externally unless there has been a prior arrangement not to do so. All managers should consider the option to advertise posts internally first, where a field exists, to allow lateral or upward progression of its own staff (see table 2).

2.2. Priority Groups

Some people have priority of consideration, because of their statutory rights or commitments that have been made to them. They are:

- People who have been declared vulnerable to redundancy
- People returning from maternity leave
- People returning from career breaks
- Staff returning from secondment

It may be possible to consider priority groups whilst the advert is being circulated. People from priority groups MUST BE CONSIDERED FIRST.

2.3. Writing the Adverts

The recruiting manager may use the central database of adverts available on the group drive, where appropriate to assist with draft of adverts.

2.4. Recruitment Advertising Procedure

In addition to the wording, there are guidelines on placing the advert that you should follow to ensure applicants with the right capabilities are attracted.

Managers should forward their recruitment advertisement, in the draft format, to the HR Officer together with the Recruitment Authority Form and any necessary background information that is required within the Recruitment Packs.

The Communications team will then produce the necessary artwork and place the advertisement. **Adverts will only be placed after the Recruiting Manager has approved the finished advert.**

2.5. Advertising Media

We place our advertisements with the media directly. All posts must be advertised using the template in the Style Guide to help promote the corporate image of LHT Group.

The majority of our adverts are placed in the Liverpool Echo on a Thursday but they can be placed wherever required, e.g. national press or trade journals. For a standard advert (i.e. 8cm x 4cm) the following costs apply:

* Liverpool Echo £1815
* Guardian £2151 all prices are inclusive of VAT
* Inside Housing £1559
All our advertisements are circulated to a range of community groups, job centres and other organisations by the Communications team. Agencies may be used in exceptional circumstances.

### 2.6. Deadlines

To ensure that the Communications team has adequate time to prepare and despatch the adverts, they must reach them by midday on Thursday the week before the proposed publication date.

#### Table 2. ADVERTISING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITUATION</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>TIME SCALE</th>
<th>WHO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consider advertising internally</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter to draft an advert.</td>
<td>If there is a strong internal field, a job may not be advertised externally.</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter to draft advertisement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pass the draft advert and the Recruitment Authority Form to Communications Officer for processing.</td>
<td>In this case recruitment can happen closer to the ‘in post’ date. (Remember to consider release dates for internal staff who will be committed to project deadlines)</td>
<td>Comm. Officer to prepare final copy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(All managers should consider advertising internally first, where a field exists to allow lateral or upward progression of LHT GROUP’s own staff)</td>
<td>Communications Officer to prepare final copy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comm. Team to post advertisement in all LHT GROUP offices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising externally</td>
<td>Compose draft advert. (The format is a standing one - please liaise with Comm. Officer for guidance)</td>
<td>Seek advice from Communications team - each publication has a different deadline and different rates.</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter and Communications team.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adverts must contain:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- An overview of the role and the group</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Post Title</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Salary (see HR before setting salary)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Details of how to apply</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Deadlines for applicants</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Deadlines for applicants</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Booking the advert with Communications team</td>
<td>Pass advert to Communications team together with Recruitment Authority Form. Communications team will handle the placing process and advise recruiting manager of the costs.</td>
<td>Same time as writing advert</td>
<td>Manager/recruiter and Communications team.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. APPLICATION

3.1. Employment Application Form

The employment application form will usually be used for any job advertised. However in specialist areas where recruitment is difficult or for managerial positions it may be more cost effective to use C.V.’s

Notes for completion of the application form should be sent to all applicants for guidance. In addition all candidates should receive relevant competencies, a Role Profile, an Equal Opportunities Statement, an organisational chart and information about LHT Group.(see table 3 for full list) This information is also available on the LHT Group website.

