



COUNCIL OF THE ISLES OF SCILLY

GUIDANCE NOTES

Please read before filling in the application form

Welcome to the Council of the Isles of Scilly

Thank you for asking about working with us. Please take time to read this booklet, as many of your questions will already be answered here. If you cannot find the information you want, please contact the personnel section on 01720 422537 and we will do everything we can do to help you.

The Council of the Isles of Scilly is unique in the United Kingdom. We have the powers of a County Council and a District Council and we have sole responsibility for the local government on the Islands. We provide a comprehensive range of services over and above that of any mainland unitary authority in the country due to being the only public water authority in the country, we run systems on St Mary's and Bryher.

The Council is non political and consists of 21 Members responsible for education, housing, waste management, fire services, highways, environmental health, planning, social services, tourism, coast defence, sea fisheries, promotion of economic development and emergency planning. We also own and operate St Mary's Airport which is central to the local economy.

We have approximately 160 employees and are responsible for all local government services for our 2,000 strong community spread over the five inhabited islands.

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Customer Commitment

We are committed to providing a high-quality service to all people and services in the Isles of Scilly.

We describe below what the Personnel Section will provide.

When you contact us about applying for a job

We will do the following:

- Make sure you receive an application pack within 2 working days of you contacting us.
- Send you an application form and information about the job you are applying for.
- Provide clear information about how we will deal with your application.
- Use open and fair procedures when deciding who is right for the job.
- Listen to any concerns or complaints you have and deal with them quickly.

About our service

Our central personnel section send out all application forms for jobs - except those based in schools. If you would like an application pack you can contact us from 9.00 am to 4.45 pm on 01720 422537 or you can call into the Town Hall and pick up a pack from the Reception Desk. Our answer phone will take your messages outside office hours. When you have filled in the application form, you should send it to:

The Personnel Department,
Council of the Isles of Scilly,
Town Hall, St Mary's,
Isles of Scilly,
TR21 0LW

You should mark the envelope 'Application Form'

After the closing date we send all the application forms to the department which has the job vacancy. If you want to find out if you have been shortlisted, or if you have any questions about the job, you will need to contact the relevant department.

Where do you advertise jobs?

We try to advertise jobs in places where they will get the greatest response. We advertise our jobs on the Town Hall notice boards and sometimes in Bourdeaux Shop window. However, we advertise some senior posts and highly-technical jobs in national newspapers and specialist magazines. We also circulate vacancies to all internal departments.

How long do I have to fill in my application form?

Most of our jobs have a closing date two weeks after we first advertise the job. The closing date will always be on the job advertisement. We will make sure you receive an application pack within 2 working days of you contacting us. Whenever we can, we will tell you in the job advert when we will hold the interview.

Who will see my application form?

Only staff involved in dealing with your application will see your form.

How do you decide who to interview?

We only interview someone if their application shows they have the right skills and

abilities.

The shortlisting panel uses your application form to assess how far your knowledge, skills and experience match those needed for the job. If you are shortlisted, we will invite you for an interview.

When will I find out if I have got an interview?

We will write back to all applicants after the shortlisting procedure and inform you whether or not you have been shortlisted.

What happens if I have got an interview?

If we invite you to an interview, we will:

- wherever possible, give you at least one week's notice of the date of the interview
- give you details of where and when the interview will take place; and
- give you details of any tests we may ask you to do.

How do you decide who is suitable for the job?

At least 2 people, but usually 3, will interview you. We will offer the job to the person whose skills, knowledge and experience best match those needed for the job (the list of things we told you we were looking for).

What about references?

You should give the names of 2 people who will give you a reference relevant to your application. The first reference must be from your present or most recent employer (or headteacher if this would be your first job after leaving school). We will only contact your referees if we offer you an interview.

Will you offer me information about my application form or interview?

We offer you the opportunity to ask the Personnel Officer to give you feedback on your application. If you have been interviewed, you can ask the interviewer or chair of the interview panel to give you feedback.

How do I complain if I feel I have been treated unfairly?

