

Application Guidance

Applying for a job with the Council - Understanding
the process and the benefits of working with us



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If you require this information in large print,
Braille or on audiotape please
telephone, **01267 234567**



INVESTORS | BUDDSODDWYR
IN PEOPLE | MEWN POBL

Introduction

Carmarthenshire

The county of Carmarthenshire offers something for everyone, from the beautiful coastline of cliffs, estuaries and beaches, historic castles and hill-forts to the hustle and bustle of historic market towns, modern shopping centres and thriving centres of industry. The Millennium Coastal Park, National Botanic Garden of Wales, Dylan Thomas Boathouse and Aberglasney Gardens are all in the County and the sporting and leisure opportunities are plentiful.

Carmarthenshire County Council

We are one of the largest employers in West Wales, employing around 9000 people in a range of occupations such as teaching, social care, highways maintenance, etc. We provide services to a population of around 170,000.

The Council is managed by 74 elected councillors from a range of political backgrounds. They are the decision makers and agree the Council's policies and spending priorities.

Supporting Employees

We offer a range of benefits and working arrangements to support employees in their working and personal life, including:

- A staff discount scheme offering discounts on anything from personal loans through to CDs.
- A discount leisure scheme in Leisure Centres across the county
- An Occupational Health Service offering health and lifestyle screening, counselling and other support.
- A Child Care Voucher Scheme
- A range of flexible working arrangements including a flexi-time scheme, special leave arrangements, job sharing, home working (currently being piloted)

Development opportunities

Whilst we may ask for certain qualifications and experience for some of our jobs, we are committed to supporting employees to develop their skills. Some of the ways in which we do this are:

- Regular appraisals and personal development plans
- Training courses
- E Learning
- Secondments
- Modern Apprenticeships

Salary/Pay

We offer a competitive range of salaries and have recently introduced a new pay and grading structure to ensure that we can continue to attract and retain people in the future.

Supporting Employees

New Look Pension Scheme

A new look local government pension scheme was introduced on the 1st April 2008. The new pension scheme remains a final salary scheme and the normal retirement date remains at 65. The scheme also has benefits including :-

- A new accrual rate of 1/60th scheme membership.
- Death in service will increase from twice to three times pension able pay
- Survivor benefits will be extended to co-habitees providing qualifying conditions exist.

Pension Banding

Pension Bandings are set against salary ranges to determine your contribution rate. These bandings are subject to annual review and in addition as your pay increases you may automatically move to a higher contribution rate.

- The tiered rate of contributions rates are based on the whole time equivalent for the post, which may include additional payments.
- If you work part time, your contribution rate will be based on the whole time equivalent for the post.
- Term time employees will be assessed on the full time equivalent term time, based on the actual weeks paid for term time only calculations.
- If you work in a second post you will be given a separate assessment of the contribution rate for the separate post.

You will be advised on the appropriate contribution rate on your employment contract and you should in the first instance contact HR department if you have any queries.

Further details can be found on the Dyfed Pension scheme website.
www.dyfedpensionfund.org.uk

Supporting Employees

Holidays

A minimum of 26 days holidays plus 8 bank holidays per year are provided. Holidays for part time employees are calculated on a pro-rata basis.

Maternity Leave & Pay

We provide an enhanced maternity scheme to employees who qualify.

Paternity & Pay

Partners (who qualify) are supported at the birth of a baby with leave and pay.

No Smoking

We operate a "No Smoking " Policy.

Welsh Language Scheme

Carmarthenshire County Council has adopted the principle that it will treat Welsh and English on a basis of equality. This scheme sets out how the Council will implement that principle in the provision of services to the public in Carmarthenshire. Further information is available on request.

Applying for a Job with the Council

Now that you've decided to apply for a job with us, this section aims to provide as much information as possible about what you can expect from our recruitment process. However, due to the wide range of posts we offer, you may find that this varies occasionally. If you can't find the answers you're looking for, please contact us at the contact number given at the end of this booklet.

