

WALLINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN CLERK

CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK



Thank you for your interest in the role of Estates Officer. This pack contains all the information that you will need to support you in making an application.

The closing date for applications is 5pm on Friday 20 August 2021. Interviews will be held on Wednesday 1st and Thursday 2 September 2020. Further details will be provided to shortlisted candidates.

Applications should be made by submitting an application form and covering letter addressed to Michelle Taylor, Town Clerk, Wallingford Town Council, 8a Castle Street, Wallingford, OX10 0AL.

Applications can be submitted by e-mail to townclerk2@wallingfordtowncouncil.gov.uk

Application forms are available from our website [www.wallingfordtowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.wallingfordtowncouncil.gov.uk), or by telephoning 01491 835373. Please provide details of 2 referees, one of whom should be your current employer if relevant.

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Further information about the Town, and the work of the Town Council can be found on our website <http://www.wallingfordtowncouncil.gov.uk/>



Wallingford is a small and lively market town on the Thames, halfway between Oxford and Reading.

Wallingford Town Council are looking to recruit an experienced individual with building/surveyor training with heritage experience, together with financial and project management skills. Must be a team player, capable of working collaboratively with colleagues, and able to harness the willingness and enthusiasm of local heritage and environmental groups.

The Town Council is seeking an experienced and qualified Estates Officer for an initial One Year Contract. This is a challenging but stimulating role in a town with a rich history with several surviving Scheduled Monuments and listed buildings, and a vibrant community with a can-do attitude. Challenges lie ahead, with the recovery from Covid-19 presenting uncertainties, and two large developments over the next few years set to increase the size of the town and population. This is a great opportunity for an exceptional individual to hone their skills and make a major contribution to this lovely town, twice mentioned in the *Sunday Times*, Best Places to Live.

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Wallingford Town Council is responsible for an unusual – probably unique – estate comprising three parks and a number of properties, most for commercial let. The parks are also Scheduled Monuments, which comes with a raft of obligations in addition to routine maintenance. All the nine properties lie within a Conservation Area, four are listed, and some belong to a Trust attached to one of the parks and run by the Council for the benefit of the Trust. It is itself the tenant of one of the nine properties available for rent. In addition it owns the Regal site which is currently due for redevelopment. All of the properties are subject to Conservation Area limitations.

This estate will require focused attention to improve its contribution to the council and the town. A subcommittee has determined that a sum of around £2.5 million is required to reinstate the Scheduled Monuments and the iconic 17th-century Town Hall.

Situated in a beautiful Thames side location and home to nationally important monuments, Wallingford needs the attention of a dedicated, full-time Estates Manager who will work with Wallingford Town Council’s teams to produce a management plan for the whole estate. This will include a review of all the commercial properties to determine whether we are getting best value from our lets and devising maintenance schemes for those properties. New leases will need to be developed to reflect modern conditions, including an obligation on the tenant to report any issues to the WTC, will be needed.

Equally important, a management plan is required for the parks/scheduled monuments. This will need to pay consideration to both heritage and ecological matters and produce a workable scheme to be able to manage and support the Parks team to ensure best practice in the Parks with conservation and environment in mind. Wallingford Town Council has a commissioned plan for the heritage restoration of parts of the monuments in the parks, but has not yet raised the necessary monies.

The Estates Manager should also work with other officers to identify sources of funding for investments in towns/high streets that could work for Wallingford. There have been a number in recent years, but none has been applied for.

**Specific Responsibilities**

As Estates Officer, you'll need to:

* develop a management plan for the estate, comprising of heritage parks and buildings within a Conservation Area, to include best practice management for the parks in conservation and environmental terms, and a review of the rental arrangements of the rentable properties to achieve best value
* organise condition surveys for all council property, with reports and recommendations
* organise repairs and maintenance on a rolling basis
* project-manage buildings and renovations
* plan, commission and manage the work of contractors
* carry out financial planning for a project and control the budget
* have previous experience with grant bids
* manage contractors employed for a specific purpose, such as tree surgeons or building services engineers
* deal with contracts for various aspects of the estate
* manage staff and any volunteers
* foster a collaborative working approach, with internal or external staff
* work with Town Clerk to keep them up to date on developments or potential issues
* keep up to date with legislation and regulations that affect the estate
* contribute with marketing activities - this will often include social media communication aimed at building a positive image, improving public perception and encouraging community engagement.

**Staff responsibilities**

1. To manage the Grounds staff as their line manager in keeping with the policies of the Council. This includes the supervision of land management in keeping with the heritage sites.
2. To ensure the effective delegation and allocation of responsibilities and activities to members of staff.
3. To ensure the appropriate training of staff and updating of skills to match their responsibilities and duties in the light of annual appraisals and personal development plans.

