

Information for Applicants

PER 032/1

Thank you for your interest in applying to work for Colchester Borough Council. We hope you find our application pack useful and of interest.

Our Vision - what we want to achieve:

Colchester has a rich heritage and an ambitious future. As a Council we want to build on the successes of recent years, and work with partners to get the best for our residents, businesses and visitors.

The four words or themes that sum up what we want to achieve are:

GROWTH RESPONSIBILITY OPPORTUNITY WELLBEING

- **Growth** – ensuring all residents benefit from the growth of the borough
- **Responsibility** – encouraging everyone to do their bit to making our borough even better
- **Opportunity** – Promoting and improving Colchester and its environment
- **Wellbeing** – making Colchester an even better place to live and supporting those who need most help.

Our priorities for action in achieving this vision are set out in the Council's Strategic Plan 2018-21.

Our People

We want to continue to be a high performing Council with motivated employees who are proud to work here and make a difference to people's lives. We need to use our resources wisely and draw on and develop the talent and skills we have in the organisation to be even better than we are in everything that we do.

We have three core goals for the organisation, with underpinning attitudes and behaviours which we expect our staff to have (please see the 'making an application' on our website). These goals are summarised below and provide a focus for what we do and how we do it:

Customer - *Help our customers access our services and deliver on our communities' needs*

Business - *Become commercially focused and even more business-like in order to be free of government grant*

Culture - *Inspired staff who do the right things and are proud to work for the Council.*

We are committed to the personal and professional development of our people, and this was recognised by the independent assessor for our Investors in People re-accreditation:

"The commitment towards learning and development is well evidenced and people who work for the Council understand that this is a priority for the organisation. Strong linkage is made between strategy and people planning and this is done at an early stage rather than as an afterthought. When planning initiatives and concepts, people are at the heart of considerations."

The Council also takes an active approach towards promoting the wellbeing of our people so that they are “happy, healthy and here”. A comprehensive wellbeing programme continues to develop in its scope and impact on the health and morale of employees.

Benefits

The Council offers employees a range of voluntary and flexible benefits to complement a person’s lifestyle needs and these include:

- Local Government pension scheme
- Generous annual leave plus the ability to purchase additional leave
- Subsidised gym and leisure membership plus other wellbeing incentives/checks
- Flexitime and flexible working policies
- “Bike2Work” scheme – large discounts on bikes and accessories
- Public transport discounts – up to 50%
- Discounted car parking facilities and car share scheme
- Relocation package (criteria based)
- A range of local and national discounts on products and services
- Financial support for continuous professional and personal development
- Employee Assistance Programme – free independent support and advice.

You can find further guidance and details on conditions of service, recruitment practices and the opportunities and benefits of working for Colchester Borough Council by looking at our website www.colchester.gov.uk/jobs or by contacting Human Resources on hrservicecentre@colchester.gov.uk

Equality and Diversity

The Council has an equality and diversity policy, which is available in the ‘Jobs’ section of our website. The Council does not discriminate against any person in our employment or who is seeking employment with us.

To help implement this policy, all applications for vacancies with the Council have an equality and diversity monitoring form which must be completed.

It is also important to note that the confidential information provided on the equality and diversity monitoring form remains with Human Resources and is **not** used as part of the shortlisting process. This information is only used for statutory data collection purposes. If you require this application form in another format because of a disability please contact Human Resources on hrservicecentre@colchester.gov.uk

Completing the Application Form

To contribute to our aim to be a “cleaner and greener” borough, we have an online application process at www.colchester.gov.uk/jobs as this reduces the amount of paper generated during the recruitment process.

If you would like help in completing an online application form, please contact the Digital Access Support Team on 01206 282452 or email digital.accesssupport@colchester.gov.uk

Our website contains an online application form which can be submitted online. Some vacancies can be applied for by CV and covering letter, but please check the job details to confirm whether this is possible. All applications for vacancies with the Council have an equality and diversity monitoring form which must be completed, even if you apply by CV.

Please remember that jobs close at midnight on the closing date so please submit prior to this in order for your application to be considered during the shortlisting process.

An application pack includes an application form, equality and diversity monitoring form, Job Accountability Statement (JAS) and Person Specification (PS) for the job vacancy you are interested in applying for. From time to time, depending on the role, candidates may also receive additional information in the application pack, which usually relates to the role being advertised.

When completing your application, we strongly advise that you use these documents:

- to help you identify the key skills, personal qualities and knowledge you need to have for this role, as well as demonstrating to us how you are the most suitable candidate for the role,
- to consider how you could help the Council in delivering its core goals of “Customer, Business and Culture”.

In terms of previous knowledge, information about unpaid work at home or in the community can be just as valuable as paid work and should be included in your application, where appropriate.

Importantly, during the shortlisting process one of the main areas we will be looking for is evidence (such as examples of the relevant skills, attitude or knowledge you have) that demonstrates why you are the most suitable person for the role.

Top Tips

- To access an application form, at www.colchester.gov.uk/jobs under “Current Vacancies” you need to select the job that you wish to apply for and ‘apply online’.
- You will need to create an account using your personal email address and setting up a password. You can save and return to your applications at any time.
- The more relevant information you provide us with about your suitability for the role, the greater the chance that you will be shortlisted for an interview.
- You may find it useful to keep the JAS and PS for reference, and when you submit your application form, you will receive confirmation of its receipt. Should your application be successful, these documents will be useful when preparing for the interview and/or assessment stage.

Other Useful Information

- If you are currently a Councillor for Colchester Borough Council or have been within the last 12 months then you are disqualified from applying for and being appointed to any paid appointment with Colchester Borough Council. This is detailed in the Local Government Act 1972 (2-264).
- As the Council is a public authority, you must not ask any Councillors or council employees to help you get the job, or try to influence them, or ask anyone else to do this for you. If you do you will be disqualified.
- As a large employer, situations may arise within the Council where relatives could be employed within the same team, service or work area. Such situations can have the potential for issues around conflict of interests. The Council needs to avoid any possible conflict of interests or accusation of bias, favouritism or prejudice, so if you think this situation may apply to the post you are applying for you should contact the HR Service Centre before submitting an application form.
- If you are successful in gaining an offer of employment for the job you have applied for **and** you are **not** an existing employee of the Council, you will be asked to complete a confidential medical questionnaire and may in certain instances be asked to undergo a medical examination by our Occupational Health team.
- If you are not an existing Colchester Borough Council employee you will be asked to provide two referees. Please ensure that you provide details of your most recent employer and one other professional referee. If you are not currently in employment please provide details of your last employer or someone who knows you in a professional capacity (for example, doctor or teacher) or someone you have worked for on a voluntary basis. We are unable to accept personal references.
- Candidates selected for interview will be contacted via email within 4 weeks of the closing date with details of the assessment and selection process that they are being invited to undertake.
- Due to the large number of applications that we receive we are unfortunately unable to contact candidates who have **not** been shortlisted for our selection process. If you do not hear from us within 4 weeks of the closing date please assume your application has been unsuccessful. Candidates can request feedback on their application by contacting the HR Service Centre on hrservicecentre@colchester.gov.uk
- If there is not a current vacancy that interests you or if you are unsuccessful at interview, we would still like you to consider working for Colchester Borough Council. We would encourage you to regularly check our website for jobs that may be of interest to you.
- Please note that we do not accept speculative applications.
- If you are new to the area, please go to the “business” heading of our website, click on “economic growth” and then on “about Colchester”, or have a look at the website www.visitcolchester.com for more details about what we have to offer people who live, learn, work and visit in our great borough!