

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Safeguarding Children
13.08/09

Internal Audit Report
30 October 2008

FINAL

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Debrief meeting:	30 September 2008	Auditors:	Chris Harris – Partner
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This review has been performed using RSM Bentley Jennison's bespoke internal audit methodology, **i-RIS**.

The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during our internal audit work and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist, or of all the improvements that may be required. Whilst every care has been taken to ensure that the information provided in this report is as accurate as possible, based on the information provided and documentation reviewed, no complete guarantee or warranty can be given with regard to the advice and information contained herein. Our work does not provide absolute assurance that material errors, loss or fraud do not exist.

This report is prepared solely for the use of Council and senior management of South Cambridgeshire District Council. Details may be made available to specified external agencies, including external auditors, but otherwise the report should not be quoted or referred to in whole or in part without prior consent. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared, and is not intended for any other purpose.

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

An audit of Safeguarding Children was undertaken as part of the approved internal audit periodic plan for 2008/09.

The object of this audit is to review the mechanisms in place to ensure the safeguarding of children. This is in correspondence with the Safeguarding Children self assessment checklist that has been issued by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. (LSCB)

South Cambridgeshire District Council has very few roles, where the employees are involved with working with children, for example they are not responsible for teaching. Due to the nature of the work undertaken at South Cambridgeshire District Council there are a number of areas within the checklist that are not applicable for the organisation.

This review has been undertaken against the LSCB Members Internal Control Arrangement – Self Assessment checklist using the audit tool provided. Where areas are not considered necessary these have been highlighted in addition to those areas where a weakness has been found.

The area considered as part of this audit was:

- Complete of an audit checklist 'The Implementation of the Key Safeguarding Employment Standards' provided by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

1.2 Scope of the review

The objective of our audit was to evaluate the adequacy of risk management and control within the system and the extent to which controls have been applied, with a view to providing an opinion. Control activities are put in place to ensure that risks to the achievement of the organisation's objectives are managed effectively. When planning the audit, the following controls for review and limitations were agreed:

Limitations to the scope of the audit:

- The work is limited to completion of the LSCB Members Internal Control Arrangements - Self-Assessment Checklist on 'The Implementation of the Key Safeguarding Employment Standards' where possible reliance will be placed on the work completed within the HR – Recruitment Audit within 2008/09.
- Testing will only be undertaken where it is considered that a relevant control is in place. Any testing undertaken as part of this audit will be compliance based and sample testing only.
- Our work does not provide any guarantee against material errors, loss or fraud or provide an absolute assurance that material error, loss or fraud does not exist

The approach taken for this audit was systematic Audit and included the following:

- Establishing the controls for which external audit intends to place reliance on internal audit testing
- Reviewing the adequacy and application of the controls in place to mitigate the risk(s) or testing to assess the extent or cause of problems identified

1.3 Conclusion

Taking account of the issues identified, in our opinion the Council can take adequate assurance that the controls upon which the organisation relies to manage this area, as currently laid down and operated, are effective.

This assurance level has been formulated on the basis of conclusions drawn on the individual element of application of controls in place:

	SUBSTANTIAL	ADEQUATE	LIMITED
APPLICATION OF AND COMPLIANCE WITH CONTROL FRAMEWORK		X	
OVERALL OPINION		X	

The above conclusions feeding into the overall assurance level are based on the evidence obtained during the review.

1.4 Recommendations Summary

The following tables highlight the number and categories of recommendations made. The Action Plan at Section 2 details the specific recommendations made as well as agreed management actions to implement them.

Recommendations made during this audit:

AREA	FUNDAMENTAL	SIGNIFICANT	MERITS ATTENTION
AS PER THE SELF ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST.	0	0	8
TOTAL	0	0	8

There have been no previous audits completed in this area, and no previous recommendations have been given.

2 Action Plan

The priority of the recommendations made is as follows:

FUNDAMENTAL	SIGNIFICANT	MERITS ATTENTION
ACTION IS IMPERATIVE TO ENSURE THAT THE OBJECTIVE FOR THE AREA UNDER REVIEW IS MET	REQUIRES ACTION TO AVOID EXPOSURE TO SIGNIFICANT RISK IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVE FOR THE AREA UNDER REVIEW.	ACTION IS ADVISED TO ENHANCE CONTROL OR IMPROVE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

REF	RECOMMENDATION	CATEGORISATION	ACCEPTED Y/N	MANAGEMENT COMMENT	IMPLEMENTATION DATE	MANAGER RESPONSIBLE
1.2	The Recruitment and Selection Policy should include details regarding the presence of the relevant line manager at the interviewing process.	Merits Attention	Y	Policy will be amended when it is next due for review	Sept 2009	HRM
1.3	The Recruitment and Selection Policy should be updated to include a statement on the Councils commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.	Merits Attention	Y	Statement already included in Applicant guidance information. Policy will be amended when it is next due for review	Sept 2009	HRM
1.4	Review the requirement for the inclusion of a statement confirming the organisations commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within key documents including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicity materials; • Recruitment websites; • Job Portfolios; • Competency Frameworks; • Induction Training. 	Merits Attention	Y	Statement already included in Applicant guidance information. Other documents and website will be amended when it is next due for review	Sept 2009	HRM
1.15	Ensure that the evaluation procedure and criteria for short listing is accurately recorded for every post prior to completion of the evaluation process.	Merits Attention	Y	Recruiting Managers – will be included in training	Ongoing	All managers
1.18	Ensure that all key questions are recorded within the interview process to provide an adequate audit trail.	Merits Attention	Y	Recruiting Managers – will be included in training	Ongoing	All managers
1.43	Ensure that the 'Probation Guidance' document is completed which involves an assessment of the probation period and recorded on either the personal	Merits Attention	Y	Recruiting Managers – will be included in training	Ongoing	All managers

