

Glasgow City Council Internal Audit Section Committee Summary Corporate Review – Recruitment and Selection

Item 4(d)

25th March 2026

1 Introduction

- 1.1 As part of the agreed Internal Audit plan, we have carried out a review of the arrangements in place across the Council in relation to the recruitment and selection process.
- 1.2 The aim of the Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy is to ensure that the Council selects the most suitable people for jobs based on their relevant merits and abilities. A recruitment and selection toolkit is available to recruiting managers which details the steps to be followed once the manager has authority from the Service to recruit. The toolkit details the process for recruitment, equality and diversity in recruitment and the pre-employment checks to be followed by recruiting managers.
- 1.3 The recruitment process involves Human Resources (HR) for the relevant service, recruiting managers and the Customer and Business Services (CBS) Recruitment team. The process begins by seeking approval from the Service's Workforce Planning Board (WPB) and ends when CBS issue the contract to the successful candidate(s). The Talentlink system is used for each recruitment exercise by CBS Recruitment and recruiting managers. Between October 2024 and October 2025 there were 1,047 recruitment exercises carried out resulting in the appointment of 2,987 employees.
- 1.4 The purpose of this audit was to gain assurance that there are adequate controls in place for an effective and efficient recruitment and selection process throughout Council Services. The audit included a review of the key controls in the following areas:
- Roles and responsibilities.
 - Documented policies, procedures and guidelines.
 - Training and communication arrangements.
 - Audit trail and document retention.
 - The process for seeking and gaining approval to recruit.
 - The advertising and selection process.
 - Pre employment checks.
 - A sample of recruitment exercises.
 - Monitoring and reporting arrangements.
- 1.5 It should be noted that this audit did not include a review of the recruitment of teachers as these posts are not considered by the Education Workforce Planning Board and managed through an annual staffing exercise. In addition, we did not review compliance with mandatory training, qualifications and memberships as this is currently subject to a separate Internal Audit review for 2025/26.

2 Audit Opinion

- 2.1 Based on the audit work carried out a reasonable level of assurance can be placed upon the control environment. The audit has identified some scope for improvement in the existing arrangements and two recommendations which management should address.

3 Main Findings

- 3.1 We are pleased to report that the key controls are in place and generally operating effectively. Recruitment policies, procedures and supporting guidance is available to recruiting managers via the staff intranet, this includes the Recruitment and Selection Toolkit and additional resources such as demonstration videos on how to navigate the Talentlink system. The roles and responsibilities for each stage in the recruitment process are documented in the Toolkit and these are reinforced when recruiting managers liaise with Service HR and CBS Recruitment to begin a recruitment exercise.
- 3.2 Through discussion with Service HR officers from each Service we were advised that in order to begin a recruitment exercise recruiting managers must submit a Recruiting Vacancy Management (RVM) form to the Service Workforce Planning Board for approval. Once approved, the relevant Service HR ensures the correct documentation is submitted to CBS Recruitment for the post to be advertised. We confirmed through review of documents for a sample of 15 recruitment exercises completed between December 2024 and May 2025, that this process was followed.
- 3.3 We were advised by CBS Recruitment that once the job advertisement has closed it is the responsibility of the recruiting manager to carry out the short listing of applications, arrange interviews and select the preferred candidate(s), this is managed via Talentlink. The recruiting manager will then notify CBS of the preferred candidate who will then begin the process of the pre-employment checks (for example the candidates right to work and references) with input from recruiting managers. Once all checks are confirmed CBS issue the contract to the successful candidate(s).
- 3.4 For the 15 exercises selected for review, there were 24 related appointments (due to more than one post being filled from one exercise). From review we found that in all 15 cases, the recruitment process had been conducted in line with Council policy. Furthermore, evidence of the recruitment checks of successful candidates were retained in the employees personnel file on EDRMS as required.
- 3.5 In addition, through the sample testing we confirmed that CBS Recruitment monitor progress of recruitment exercises using a tracker spreadsheet for each post, which documents the completion of each stage of the recruitment process, we confirmed this was in place and complete for all candidates reviewed as part of the sample.

