

Candidate
Information Booklet
Senior Staff Officer
(Grade VI)

Competition Ref:

Please Read Carefully

Closing Date:

Candidate Information Booklet – Senior Staff Officer

(Grade VI)

Competition Ref:

Longford County Council

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Longford County Council

Longford County Council is one of 31 Local Authorities in the Republic of Ireland

The Council has responsibility for the delivery of a wide range of services which are necessary to the physical, economic, social and cultural life of County Longford, with a focus on making Longford an attractive place to live, work and invest.

The following comprises the areas of service delivery in Longford County Council:

- Economic and Community Development
- Local Enterprise
- Planning
- Cultural and Recreational Services
- Infrastructure
- Water Services
- Housing
- Fire and Emergency Services
- Environment
- Finance
- Information Services
- Corporate Services
- Human Resources

This is an opportunity to gain employment in the role of Senior Staff Officer with Longford County Council.

Longford County Council is committed to a policy of open and fair recruitment, in line with good practice, recruitment & selection standards, employment legislation and relevant circulars from the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government.

This Candidate Information Booklet is intended to provide information on the post of Senior Staff Officer and the selection process and candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with the detailed information in advance of submitting their application.

Candidates should satisfy themselves that they are eligible under the Qualifications to apply for the post of Senior Staff Officer.

Where a candidate provides false or misleading information or has deliberately omitted relevant information on their application form this may result in their disqualification from the competition.

The Role

The **Senior Staff Officer** is a middle management position within the Local Authority and is assigned responsibility for the day to day administration and management of a section or department handling an area of the local authority's activities, including management and supervision of staff. The **Senior Staff Officer** is responsible for ensuring that goals set out in Departmental and Team Plans become operational actions through the planning, allocation and prioritisation of work.

The **Senior Staff Officer** is a key point of contact and liaison with other Sections or Departments in relation to all operational matters for the service delivery section or sections for which they are responsible.

The **Senior Staff Officer** is expected to carry out their duties with an understanding of the political context of local government and in such a manner that enhances public trust and confidence and ensures impartial decision making.

Duties

The key duties and responsibilities of the post of Senior Staff Officer include but are not limited to:

- To be responsible for the management and administration of a section or sections within the Council, including the management and supervision of staff.
- To support their line manager to ensure work programmes are implemented to deliver on the Council's corporate and operational plans, including planning and prioritising work and allocating resources.
- To develop and maintain productive working relationships including providing information and assistance when required.
- To act as a key point of contact and liaison in relation to all operational matters for the service delivery section or sections for which they are responsible.
- To research, analyse and communicate information on specific issues and policies as appropriate, including compiling, preparing and presenting reports, presentations, correspondence, etc.
- To represent the local authority on committees and at meetings and to report on progress in his or her respective section or department as required.
- To provide support and administrative assistance in the delivery of projects as required.
- To be involved in the day to day financial management of capital and operational expenditure in the department or section.
- To identify opportunities for improvements in the service delivery within the relevant areas of responsibility.
- To implement and manage change management initiatives within the relevant area of responsibility.
- To manage and supervise employees in supporting roles, including assigning and scheduling duties and workload, providing on-going support and handling day to day issues.
- To ensure compliance with all organisational policies and procedures within their area of responsibility and to provide assistance in the understanding and interpretation of policies and procedures to employees in their area of responsibility and to customers and other stakeholders as appropriate.
- To participate in corporate management activities and responsibilities appropriate to the grade.
- To comply with Health and Safety legislative requirements, policies and procedures and safe systems of work.
- Participate & take part in the duties as required as part of the Organisational response to Climate Action to promote & ensure capacity building, empowering change and delivering action
- To deputise for the line manager or equivalent as required.
- To undertake any other duties of a similar level and responsibility, as may be required or assigned from time to time.

Competencies

Key competencies for the post of **Senior Staff Officer** are given below. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate sufficient evidence within their application form of their competence under each of these headings.

Take particular note of the competencies listed below as any shortlisting or interview processes will be based on the information provided by the candidate in their completed application form.