REF	RECOMMENDATION	CATEGORISATION	ACCEPTED Y/N	MANAGEMENT COMMENT	IMPLEMENTATION DATE	MANAGER RESPONSIBLE
	file or the anite electronic folder.					
1.45	The CRB Policy and Procedure should be reviewed to include guidance on the retention of documentation.	Merits Attention	Y	Policy and guidance will be updated when next reviewed	31 Mar 2009	HRM
1.57	Record the procedure for obtaining foreign national CRB detailed within the policies and procedures. This is to ensure that it is clearly evident as to the process which you would follow.	Merits Attention	Y	Policy and guidance will be updated when next reviewed	31 Mar 2009	HRM

3 Findings and Recommendations

	CONTROL AS PER CHECKLIST	CONTROL OPERATING (YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE)	TEST RESULT / IMPLICATIONS	RECOMMENDATION	CATEGORISATION
1.1	Do you have an explicit written recruitment and selection policy and procedures that comply with the Key Safeguarding Employment Standards, and which details all aspects of the process and links to your child protection policy and procedures?	Yes	<p>We confirmed that there is a 'Recruitment and Selection Policy' in place, which is available to all staff via the intranet. We can confirm that this policy reflects the standards set out in the 'Key Safeguarding Employment Standards' which is produced by the Cambridgeshire Local Safeguard Board. Those standards that are not covered in the 'Recruitment and Selection Policy' such as training and the 'Whistle Blowing and Complaints' are covered within their own separate policies.</p> <p>We also confirmed that there is a 'Protection of children and young people from abuse' policy which is available to all members of staff via the intranet.</p>		
1.2	<p>Do you have a clearly documented policy governing the managers to be involved in recruitment and selection of staff? For the appointment of staff to work directly with children and young people it is strongly recommended that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More than one person interviews. - The Line Manger is always a member of the formal interview panel. - Warner interviews are undertaken for posts which require them. 	Yes	<p>We confirmed by review of the Recruitment and Selection Policy that it clearly states that at least two members will need to be present for the interview process.</p> <p>Through review we found that the Recruitment and Selection Policy does not detail the requirements for the Line Manager, for that particular post, to be present at the interview stage. However, as part of our later testing we identified that the Line Manager was present for all the interviews sampled.</p> <p>We confirmed by discussion with the HR Manager that Warner interviews are not carried out due to the limited number of officers employed in this kind of role the Council does not consider it appropriate.</p>	The Recruitment and Selection Policy should include details regarding the presence of the relevant Line Manager at the interviewing process.	Merits Attention
1.3	Does the organisation's Recruitment and Selection Policy	No	We confirmed by review that the Recruitment and Selection Policy does not	The Recruitment and Selection Policy should be updated to include a statement on the Councils	Merits Attention

	CONTROL AS PER CHECKLIST	CONTROL OPERATING (YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE)	TEST RESULT / IMPLICATIONS	RECOMMENDATION	CATEGORISATION
	<p>incorporate an explicit statement about your commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.</p> <p>For example: "SCDC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment".</p>		<p>contain a statement about the Councils commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.</p> <p>We confirmed that this statement is present on the guidance notes for completing a job application form which is part of the starter information pack that is sent to all applicants, and also available to members of staff via the intranet.</p> <p>However, including this Statement within the Councils Recruitment and Selection Policy would emphasise this key area of Child safety.</p>	<p>commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.</p>	
1.4	<p>Do you ensure that the above statement is included in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicity materials • Recruitment websites • Advertisements • Candidate information packs • Person specifications • Job descriptions • Competency frameworks • Induction training 	No	<p>We confirmed by review of information sent out to candidates, that the statement of commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is included within the pack.</p> <p>Through review of a sample of three relevant job portfolios, which include the Person specification, Job description and the job advertisement, we found that the commitment statement is not included in these areas.</p> <p>We understand by discussion with the HR Manager that the statement of commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is not included in the competency frameworks, induction training, publicity materials or recruitment websites.</p>	<p>Review the requirement for the inclusion of a statement confirming the organisations commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within key documents including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicity materials; • Recruitment websites; • Job Portfolios (including job descriptions, advertisements and person specification.); • Competency Frameworks; • Induction Training. 	Merits Attention
1.5	<p>Have all managers involved in recruitment and selection received appropriate training?</p> <p>Do you ensure that at least one trained person is present on each interview panel?</p>	Yes	<p>We confirmed by review that a training attendance record is held by the Human Resources Officer. We found that the record details staff who have attended the Recruitment and Selection training and the date attended.</p>		

	CONTROL AS PER CHECKLIST	CONTROL OPERATING (YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE)	TEST RESULT / IMPLICATIONS	RECOMMENDATION	CATEGORISATION
			We confirmed by review of 5 interviews across 2 posts, that at least one member of the interview panel had received the recruitment and selection training.		
1.6	When a vacancy is advertised, does the advertisement include a statement about the employer's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and reference to the need for the successful applicant to undertake a criminal record check via the CRB, where appropriate, as well as the usual details of the post and salary, qualifications required, etc?	Yes	<p>We confirmed by review of 3 job advertisements that they all indicate that a CRB check will be required for the role. They also include the salary, post and the qualifications and experienced required for the job.</p> <p>We identified by review the three job advertisements that the 'commitment to the safeguarding and welfare of children' statement has not been included. We left a recommendation within 1.4 of this report to address this weakness.</p>	Refer to control 1.4	
1.7	<p>Do you review the following documentation on a regular basis to ensure that it is up to date and clearly sets out the extent of the relationships/contact with children and the degree of responsibility for children that the person will have in the position to be filled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person specification. • Application form. • Job description. • Information/guidance for applicants that will form part of the pack to be sent to prospective applicants. 	Yes	We confirmed from a sample of two relevant job evaluations from recently appointed posts that before a post is advertised it goes through an evaluation process. We found that the evaluation process reviews the job description, person specification, application form and the grade of the post.		
1.8	Do application forms used by the organisation obtain the following information:	Yes	We confirmed by review of the standard application form that applicants are requested to provide information regarding		

