

Reviewed 8 September 2026. Next review September 2027.

EMPLOYMENT POLICY 1

Policy on staff recruitment and employment

PHMC aims to have an effective and consistent strategy for recruiting staff, and a process that is fair, transparent and non-discriminatory.

Equal Opportunities

All aspects of the staff recruitment process will comply with the PHMC's Equal Opportunities policy which seeks to comply with the relevant legislation and avoid unfair discrimination.

Advertising vacancies

PHMC uses a range of strategies and publications for advertising vacancies. PHMC tries to achieve a balance by publicising vacancies locally in the immediate neighbourhood and in publications which are likely to reach potential applicants.

Local publicity may include the following:

- Notices in key places in Ponsanooth – the community notice boards, local shops
- Advertisements in the West Briton, Falmouth Packet.
- Notices on the Ponsanooth Hall website www.ponsanooth-hall.co.uk

Wider publicity may include the following:

- Advertisements in the Western Morning News
- Use of internal County Council vacancy bulletins, including websites and intranets

The balance and extent of publicity will vary depending on the nature of the post, the timescale involved, and the cost of advertising.

Application forms

Applicants for paid employment with PHMC are required to complete and sign a written application form. A similar form is available for applicants wishing to undertake voluntary work for Ponsanooth Hall.

Person specification

A written person specification will be drawn up in respect of each post advertised. Details of this person specification will be sent out to applicants along with the application.

Job description

A written job description will be drawn up in respect of each post advertised. Details of this job description will be sent out to applicants along with the application and will form part of the terms and conditions of employment for the successful candidate.

Short-listing and interviewing

This process is the responsibility of the PHMC Management Committee. The recruitment process must be undertaken by a minimum of two people of whom at least one must be a Committee member. It will have an appropriate balance of Committee members, members and, if appropriate, representatives of partnership agencies.

One member of the panel will chair the interviewing process. The recruitment panel will be determined by the PHMC Committee.

All application forms received by the deadline will be considered for short-listing. Candidates will be short-listed for interview according to their suitability for the post as assessed in relation to the relevant job description and person specification. Candidates who have been short-listed for interview will be given reasonable notice of the date, time and venue for interviews.

The interviewing panel will draw up a standard list of questions which will be put to each candidate. Interviewees' suitability for the post will be assessed on their performance in interview, together with the information contained in their application forms, and the content of references etc. As with the short-listing process, candidates' suitability for the post will be considered in conjunction with the job description and person specification.

The interview panel will notify the successful candidate as soon as possible, and arrange for further checks and references to be taken up. Candidates who have not been successful will also be notified as soon as possible, and offered the opportunity to discuss the reasons why their application was unsuccessful.

References

Every applicant for employment (paid or voluntary) will be required to provide details of two referees (usually on the standard application form), including their current / most recent employer. PHMC will always take up written references and ensure that these are satisfactory before a formal appointment is made.

Entitlement to work

PHMC has a legal obligation to ensure that staff are entitled to work in the UK. The PHMC Management Committee will require evidence of such entitlement before an applicant can be formally appointed.

DBS checks

PHMC takes very seriously the need for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, in order to protect children and vulnerable adults. Where appropriate, applicants are asked to give written permission for a DBS check to be carried out, usually at the point of completing an application form. The checking process will be carried out once a formal offer of employment is made and this will require an applicant to provide such personal details and evidence of ID, address etc. as are necessary to complete the check. If the post involves significant contact with children or vulnerable adults, PHMC will request an enhanced disclosure.

Employment of ex-offenders

PHMC aims to balance the various needs of people involved with the Ponsanooth Hall. Whilst taking into account the needs of ex-offenders seeking voluntary or paid employment, Ponsanooth Hall has to balance these with the needs, safety and well-being of other staff, volunteers and the users of the Ponsanooth Hall, many of whom are children and young people. Achieving this balance includes a duty of care and a commitment to our Child Protection Policy. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar applicants from working with us, but any offer of employment, whether paid or voluntary, will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of candidates' offences.

Induction, development and support

PHMC will endeavour to provide appropriate induction, development and support for its staff. This will take the form of 'on the job' induction and support from other staff and members of the PHMC Management Committee and (where relevant and affordable) external training, e.g. food hygiene training for café.

Contracts

All paid employees with PHMC will receive a written contract. This will specify the hours to be worked, the rate of pay, the period of notice, and other relevant information. It will also name the person who is responsible for supervision and support. The contract will also refer to various policies, including the child protection and health and safety policies, with which all employees are expected to comply during the course of their work. In addition, the contract will specify the length of probationary period relevant to the post.

Review of conditions of service

Conditions of Service will be reviewed annually with a view to keeping up to date with changes in employment law and practice.

EMPLOYMENT POLICY (2)

Staff disciplinary and grievance procedure

Purpose of this procedure

PHMC requires good standards of behaviour from its employees, together with satisfactory standards of work. These disciplinary and grievance procedures apply to any misconduct or failure to meet standards of performance or attendance.

The purpose of the procedure is to bring about improvement rather than to punish, and it should be recognised that the existence of procedures such as these is to encourage employees to achieve and maintain acceptable standards of conduct, attendance and job performance and to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all employees. This procedure sets out the action which will be taken when the employer's rules are breached.