Implementing Change

- Thinks and acts strategically
- Develops and maintains positive, productive and beneficial working relationships
- Embeds good governance practices into day to day activities, practices and processes
- Effectively manages change, foster a culture of creativity in employees and overcomes resistance to change

Delivering Results

- Positively contributes to the development of operational plans and leads the development of team plans
- Plans and prioritises work and resources effectively having regard to corporate priorities and operational objectives
- Establishes high quality service and customer care standards
- Acts decisively and makes timely, informed and effective decisions, pinpointing critical information and addresses issues logically
- Proactively identifies areas for improvement and develops practical suggestions for their implementation

Performance through People

- Leads by example to motivate and engage employees to achieve high-quality outcomes and customer service.
- Effectively manages performance of individuals and teams to achieve operational plans, targets and objectives
- Effectively identifies and manages conflict
- Acts as an effective link between staff and senior management

Personal Effectiveness

- Takes initiative and seeks opportunities to exceed goals
- Anticipates situations and acts to pre-empt problems and to create new opportunities
- Manages time and workload effectively in an environment with significant complexity and pace
- Maintains a positive, constructive and enthusiastic attitude

Qualifications

1. Character

Candidates shall be of good character.

2. Health

Each candidate must be in a state of health such as would indicate a reasonable prospect of ability to render regular and efficient service.

3. Citizenship

Candidates must, by the date of any job offer, be:

- a. A citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; or
- b. A citizen of the United Kingdom (UK); or
- c. A citizen of Switzerland pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons; or
- d. A non-EEA citizen who is a spouse or child of an EEA or UK or Swiss citizen and has a stamp 4 visa: or
- e. A person awarded international protection under the International Protection Act 2015 or any family member entitled to remain in the State as a result of family reunification and has a stamp 4 visa or
- f. A non-EEA citizen who is a parent of a dependent child who is a citizen of, and resident in, an EEA member state or the UK or Switzerland and has a stamp 4 visa

4. Education, Training and Experience etc.

Applicants for Panel B – Open Competition

Each candidate must, on the latest date of receipt of completed application forms:

- a.
 - i. have obtained at least a grade D (or a pass), in Higher or Ordinary Level, in five subjects (or 4 subjects if Irish is included) from the approved list of subjects in the Departments of Educations established Leaving Cert Examination or Leaving Cert Vocational Programme including Irish and/or English and one of the following: Mathematics, Accounting, Business Organisation or Economics, **and**
 - ii. have obtained at least Grade C (or Honours) in Higher Level (or Honours) papers in three subjects in that examination (or two subjects if Irish and/or one of the following is included: Mathematics, Accounting, Business Organisation or Economics) **or**
- b. have obtained a comparable standard in an equivalent examination, **or**
- c. hold a third level qualification of at least degree standard
- d. have satisfactory experience in administrative procedures, and including adequate practical experience in work of an executive nature, office organisation and control of staff

Applicants for Panel A – Confined Competition

Each candidate must, on the latest date of receipt of completed application forms

- a. be a serving employee in a local authority or a regional assembly and have at least **two years** satisfactory experience in a post of Clerical Officer or analogous post and
- b. have satisfactory experience in administrative procedures, and including adequate practical experience in work of an executive nature, office organisation and control of staff

Applicants for Panel C – Confined Competition

Each candidate must, on the latest date of receipt of completed application forms

- a. be a serving employee in Longford County Council and have at least **two years** satisfactory experience in a post of Clerical Officer or analogous post and
- b. have satisfactory experience in administrative procedures, and including adequate practical experience in work of an executive nature, office organisation and control of staff

Panel Information and Eligibility

In accordance with the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) agreement, the following procedure will apply to the recruitment of clerical and administrative Grade IV to Grade VII posts in Longford County Council with effect from 1st January 2020.

A recruitment competition will be held to create three Panels. Successful applicants will be qualified for appointment in order of merit and placed on the appropriate Panel/s according to their eligibility:

Panel A – Confined to current employees of the Local Authority/Regional Assembly Sector

This will comprise successful applicants in order of merit who are currently working in the Local Authority and/or Regional Assembly Sector only

Panel B – Open

This will comprise all successful applicants in order of merit and may include candidates who are currently working in a local authority, regional assembly and external applicants.