Competency questions can be used in the following ways;
* only for shortlisted candidates
* for all applicants
* for all those who return a completed application form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITUATION</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>TIME SCALE</th>
<th>WHO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draw together an</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter (and HR, if required) draw up written questions for</td>
<td>To be ready for the day the advertisement is</td>
<td>HR Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>application pack</td>
<td>the applicant to demonstrate prior knowledge and competence.</td>
<td>posted or published.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Application packs must contain:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Covering Letter</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Equal Opps Policy Statement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LHT Group application form</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Organisational chart</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Background info. on LHT Group</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competence based questions Relevant to the post (if required)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructions on completing competence based questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Guidance for applicants”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue application</td>
<td>HR Staff to number each application form and Equal Opportunities</td>
<td>As enquiries are made.</td>
<td>HR Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>packs</td>
<td>Monitoring Form. Complete Applications Log.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Record:</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Address details</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Origin of enquiry, if given, for analysis.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
4. SHORT LISTING

4.1. The Panel
A panel should be formed to produce a shortlist and carry out interviews. The size and composition of the panel may to some extent be dependant on the role under consideration but this should be discussed with the HR Manager. However it should never include less than two people and is unlikely to include more than three. The HR Manager will be part of most panels, resources permitting. It is essential that all of the panel be coached in the skills involved in these procedures and in the relevant Equal Opportunities Legislation.

The panel should meet to go through all the applications. Any differences will be discussed and by consensus the panel will arrive at an agreed list to be interviewed.

The size of the short list will have to be arranged by the panel as different sizes will be suitable for different jobs.

4.2. Shortlisting
Using the criteria laid out in the application form, shortlist only those applicants who meet all the previously agreed requirements/competencies. If there are still too many applicants to interview, select those with the greatest number (or the most important) of the ‘desirable’ requirements.

Acknowledge replies quickly and keep candidates updated (see table 4); some selection processes can take several weeks from start to finish, and it reflects negatively on LHT Group if you leave candidates without information/feedback for long periods.

Table 4. SHORT LISTING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITUATION</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>TIME SCALE</th>
<th>WHO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draw together shortlisting/</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter needs to assemble 2-3</td>
<td>With enough time to allow the panel to meet</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter to invite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interview panel</td>
<td>panel members - all must have been coached</td>
<td>to discuss roles.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in the interview process and should</td>
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<td></td>
<td>include the HR Officer, resources permitting.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sift applicants / score</td>
<td>Panel to consider the information on the</td>
<td>Immediately after closing date.</td>
<td>Panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>application form</td>
<td>application form and score the content of</td>
<td></td>
<td>Scoring sheets available on the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the form.</td>
<td></td>
<td>drive under Recruitment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respond to unsuccessful</td>
<td>If an applicant is deemed unsuitable for</td>
<td>As soon as the decision is made not to</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter or HR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>applicants</td>
<td>interview, this should be used as an</td>
<td>interview.</td>
<td>With training &amp; development advice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>opportunity to provide feedback if</td>
<td></td>
<td>from HR if necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>requested,.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The HR team will offer advice and support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>if required</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. INTERVIEWING/MAKING A DECISION

5.1. Equal Opportunities
Care needs to be taken in the interview regarding the choice of questions and consistency of questions. It is an effective interviewing technique to maintain consistent questions and this can be particularly helpful in avoiding accusations of discrimination.

Equal Opportunities legislation underpins most organisations’ Equal Opportunities policies and LHT Group is no exception (see LHT Group’s Equal Opportunity Policy).

5.2. Planning the Interview
Plan the interview well in advance (see table 5). The interview panel will be the same as the shortlisting panel to ensure consistency. Decide on the date(s) for interviews, the location, and whether they will happen before or after any tests or other types of assessment to be used. The interview pack is available on the group drive in the Recruitment folder. The pack should contain:

- Panel guide
- Score sheets 1 - 8
- Interviewers rating sheet

5.3. Key Points
Interviews are most likely to be valid and effective if the interviewer keeps the interview focused on gathering information specific to the candidate’s ability to meet the role profile and competencies. However questions can be asked that specifically relate to the candidate.

- **Gain knowledge of the position to be filled, such as:**
  - the skills needed;
  - the behaviours required;
  - the specific tasks to be performed;
  - the relative importance of the tasks.

- **Identify requirements of the job, such as:**
  - educational requirements;
  - professional requirements;
  - overtime work required/shift working
  - travel requirements;

- **Be prepared to talk about (and answer questions about):**
  - the business;
  - LHT Group services;
  - company policies/benefits;
  - operating procedures/working environment;
  - career development opportunities/training provided.
Introduce the panel members, outline their roles and explain the format the interview will take. You should indicate how long the interview will last and when the candidate will have the opportunity to ask questions.