	CONTROL AS PER CHECKLIST	CONTROL OPERATING (YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE)	TEST RESULT / IMPLICATIONS	RECOMMENDATION	CATEGORISATION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full identifying details of the applicant (current / former names, date of birth, current address & NI number) • A statement of relevant academic or vocational qualifications and date of award • A full history in chronological order since leaving secondary education, including periods of any post-secondary education/ training, and part-time and voluntary work as well as full time employment, with start and end dates, explanations for periods not in employment or education/training, and reasons for leaving employment. • A declaration of any family or close relationship to existing employees or employers (including councillors and governors) • Details of referees • One referee should be the applicant's current or most recent employer, and normally two referees should be sufficient. The form should make it clear that references will not be accepted from relatives or from people writing solely in the capacity of friends. • A statement of the personal qualities and 		<p>their previous and current employment. In addition to their academic or vocational qualifications held, and the date which they were achieved.</p> <p>We confirmed that the application form includes a declaration where the applicant can give information on any relatives working for the Council. In addition we found that applicants are required to provide the details for two references. The application form requires the applicants to give a statement of suitability, and personal information such as full name, current address, and telephone numbers and email address. We confirmed by observation that this is also applicable for the online application form.</p> <p>We confirmed that the application does not request the applicants DOB, former names or the NI number. However, by discussion with the HR Manager the DOB is not requested due to discrimination; however, evidence of age will be required before an appointment. Also that the NI number will be required by the new starter form and the former names will be checked when a CRB request is carried out for the applicant, therefore, it is not considered necessary to include these within this within the application form.</p>		

	CONTROL AS PER CHECKLIST	CONTROL OPERATING (YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE)	TEST RESULT / IMPLICATIONS	RECOMMENDATION	CATEGORISATION
	experience that the applicant believes are relevant to his/her suitability for the post advertised and how s/he meets the person specification.				
1.9	Does the information pack to candidates include an explanation that the post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore that all convictions, cautions and bind-over's, including those regarded as 'spent', must be declared?	Yes	We confirmed by review of the 'Guidance notes for completing a job application form', which is included in a candidates information pack, that details regarding the exemption from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 are made aware to the candidate.		
1.10	Are applicants required to provide a signed statement stating that they are not on List 99, PoCA or PoVA, disqualified from work with children, or subject to sanctions imposed by a regulatory body, and either has no convictions, cautions, or bind-over's, or has attached details of their record in a sealed envelope marked confidential?	N/A	An applicant is not required to provide a signed statement stating that they are not on List 99, PoCA or PoVA, or that they have any convictions or cautions. They are also not required to state whether they have been disqualified from working with children, or subject to sanctions imposed by a regulatory body. However, a CRB will be required before an appointment is made which will indicate any issues in any of these areas, therefore this is not considered necessary by the Council.		
1.11	Does the application form state that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where appropriate the successful applicant will be required to complete a Disclosure from the CRB at the appropriate level for the post The organisation will seek references on shortlisted candidates, and may approach previous employers for 	Yes	We confirmed by review of the standard application form that appointment will be subject to receipt of satisfactory references. We confirmed that the application form does not indicate that a CRB check will be required, or that providing false information is an offence. However we confirmed by review of the candidate information pack that this is all detailed in the 'Guidance notes for completing a job application form'. We also confirmed by observation that the information is made aware to applicants		

	CONTROL AS PER CHECKLIST	CONTROL OPERATING (YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE)	TEST RESULT / IMPLICATIONS	RECOMMENDATION	CATEGORISATION
	<p>information to verify particular experience or qualifications, before interview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the applicant is currently working with children, their current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences relating to children, including any which the penalty is 'time expired' and whether the applicant has been the subject of any child protection concerns, and if so, the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. Providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected and possible referral to the police. 		<p>which apply online. We confirmed by discussion with the HR Manager that the application form does not state that applicants currently working with children will have their current employer asked about any disciplinary offences relating to children. However, this will be addressed at a later stage by the request for references and the CRB check that are required.</p>		
1.12	<p>Does the job description clearly state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main duties and responsibilities of the post The individual's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons they are responsible for or come into contact with. 	Yes	<p>We confirmed by review of 3 relevant job descriptions, that all 3 highlight the main responsibilities and duties involved for the post.</p> <p>However, we found that the statement of commitment to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons was not included in any of the job descriptions reviewed. We left a recommendation to address this weakness within 1.4 of this report.</p>	Refer to control 1.4	
1.13	<p>Does the person specification include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The qualifications and 	Yes	<p>We confirmed by review of the person specification for 3 separate posts that all 3 person specifications had included the qualifications and experience needed, the</p>		