Panel C – Confined to current employees of Longford County Council

This will comprise successful applicants in order of merit who are currently working in Longford County Council.

Vacancies that arise during the life of these Panels may be filled from the appropriate Panel in the following sequential order:

Vacancy number	Panel	
1	Panel C	Confined to current employees of Longford County Council
2	Panel A	Confined to current employees of the Local Authority/Regional Assembly Sector
3	Panel B	Open
4	Panel C	Confined to current employees of Longford County Council
5	Panel A	Confined to current employees of the Local Authority/Regional Assembly Sector
6	Panel B	Open
7	Panel B	Open
8	Panel A	Confined to current employees of the Local Authority/Regional Assembly Sector
9	Panel A	Confined to current employees of the Local Authority/Regional Assembly Sector
10	Panel A	Confined to current employees of the Local Authority/Regional Assembly Sector

- 50% confined to employees of the Local Authority/Regional Assembly Sector (Panel A)
- 30% open (Panel B)
- 20% confined to employees of Longford County Council (Panel C).

Candidates who are not employees of a Local Authority or Regional Assembly but who meet the Qualifying criteria are eligible to apply for inclusion on Panel B (Open).

Current employees of a Local Authority or Regional Assembly who meet the Qualifying criteria are eligible to apply for inclusion on both Panel A (Confined) and Panel B (Open).

Current employees of Longford County Council who meet the Qualifying criteria are eligible to apply for inclusion on all three Panels.

Particulars of Employment

1. The Post

The post is wholetime (i.e. 35 hours per week) and appointment may be permanent or temporary.

2. Location

Longford County Council reserves the right to assign the successful candidate to any premises in use by the Council, now or in the future.

The person appointed will be required to report to their place of work by their own means of transport and at their own expense.

3. Commencement

Longford County Council shall require a person to whom an appointment is offered to take up such appointment within a period of not more than one month and if they fail to take up the appointment within such period or such other longer period as the Council in its absolute discretion may determine, Longford County Council shall not appoint them.

4. Working Hours

The current working hours are 35 hours per week, Monday to Friday. A flexible working system is in operation. Longford County Council reserves the right to alter the hours of work from time to time.

All hours worked are subject to and recorded in accordance with the provisions of the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997, and the Organisation of Working Time Regulations, 2001. Longford County Council requires employees to record their hours using a Clocking system.

5. Reporting Arrangements

Senior Staff Officers report directly to the appropriate supervisor in the Section or to any other employee of Longford County Council as the Director of Services or other appropriate employee may designate for this purpose.

A system of regular appraisal will be operated during employment, which will involve discussions between the employee and the line manager regarding performance and conduct.

6. Probationary Period of Employment

There shall be a period after appointment during which the appointee will hold the position on probation. The period of probation will be prescribed by the Chief Executive. Employment may be terminated during the probationary period should service be deemed by the Chief Executive to be unsatisfactory. Employment may be terminated at the end of the probationary period unless the Chief Executive has certified that the employee had satisfactory service. Tenure of employment following probation will be subject to satisfactory service.

7. Remuneration

The current salary scale for the post of **Senior Staff Officer** is:

Salary (gross per annum):

Per circular:

The rate of remuneration may be adjusted from time to time in line with Government Circulars.

On appointment successful candidates will be placed on the first point of the point of the salary scale. Appointment to a higher point of the salary scale may apply to candidates employed elsewhere in the public service, subject to verification of service history.

Remuneration is paid fortnightly by PayPath directly to the employees nominated bank account. The current wage pay cycle may be revised during the period of employment.

Remuneration is subject to all statutory deductions, e.g. P.A.Y.E. and P.R.S.I. Increments are paid annually subject to satisfactory attendance, conduct and performance and national agreements. Increments may be withheld if performance, attendance and/or conduct are not satisfactory.

8. Superannuation & Retirement

A person who becomes a pensionable employee of the County Council will be required in respect of their Superannuation to contribute to the Local Authority at the appropriate rate.

The terms of the Local Government Superannuation (Consolidation) Scheme 1998 as amended **or** the Public Services Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004 **or** the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme & Other Provisions) Act 2012 will apply as appropriate on appointment.

