

Merton Design Review Panel

Proposed Recruitment process for new Panel members

Proposed Statement of Agreement to ToR and CoC for Panel members

INTRODUCTION

Post-review

Following approval by Council of a range of changes to the structure and operation of the Merton Design Review Panel (DRP) a number of tasks will be required to implement these changes. Based on this, there is a logical order in which tasks need to be undertaken in relation to recruitment:

- Approval of Code of Conduct (with any amendments)
- Writing and approval (by Cabinet Member) of Terms of Reference
- Recruitment of Chair and two deputy chairs
- Recruitment of up to a maximum of 27 new panel members (to create a total pool of 30)

Following implementation of the review, the whole panel membership will be re-recruited as outlined below (see full refresh of membership). Existing Panel members will be welcome to re-apply to be a reviewer on the panel or apply to be the Chair or a deputy Chair

Appointment of the Chair and deputy chairs will be made by the Panel administrator, Head of Future Merton and the relevant Cabinet member.

Appointment of the remaining Panel members will be made by the Panel Administrator, Head of Future Merton and the Panel Chair.

Recruitment: full refresh of membership

Following the review, there will be a full refresh of the panel membership. A full refresh will also be appropriate after a long period of relatively stable membership. This is to ensure, more fully than periodic reviews, that the full range of external skills and talent are brought to the Panel, who might otherwise not be aware of the opportunity. In addition to ensuring the Panel remains vibrant, keen and able to add real value to the development process, this is also a tool to focus existing reviewers on their role on the panel. It is envisaged this type of review will only take place every 5-10 years.

Recruitment: periodic refresh

The purpose of the periodic refresh, or appointment of new Panel members is not intended to be a complete renewal of Panel membership. Its purpose is to do the following:

- To ensure the panel contains sufficient members to draw upon for reviews:
Panel members' professional and personal circumstances change and career developments mean that people sometimes can no longer commit to being on a panel, so over time a panel is likely to reduce in size.
- To ensure the skill base of Panel members remains relevant and up-to-date:
What constitutes good design evolves, and can include changing skill sets. The Panel must include a skill base that is both broad and has depth to ensure the right skills can be drawn upon when needed.
- To ensure the best possible expertise is available to review proposals:
New people arrive on the scene with relevant skills as their careers develop and new and innovative development, regeneration and public realm schemes are completed, so new expertise may actively be sought directly by the Panel management.

Therefore the membership will be continually reviewed informally by the Panel Management and new appointments may be made either individually or in small groups to ensure the Panel remains vibrant, keen and able to add real value to the development process. There will be no set timetable for this type of recruitment.

Recruitment: between refreshes

Design experts may become aware of the Panel and its work, and who are interested in becoming a reviewer. They are encouraged to express their interest and send in a CV. When the next group review takes place, they will be informed so they can apply if they wish. Therefore there is essentially an open invitation for people to express an interest in becoming a Panel member.

Panel Management

For the purposes of recruitment, the Panel management consists of:

- The Panel Administrator
- The Head of Future Merton
- The Panel Chair

For the purposes of making changes to the way the Panel operates (that does not require further approval by council committee), the Panel management consists of:

- The Panel Administrator
- The Head of Future Merton
- The Panel Chair
- The relevant Cabinet Member

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

1. Advertisement

- Advertisements will be placed in professional publications relevant to design review (to be decided) and/or their online journal/website.
- Advertisements will be placed on the jobs page of the Urban Design Group website and through Urban Design London.
- A flyer will be produced for the purpose of external advertisement with links to the DRP webpage and other relevant publications.
- The recruitment process will be advertised on the Merton Council website homepage with a link to the Design Review Panel webpage
- The Merton DRP webpage will contain an advertisement for the recruitment including the flyer and wider set of links to relevant documents and downloadable relevant documents.
- The webpage will include a recruitment pack for prospective applicants to download.
- There will be a deadline for responses and an indicative timetable for appointment.

2. Recruitment Pack

The recruitment pack will include the following information:

- A copy of the advertisement flyer.
- A brief introduction outlining the DRP and what it does.
- A brief introduction to the borough and its context, including links to the FutureMerton magazine and other promotional literature.
- A summary of the recent review and new Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference and a link to the full downloadable documents on the DRP webpage.
- A brief description of how the DRP operates following the recent review
- A description of the type of people and expertise the council is looking for and what they are expected to do.
- Terms and conditions of appointment with links to the Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference
- Information on the recruitment process and selection
- Information on how to apply to be a reviewer and what documentation is required
- A timetable for advertisement and recruitment.

3. Selection Criteria and Method of Selection

Assessment of applications for shortlisting, interview and desktop assessment will be based on the following criteria:

- A degree level qualification (or demonstrable equivalent) in a relevant built environment profession that clearly relates to design in the built environment.
- Experience 'in practice' in delivering (or clearly influencing) design quality, with a clear or clearly emerging track record (typically this will be private sector practice of

10 years or more, but flexibility will be applied based on profession type and particular project involvement).