If you think you have been discriminated against because of your race, culture, sex, disability, marital status, age, sexuality, former convictions or trade union membership, you can complain.

You should contact the Personnel Department on 01720 422537. Ask :

- why you were not shortlisted (you must do this within six weeks of the closing date); and
- why you were not offered the job after your interview (you must do this within 2 working dates of finding out the result of your interview).

If you are still not happy, you should write to the Chief Officer of the department which has the job vacancy. In your letter, explain why you think you have been unfairly treated. You must do this within two weeks of finding out the result of your interview.

Listening to you

We are keen to provide services that meet your needs. If you have comments or suggestions about our service, please let us know by using our 'Comments, Compliments and Complaints' scheme.

Filling in the application form

Please read the following guidance notes carefully before you start filling in your application form.

The main points to remember:

- Type or use a pen.
- Do a rough draft first. This helps you to avoid making mistakes and allows you to make sure that the information you have given is relevant.
- Because of our equal opportunities policy we ask all applicants to fill in our standard application form. Do not send a CV with your application.
- Fill in your form as fully as possible. The information you give us in your application is the only information we will use when matching your knowledge, skills and experience to those needed for a particular job. We cannot make any assumptions about your abilities and do not take account of any previous applications you have made.
- Read the 'job description', 'duties and responsibilities' and 'person specification' forms carefully. Think about whether your knowledge, skills and experience match those needed in the job and, if so, whether you can show this on your form.
- **Use the blank section headed 'details of experience' in the application form. Use this space to explain exactly how you have the knowledge, skills and experience needed. Where possible, give examples to show us how you match the particular skill. Remember that we cannot make any assumptions about your skills and experience - if you don't tell us, we won't know!**
- Don't just repeat your career history - explain the skills you have developed. Don't forget to use experience outside of work that has helped you to develop your skills.
- If possible, make a copy of your completed form for future reference.
- Don't send the same form for all jobs - pay attention to the specific job requirements for the job you are applying for.
- Make sure you return your form to us before the closing date as we won't accept late application forms.

Information for applicants

Hours of work

Our employees normally work up to 37 hours a week.

Holidays

New employees are entitled to at least 20 working days annual leave. This rises to at least 25 days after 5 years of service. There are also 10 extra days for bank holidays and public holidays. Part-time employees will receive a proportion of these holidays according to the hours they work.

Wages

We pay wages on a monthly basis straight to your bank account.

Help with relocation

Some posts are eligible for relocation costs; you can get further details from the personnel section.

Superannuation (local authority pension scheme)

Employees may join the Superannuation Scheme. Contributions to the scheme are 6% of your salary.

Medical clearance

As a new employee you must fill in a medical questionnaire which we must be satisfied with before we can confirm your job. You may need a medical examination.

Probationary service

You will first be employed for a 'probationary period' of 6 months. At the end of this period, if we are happy with your work, your period of service in local government will start.

Whole time service

Full-time employees must devote all their working hours to the council and must not do any other work without our permission.

Smoking policy

Smoking is not allowed in council buildings or vehicles.

Overtime

If you work to a standard hours contract and work more than 37 hours a week you will be paid at overtime rates.

Training

As a general principle part-time employees have the same access to training as full-time employees.

Putting the Customer First

Equal Opportunities statement

The Council of the Isles of Scilly commits itself to the provision of equal opportunity in employment and undertakes, as a responsible employer, to conduct its affairs in a manner which will not cause disadvantage to any employee or job applicant on the grounds of race, colour, nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origin, sex, gender reassignment, rehabilitation of offenders, marital status, disability, age or religion.

In meeting its legal obligations under the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and in accordance with the Age Diversity in Employment Code of Practice and the DfEE Guide to Gender Reassignment, the Council will ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that with reference to the foregoing:

- 1 no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment than another;
- 2 no job applicant or employee is placed at a disadvantage unjustifiably by requirements or conditions which have a disproportionately adverse effect on a particular group.