- Retirement age for employees is dependent on their relevant contract of employment, with due consideration being given to the rules of the Superannuation Scheme to which they belong.
- For appointees who are deemed **not** to be “new entrants” as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, retirement is compulsory on reaching 70 years of age.
- The minimum retirement age for “new entrants” to the public service as defined in the Public Service Superannuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2004 is 65. There is no mandatory retirement age.
- Effective from 1 January, 2013, The Single Public Service Scheme applies to all first-time new entrants to the public service, as well as to former public servants returning to the public service after a break of more than 26 weeks:
 - Retirement age is set, initially, at 66 years; this will rise in step with statutory changes in the State Pension Contributory (SPC) age to 67 years in 2021 and 68 years in 2028.
 - Compulsory retirement age will be 70.

9. Annual Leave

The current annual leave entitlement for **Senior Staff Officer** is **30** days per annum, in accordance with the Council’s Annual Leave Policy.

The Chief Executive of Longford County Council retains autonomy with regard to office closures, (e.g. Christmas Office Closure), any days arising from such closure will be reserved from the employee’s annual leave entitlement. Proposed office closure days will be reviewed and advised to all employees each year.

10. Driver’s Licence & Insurance

Longford County Council employees may on occasion be required to use their car on official business. In such situations the employee must hold a current clean driver’s licence and have available adequate means of transport.

It is the responsibility of the employee to arrange the appropriate car insurance cover for business use and to indemnify Longford County Council with the indemnity specified on your insurance certificate under the heading “Persons or classes of person who are covered”. Documentation to confirm the appropriate insurance cover will be required to be supplied to the Council on an annual basis.

11. Code of Conduct/Organisation Policies

Employees are required to adhere to all current and future Longford County Council codes of practice including Code of Conduct of Employees and all current and future organisational policies including, but not limited to Health and Safety, Communications, Data Protection, Equality, Staff Mobility, Attendance Management and Use of Electronic Equipment.

12. Training

Employees are required to attend and participate fully in training programmes as may be decided by the Council from time to time and to apply their learning in the course of their daily working activities.

13. Health and Safety Regulations

Longford County Council as an Employer is obliged to ensure, so far as it is reasonably practicable the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work of all of its employees. Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, the County Council has a legal duty to exercise all due care and take all protective and preventative measures to protect the Safety, Health and Welfare of its employees.

All employees also have a legal obligation under Safety and Health legislation to co-operate with management and not engage in any improper conduct or behaviour or do anything, which would place themselves or others at risk. Employees must not be under the influence of an intoxicant at the place of work.

Employees must comply with all Safety and Health rules and regulations and attend all required Safety and Health Training.

Important Notice

The above represents the principal conditions of service and is not intended to be the comprehensive list of all terms and conditions of employment which will be set out in the employment contract to be agreed with the successful candidate.

How to Apply

Only fully completed applications forms will be accepted.

Please ensure that:

1. your application is made on the official application form only and sent via email in pdf format to HRrecruitment@longfordcoco.ie – do not attach or include your CV
2. your application form is completed in **typed format**.
3. **Note:** your CV **will not** be accepted as an application or as part of your application.
4. you fully complete all sections of the application form and include all relevant, detailed and accurate information
5. **Note:** any offer of employment is subject to the information given on your application form being true. False/misleading information or deliberate omissions may result in termination of employment.
6. you include a copy of your educational certificates as part of one PDF application (see **Combining PDFs Instruction Sheet**, available to download alongside the application form)
7. you submit your application on or before:

Forward your completed application form via email to HRrecruitment@longfordcoco.ie

- **Applications submitted after the closing date will not be accepted**
- **Applications forms must be submitted by email in pdf format**
- **Applications submitted by hand, post or fax will not be accepted**
- **Claims in relation to the late receipt of application forms will not be entertained.**

Admission to this competition, or an invitation to take tests or to attend for interview does not infer that you fulfil all the requirements for appointment.

Applications submitted by email will be acknowledged automatically. Please keep this acknowledgement as proof of delivery and receipt of your application.