- A demonstrable commitment to, and track record of improving and influencing the quality of the built environment, including buildings, neighbourhoods and the public realm and advocating good design.
- Skills in how to critically assess development proposals then clearly and understandably communicate often complex observations in a positive and helpful manner that facilitates change and scheme development.
- Ability to bring one's own individual skills and knowledge to reviews, but maintaining an objective viewpoint without allowing personal preferences to unduly colour design advice.
- An understanding, consideration and respect for other professions and the value of their input into the design review and development process.
- An understanding of the purpose of design review, ability to conduct oneself in a professional and respectful attitude to all involved in the process and willingness and ability to abide by the councils Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct for the design review panel.

Candidates wishing to apply to the position of Chair or Deputy chair, should be able to demonstrate the ability to undertake this role, notably as set out in the document "Reviewing Design Review in London" (UCL).

4. Application

Prospective reviewers will be asked to fill in an on-line application form.

This may be done independently through a company like SurveyMonkey, or through the council's own online jobs page. In addition to attaching a CV and submitting the usual personal information, applicants would be expected to provide the following:

- A statement of relevant experience (250 words)
- A statement of why the applicant wants to be on the Panel, what contribution they believe they can make and how well suited they are to be on the Panel (500 words)
- A short biography statement (approx. 75 words), that would be used – if appointed – in a list of DRP members to be put on the DRP website along with a photo (supplied later). This may be edited for style and grammar to read consistently with other members' statements.
- A list of interests and affiliations as required by the Code of Conduct
- A minimum of 2 references

5. Interview

Applicants for the positions of Chair and Deputy Chair will be shortlisted for interview by the Panel management, consisting of the Panel administrator, Head of Future Merton and relevant Cabinet Member.

Following appointment of the Chair and Deputy Chairs, appointment of Panel members will be undertaken by desktop assessment. This will be done by the Panel administrator, Panel Chair and Head of Future Merton.

Appointment by interview and desktop assessment will be undertaken according to the selection criteria outlined above.

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT TO TOR & COC

On appointment, new Panel members will be asked to provide a photo for the webpage to go with the previously submitted biography statement. They will also be asked to sign a conduct form committing themselves to abide by rules and regulations of the Panel operation. This is essentially the Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference. The basic content of such a form is laid out below. Completion of this form could also be online. Alternatively, it may be decided that a more formal short contract is required, due to the fact that reviewers will now get paid.

Merton Design Review Panel

MEMBERSHIP ACCEPTANCE FORM

I am happy to accept the offer of a position as a reviewer on the Merton Design Review Panel according to the terms and conditions set out below:

Remuneration

Panel members are paid to attend review meetings. Reviewers are paid £300 per meeting and the Chair (or deputy when acting as chair) is paid £500 per meeting.

Term

Panel members are appointed for an initial term of 2 years with an option to be extended at the discretion of the Panel management according to the needs of the Panel.

Time Commitment

Panel members are expected to plan to attend up to six Panel meetings per year, with each meeting requiring a half day (daytime) attendance at the review session and approximately another half day in preparation – reading documentation and familiarisation with the application sites. Chairs (and acting deputies) will have additional duties as set out in the recruitment pack and Terms of Reference.

Employment Relationship

Panel members must have agreement from their employers that they are able to take the required time out of their normal working day in order to perform Panel duties. This is the basis of the financial remuneration. Whilst other commitments can sometimes take priority, poor attendance at Panel meetings may result in removal from the Panel.

Panel members are appointed as individuals on the basis of their individual suitability, and not as representatives of their company. Companies are not permitted to put staff forward for inclusion on the Merton Design Review Panel

Personal and work Details

My personal and professional details are as follows:

Name

Place of work.....	Home telephone*
Job title.....	Personal mobile*
Work telephone.....	Personal e-mail*
Work mobile.....	Home address
Work e-mail.....
Work postal address
.....
.....	
.....	

*Optional

Interests and Associations

I have read the Code of Conduct and consider that my relevant interests and associations are as follows:

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Expertise

I consider my particular areas of expertise, based on my qualifications and experience, to be the following:

1

2

3

Specific Agreements

Specifically, I agree to:

- The Terms and Conditions as set out in the Recruitment Pack
- Abide by the Terms of Reference for the Merton Design Review Panel
- Abide by the Code of Conduct for the Merton Design Review Panel
- Provide and keep up to date a list of relevant interests and associations as set out in the Code of Conduct.
- Inform the Panel management of any actual or potential conflicts of interest that arise, as soon as I become aware of them, whether already included in the register of interests and associations, or additional to them, based on the information provided on companies and personnel involved in applications, or that arise at the time of the review meeting.
- Respect the confidentiality of the applicants and their proposals as set out in the Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference.
- Conduct myself in a professional and courteous manner in all matters relating to the Design Review Panel as set out in the Code of Conduct.
- Not bring the work or effectiveness of the Panel into disrepute by any of my actions outside my work for the Panel.

I have also provided a photo for the purposes of the public list of Panel members

Signed:

Name.....

Date.....

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