- 3.6 Furthermore, we were advised that records in relation to the application and interview stage are the responsibility of the recruiting manager and should be disposed of via confidential waste six months after the recruitment process has ended. This is outlined in the Toolkit and meets the requirements of the Council's Records Retention and Disposal Schedule. For a sample of five recruitment exercises completed between June and November 2025, the recruiting managers were able to provide the assessment paperwork used as part of the interview process.
- 3.7 However, our audit testing identified some areas for improvement in the existing arrangements. Through discussion with CBS Recruitment and Service HR officers we developed an expected timeframe for the recruitment process with the number of days expected at each stage. Through the sample testing noted above at 3.2 we considered the days taken to complete each stage of the recruitment process. We noted all timings were either within the timeframes advised or reasonable explanations and evidence were provided as to why the stage in the process took longer than expected, for example the referee was late in returning the reference to CBS. However, we found that these timeframes are not formally documented and adherence to these are not monitored.
- 3.8 We were advised that there is limited performance reporting in relation to the recruitment process from Service HR and CBS Recruitment. CBS Recruitment collate a report to show one Key Performance Indicator (KPI), this indicator is that recruitment exercises are completed within a 16-week period from the date the advert closes to the date the contract is issued. Though this is collated and monitored by CBS management, it is not reported elsewhere, and only part of the 16 week processes are within the control of CBS. Previously this, along with the average weeks to complete a recruitment exercise, was reported to the Resourcing Group attended by Service HR representatives and CBS but it was decided by the HR officers that these no longer met the requirements of the group. No other performance information is in place for monitoring recruitment exercises.
- 3.9 We obtained a report showing all job adverts that were closed between October 2024 and October 2025 and compared this to a report showing the date all contracts were issued. This included 1,047 contracts being issued with an average time of 9.5 weeks. Through data analytics we identified that there were 86 posts that took longer than 16 weeks, the longest being 31 weeks. CBS Recruitment advised that this can often be due to external factors such as lack of responses from referees.
- 3.10 An action plan is provided at section four outlining our observations, risks, and recommendations. We have made two recommendations for improvement. The priority of each recommendation is:

Priority	Definition	Total
High	Key controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved. Urgent attention required.	0
Medium	Less critically important controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved.	2
Low	Lower level controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved.	0
Service Improvement	Opportunities for business improvement and/or efficiencies have been identified.	0

- 3.11 The audit has been undertaken in accordance with the Global Internal Audit Standards in the public sector.
- 3.12 We would like to thank officers involved in this audit for their cooperation and assistance.
- 3.13 It is recommended that the Head of Audit and Inspection submits a further report to Committee on the implementation of the actions contained in the attached Action Plan.

4 Action Plan

No.	Observation and Risk	Recommendation	Priority	Management Response
Key Control: Adequate performance reporting arrangements are in place across all services.				
1	<p>We held meetings with officers from HR representing all Council Services and CBS Recruitment and developed an expected timeline for each stage in the recruitment process, noting these can vary dependent on factors such as number of applicants or posts available. The timeframes included the number of days to submit documents to CBS Recruitment for advertisement after WPB approval (within three days) and the timeframe for CBS to issue requests for the required pre-employment checks (within five days of receiving the notification from recruiting manager when a successful applicant has been selected, this is the prepare to offer (PTO) notification).</p> <p>However, we found that the timeframes for each stage identified are not formalised and subsequently are not monitored. This was discussed with Corporate HR who advised due to the varying nature of recruitment exercises, e.g. large number of applicants or bulk recruitment for a large number of posts it would be difficult to formalise a timeframe for recruiting managers to meet.</p>	<p>Corporate HR should review the recruitment toolkit to make it clear that each stage of the recruitment process should be completed in a timely manner to reduce delays.</p> <p>Service HR management should consider whether it is feasible to agree timeframes for each stage of the recruitment process. Thereafter these should be documented and communicated to relevant staff.</p>	Medium	<p>Response:</p> <p>Corporate HR - Accepted. A review the Recruitment Toolkit will be undertaken.</p> <p>EDS – Accepted. Currently, recruitment timeframes are set in advance and communicated with CBS specifically for large scale or Directorate recruitment exercises.</p> <p>Recruiting Managers for all other exercises will continue to be encouraged to set a timeframe for delivery.</p> <p>FS/CED – Accepted. Service HR will take appropriate action.</p> <p>NRS - Accepted. HR issued guidance to recruiting managers in February 2025 to improve the timeliness of the recruitment process. This included advisory timescales for shortlisting, interviewing and submitting required paperwork for CBS upon selection of a successful candidate.</p>