Pay attention to practical issues. Consider the accessibility of the room for candidates with disabilities, and the physical set up of the room. Ensure that there will be no distractions and that there is a notice on the door.

5.4 Sources of Bias in the Interview
The best defence against sources of bias is to be aware of them. They may derive from something in the candidate’s appearance, in their record or in their behaviour.

Dress Code
Some interviewers may have a particular opinion on candidates with an unusual dress code. However you should be aware that this opinion may contravene Articles 8 & 10 of the 1998 Human Rights Act that cover “Freedom of Expression”.

Physical Disability
All questions should only be related to the candidate’s ability to perform the job.

5.5 Making a Decision
During the interview, the panel members should make notes that will help them score the answers given to the set questions using the following rating:
Score:
5 - significantly above standard expected at this level
4 - above standard expected at this level
3 - to standard
2 - below the standard
1 - significantly below the standard
N/D - not demonstrated

Questions can also be asked that specifically relate to an individual candidate
The scores for all the set questions are then collated and the totals recorded on the interviewers overall rating sheet.
Any major differences in the scores for a candidate should be discussed by the panel and a compromise reached on which they all agree.
When you have an agreed score for each candidate, a selection decision can be made.

It is best to evaluate the candidate as soon as possible after all the interviews are complete. However, don’t rush into a decision if you need more time to think, and don’t feel that you have to appoint. In these situations the HR member of the panel will provide advice. After considering all the ratings if there is a tie, the panel should re-examine all the evidence and discuss their findings again.

If interviews are completed and the consensus of the panel is that none of the candidates are suitable, the first step will be for the panel to review the competencies to ensure their accuracy
and that the standards required have not been overstated. If there are still felt to be no suitable candidates then the post should be re-advertised. You also need to consider if the advertisement was correctly placed to attract the applicant that you wanted.

Table 5. INTERVIEWING/MAKING A DECISION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITUATION</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>TIME SCALE</th>
<th>WHO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Set up interviews</strong></td>
<td>HR Team to invite candidates - allow at least 1-1.5 hrs per candidate to allow time to score performance</td>
<td>In enough time to allow candidates preparation time.</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel draw up competence based questions for interview</strong></td>
<td>Questions to test competence in core and job specific competence areas. Copy questions to HR for future use.</td>
<td>In good enough time before the interviews.</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter to draw together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conduct interviews</strong></td>
<td>Panel to interview candidates and rate performance using a competence based score sheet (available from Trust drive under Recruitment).</td>
<td>Summarise performance at the end of each interview. At the end of the round of the interviews decide on the successful candidate.</td>
<td>Panel Members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. OFFERS OF EMPLOYMENT/UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

6.1. Legal Considerations
It needs to be remembered that employment is a legal contract. While the successful candidate may not become an employee until the employment begins, the contract itself is legally enforceable as soon as it is formed. It is formed when:
- There is an offer, and acceptance of that offer
- Both parties intend it to be a legally binding arrangement
- There is sufficient certainty of terms.

We need to make sure, if we make a verbal offer, we will not have to withdraw it without good reason, such as unsatisfactory references or medical.

All appointments will be subject to a probationary period of 6 months
Offer letters will only be issued by the HR Team in consultation with the recruiting manager

6.2 Medical Questionnaires
A medical questionnaire will be sent to the successful candidate by the HR team

6.3 References
References will be taken up by the HR Team for the successful candidate. Offers can only be made on condition that satisfactory references and medical questionnaire are obtained in respect of the applicant. In this way, if the references obtained prove to be unsatisfactory, the offer of employment can be withdrawn without the employer being in breach of contract.

It is advised to set out brief details of the job on offer and ask the referees (provided that they are ex-employers of the applicant) to give an assessment of the applicant’s suitability for the post on the basis of their knowledge of the following:

- Length of employment
- Present job duties
- Pay
- Sickness absence (with explanatory information)
- Any disciplinary action

6.4. Unsuccessful candidates
External candidates who request the information must be informed clearly by the panel the reasons why their application was unsuccessful. Care will need to be taken to ensure that these reasons given are factual and cannot be construed as discriminatory.