Fair Recruitment

We want to ensure that every stage in our recruitment process is fair and that you are treated properly. We have a duty to ensure that no-one is discriminated against and we hope that even if you are not appointed, you will feel that you have been treated fairly.

When assessing your application, we will not consider any previous applications or personal knowledge of you. As we base this assessment only on your application form it is very important that you complete it as fully as possible and the sections which follow aim to help you with this. If you are unable to complete an application form in the standard format due to disability or some other reason, please contact us for advice.

The Application Pack

Within the pack, you should find the following:

- **An application form**
- **A Job Description:** This sets out the main duties and requirements of the job.

Applying for a Job with the Council

- **A Person Specification:** This details the skills, experience, qualifications and aptitudes we are seeking for the job for which you are applying. If you think that you meet all of the essential requirements it will be essential that you are able to explain and demonstrate how you do so when you are completing the application form.
- **Equality Monitoring Form:** We ask all our applicants to help us to monitor the fairness of our recruitment process by completing this form. You may complete some or all of it and return it with your application form. Once received, we will separate it from your application so that it does not form part of the assessment process. This information is treated in confidence. If you have any questions or concerns about this, please contact our Recruitment Team at the telephone number given at the end of this booklet.

Completing the Application Form

General

This section provides detailed advice on how to complete each part of the form. The numbers relate to the numbered sections on the form. Please read this carefully before completing the application form.

Please do not send in your CV instead of an application form, as it will not be put forward for assessment. Also, please do not attach your CV to the application form as our assessment is based on the information provided in our application form only. This means we can assess your skills, etc, against another applicant's in a fair and consistent way.

Don't be put off by the amount of information we ask for. This means that we can complete the assessment of your application quickly and without having to ask you for further information. If some of the boxes don't apply to you, please put a line through them and move to the next box.

You can complete your application form by hand or type and in English or Welsh. You can also apply online at www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk. When completed you should return the form to the address given by the closing date. You may wish to keep a copy for your reference.

Employee Number/Applicant Reference No:

At the top of the Application Form, existing employees should enter their employee number. If you are not a current employee, this will already be completed for you or will be automatically completed if applying online.

Completing the Application Form

1. Vacancy Details

This may already be completed (or automatically completed if applying online). Please check that all the details are correct and if not or if any information is missing, please refer to the job advertisement and complete the box. Take note of the closing date as we must receive your application form by this date or it cannot be considered.

2. Personal Details

The details you provide here enable us to contact you about your application. We will usually write to you but we may contact you by telephone or e-mail. As we only ask for your initials and surname at this stage, please do not think we are being disrespectful if we refer to you as A Smith for example.

3. Positive about Disabled People

The Council is committed to the Disability Symbol. Interviews for people with disabilities, as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) are guaranteed if the essential criteria for the post is satisfied. If you wish to be considered for an interview under this scheme, please make us aware of this by indicating so under this section of the application form.

Please note that individual schools will indicate if they are signed up to the scheme.



4. References

The two referees you name should be your current and most recent previous employer. However, we recognise that this is not always possible. If you are self-employed, you may provide the name of someone who has known you in a professional capacity e.g. an accountant or solicitor. If you have just left full time education you should provide the names of your course teacher or head teacher. If returning to work after a career break, you might consider providing the name of someone unrelated to you who knows you well, for example, your GP or the leader of a community group with which you have been involved. Failure to supply a referee may result in your application not being considered.

Completing the Application Form

As we do not appoint without taking up references and to speed up the process, we prefer to contact referees prior to interviews. Please tick the box only if you do not want us to do this.

For some posts, which have access to vulnerable groups for example, we may approach other employers named in your application, depending on the relevant statutory requirements. If you wish to discuss this please contact the Recruitment Team.

5a. Current employment

Please provide the details of your current employer. If you are not currently in employment, please leave this blank.

5b. Previous employment

Starting with the most recent (before your current employer), please provide as much information on your employment history, back to the date of leaving school. Please explain any gaps in the employment history and attach an additional sheet if necessary.