No.	Observation and Risk	Recommendation	Priority	Management Response
	<p>Whilst there are exceptions, without formal timeframes for the recruitment process there is an increased risk that managers are unaware of the timeframes expected and therefore recruitment exercises may take longer than expected.</p>			<p>A reminder will be issued to Leadership in January 2026.</p> <p>SWS – Accepted. We already have this in place and communicated with CBS, however final update to be made. There should be a caveat that the timeframes are guidelines and may vary depending on service circumstances.</p> <p>Officer Responsible for Implementation:-</p> <p>Corporate HR – HR Manager – Corporate</p> <p>EDS – HR Manager</p> <p>FS/CED – Senior HR Officer</p> <p>NRS - Strategic HR Manager</p> <p>SWS – Senior HR Officer</p> <p>Timescales for Implementation:</p> <p>Corporate HR – 30 April 2026</p> <p>EDS – 30 April 2026</p> <p>CED/FS – 31 March 2026</p>

No.	Observation and Risk	Recommendation	Priority	Management Response
			■	NRS - 31 January 2026 SWS – 31 March 2026

No.	Observation and Risk	Recommendation	Priority	Management Response
Key Control: Adequate performance reporting arrangements are in place across all services.				
2	<p>CBS Recruitment collate four weekly performance information that is collated and monitored by CBS management. This includes total vacancies advertised, total applications received, average number of weeks to fill a post and if any breached the time frame of the contract to be issued within 16 weeks of the advert closing. However, this information does not include the SLA for CBS to issue requests for the pre-employment checks within five days of receiving PTO confirmation from recruiting managers. CBS Management advised this is tracked per post and there is no report available to report this per service, if there is a delay in the 16-week measure this SLA would be reviewed for the individual cases.</p> <p>We also found that no other performance reporting in relation to the recruitment process is undertaken. We were advised by CBS Recruitment that outwith Talentlink it would not be possible to produce performance information as the information, including dates that parts of the process have been completed is not held centrally in one place for all recruitment exercises.</p> <p>From analysis of the 1,047 contracts issued between October 2024 and</p>	<p>CBS Recruitment should provide Service HR with performance information each period to show the average time to complete a recruitment exercise and any that breach the 16-week SLA for their own service.</p> <p>Service HR and CBS Recruitment should then investigate any areas of concern and take action where appropriate.</p> <p>In conjunction with recommendation 1, Service HR should consider whether additional performance measures for the recruitment and selection process can be developed. Thereafter, performance against these measures should be regularly monitored and reported to identify any stages in the process that are subject to frequent delays so that appropriate action can be taken where required.</p>	Medium	<p>Response:</p> <p>CBS - Accepted. CBS will provide required reports and action if required.</p> <p>EDS – Accepted. We will work with CBS using their performance information to monitor timeframes and investigate any areas of concern together, including consideration of any further performance measures.</p> <p>We have the opportunity to include this discussion in the Service HR and CBS weekly/fortnightly operational delivery meetings.</p> <p>These can also be reviewed strategically at the monthly CBS/Service HR meeting to remove any barriers to delivery.</p> <p>FS/CED – Accepted. Will action as appropriate.</p> <p>NRS – Accepted. NRS Service HR will review and recommend action as appropriate.</p>

October 2025 we identified that there were 86 cases where the contract was not issued within 16 weeks. We noted that the average number of weeks to issue the contract from the date of the advert closing was 9.5. We were advised that these delays can be due to external factors such as candidates provision of required documents or awaiting disclosure checks. However, it could also be attributed to internal factors causing delays at the various stages undertaken by recruiting managers or CBS Recruitment.

Delays in the recruitment process could result in candidates withdrawing. A lack of performance monitoring and reporting, increases the risk that reasons for delays are not identified and addressed.

SWS - Accepted. We will work with CBS to review the information currently recorded in Talent Link – to ensure we can access more accurate and meaningful data.

Officer Responsible for Implementation:-

CBS - Head of Customer Operations

EDS – HR Manager

FS/CED – Senior HR Officer

NRS - Assistant HR Manager

SWS - Senior HR Officer

Timescales for Implementation:

CBS – 31 March 2026

EDS – 30 April 2026

FS/CED – 31 March 2026

NRS - 31 July 2026

SWS – 31 July 2026