	CONTROL AS PER CHECKLIST	CONTROL OPERATING (YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE)	TEST RESULT / IMPLICATIONS	RECOMMENDATION	CATEGORISATION
	<p>experience, and any other requirements needed to perform the role in relation to working with children and young people;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The competences and qualities that the successful candidate should be able to demonstrate; and, An explanation of how these requirements will be tested and assessed during the selection process. 		competences and qualities required and the person specifications also indicated where these requirements will be tested.		
1.14	<p>Does the information pack sent to candidates include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application form Job description and Person Specification Statements of relevant policies such as equal opportunities and the recruitment of ex-offenders The organisation's Child Protection Policy statement 	Yes	<p>We confirmed by review of the information pack sent out to candidates that included is an application form, the job description and the person specification.</p> <p>We found that the information pack also includes an 'Employee Benefits and Entitlements' form, a 'Guidance notes for completing a job application' and a 'Recruitment Monitoring Form'. These collectively include the relevant policies and opportunities as well as the organisation's Child Protection Policy statement.</p>		
1.15	<p>Before the short listing process and before interviews are held does the selection panel agree a procedure for evaluating the candidates?</p>	Yes	<p>We confirmed by review of 2 relevant job files, that only the ASB case workers file showed evidence of a short listing criteria and grading scale.</p> <p>We confirmed that the second job file - Travellers Site Team Leader - had no record of an evaluation procedure, however there was a set criteria followed for the short listing matrix but this was not recorded in the job file.</p>	Ensure that the evaluation procedure and criteria for short listing is accurately recorded for every post prior to completion of the evaluation process.	Merits Attention

	CONTROL AS PER CHECKLIST	CONTROL OPERATING (YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE)	TEST RESULT / IMPLICATIONS	RECOMMENDATION	CATEGORISATION
1.16	Are applications scrutinised to ensure that they are fully and properly completed, that the information provided is consistent and does not contain any discrepancies, and to identify any gaps in employment?	Yes	We confirmed by review of two job files that the applications had been reviewed and scrutinised. This is then compiled into the 'Short listing Matrix' and candidates applications are scored accordingly. We also reviewed five applications and confirmed that they had all been fully completed.		
1.17	Are any anomalies or discrepancies or gaps in employment identified by the scrutiny noted so that they can be taken up as part of the consideration of whether to short list the applicant?	Yes	Any anomalies or discrepancies or gaps in employment are identified by the scrutiny process, and are identified as areas for questioning in the interviewing stage to clarify if there is a reasonable explanation for the issues identified. These issues would not be used in the shortlisting process as this can be seen as discriminative.		
1.18	Are reasons for obvious gaps in employment, a history of repeated changes of employment without any clear career or salary progression or a mid-career move from a permanent post to temporary work noted so that they can be explored and verified during the interview?	Yes	We confirmed by review of a sample of five applications that four of the applications had a full and stable employment history. We found that for the remaining, there was a large gap in the employment history. We reviewed the interview notes for evidence that the gap in employment had been discussed. There were no notes but after discussion with the HR Manager we understand that the issue was raised but not recorded.	Ensure that all key questions are recorded within the interview process to provide an adequate audit trail.	Merits Attention
1.19	Are at least 2 references taken up for each appointment (one of which should be the applicant's current employer)?	Yes	We confirmed by review of a sample of five successful applicants that at least 2 references were obtained before the applicants were appointment. We also confirmed that at least one of these references was from their most recent employer.		
1.20	Do you ensure that references are always obtained directly from	Yes	We confirmed by review for a sample of references held for five employees, that the		

	CONTROL AS PER CHECKLIST	CONTROL OPERATING (YES/NO/NOT APPLICABLE)	TEST RESULT / IMPLICATIONS	RECOMMENDATION	CATEGORISATION
	the referee and that reliance is not placed on references or testimonials provided by the candidate, or on open references and testimonials, i.e. "To Whom It May Concern"?		references were addressed to the member of staff dealing with the appointment. We also confirmed that the references obtained from the 'Reference Request Form', which are sent directly to the employer, were also fully completed and detailed signatures from the employers.		
1.21	Are references sought on all short listed candidates, including internal ones, and obtained before interview so that any issues of concern can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview? (Note: In exceptional circumstances it might not be possible to obtain references prior to interview, either because of delay on the part of the referee, or because a candidate strongly objects to their current employer being approached at that stage, but that should be the aim in all cases).	No	The Council request the references after the interview stage. Any issues regarding the information within the references will be taken up with the candidate. Sufficient references are required before an appointment is made.		
1.22	Where a reference has not been obtained on the preferred candidate before interview, does the organisation ensure that it is received and scrutinised, and any concerns are resolved satisfactorily, before the person's appointment is confirmed?	Yes	We confirmed by review of 5 appointments, that all 5 had produced sufficient reference before the appointment was made. We confirmed by discussion with the HR Manager that the references are requested after the interview stage and that any issues raised from the references will be discussed with the applicant as required.		
1.23	When requesting a reference do you send the referee a standard reference request pro forma, a copy of the job description and a	Yes	We confirmed that a 'Referees Information Pack' is sent to the applicants listed referees. This includes a 'covering letter', a 'reference request' form, the job description and person		

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	copy of the person specification for the post for which the person is applying?		specification relevant to the role applied for. We also confirmed that this is detailed in the Recruitment and Selection Policy.		
1.24	<p>Does the standard reference request form used by the organisation ask for the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The referee's relationship with the candidate Specific comments about the applicant's suitability for the post Whether the referee is completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children and, if not, specific details of the referee's concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the person may be unsuitable. 	Yes	We confirmed that in the standard 'Reference Request Form' is requests of information for the suitability of the applicant for the post applied for and the capacity in which the referee knows the applicant.		
1.25	<p>Do reference requests to the candidate's current employer, or a previous employer in work with children, seek:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of details of the applicant's current post, salary, and sick record; Specific verifiable comments about the applicant's performance history and conduct; Details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to in which the disciplinary sanction is 	Yes	We confirmed by review of the Reference Request Form that details are requested regarding the applicant's current post and sick records, the performance history of the applicant, any criminal/ disciplinary records. We confirmed that allegations and concerns raised with the applicant are not too used in the process according to the ACAST guidance.		