If you have not been employed before or are returning after a long career break, try to think of examples of projects or community groups, etc you have been involved with that may have required some of the skills we are looking for.

6. Education/Qualifications

Please give details of any relevant qualifications you hold and where you obtained them. This should include the grade and level of qualification.

If you do not have any qualifications please draw a line through the box.

If you are shortlisted for interview you will need to bring your original qualification certificates with you. These will be checked and if necessary, we will contact the awarding body to verify the qualification.

Completing the Application Form

7. Professional membership and other training

You should include details of membership of professional bodies and if shortlisted for interview, you should bring your original registration documents with you. Please also include details of any job related or other training which you think is relevant.

8. Language Skills

Please indicate what language skills you have. Some of our positions require Welsh speakers/writers so it is important that you indicate what level of fluency you have. Also, the ability to speak any other languages can be very useful in some jobs so please complete as fully as possible. Please refer to the person specification to find out what level of fluency is required.

Speaking

Level 1 - No speaking skills

Level 2

For example:

- Ability to meet and greet people in language selected
- Ability to introduce /meetings in language selected
- Ability to pronounce local place names in Welsh (applies to Welsh language skills only)
- Ability to pronounce key Local Authority vocabulary in language selected (applies to Welsh and English language skills only)
- Ability to understand and participate in simple conversations in language selected
- Ability to answer the telephone with bilingual greeting and transfer call to a Welsh speaker (applies to Welsh only)

Completing the Application Form

Level 3

For example:

- Participate in meetings where all that is demanded is simple answers to simple, factual questions.
- Provide simple, routine information about business activities, e.g. 'Yes, we provide'
- Begin to establish a business relationship, but not beyond the exchange of simple information.

Level 4

For example:

- Provide short reports on activities that are familiar and within own field, but may not stand up to questioning.
- Take part in routine meetings where the discussion is limited to an exchange of information within own field through question and answer or receiving instructions, making arrangements, etc.
- Obtain routine straightforward information within a known field. Ask questions about that information and understand straightforward answers, but may not understand unpredictable answers.

Level 5

For example:

- Handle routine information within own field, and can handle unpredictable questions within it.
- Begin to handle complex questions within own field, but with the risk of misunderstanding.

Completing the Application Form

- Clarify most information within own field, except where this is complex.
- Present information specifying daily work requirements, and explain the requirements of others, within own field.
- Provide short reports on activities etc. within own field and withstand questioning, provided this is predictable.

Level 6

For example

- Handle all aspects of everyday work, except where these are unpredictable and outside own field.
- Maintain relationships with business networks within own field, but may have difficulty in establishing and maintaining these where the demands made fall outside own field.
- Speak and answer questions at length when required.

Writing Skills

Level 1 - No written skills

Level 2

For example:

- Provide very simple information on complaints, faults, provided this is within own field, is familiar and the output required is to a standard format.
- Prepare and present standard reports where the output required is factual and can be expressed in simple language.

Completing the Application Form

Level 3

For example:

- Describe the key characteristics of services and organisations within own field, but may not be able to describe these fully and in detail.
- Report on straightforward complaints, or enquiries etc. within own field, provided that these are familiar and are presented in a standardised format.

Level 4

For example:

- Report on enquiries, complaints, problems, etc. within own field, but there remains the risk of being misunderstood where these are complex and/or lengthy.
- Begin to compose technical assessments of enquiries, complaints, etc. where these are within own field and the output required is straightforward.
- Produce information to monitor plans.

Level 5

For example

- Report on enquiries, complaints, problems, etc. within own field.
- Compose technical assessments of enquiries, complaints, problems and faults within own field.

Completing the Application Form

9. Additional Information

- a) Some of our jobs involve driving and/or the ability to travel. Please tick the appropriate box. See the Person Specification to establish the requirements for the post for which you are applying.

10. Supporting Statement

This is a very important section as this allows you to state exactly how you think your skills, experience and training will enable you to meet the requirements of the job.

