

<b>Recruitment &amp; placement of ex-offenders policy – staff &amp; volunteers</b>	
<b>Author</b>	Ann Donkin, Chief Executive (Interim)
<b>Division</b>	Senior Management Team
<b>For use by</b>	Staff, Volunteers and Trustees
<b>Purpose</b>	To set out the recruitment & placement of ex-offenders policy in relation to staff, volunteers and Trustees seeking to work in the Charity
<b>Key related documents</b>	Other policies relating to safeguarding & recruitment
<b>Version</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> July 2023
<b>Approval date</b>	Governance Sub Committee 20 <sup>th</sup> July 2023
<b>Review date</b>	Q2 2024 / 25

<b>DOCUMENT CONTROL</b>			
<b>DATE</b>	<b>EDITS</b>	<b>EDITOR / REVIEWER</b>	<b>CHANGE CONTROLLER / DOCUMENT OWNER</b>
12 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	First draft for SMT discussion.  <i>Editor</i> check of grammar & spelling.	Ann Donkin, Chief Executive (Interim)	Ann Donkin, Chief Executive (Interim)
22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2023	Amended text to reinforce application of policy to the placement of volunteers.	Ann Donkin, Chief Executive (Interim)	Ann Donkin, Chief Executive (Interim)
1 <sup>st</sup> June 2023	Amended to reflect Age UK national advice on <i>HMPPS</i> policy in relation to signposting for paid positions.	Ann Donkin, Chief Executive (Interim)	Ann Donkin, Chief Executive (Interim)
5 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Section 5 rewritten.	Ann Donkin, Chief Executive (Interim)	Ann Donkin, Chief Executive (Interim)
20 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	To Governance Sub Committee for approval. Following Committee discussion, Clause 5.4 amended to read that the explicit approval of the Chief Executive or Deputy Chief Executive must be sought prior to any appointment.	Ann Donkin, Chief Executive (Interim)	Ann Donkin, Chief Executive (Interim)

## RECRUITMENT & PLACEMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS POLICY – STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

### 1 Introduction

Age UK Norfolk (AUKN) uses the *Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)* to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust. AUKN complies fully with the *DBS Code of Practice* and undertakes to treat all applicants for staff and volunteer positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal offence disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

### 2 Age UK (national) policy

- 2.1 Age UK's policy nationally is that they would not accept job / volunteer applications from individuals with the following unspent convictions including:
- sexual offences
  - offences against children
  - offences against an older person
  - robbery / burglary
  - arson
  - use or supply of *Class A* drugs
  - violent offences.
- 2.2 As a local brand partner, AUKN will adopt this policy given that many service users are frail and vulnerable.
- 2.3 Age UK (national) has also been assured by *His Majesty's Prison & Probation Service (HMPPS)* that their national policy is not to refer people for a paid post to any Charity providing services to vulnerable members of the community.
- 2.4 AUKN is not able to ask any person on probation signposted to AUKN for a volunteer role via *HMPPS* for details of their criminal convictions due to *General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)*
- 2.5 However, *HMPPS* has reassured Age UK that they have a very robust risk assessment process that they follow before placing anyone to volunteer with any charitable organisations and do not and would not allocate anyone with the above types of offence.
- 2.6 Age UK has asked the *HMPPS* to honour this same arrangement for partners too and they have agreed.

## **RECRUITMENT & PLACEMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS POLICY – STAFF & VOLUNTEERS**

### **3 Equality and diversity**

- 3.1 AUKN is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, volunteers or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical / mental disability or offending background.
- 3.2 This policy on the recruitment / placement of ex-offenders will be made clear to all applicants at the outset of the recruitment / placement process.
- 3.3 AUKN actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records, whilst being mindful of the need to protect vulnerable adults. Candidates will be selected based on their skills, qualifications and experience (see also separate Recruitment & selection policy).

### **4 Disclosure**

- 4.1 All application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs for new staff / volunteers will contain a statement that a disclosure of previous offences will be requested in the event of an individual being offered a role applied for (see below).
- 4.2 Where a disclosure is to form part of the recruitment / placement process, AUKN encourages all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. AUKN requests that this information is sent under confidential cover to a designated person within AUKN. AUKN guarantees that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of any recruitment / placement process.
- 4.3 Unless the nature of the position allows AUKN to ask questions about an applicant's entire criminal record, AUKN only asks about unspent convictions as defined in the *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974*.

## RECRUITMENT & PLACEMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS POLICY – STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

### 5 Interview / placement process

- 5.1 AUKN will ensure that the lead / appointing manager involved in the recruitment / placement process has been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. AUKN will also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment / placement of ex-offenders, e.g. the *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974*.
- 5.2 At interview, or in a separate discussion, AUKN will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences, or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to disclose information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment / volunteering opportunity.
- 5.3 The lead / appointing manager should record, with the panel's decision to appoint or not, the discussion and risk assessment with regard to the suitability of any candidate for appointment.
- 5.4 The explicit approval of the Chief Executive or Deputy Chief Executive must be sought prior to any appointment.

### 6 DBS checks

- 6.1 AUKN makes everyone subject to a *DBS* Disclosure aware of the existence of the *DBS* Code of Practice and will make a copy available upon request.
- 7 AUKN undertakes to discuss any matter revealed in a disclosure with the person seeking the position / placement before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment / volunteering opportunity.

- 8 **Having a criminal record will not necessarily wholly debar someone from working with Age UK Norfolk. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of the offences.**