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	<p>current;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of any allegations, concerns or disciplinary procedures that have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people, and the outcome of those concerns / proceedings. 				
1.26	If a candidate for post involving direct work with children/young people is not currently employed in such a role, are checks undertaken with their most recent employer who did employ them in such a role, to confirm details of their employment and reasons for leaving?	No	Due to the limited number of officers employed in this kind of role the Council does not consider it appropriate to get a reference from a previous employer in this kind of role. However, a reference from their previous employer is obtained. We have reviewed the receipt of references within a later part of the review.		
1.27	On receipt are all references checked to ensure that all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily?	Yes	<p>We confirmed by discussion with the HR Officer that all references are checked and any information that is of concern or missing is raised and addressed.</p> <p>We confirmed by review of 10 references that all had been completed fully.</p>		
1.28	If all questions have not been answered or the reference is vague or unspecific, is the referee telephoned and asked to provide written answers or amplification as appropriate?	Yes	<p>We confirmed by review of 5 references that all 5 had been completed fully, so no further action had been taken.</p> <p>We confirmed by discussion with the HR Manager that should a reference not contain sufficient information then the referee is contacted for additional information via post or telephone. Should this be done via telephone then the outcomes are recorded and added to the references in the job file.</p>		

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1.29	Is the referee telephone in order to confirm their identity?	No	We confirmed by discussion with the HR Manager that the Reference Request form is sent directly to the referee for completion, also references received on headed paper. It is seen as unnecessary to contact the referee for confirmation of identity.		
1.30	Is the information provided by the referee compared with the application form to ensure that the information provided about the candidate and his/her previous employment by the referee is consistent with the information provided by the applicant on the form? (Any discrepancy in the information should be taken up with the applicant).	Yes	We reviewed 5 application forms against 5 relevant references that had been obtained. We confirmed that the information in the application forms was reinforced by the references obtained. We confirmed by discussion with the HR Officer that any discrepancies in the information would be addressed; however the more common issues that are identified are regarding illness and the start/finish dates of employment.		
1.31	Is any information that has been provided about a past disciplinary action or allegations considered in the circumstances of the individual case?	Yes	We confirmed by discussion with the HR Manager that this issue has not arisen to date, however, should this issue occur there is a risk assessment that is carried out, which is detailed in the 'CRB Policy and Procedure'		
1.32	Where telephone references are taken up, are they confirmed as soon as possible in writing? Are notes of any telephone references formally recorded?	Yes	We confirmed by review of Recruitment and Selection Policy and by discussion with the HR Manager that should a telephone reference be received then notes will be made and added to the job file. Also the referee will be asked to confirm the information in writing by a set deadline date. Of our sample of 5 references obtained in a previous part of our testing we found that each held written references.		
1.33	Prior to the interview are all shortlisted candidates provided with the following:	Yes	We confirmed that there is a standard interview invitation template which is available via the intranet.		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time and location of the interview Directions to the venue Membership of the interview panel Details about how the interview will be conducted and the areas it will explore, including suitability to work with children. (N.B. Enclosing a copy of the person specification can usefully draw attention to the relevant information). Notification that all candidates should bring with them documentary evidence of their identity that will satisfy CRB requirements and also original documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post. 		<p>We confirmed by review of 5 invitation to interview letters that each letter contained the time and location of the interview, also detailed was the members of the interview panel. We also confirmed that the letter indicates the relevant documentation that will be required at the interview.</p> <p>We confirmed that the interview invitation letter did not give directions to the place of the interview; however it clearly stated a web address where these can be located.</p> <p>We confirmed by discussion with the HR Manager that the letter does not contain how the interview will be conducted, but should any additional tasks be included in the interview process, for example presentation, then these will be stated within the interview invitation. We also confirmed that the areas where the applicant will be tested within the interview are clearly indicated in the Person Specification, which is sent to the applicant.</p>		
1.34	Are interviews conducted by at least two persons?	Yes	We confirmed by review of 5 that there were 2 or more members present for each interview.		
1.35	<p>The members of the interview panel should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have the necessary authority to make decisions about the appointment Be appropriately trained Meet before the interviews to reach a consensus about the required standard for 	Yes	<p>We confirmed by review of 2 interview panels that the chairperson, which was the relevant line manager, had the relevant authority to make and confirm the appointments. We also confirmed that at least one member of the panel had received the Recruitment and Selection training.</p> <p>We confirmed by review of 2 job files that the interview questions and scenarios, with the marking criteria, had been developed prior to</p>		

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	the job to which they are appointing, consider the issues to be explored with each candidate and agree the assessment criteria to be used		the interview.		
1.36	<p>Does the interview process explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The candidate's attitude toward children and young people • Their ability to support the organisation's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children • Gaps in the candidate's employment history • Concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and / or a referee. • Any declarations that the candidate may wish to make in light of the requirement for a CRB check. 	Yes	We confirmed by discussion with the HR Manager that prior to the interview process the questions to be asked are identified to be specific and relevant for the individual posts and the application forms. This would include gaps in employment history or any discrepancies identified, but not necessarily direct questions in relation to their attitude toward children and young children. The detail of this would depend on the post being applied for. It is not considered by the HR Manager to be necessary to ask these types of questions for all appointments as for many this is not directly relevant.		
1.37	Is consideration given to involving children/young people in the recruitment and selection process in some way?	N/A	The consideration of involving children/young people in the recruitment and selection process is considered unnecessary for any of the posts at SCDC.		
1.38	Do you record all interviews and the information ascertained and retain such records on the personal file for future reference, for at least six months in case of a challenge by an unsuccessful applicant?	Yes	We confirmed by review of 5 interviews for 2 posts that the interviews are recorded and then kept within the job file for a period of 6 months.		