You should relate your supporting statement to the Person Specification and set out clearly what experience, skills or training you have for each requirement. Try to use examples of work you have carried out or training you have undertaken. This does not have to be work related if you think it is relevant. For example:

Applicant A is applying for an Accounts Assistant post after a career break. She has no recent paid work experience so she explains how the skills she has developed in her voluntary work as Secretary/ Treasurer of an after-school club relate to the person specification.

Please tell us about any experience, skills or training which you think is relevant to the job. When shortlisting, we cannot make assumptions so if you do not make it clear that you meet the criteria set out in the Person Specification, we will not be able to take your application any further.

Completing the Application Form

11. Rehabilitation of Offenders

You only have to complete this section if the job for which you are applying requires a Criminal Record (CRB) check. If shortlisted for interview, you will be asked to provide details of all/any spent and unspent convictions, bindovers or cautions, together with any judgements or investigations pending.

This does not mean that you will not be appointed, as this will depend on the nature of the offence and the type of job for which you are applying. If appointed, you will be asked to complete a CRB check form which is sent to the Criminal Records Bureau. As part of this process a check may be made with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) if the nature or place of work involves contact with children or vulnerable adults. Additional checks may also be made with other Regulatory Bodies.

Please see the enclosed Policy for further information.

Completing the Application Form

12. Relationships to Councillors, School Governors or Senior Employees

Please tell us if you are related to a Councillor, School Governor or Senior employee of the Council, as we must ensure that shortlisting and interview decisions are not made by anyone related to a candidate as far as possible. You could disqualify your application if you do not disclose or try to influence the process via a relationship you have with one of the above.

13. Declaration/Confirmation

By the time you sign your application form, the hard work will be completed. **Please read the declaration carefully** and sign and date where shown. If you are applying on line, you will be unable to do this. In these circumstances, we will ask you to sign and date a copy if you are selected for interview.

What happens after you've sent in your application?

Once we've received your application, we will separate the equal opportunities monitoring form and send the application form only to the shortlisting department. We will not send an acknowledgement of receipt unless you specifically request it and send a stamped addressed envelope.

Your application will then be assessed against the criteria (in the person specification) and the shortlisting panel will decide whether it can be shortlisted.

If you are not called for interview within six weeks of the closing date, please assume you have been unsuccessful in your application on this occasion.

If you are shortlisted for interview, you will receive a letter from us usually within **2 weeks** of the closing date, advising the date, time and location of the interview. The letter will also include details of assessment testing which is to be carried out and will outline the documentation which you are required to bring with you.

All those who attend for interview will be asked to bring the following original documentation:

- Passport/European Identity Card or Birth Certificate, and proof of National Insurance, P45, P60 or Government letter.
- If you are not a British national or the holder of an EU or EEA Passport, you must provide evidence of your eligibility to work within the UK. Acceptable forms of identity will be detailed in your interview letter.
- Certificates of relevant qualifications or proof of registration with a professional body if required.
- Other documents may be requested depending upon the requirements of the job e.g. driving licence

These documents will be photocopied and retained along with your application form, for a period of **12 months** from the date of interview. However, if you are successful, these documents will be held confidentially on your personal file.

After the Interview

We advise all applicants who attend for interview of the outcome either by telephone or by letter. If you are successful, we may need to complete all pre-employment checks prior to offering you the post so there may be some delay. Once these are completed, we will agree a start date with you and provide you with further information relating to your employment, including a contract, employee guide, etc.

We hope that this guide helps you during the recruitment process and that you are successful in your search for a job with the Council.
Good Luck!

Useful Contact Numbers

Requesting an application form & other recruitment enquiries:

01267 246141

01267 234567

Email: direct@cardiffshire.gov.uk

www.cardiffshire.gov.uk/english/jobs/pages/

Returning Your Application Form

Please return your completed application form and equal opportunities monitoring form to:

The Recruitment Team

Human Resources

People Management & Performance

St. David's Park

Jobswell Road

Cardiff

SA31 3HB