Internal candidates should automatically be provided with this information as part of their feedback after interview. Reasons given should be based on the notes made at the above stages and it is therefore important that all notes are kept for a period of six months after the interview date in the event of any queries. All unsuccessful letters should be sent by the HR Team.
6.5. Contract of Employment

The contract will list the following subheadings (if appropriate) and will be issued by the HR Team:

- Name of employer
- Place of work
- Date of the contract
- Hours of work
- Holidays and sickness
- Expenses
- Car
- Confidentiality
- Health and safety
- Attachments

- Job title
- Date commenced continuous employment
- Remuneration
- Other employment
- Grievance and disciplinary procedure
- Pension plan
- Relocation
- Notice
- Equal opportunities
- Signature

Table 6. OFFERS OF EMPLOYMENT/UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITUATION</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>TIMESCALE</th>
<th>WHO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notify successful candidate</td>
<td>Telephone the successful applicant initially and follow up in writing.</td>
<td>As soon as possible after the interview</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer letter/medical questionnaire</td>
<td>Successful candidate should receive offer letter/medical questionnaire</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>HR Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>Details of referees are provided by the candidates, on the application form.</td>
<td>Seek references for successful candidate</td>
<td>HR Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback to internal candidates</td>
<td>All applicants should receive feedback on their performance, highlighting observed strengths and development areas. This is particularly important when an internal candidate has been unsuccessful</td>
<td>As agreed with the candidates at the end of the interview.</td>
<td>Panel, led by Manager/Recruiter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notify HR</td>
<td>Pass all interview/relevant documentation to HR to allow the creation of Personnel/Payroll files and issue of employment contract.</td>
<td>Before the start date so that HR can issue a “starter pack” in good time.</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter to HR. HR to set up record.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree start date</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter to discuss with successful candidate.</td>
<td>As soon as possible.</td>
<td>Manager/Recruiter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

As with all procedures the only way to measure its success is to monitor its crucial stages. These are:

- Applications received
- Selected for shortlist
- Appointments
- Complaints
- Staff profile

If any aspects of the process caused problems, or did not achieve the required results, the reasons need to be investigated and steps taken to ensure the same difficulties are not encountered during the next recruitment exercise. It might be necessary, for example, to use a different method of attracting applicants or to re-design the application form.

Even if the recruitment procedure went smoothly, it needs to be borne in mind that the system used on one occasion, for a particular type of vacancy, might not be suitable for recruitment exercises undertaken at a future date. Depending on the nature of the vacancies and the state of the labour market at any given time, tried and tested recruitment procedures might need to be adapted if they are to continue to produce successful results.

Monitoring will be co-ordinated by the HR Team. We will also issue regular monitoring reports to SMG.
8. INDUCTION

8.1 Introduction
Induction allows LHT Group to welcome and introduce new members of staff and is of fundamental importance in setting standards and patterns of behaviour for the future.

Induction is not simply for people new to LHT Group. We also include people who have significantly changed roles, staff returning to work after a break of some sort, temporary staff and Board members.

8.2 Aims

☞ To equip new staff with the specific skills and knowledge to undertake their own role effectively;
☞ To give new staff an identity so they know where they fit into LHT Group;
☞ To ensure new staff become integrated and productive from the earliest opportunity;
☞ To ensure new staff fully understand the values, policies and procedures under which they will be working;
☞ To reinforce the information given during the selection process about the role itself and LHT Group’s expectations of the individual to fulfil that role.

8.3 Roles and Responsibilities
Responsibility for achieving these aims will be shared. The HR team will be responsible for the corporate induction and the individual’s line manager will look after the work area induction. However, there is likely to be some overlap between the two and so effective communication and planning are essential if it is to be managed effectively. Both should involve giving the individual as clear a view as possible about LHT Group’s culture and the way things are done.

Line Managers should have primary responsibility for inducing members of their team. They are in the best position to identify initial training needs, agree learning styles and to monitor, support and encourage the progress of an individual.

The HR team should advise line managers, ensure that all training facilities are provided, manage and co-ordinate group events and oversee the delivery of the overall induction process.

Senior Managers (Chief Executive and Directors) will also contribute to induction by explaining the vision and purpose of LHT Group. Their involvement can help motivate individuals and make them feel an important part of LHT Group.