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1.39	<p>Is an offer of appointment to the successful candidate conditional upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The receipt of at least two satisfactory references • Verification of the candidates identity • A check of DfES List 99, PoCA and PoVA as applicable and, where appropriate, a satisfactory CRB disclosure • Verification of qualifications • Verification of professional status where required • Satisfactory completion of the probationary period 	Yes	<p>We confirmed by review of the Recruitment and Selection Policy that an appointment is dependant upon satisfactory references, CRB disclosure, medical clearance and proof of identity. This is communicated to the applicant via the 'Conditional Offer Letter', where the template can be found on the intranet.</p> <p>We also confirmed that the applicant will be required to provide evidence of the qualification certificates stated in the application form. This is carried out at the interview stage and is communicated via the interview invitation letter.</p> <p>We also confirmed that the final confirmation of appointment is conditional to successful completion of the probation period which is covered in more detail in a later section of the report.</p>		
1.40	<p>Do you ensure that all of the above checks are confirmed in writing, retained on the personnel file and followed up where they are unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies in the information provided?</p>	Yes	<p>We confirmed by review of 5 personal files for successful applicants, that each file contained at least 2 references proof of identity and any qualifications held.</p> <p>We confirmed by review of the CRB checklist held by the HR Officer that a CRB was completed for the applicant. The CRB report is held in a separate file to the personal information and is destroyed after 6 months due to data protection.</p> <p>We confirmed by review of 4 personal files that there was no evidence of any probationary records and the standard 'Probation Guidance' was also not evident. We have reviewed this in more details and left a recommendation within section 43 of</p>	Refer to control 1. 43	

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			this report.		
1.41	Does all new staff serve a 6-month period of probation in accordance with conditions of service?	Yes	We confirmed by review of 4 applicants in post for a period greater than 6 months that they had all successfully completed their probationary periods.		
1.42	Is this made clear to the candidate at the interview?	Yes	We confirmed by review of the 'Conditional Offer' letter sent to the successful applicant that the final appointment is conditional upon the completion of a probationary period. We also confirmed that this is communicated to the applicant via the 'Guidance notes for completing a job application form'.		
1.43	Is an evaluation undertaken after the initial 6 months of employment?	Yes	We confirmed by review of 4 applicants, that all 4 of the applicants have fully completed their probationary period. We confirmed by review of the electronic anite files for the applicants that no evaluation of the probationary period has been recorded. We confirmed by discussion with the HR Officer that an evaluation would have taken place to assess whether the probation has been completed fully.	Ensure that the 'Probation Guidance' document is completed which involves an assessment of the probation period and recorded on either the personal file or the anite electronic folder.	Merits Attention
1.44	Is an enhanced CRB check requested for all new employees?	N/A	A CRB check is not required for every post within the organisation. We confirmed by review of the 'Modified list of council staff to be subject to CRB check' that certain posts do require a CRB check. It also details the level of the check, whether a standard or enhanced check is required.		
1.45	Where you do not use a contracted personnel provider, but run your personnel service in-house, are all managers involved in recruitment and selection aware of the CRB guidance regarding registered	Yes	We confirmed by review of the CRB Policy and Procedure, which is available to all staff members via the in house intranet, that the process to follow is made aware to staff. Also we confirmed that there is a CRB flowchart that highlights the key areas and process for acquiring a CRB check.	The CRB Policy and Procedure should be reviewed to include guidance on the retention of documentation.	Merits Attention

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	bodies (including aspects such as retention?)		<p>However, we found that this does not include aspects of the retention of CRB documents.</p> <p>There is a risk that the CRB checks are not held and disposed of in a suitable manner if clear guidance is not provided.</p>		
1.46	Are staffs involved in the CRB process aware of the checks that need to be performed in respect of the completed application?	Yes	We confirmed through review of the CRB Policy and Procedures and the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures that these includes the key areas for staff to follow. We found that all staff has access to these policies and procedures via the intranet. In addition, we confirmed earlier in our report that all line manager have attended training on recruitment and selection. As part of our testing during the review we confirmed that staff are following the procedures in relation to the checks that are required to be undertaken. (Due to the length of the time CRB notices are held we were unable to check the accuracy of the information entered.)		
1.47	Do you give the successful applicant a CRB disclosure form with the level of disclosure required already marked?	Yes	We confirmed by review of the Recruitment and Selection Policy that a CRB form is issued to the successful applicant for completion at the required level.		
1.48	Is original documentation to support proof of identity always obtained, such as a birth certificate, photo driving licence, or a passport?	Yes	We confirmed by review of 5 personal files that a copy of identification is held on record.		
1.49	Do you check I.D. to the CRB form in accordance with the instructions on the CRB form?	Yes	Through discussion with the HR Manger we understand that all CRB forms are checked to the applicant's identity and recorded as such. We were unable to validate that appropriate checks on the CRB form (to confirm identity) are carried out due to the CRB form being destroyed after 6 months of		