If you do not receive an acknowledgement within 24 hours, please contact the Human Resources Department immediately at 043 3343356/ 043 3343396 or by email:

HRrecruitment@longfordcoco.ie

It is the responsibility of candidates to ensure the proper application format, delivery and receipt of their applications.

Longford County Council may need to contact you during the competition's selection process. It is important that the contact details (i.e. your postal address, email address and phone number) given on your application form are correct and accessible by you.

Longford County Council will not accept responsibility for communication not accessed or received by you.

Selection Process

Stage 1 – Submission of Application Form via email

Candidates interested in applying for the position of **Senior Staff Officer** should submit their completed application with supporting documentation form via email in PDF format to HRrecruitment@longfordcoco.ie

Completed Application Forms must be submitted on or before:

Each completed application must include a copy of all educational qualifications declared in the application form.

Failure to submit a completed application form, with all required supporting documentation, by the specified deadline will result in the application being deemed invalid and it will not be permitted to proceed any further in the selection process.

Stage 2 – Initial Screening

All completed application forms received by the stated closing date & time will be screened to ensure that they meet the minimum eligibility criteria for the position of Senior Staff Officer in accordance with the declared Qualifications (**as given on page 7 of this booklet**).

Candidates who demonstrate that they meet the required eligibility criteria: their application will progress to the Step 3 of the selection process.

Candidates who fail to demonstrate that they meet the minimum eligibility criteria required: their application will be deemed invalid and will not progress any further in the selection process.

Stage 3 – Shortlisting

Longford County Council reserves the right to shortlist applications, it is very important therefore, that candidates provide accurate, clear and comprehensive information in their completed application forms.

Shortlisting may take the form of:

1. a desktop-shortlisting process, where a board will be assigned to examine the information provided by the candidate and assess it against criteria required for the position, and/or
2. an online shortlisting interview.

Candidates who are shortlisted may have their application scored and ranked in order of merit. Based on the score awarded their application may progress to Stage 4 of the selection process.

For candidates who are not shortlisted, their application will not progress any further in the selection process.

Stage 4 – Interview

On completion of the Stage 3 of the selection process, successfully shortlisted candidates may be invited in batches, to attend for interview.

Please note the interview process may be conducted remotely using Microsoft Teams and/or in person.

An independent interview board will be established by the Chief Executive of Longford County Council. The board will comprise a Chairperson and two other members, who will have expert knowledge in the relevant field. The objective of the board is to establish the applicant's suitability for the post and to rank the successful candidates in order of merit for appointment.

The interview will be the candidate's opportunity to demonstrate that they possess the required competencies, knowledge, skills and experience. The objective of the board is to assess the candidate's responses against agreed criteria and to identify the candidates who best meet the competencies required.

Longford County Council will issue advance notice of the date and time of the interview. It is the responsibility of the candidate to make themselves available for interview on the date and time notified and to ensure that they can attend their Interview or successfully connect to the online interview.

Requests to reschedule notified interview dates or times cannot be accommodated.

Candidates who do not attend/connect for their interview at the time and on the date advised will be deemed to have withdrawn their application from the competition and their application will receive no further consideration.

Expenses incurred by candidates in attending for interview will be the responsibility of the candidate.

Candidates who are successful in the interview process will be qualified for appointment in order of merit and placed on a panel. This panel may be used to fill both permanent and temporary **Senior Staff Officer** vacancies that may arise during the life of the panel.

It should be noted that placement on a panel may not necessarily lead to a job offer. The selection process is not concluded until sought references are received and all other clearance checks, e.g. Garda Vetting, occupational health, verification of education qualifications, etc, have been carried out to the satisfaction of the Council.

Candidates on the **Senior Staff Officer** panel who satisfy all the requirements for the post may be offered employment subject to:

1. Their place, in order of merit, on the panel
2. The requirements of Longford County Council.

Should a candidate decline an offer of employment or having accepted an offer of employment relinquish it prior to commencing in the post, they will be deemed to have withdrawn their application from the competition.

Further Information

1. Feedback

Candidates shall be notified of the outcome of each stage of the selection process as soon as possible.

If, following the interview, a candidate is placed on a panel they shall be informed of their position on the panel. Details of marks attained in the interview process will be provided upon receipt of written request.