A nominated mentor, or “buddy” can help new employees understand organisational detail, unwritten rules and routines. They can help new employees to settle down by introducing them to colleagues and the social side of LHT Group.
8.4 Induction Process

**Pre-employment**

A letter with clear instructions for the first day and an outline of the initial process will prevent pre-employment nerves.

**Early days in the Group**

Our primary concern is to address new employees’ immediate needs and priorities. Health and Safety and facilities in the workplace should be explained immediately. This is essentially to comply with legal and business requirements. It is also important to ensure that new employees understand the contractual relationships they are entering into with LHT Group and its customers. Employees’ should visit district offices and meet with other staff and managers, who will be key in the success of their role. New managers should meet with all other teams in LHT Group. Managers may also wish to arrange site visits and meetings with tenants for new members of staff.

**Job Instruction**

This is the first round of CPD that an employee will experience. Particularly, it must provide for:

- The new employee’s line manager to explain the particulars of the job. They should provide the employee with a competency framework and role profile.
- Standards of performance should be set and targets agreed. The line manager should also ensure that the relevant resources and technical training are provided.
- The value and importance of the job to be emphasised to the person taking on the role.
- Directors to be involved in describing the effects of good or bad performance to the new employee.
- Staff with budget responsibilities to be made aware of LHT Group’s financial regulations and trained in the key budget procedures.
- Line managers to ensure that new employees fully understand the CPD - Competency and Performance Development system and our approach to learning.

**Reviews and Evaluation**

Reviews between the line manager and the new employee are an integral part of our induction / CPD process. We will be consolidating learning, encouraging employees, assessing problem areas, developing targets and gaining information for evaluation. The mechanism for this is contained in the CPD system, when the appropriate review contract is set up.

A ‘Starter Pack’ will also be issued including the following information:
- Starter Pack memo (to be completed and returned to the HR Team)
- Current Staff List
- Current Salary Pay Scales
- Pension application form and literature
- Flexi working arrangements
- Health and Safety Guidelines
As well as the starter pack, new employees are welcomed by their line manager or a designated member of staff. They should be given a copy of the ‘Induction Pack’ which will be divided into three sections:

1. **General Introduction**

   LHT Group - the company history and background  
   The team / department they will be working with  
   Services provided by LHT Group and its markets  
   Current and future developments

2. **Work Induction**

   Map of the building  
   Terms and conditions of employment  
   Company rules and procedures  
   Education, training and development - schemes, opportunities and assessment  
   Employee involvement and communication  
   Welfare and employee benefits and facilities  
   Security and data protection

3. **Health and Safety**

   *(NB. This is a legal requirement on us as an employer)*  
   Emphasis on the importance of health and safety  
   Responsibilities of the employer and the employee under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974  
   Reference to development opportunities around health and safety  
   This stage of induction is compulsory and should follow the checklist provided. It has to be carried out during the first week of employment.

4. **Corporate Induction**

   The corporate induction will cover the following:
   
   Employees’ will be given a structured view of the organisation from a variety of staff, based on: mission statements; culture; rules and procedures; business planning; communication; quality; essential skills and core competencies.
   
   Employees’ will be shown how they fit in as part of the whole organisation. This will be shown through organisational charts and briefing from local staff.

   The Corporate Induction will be a one day course held in Hanover Street for new employees and those who have significantly changed jobs, changed roles and temporary staff.
Induction will be evaluated at around eight weeks after new employees start date. The HR Team will send an evaluation form directly to the new member of staff, in confidence, seeking views on their reactions, learning and behaviour since starting; whether they were given a warm welcome; whether our induction matched their needs and whether they have any further requirements.

The organising of the course and its facilitation is led by Claire Sweeney HR Officer.
LHT Group Ltd Service Level Agreement
Cost Structure of
Beechwood & Ballantyne Community Housing Association

Charge 2004/2005 .. £5,059.02 per annum (pro rata)

Services covered:

Health & Safety
Payroll
Common HR System (CHRIS)
Establishment of Common Policies and Procedures
Day to day advice and guidance
Maintenance of Group wide CPD system

Not included in the above (but available on request)

Recruitment
Training administration and delivery

Basis of apportionment = additional income required to
directly support the organisation