



Shipley & Baildon Scout Council

## Appointments Committee Information & Procedures

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## Introduction

The organisation and running of an Appointments (or Warrant) Committee vary from District to District. This booklet is based on the procedures of the Shipley & Baildon Appointment sub-Committee.

Every District should have an Appointments Committee in place to assist the District Commissioner in the process of approving the appointment of new Helpers and new Leaders and also in the task of reviewing the renewal of warrants to existing Leaders.

This is all part of the process of ensuring that Leaders and helpers are fit and proper people to work with young people and to handle funds that belong to a registered charity (the Scout Group or District)

### Who needs to complete an Adult Appointment Application (AA)?

Anyone who wishes to become a *Warranted Leader, Helper, Instructor, Advisor, Assessor, Administrator or other appointment* within the Scout Association MUST be formally approved to do so. Although we need to be careful not to frighten off prospective helpers or Leaders this should be done before any adult takes responsibility for any activity involving young people or funds. Note also that additional section specific or local guidelines or restrictions may apply.

Since August 1998 the Committee is also responsible for interviewing the suitability of applicants for appointment as *Assistant District Commissioners*; District Scouters; Helpers; Skills Instructors; Group and District Administrators; and those seeking Adventurous Activity Authorisations who do not hold a Warrant or Appointment elsewhere in the Movement.

It is the responsibility of the Group Scout Leader to ensure that the prospective recruit completes a *CRB Disclosure Application* form, and in the case of a prospective Warranted Leader an *Adult Appointment Application* form. They must also be given the yellow card entitled *Young People First. This card outlines the welfare of young people policy of the Scout Association.* The Appointments Committee handles applications from prospective Warranted Leaders and will also assess prospective helpers and skills instructors as well. The emphasis here is on the word 'skills' since the Appointments Committee must be assured that anyone applying to be a skills instructor rather than a helper not only possesses the relevant skills but can also pass them on to young people.

### ***All appointments must be reviewed on a 5 yearly basis***

Some Districts also choose to vet anyone helping on a non-regular basis where youngsters are involved. Examples may be parents helping on a weekend camp or parents who regularly help with section or Group events. At present we have not instigated this policy in Shipley & Baildon.

### **Anyone wishing to help in any capacity must complete a CRB form**

### **Adult Appointment Application completed – what happens next?**

Once an Application has been completed and returned to the Group Scout Leader this will then be forwarded to the District Commissioner who in turn will pass onto the District Secretary for recording purposes and finally for use by the Appointments Committee.

## **References – Follow up**

In cases where the Applicant has not been known within the Scout District (such as where previous Warrants have been held, or a Helper is taking out a Warrant) it will be necessary to follow up references and seek details from National Scout H.Q.

Enquiries to Headquarters about new applicants should be made through the District Secretary using the **CRB** form. In addition, references should also be followed up.

## **Arranging the Appointments Interviews**

Once all the necessary references have been received the applicants will then be invited to appear before the Appointments Committee. The purpose of the Appointments Committee interview is to allow the members of the Committee to meet the applicant face-to-face and assess for themselves their suitability for the position sought. Meetings are usually held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month starting at 7.30pm and letters are sent to all of the applicants letting them know where and when the interview is to take place.

## **Letter to Applicants**

As well as letting the applicants know the time and place of the meeting the District Secretary sends a list of candidates to all committee members that includes the date, time and venue of the meeting.

To be fair to both the members of the Committee and the applicants themselves details are circulated to members of the Committee about the interviewees before the actual interviews.

This allows members of the Committee to properly prepare for the meeting and to prepare any specific questions they may have for any of the applicants.

## **Committee Meetings and Appointments Interviews**

### **General Business**

As well as the interviews themselves the Appointments Committee will have their own business to attend to and this will include the usual formal items such as apologies, minutes of the last meeting, outstanding matters and confirming the venue for the next meeting.

Items which are discussed or carried forward may include discussion on previous applications (if there is a query about any candidate) or matters of policy such as who is acceptable as a suitable referee, questions concerning spiritual matters etc.

This business can be conducted before or after the interviews and even during and 'no shows' but generally 15 minutes are set-a-side at the beginning for such matters. First interview is usually scheduled for 7.45pm.

### **Appointment Interviews**

The purpose of the interview with the Appointments Committee is designed to assure the members of the Committee that the applicant is a fit and proper person to be a helper, instructor or Leader in the Scout Association.

The Association must satisfy itself in every way that the applicant is fully fitted by character and previous history to be entrusted with the care of boys and girls and has, in particular, personal standing and character such as will ensure a good moral influence and sufficient steadfastness of purpose to carry out the work with energy and perseverance.

Part of this process is the initial interview with the Group Scout Leader, another part is the use of references and the final part of this process is the interview with the Appointments Committee.

The Appointments Committee is composed of experienced Scouters who have known all sorts of fellow Scouters through the years and who are a good judge of character. Although the Committee should do everything possible to fulfil the above intent this does not mean that the interview should be conducted in an aggressive or intimidating manner.