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			<p>being completed. Also there were no employees requiring a check which has been completed and returned within the last 6 months.</p> <p>We confirmed by discussion with the HR Officer that checks are carried out before the CRB form is processed. We also confirmed that checks are carried out via CRB which will then return incomplete applications</p>		
1.50	Are copies made for your personnel records?	Yes	<p>We can confirm that all CRB checks are filed separately to the personal files. This is due to data protection. Also the CRB files are destroyed after a period of 6 months.</p> <p>We confirmed that a spreadsheet detailing all CRB checks carried out is held by the HR Officer. The spreadsheet details the employees name and post, type of disclosure, the application number, date received by HR, date sent to CRB, date of disclosure of CRB and the decision on the recruitment.</p>		
1.51	Do you have in place a process to deal with CRB checks that have revealed a trace – e.g. an objective assessment form?	Yes	We confirmed by review of the 'CRB Policy and Procedure' document and by discussion with the HR Manager that a risk assessment is carried out should a CRB check reveal a trace that has not already been reviewed.		
1.52	Are instances where the conviction revealed had not been disclosed on the application form followed up?	Yes	We confirmed by review of 2 CRB checks that revealed a trace that a risk assessment was carried out and that the applicant was notified of the outcome of the assessment.		
1.53	Is a List 99/PoCA/PoVA check undertaken for all new staff appointments where the post involves work with children/young people, prior to commencement, where the CRB check will not be completed prior	Yes	We confirmed by review of the CRB Checklist that the CRB checks were completed for new starters requiring a CRB, therefore a List 99/PoCA/PoVA have not been required.		

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	to the new employee taking up their post?				
1.54	If a CRB check is not received prior to start of the job, is a risk assessment undertaken?	Yes	We confirmed by review of the CRB Policy and Procedure that there is a risk assessment in place. However, we confirmed by discussion with the HR Manger that for post requiring CRB checks, no appointment would be made until that has been attained. The risk assessment is used for assessment should the CRB indicate any past convictions not already confirmed.		
1.55	Are the results of the risk assessment clearly documented, signed by the person completing the assessment, a final decision clearly stated and where relevant the decision approved?	Yes	We confirmed by review of 2 CRB checks which revealed a trace not already confirmed, that the risk assessment was carried out with the outcome clearly stated, also the reasoning behind the decision is stated in the letters sent to the applicants. The letters are confirmed and signed by the appropriate member of staff.		
1.56	Does the CRB process work as follows (or broadly similar)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The successful applicant is made aware that they are the 'preferred candidate' • The applicant completes the form and returns it to the manager along with an original passport / driving licence / birth certificate for verification. • The manager verifies personal details and forwards the disclosure to your HR department • Your HR adviser/manager countersigns the disclosure form and 	Yes	We confirmed by review of the CRB Policy and Procedure document and by discussion with the HR Manager that applicants are made aware they are the preferred candidate via the conditional offer letter, which attached is the CRB disclosure form required to be completed and returned by the applicant. The proof of identity obtained at the interview process is then used to fill the personal details on the back of the CRB form. This is then sent to one of the signatories, the HR Manager or the HR Officer, for signing, and then sent off. The result of the CRB check will be returned to the HR Manager and either a risk assessment is completed or approval is given to the relevant line manager.		

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	forwards that to the CRB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your HR manager advises the manager of the outcome of the check immediately it has been received 				
1.57	Do you undertake CRB checks or any other appropriate checks on foreign nationals (i.e. candidates with a limited or no prior period of residence in the U.K.)?	No	We confirmed by discussion with the HR Manager that this has not been required to date, but there is a process which would be followed to obtain a CRB for foreign nationals. However, there is no formal national procedure set, which allows for variation of process. We confirmed that the procedure adopted is not stated in any of the policies or procedures, which could result in inappropriate actions being taken.	Record the procedure for obtaining CRB checks or other appropriate checks on foreign nationals within the policies and procedures.	Merits Attention
1.58	Is advice sought from your HR manager or the Disclosure Service in such instances? Note: For certain positions you may still have a statutory duty to undertake checks on the list held by the DH and DFES).	N/A	As to date this has never been applicable as the issue has never arisen.		
1.59	Do you have procedures in place to monitor new employees during their probation period? (E.g. new staff could be subject to periodic unannounced peer review, Line managers could receive feedback on the progress of staff who report directly to another member of the team?)	Yes	We confirmed by review of two Probation Guidance documents that there is an ongoing monitoring system in place and that this is being followed and completed.		
1.60	Do you maintain an up to date list of all volunteer helpers used by the organisation?	N/A	South Cambridgeshire District Council does not currently have any volunteers that would come into contact with children.		

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1.61	If you are actively seeking volunteers, and are considering candidates about whom you have little or no recent knowledge, do you adopt equivalent recruitment measures as you would for paid staff?	N/A	South Cambridgeshire District Council does not currently have any volunteers that would come into contact with children.		
1.62	Where using individuals known to the organisation as volunteers, do you still: - Seek references - Conduct an informal interview to gauge the person's aptitude and suitability - Undertake a list 99, PoCA/PoVA and CRB check	N/A	South Cambridgeshire District Council does not currently have any volunteers that would come into contact with children.		
1.63	Do you maintain a policy with regard to which types of volunteers require a CRB check?	N/A	South Cambridgeshire District Council does not currently have any volunteers that would come into contact with children.		
1.64	Do you ensure that firms providing services that bring their employees into regular contact with children have undertaken the necessary level of CRB checks as a minimum? Note: It is the organisation's policy that 'proof of registration with the CRB' is required before services can be commissioned from any independent contractor, agency or company' where the work involves regular contact with children?	N/A	South Cambridgeshire District Council does not currently have any out sourced firms that would come into contact with children.		
1.65	Do you obtain assurance that all staff that work directly with children and young people have	N/A	South Cambridgeshire District Council does not currently have any volunteers, or out sourced agencies that would come into		

