

## STAFF REFERENCES

### 1. SUPPLYING REFERENCES

- 1.1 References for existing and previous employees of the London Borough of Barnet should be drafted by a line manager with direct knowledge of the employee's work and signed in the Chief Officer's name.
- 1.2 Staff should be advised to give the name of their Chief Officer when asked to provide a referee.
- 1.3 If an employee asks a particular officer to provide a reference in their own name, it should be regarded as a personal reference and official headed notepaper must not be used.
- 1.4 Requests for references should be dealt with promptly and in confidence.
- 1.5 Requests addressed to the "London Borough of Barnet", or "HR", etc. should be passed promptly to the last known employing Service Area for attention.
- 1.6 The following information should be provided as appropriate:-
  - Job title
  - Dates of employment
  - Nature of work undertaken
  - Health/attendance record
  - Timekeeping

Opinions relating to the ability of the individual should be confined to an assessment of performance in undertaking current or past duties; views as to the individual's suitability for posts with other employers should only be expressed with great caution.

- 1.7 If an employee's performance is such that they cannot in good faith be recommended to a prospective employer, care should be taken to avoid making potentially libellous statements. Only factual information should be given. An employer will be held legally liable for an inaccurate reference whether or not it was written by them personally or by someone else in the organisation authorised to provide references.
- 1.8 In order to protect the Authority from possible claims for negligence, a disclaimer should be inserted in every reference as follows:-

*"In accordance with our normal procedure this reference is given without legal or financial responsibility on the part of the Authority or its officials".*
- 1.9 If telephone requests for references are received, information should only be given after the caller's name and telephone number has been obtained, and the call returned in order to ensure that the request is legitimate.