The Assistant District Commissioner (Adult Training) or District Training Administrator (DTA) is an invited member of the Appointments Committee and covers all training requirements relative to each persons needs and obligations. To keep interviews on time the ADC (LT) or DTA will discuss training requirements outside of the main interview unless there is a problem with a leader undertaking such training.

Indeed, everything possible is done to help put the applicant at their ease and to make them feel welcome into Scouting.

Part of this process is the basic courtesy of ensuring that the interviews are started on time and that no-one is kept waiting. This means arranging a schedule for the interviews which will provide the Committee with sufficient time with each applicant without keeping others waiting.

Generally speaking, 10 to 25 minutes is sufficient for each applicant, depending upon whether the candidate is already known to the Committee (as will be the case with a change in warrant or a warrant renewal) or whether there are potential issues arising from the application form.

We normally allow 15 minutes, but new Section Leaders or GSLs sometimes need 20/25 minutes of discussion and guidance. The interviews normally take place at the District Chairman's home where there is a room for applicants to wait in comfort. We try, and usually succeed, to ensure the interviews stay on time.

The committee chairman introduces the applicant and explains what the committee is all about to help put them at their ease and other members introduce themselves and a little of their scouting background.

To get the ball rolling we ask the applicant to tell us a little bit about themselves and how they came to apply for the position they're seeking

To help ensure that relevant issues are raised and that the applicant understands the responsibilities of the role they are seeking we have a set order for the interview and standard questions that are asked. Each member of the Committee as their own favourite questions and the questioning doesn't come from the same person.

## **End of Interview observations**

### ***Pass or Fail?***

The good news is that the vast majority of applicants go on to become excellent helpers, instructors and leaders. The downside is that a small number are deemed inappropriate for the positions they are seeking (but who may well be perfectly suited for a different role in Scouting)

As a policy candidates are not usually told the result of their application. As a rule it's probably best not to give a formal answer at the end of the interview itself. This allows members of the Committee to discuss any points or reservations that they may not wish to raise in front of the applicant. Sometimes however it may be acceptable to provide an unofficial confirmation at the end of the interview (especially when applicants are already known to the Committee from a previous role). Something along the lines of "Well, we don't see any problems here, but the formal letter will be in the post within the next few days".

In the vast majority of cases where the decision is a positive one the District Secretary informs the applicant and his/her Group Scout Leader of the outcome. Relevant paperwork is then completed and forwarded to the Scout Association Records Office so that records can be updated, Warrants issued etc.

## **Letter of Confirmation**

We have an established policy for those minority of cases where an application is turned down. Thankfully this is rare, but needs preparing for.

To many of the applicants this will be a surprise and they may well feel hurt and rejected. In these instances it is important that they are told why their application failed. This is often a task best carried out by someone with whom the applicant is familiar (their GSL for instance) and a member of the Committee who attended their interview.

Wherever circumstances allow the applicant should be pointed in a direction where they can serve Scouting to the best of their ability. For someone who has been refused a Warrant this may be a position as a helper or instructor and the Scout Fellowship is an ideal alternative for everyone who wishes to serve Scouting.

### **The Renewal of Warrants**

As well as interviewing new applicants the Appointments Committee is expected to interview existing Warranted Leaders when their warrants are due for renewal

Although this is often seen as a formality this is also an ideal opportunity to talk to existing Leaders about what they are doing, what they enjoy about their Scouting, what they dislike and so on. In this way feedback is provided to the District Commissioner and his/her team and/or the Leaders GSL so that improvements can be made where possible

It is also an opportunity to identify those Leaders who are perhaps getting stale in their current position and who may benefit from a change in role. Very often an existing Leader may mention this to the Committee where they would feel constrained to discuss matters with their Section Leader or GSL who values them in their current position and sees them in no other role

Other Leaders are happy in their current role and would not appreciate or benefit from any change and in these circumstances it's best to leave things well alone

Perhaps the most problematical issue when a Leaders Warrant is due for renewal is when they have not completed the training that they originally agreed to undertake. Some Leaders may have a legitimate reason for this and they should be able to explain this to the Appointments Committee, who may then agree an extension to the deadline with the Leaders Group Scout Leader and the District Commissioner

In other circumstances the Leader may not see the benefit of Leader Training and may continue to make excuses for its avoidance

District policy on such matters has been defined to the Appointments Committee who in turn explains to the Leader concerned. This may be a small extension during which training must be started, or the alternative may be a refusal to renew a Warrant. The ADC (Leader Training) or District Training Administrator will have all training records for that particular interviewee.

### **Training new members for the Appointments Committee**

It may be necessary to train a new member, although new members of the Appointments Committee may have been Scouters of long service, many will not know how the system operates in practice. New members may well find it better to observe at their first meeting.

In other circumstances the District may choose to review or tighten up its procedures and all of the members of the Committee may need to be advised of the changes.

A good starting point would be for the Chairman or the Secretary of the Committee to meet with the new members. During such a session the purpose of POR should be explained as should the various procedures and the timing involved.

By ensuring that all members of the Committee are familiar with the rules and method the District will be ensuring that POR is fully complied with and that the whole District recognises the importance of the process.