Principles

If an employee is subject to disciplinary action:

- The procedure is designed to establish the facts quickly and to deal consistently with disciplinary issues. No disciplinary action will be taken until the matter has been fully investigated.
- At every stage the employee will be advised of the nature of the complaint, and be given the opportunity to state his/her case, and be accompanied by a fellow employee of his/her choice or by an officer of a trade union of which the employee is a member, who will have the right to address the interview panel, but not to answer questions on his/her behalf.
- The employee will not be dismissed for a first breach of discipline except in the case of gross misconduct, when the penalty will normally be dismissal without notice and without pay in lieu of notice.
- The employee has the right to appeal against any disciplinary action taken against him/her.
- The procedure may be initiated at any level depending on the degree of the alleged misconduct.

Informal discussion/counselling

Before taking formal disciplinary action, the Chair of the PHMC Management Committee will make every effort to resolve the matter by informal discussions with the employee concerned. Only where this fails to bring about the desired improvement should the formal disciplinary procedure be implemented.

Formal verbal warning

If, despite informal discussions, his/her conduct or performance does not meet acceptable standards, the employee will be given a formal verbal warning by the Chair of the Management Committee. The employee will be told:

- the reason for the warning;
- that this warning is the first stage of the disciplinary procedure;
- that the employee has a right of appeal.

A brief note of the warning will be kept but it will lapse after 6 months, subject to satisfactory conduct and/or performance.

Written warning

If there is no improvement in standards, or if a further offence occurs, a written warning will be given. A copy of this first written warning will be kept on file but the warning will lapse after 12 months subject to satisfactory conduct and/or performance.

The warning will:

- state the reason for the warning and note that, if there is no improvement after one month, a final written warning will be given; and
- invite the employee to attend a meeting to discuss the matter.

The meeting will take place only if:

- a. PHMC has informed the employee of the basis for including in the written warning grounds given in it; and
- b. the employee has had a reasonable opportunity to consider his/her response to that information.

The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting.

Final written warning

If his/her conduct or performance remains unsatisfactory or if the misconduct is sufficiently serious to warrant only one written warning, then a final written warning will be given. This will state that any recurrence of the offence or other serious misconduct within a period of one month will result in dismissal. A copy of the warning will be kept on file but the warning will lapse after 12 months subject to satisfactory conduct and/or performance.

Dismissal

If there is no satisfactory improvement or if further serious misconduct occurs, the employee will be dismissed.

Gross misconduct

If, after investigation, it is deemed that the employee has committed an offence of the following nature (the list is not exhaustive), the normal consequence will be dismissal:

- Theft, fraud, deliberate falsification of company documents
- Fighting, assault on another person
- Deliberate damage to PHMC property
- Sexual or racial harassment
- Being unfit for work through alcohol or illegal drugs
- Gross negligence
- Gross insubordination

While the alleged gross misconduct is being investigated, the employee may be suspended, during which time the employee will be paid the normal hourly rate. Such suspension is not to be regarded as a form of disciplinary action and will be for as short a period as possible. Any decision to dismiss will be taken only after a full investigation. If the employee is found to have committed an act of gross misconduct, the employee will be dismissed without notice or payment in lieu.

Appeals

If the employee wishes to appeal against any disciplinary decision, the employee must appeal in writing to the PHMC Secretary within five working days of the decision being communicated to him/her. Members of the Management Committee who have not previously been involved in consideration of the matter will hear the appeal and decide the case as impartially as possible. The appeal meeting need not take place before the dismissal or disciplinary action takes effect. The employee will be invited to an appeal meeting and the employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting. The employee may be accompanied at any meeting by a fellow worker of his/her choice or by an officer of a trade union of which the employee is a member, who will have the right to address the interview panel, but not to answer questions on his/her behalf. After the appeal meeting, the Management Committee will inform the employee in writing of its final decision.

Grievance procedure

PHMC will resolve employee grievances as quickly and as fairly as possible. This will involve the following procedure:

Informal discussions

If a member of staff has a grievance he or she can first discuss this informally with the Chair of PHMC. Hopefully the majority of concerns can be resolved in this manner.

Official notification

If the matter is not resolved it should be raised with the Chair officially in writing. When the Chair has had a reasonable opportunity to consider this, he or she will meet formally with the member of staff. Subsequently the Chair will respond in writing which will include notifying the staff member of the right to appeal.

Appeal

If the staff member is not satisfied with the Chair's decision, he or she can appeal in writing to the Secretary of the Management Committee. The staff member will be invited to attend a meeting with members of the Management Committee who have not previously been involved in consideration of the matter. The meeting will take place only if:

- (a) the staff member has informed the Management Committee Secretary of the basis for the grievance in writing; and
- (b) the Management Committee has had a reasonable opportunity to consider its response.

The staff member may be accompanied at this meeting by a fellow worker of his or her choice, or by an officer of a trade union of which the staff member is a member. These people will have the right to address the Management Committee, but not to answer questions on behalf of the staff member. After the appeal meeting, which the staff member must take all reasonable steps to attend, the Management Committee will inform the staff member in writing of its final decision.