



WEST BEDLINGTON

TOWN COUNCIL

Policy for DBS Checks

Date	14th April 2016
Version	3
Reviewed	13th November 2025
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Policy for DBS Checks

WBTC policy for DBS Checks.

The purpose of this code of practice is to give details of the disclosure and barring checks that council would like all people who become councillors to undertake, as well as for staff and volunteers directly working for and under the supervision of the council. In the case of applicants for paid employment, it should include guidance on how these checks relate to the recruitment process. It will also help Council adopt robust vetting procedures that minimise the risk of employing people who pose a risk of harm to children and/or vulnerable adults.

Provisions on the scope of 'Regulated Activity' as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (SVG) Act 2006, as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

If anyone disputes the information provided on the certificate of disclosure, it is his/her responsibility to contact the DBS direct and arrange for further checks to be made.

The certificate of disclosure will be sent direct to the individual, a copy can be retained by Council for a maximum period of 6 months, in accordance with the policy on security of disclosure information and DBS guidelines.

As certificates of disclosure cannot be held on file for longer than 6 months, Council will maintain a record of the date of the disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of disclosure, the position in question, the unique number issued by the DBS and if necessary, the recruitment decision taken.

Enhanced disclosures and barred list check for all Councillors.

This council would recommend that Basic DBS should be mandatory for all new appointees to the Council, including councillors, staff and sessional workers under the jurisdiction of the council.

If an individual is registered with the online update service, has a certificate at the right level and for the right workforce group (children and vulnerable adults); an online status check can be undertaken with their permission. If this is clear then the certificate can be accepted; if there have been updates/changes since the certificate was issued then a new check would need to be undertaken in the normal way.

Council should consider obtaining enhanced DBS disclosures where the councillor, staff or volunteer is regular and involves contact with children or vulnerable adults. Regular is defined as three or more times in a 30-day period, or overnight.

All staff posts in council are subject to declaration of criminal convictions and require an enhanced certificate of disclosure to be obtained.

After the final selection stage an offer of appointment to the chosen candidate can be made but this must be subject to the receipt of a satisfactory certificate of disclosure (in addition to the other necessary pre-employment checks). Under no circumstances should an unconditional offer of employment be made.

Council has discretion to allow an employee to start work pending receipt of a DBS certificate of disclosure. Council should consider carefully the circumstances of the situation before doing so.

Council is therefore responsible for obtaining sight of the original certificate from the individual and must verify its authenticity:

- ID check
- Check certificate is for the named applicant
- a 'crown seal' watermark repeated down the right-hand side,
- visible both on the surface and when holding it up to the light
- a background design featuring the word 'Disclosure', which
- appears in a wave-like pattern across both sides of the
- certificate; the pattern's colour alternates between blue and
- green on the reverse of the certificate
- Ink and paper that change colour when wet.

A photocopy of both sides should be taken which is signed and dated to verify the original has been seen.

The existence of a criminal record or other relevant matters is not necessarily a bar to an individual obtaining a position. Obviously, some convictions are of such a nature as to render a person unfit to work with children or vulnerable adults; however, it is impossible to compile an extensive list of offences which automatically prevent someone from working with children.

In deciding whether a declared conviction or other relevant matters affects an applicant's suitability, the information supplied to the employer must be discussed with the candidate before or at interview. This may include seeking more information about the detail of any conviction where necessary.

The only information from a certificate of disclosure which will be retained by the Council for more than the 6-month maximum is as follows:

- the date the certificate of disclosure was issued;
- the name of the subject;
- the type/level of disclosure;
- for an enhanced disclosure,
- the position in question;
- the unique number issued by the DBS;
- The recruitment decision taken.

No further information will be retained.

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it is appropriate in light of recommended best practice and complies with statutory regulations. In the event of any conflict with statutory regulations, the legal provisions will have precedence over this policy in all cases.