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	been subject to the required checks?		contact with children. For all SCDC employees the relevant procedures are taken.		
1.66	If no checks are undertaken do you have appropriate measures in place to reduce any associated risks (e.g. segregation, works undertaken when children/young people will not be on site)?	N/A	South Cambridgeshire District Council does not currently have any volunteers, or out sourced agencies that would come into contact with children. For all SCDC employees the relevant procedures are taken.		
1.67	Do you have systems in place to ensure that the staffs employed by other agencies that have regular contact with children in your organisation have been subject to full CRB checks?	N/A	South Cambridgeshire District Council does not currently have any volunteers, or out sourced agencies that would come into contact with children. For all SCDC employees the relevant procedures are taken.		
1.68	Do you ask for written confirmation that a CRB check and references have been obtained by the agency that indicate there are no reasons the person should not be employed to work with children? Note: Employment agencies providing Bank staff will normally have CRB registration, but it is still important to check that this is the case.	N/A	South Cambridgeshire District Council does not currently have any volunteers, or out sourced agencies that would come into contact with children. For all SCDC employees the relevant procedures are taken.		
1.69	In the appointment of agency staff do you ensure that you obtain: - Two satisfactory references - - Medical clearance - Criminal records bureau check	N/A	South Cambridgeshire District Council does not currently have any out sourced agencies that would come into contact with children. For all SCDC employees the relevant procedures are taken.		
1.70	Does the organisation have an	Yes	We confirmed by review of the 'Induction		

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	<p>induction programme for all newly appointed staff and volunteers, the purpose of which should be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training and information about the organisation's policies and procedures • Support individuals in a way that is appropriate for the role for which they have been engaged • Confirm the conduct expected of staff in relation to safe working practices with children and young people? • Provide opportunities for a new member of staff or volunteer to discuss any issues or concerns about their role or responsibilities • Enable the person's line manager or mentor to recognise any concerns or issues about the person's ability or suitability for work with the client group at the outset and address them immediately. 		<p>Checklist' that new starters are provided information regarding the policies and procedures relevant to that post, that they are taken through the code of conduct. Throughout the Induction Checklist the employee is able to discuss any issues arising from the induction, also there is a comments section to record the thoughts of the new starter should they wish.</p>		
1.71	<p>Is formal child protection training provided for all staff that has contact with children, at least every three years?</p>	Yes	<p>We confirmed by review of the 'Training Log for Safeguarding Children and Young People' That the members who are in contact with children or have an interest in the safeguarding of children attend a training session specified for this.</p>		
1.72	<p>Are regular updates held at staff meetings to revisit some of the</p>	Yes	<p>We confirmed that there are regular meeting held where safeguarding children issues are</p>		

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	issues around child protection?		raised and discussed. We reviewed the minutes for the meeting held on 24th September 2008. In this meeting issues around safeguarding children are reviewed, a self assessment and plan of action was also included. A training plan for safeguarding children was also confirmed. In addition, there was evidence to show previous meeting had taken place.		
1.73	Is there clarity amongst staff that works with children and young people about what is contained in the organisation's child protection policy and do you have confidence that each member of staff is able to play their part in protecting children?	Yes	We confirmed by discussion with the HR Manager that there is confidence with the procedures and training in place that staff are made aware of the procedures regarding working with children and that the relevant staff are able to play their part in protecting children.		
1.74	Is regular supervision, from colleagues, senior staff or suitably qualified outside workers, undertaken on all staff that deals directly with child protection cases so that an opportunity for support and reflection on the management of cases is available?	No	Due to the very limited number of posts that involves working with children this is not carried out.		
1.75	Do you target child protection management issues through the performance management process?	No	Due to the very limited number of posts that involves working with children this is not carried out independently of the usual procedures with all staff.		
1.76	Do you have in place a clear child protection policy and procedures including how to deal with allegations made against staff, support / contract staff and volunteers?	Yes	We confirmed that there is a 'Protection of Children and Young People from Abuse Policy' in place. The policy details the procedures to be followed should an allegation be made against a member of staff.		
1.77	Has the policy been clearly	Yes	We confirmed by observation that the		

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	communicated to staff, volunteers and parents?		'Protection of Children and Young People from Abuse Policy is made available via the intranet. We also confirmed that posters, detailing the reporting of potential child abuse, indicating certain areas of the policy are present throughout the premises.		
1.78	Do you have a Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers covering contact with children, including clarity about what constitutes clear professional boundaries, which is clearly communicated to staff, monitored and enforced?	N/A	We confirmed by review of the 'Code of Conduct' that there is no inclusion regarding coming into contact with children or what constitutes professional boundaries. We understand that there are very few positions within the organisation for which this would apply, therefore it is not considered appropriate to include anything within the Code of Conduct.		
1.79	Do you have a policy on the use of physical intervention which is clearly communicated to staff, monitored and enforced	N/A	There is no policy for the use of physical intervention as there are no posts which this would be relevant to.		
1.80	Do you have a whistle blowing policy that has been publicised to all and on which all staff have been briefed?	Yes	We confirmed that there is a 'Whistle Blowing Policy in place, and that this policy reflects the standards set by the Cambridgeshire Local Safeguard Board.		
1.81	Do you have a clear written bullying policy that covers racial harassment?	Yes	We confirmed that there is a 'Harassment and Bullying at work' policy and procedure which is available via the intranet.		
1.82	Do you retain records of concerns securely?	Yes	There are no records kept regarding bullying however any issues raised will be dealt with and appropriate action taken where necessary with due consent taken for the security of any records.		