2. Deeming of candidature to be withdrawn

Candidates who do not attend for interview when and where required by the Longford County Council or who do not, when requested, furnish such evidence as required by Longford County Council within the specified timeframe, regarding any matter relevant to their candidature, will be deemed to have withdrawn their application from the competition.

3. References

Applicants are required to advise the names of two responsible persons to whom they are well known but not related.

In advance of any offer of employment, Longford County Council reserves the right to seek both written and verbal references from current and previous employers, educational institutions or any other organisations with which the candidate has been associated. Longford County Council reserves the right to determine the merit, appropriateness and relevance of such references and referees. Information sought from referees shall be structured around the requirements of the job and the job description, person specification and/or competency profile provided.

4. Verification of Education Qualifications

Prior to appointment, the candidate will be required to present the original parchment of their certificate, diploma and/or degree and any other supporting documentation required by Longford County Council*, to the Human Resources department in order to verify their qualifications.

5. Pre-Employment Medical

Prior to appointment the candidate will be required to complete a Health Declaration and to undergo a medical examination, at their own expense, by a qualified medical practitioner nominated by Longford County Council. On taking up employment the expense of this medical examination will be refunded.

6. Garda Clearance

Garda Vetting will be sought in accordance the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 and the applicant will be required to fully cooperate with this process.

7. Canvassing

Any attempt by a candidate, or by any person(s) acting at the candidate's instigation, directly or indirectly, by means of written communication or otherwise influence in the candidate's favour, any member or employee of Longford County Council or person nominated by the County Council to interview or examine applicants, will automatically disqualify the candidate for the position being sought.

8. Confidentiality

Longford County Council, in its recruitment and selection procedures, has appropriate measures in place to protect the confidentiality of all applicants. All enquiries, applications and other aspects that form part of the recruitment formalities are treated as confidential and are not disclosed to anyone, outside of those directly involved in the recruitment process - subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Acts, 1997-2014.

Records created, maintained and stored by Longford County Council as part of the recruitment and selection process are subject to a range of legislation, including Freedom of Information and Data Protection. Longford County Council shall comply with the National Records Retention Policy (2001) and any other relevant records retention policies.

* Non-Irish Qualifications must be accompanied by a determination from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to establish their comparability against the Irish National Framework of Qualifications, overseas qualifications must also be accompanied by a translation document.

FAQ

1. Who can I contact if I have a query in relation the Recruitment Campaign for Senior Staff Officer?

The Candidate Information Booklet provides comprehensive information relating to the selection process for this recruitment campaign. However, if after reading this information booklet you require any additional/further information - please forward your query by email to: HRrecruitment@longfordcoco.ie

2. I have submitted my application form. What happens next?

Longford County Council will carry out an eligibility check on all application forms to ensure that they meet the minimum eligibility criteria for the post as set out by the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage. If you do not meet the minimum eligibility requirements for the post, based on the information given in your application form, you will not be invited to interview.

Depending on the number of candidates remaining at this stage of the competition it may be necessary to hold a shortlisting process. The shortlisting process may take the form of either a desktop exercise (based on the information contained in the application forms) or a shortlisting interview.

3. What happens on completion of the shortlisting process?

Longford County Council will contact all applicant's advising them of the results of the shortlisting process. Candidates who are shortlisted at this stage will be invited to attend for interview. It is your responsibility to attend for interview on the date and time notified. An alternative dates and times cannot be facilitated.

4. What happens after undertaking the final interview?

Candidates who are successful in the interview process will be placed on a panel and ranked in order of merit. This panel may be used to fill both permanent and temporary vacancies for the post of **Senior Staff Officer**, that may arise during the life of the panel.

Please note that being placed on a panel is not a guarantee that you will be appointed to the position of **Senior Staff Officer**

5. If I am offered employment where will I be based?

The management of Longford County Council reserve the right to assign employees to any premises or business section as required in accordance with the business needs of the organisation.

6. How will Longford County Council communicate with me throughout the Recruitment and Selection Campaign?

Longford County Council may contact you by phone, email or post at various stages throughout the selection process. Any change to the contact details provided that occur during this recruitment campaign should be notified by email to HRrecruitment@longfordcoco.ie.