To this end, the Council will ensure in particular that:

- advertising and recruitment will be by the widest practicable notification of vacancies through appropriate publications, agencies, job centres etc including notice to existing employees, seeking to ensure that no potential applicant is disadvantaged on grounds of race, colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, disability or religion.
- transfer, promotion and training opportunities and the application of procedures are made known to all eligible employee and not in such a way as to exclude, or disproportionately reduce, the numbers of applicants from a particular group;
- selection criteria for appointment, transfer, promotion and training are strictly related to the job or training requirements and consistently applied to all applicants;
- terms of employment, benefits, facilities and services are afforded equally to all employees in the same or similar circumstances;
- grievances concerning discrimination, victimisation and harassment are dealt with in accordance with the Council's grievance procedure and will not subsequently result in the complainant receiving less favourable treatment than other employees;
- criteria for dismissal will be solely those consistent with the Council's practice in regard to indiscipline, redundancy or lack of capability.

- Individual employees of the Council at all levels also have responsibilities for ensuring equality of opportunity for their fellow employees and job applicants; and they personally must not:
- discriminate in the course of their employment against fellow employees or job

applicants, or harass them;

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- induce, or attempt to induce, other employees to practice unlawful discrimination;
- victimise individuals who have made allegations or complaints of discrimination or provided information about such discrimination.

Officers and supervisors at all levels are expected to set an example in non-discriminatory behaviour and to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that employees for whom they have responsibility act in accordance with the Council's policy on equal opportunity.

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995)

Information for disabled applicants

The Council of the Isles of Scilly, as a responsible employer, acknowledges its responsibility under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 both to avoid unjustifiably discriminating against employees and prospective employees who have a disability and to take reasonable positive steps to encourage and facilitate the employment of people with disabilities and existing staff who may become disabled.

The Council will interview all people with disabilities who apply for advertised posts who declare at the time of application their disability, and who would otherwise meet the essential person specification for the post and whose disability is not such as to substantially and materially prevent them from potentially fulfilling the duties of the post. Where reasonable and practicable, the Council will make arrangements to enable such applicants both to pursue their application and, if successful, to fulfil the duties of the post.

In order to do this we will need to ask you questions about your disability. Please remember that although you do not have to tell us about your disability, any details you provide will help us to help you. Any information you give us will be kept confidential.

On our application forms we ask whether you consider yourself a disabled person and to give details of any needs you may have to enable you to attend an interview. This information is important because it helps us to make sure that you have every opportunity to demonstrate your true abilities.

At your interview you may be asked questions about how your disability may affect that particular job. Asking about the effects of your disability is important because it helps us to establish what adjustments we may need to make to help you do that job. These questions will be asked at the end of your formal interview questions.

The Council will take all reasonable steps to make appropriate adjustments to the physical features of the working environment (including equipment) and/or to the duties or working arrangements associated with particular posts where an employee becomes disabled during employment, with the Council. Where such actions are not reasonably practicable, the Council will seek to transfer the individual to more appropriate duties with the support of reasonable training and other relevant facilities.

The Council will treat disabled employees no less favourably because of their disability than other staff including when being considered for training, promotion or career development opportunities. The Council will pay particular attention to job design, and where relevant, appropriate physical support measures in order to facilitate the opportunities for the career advancement of employees with disabilities.

The Council will take into account, as far as reasonably practicable, the needs of the disabled when designing and equipping new premises and will make reasonable adaptations to existing premises where this is essential for the employment of a newly appointed or existing employee with disabilities.

The Council will endeavour to ensure that employees with disabilities are, when necessary, offered specialist support and advice to assist them in their working lives. To this end, the Council will consult as appropriate with employee representatives and organisations with relevant expertise in the employment and safety of people with disabilities.

The Council will ensure that its managers are conversant with the requirements of this policy, their responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act and the sources of help and advice available to them in order to sustain the Council's commitment under this policy. The Council will also ensure that the actions of staff generally contribute to its commitment to supporting employees and prospective employees with disabilities.

The Council will review the relevance of its employment policies and practices generally to ensure that they effectively support this policy statement, the requirements of legislation and good practice.

Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974)

One of the sections on the application form asks you to provide details of any criminal convictions that you have. You should read the following guidance notes carefully before doing so. We will not discriminate against ex-offenders, and if you have to give details of any previous convictions this will not automatically prevent you from getting the job. We will consider how previous convictions could affect the job you are applying for, and these will only be taken into account if the offence is relevant to the type of work you would be doing.

Policy Statement on the recruitment of ex offenders

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, the Council of the Isles of Scilly complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice (copy available on request) and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

The Council of the Isles of Scilly is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

A Disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and post details will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential, cover to a designated person within the Council of the Isles of Scilly and we guarantee that this information is only seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

Unless the nature of the position allows the Council of the Isles of Scilly to ask questions about your entire criminal record we only ask about "unspent" convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We ensure that all those in the Council of the Isles of Scilly who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders eg the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

We make every subject of a CRB Disclosure aware of the existence of the CRB Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

What is a 'spent' conviction?

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, if someone has been convicted of an offence and is not convicted of that offence again during a specified period, their conviction becomes 'spent'. A spent conviction does not need to be mentioned on your application form or at the interview unless you are applying for a post in one or the following areas:

- being a solicitor
- being a chartered or certified accountant
- Jobs in social services which enables the postholder to have access to:
 - people over the age of 65
 - people suffering from serious illness or mental disorder of any description
 - people addicted to alcohol or drugs
 - people who are blind, deaf or without speech
 - people who are substantially and permanently disabled by illness, injury or congenital deformity
- Jobs involving contact with children:
 - 1 work in a regulated position:
 - any staff whose normal duties involve carrying out work of any sort in certain types of establishment (eg a care home or residential care home, an educational institution (schools), a children's home or voluntary home, or a home provided under s.82(5) of the Children Act 1989).
 - a position whose normal duties include work on day care premises (premises on which children under the age of 8 are looked after for at least 2 hours per day - not domestic premises).
 - a position whose normal duties include caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children.
 - a position whose normal duties involve unsupervised contact with children under arrangements made by a responsible person
 - a position whose normal duties include caring for children under the age of 16 in the course of the children's employment.
 - 'the great and the good' - a school governor, a local authority member who

- discharges education or social services functions of a local authority, a chief education officer, a director of social services
 - a position whose normal duties include supervising or managing an individual in his work in a regulated position.
- 2 work in a further education institution where the normal duties of that work involve regular contact with persons aged under 18.

If the post you are applying for comes under one of the categories above, you must mention all previous convictions on your application form, whether or not these convictions are spent within the meaning of the Act.

If the post you are applying for does not come under one of the categories above you do not need to tell us about any convictions which have become spent. You must give details of convictions that are not spent.

How long are the rehabilitation periods?

A conviction becomes spent after a certain length of time which changes depending upon the sentence and your age at the time of the conviction.

Examples are shown below:

Sentence	Period of good conduct needed for conviction to become spent
Imprisonment, detention in a young offenders institution or youth custody or corrective training for between six and thirty months	10 years (5 years if the offender was under 18)
Imprisonment, detention in a young offenders institution or youth custody for six months or less	7 years (3.5 years if the offender was under 18)
A fine	5 years (2.5 years if the offender was under 18)
Probation	5 years (if under 18, the longer of 2.5 years or when the order ceases to have effect)
Absolute discharge	6 months (whatever age)
Conditional discharge	The longer of one year or expiry of the order
Bindover	The longer of one year or expiry of the order

Sentences of more than 2.5 years are never spent. It is the sentence set by the court that counts (even if it is a suspended sentence), not the time actually spent in prison.

Any information will be kept confidential and used only in connection with this application.

We may withdraw an offer of employment if you do not give details of previous unspent convictions (or spent convictions where appropriate).

How will I know whether or not I must mention spent convictions for the post I am applying?

The application form identifies whether you must mention spent convictions or not.

Where can I get further advice about how the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 applies to me?

If you are not sure about whether or not you have to declare a previous conviction, contact your local probation officer, Citizens Advice Bureau or your solicitor.