**Statutory responsibilities**

1. To ensure that statutory and other provisions governing or affecting the running of the Council are observed.
2. To advise the Council in relation to its legal obligations, in relation to Heritage, Conservation and Environment and ensuring all risk assessments are kept up to date.

**Financial responsibilities**

1. To ensure that expenditure is in line with the Council’s annual budget and managed in accordance with the relevant local authority framework.
2. To ensure the Town Council’s Financial Regulations are followed in accordance with budget limits and public procurement.

**Asset management responsibilities**

1. To oversee the Council’s property portfolio which include commercial property, residential property, listed buildings, scheduled/listed monuments and open spaces within our conservation area, and to ensure that appropriate security arrangements are in place for all Town Council assets.
2. To ensure that the Council has a programme of planned preventative maintenance for all Town Council properties.

**Administrative responsibilities**

1. To ensure the efficient running of the Town Council properties, reviewing and monitoring systems, processes and procedures and updating where appropriate, making best use of appropriate information technology.
2. To attend meetings of the Council and meetings of its committees and sub-committees as necessary, and provide written and verbal reports as required.
3. To study reports and other data on activities of the Council and on matters bearing on those activities. Where appropriate, to discuss such matters with specialists in particular fields and to produce reports for circulation and discussion by the Council.
4. To recommend the Council to obtain external specialist advice when appropriate and to ensure that the advice is placed before the Council to assist members in making decisions.
5. To draw up both on his/her own initiative and as a result of suggestions by councillors’ proposals for consideration by the Council and to advise on practicability and likely effects of specific courses of action.
6. To receive correspondence and documents on behalf of the Council and to deal with the correspondence or documents and bring such items as are appropriate to the attention of the Council. To issue correspondence as a result of instructions of, or the known policy of the Council.
7. To ensure the proper maintenance and safe custody of all Council records, deeds and documents, including electronic storage where appropriate.

**Communications responsibilities**

1. To act as the representative of the Council as required, including attending meetings with key stakeholders and promoting the Council within the local community to ensure the continued presence of the Council in local affairs.
2. To liaise closely with other Councils, in particular SODC and OCC on matters regarding the Town, and to participate in joint initiatives.
3. To represent the Council to members of the public and ensure that enquiries are dealt with sensitively and appropriately.
4. To prepare, in consultation with the Clerk, press releases about the activities of, or decisions of, the Council, and respond to ad hoc enquiries from the press.
5. To ensure that relevant information on the Council and other related matters is made widely available to members of the public, including making the best use of technology where appropriate.
6. To maintain the confidentiality of information as appropriate.

**Civic responsibilities**

1. To provide support, advice and assistance to the Town Clerk as appropriate.
2. To respect the traditions and heritage of Wallingford and attend and co-ordinate relevant personnel on all civic occasions as required.

**Personal development responsibilities**

1. To continue to acquire the necessary professional knowledge required for the efficient management of the affairs of the Council:

**Other responsibilities**

1. To undertake such other responsibilities and functions as may be required from time to time by the Council commensurate with the duties and responsibilities of the post.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

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| **Education & training** |
| **Essential**  | **Desirable**  |
| * Educated to at least A level or equivalent, including professional qualifications where appropriate.
 | * Educated to Degree level or equivalent
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| **Skills & knowledge** |
| **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| * Theoretical and/or practical knowledge of building and surveyor
* Sound Heritage experience and land management
* Knowledge of the statutory duties of a local council and Town & Country Planning.
* Knowledge of current employment and health and safety legislation
* Excellent written and oral communication skills
* Strong analytical skills
* General administration skills
* Project management skills
* Effective prioritisation and delegation skills
* Ability to manage and implement change diplomatically
* Managing meetings within set regulations and to a predetermined agenda
* Ability to communicate complex and potentially contentious issues to a range of audiences, including non-specialists, heritage and environmental groups
* Ability to anticipate future needs as well as deliver on current priorities
* Supervisory skills
* Use of IT systems and various Social media platforms
* Ability to build effective working relationships with Members of Council, staff and a range of stakeholders
 | * Project manage buildings and renovations
* Plan, manage Implementation of IT projects which benefit members of the public
* Experience of identifying best practice and implementing where appropriate
* Knowledge of civic protocols
* Project management qualification - Prince 2 or equivalent
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| **Experience** |
| **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| * Previous experience in local government
* Procurement of resources and services within predetermined budgets
* Effective budget management (at least £250k)
* Implementing solutions to administrative challenges using IT where appropriate.
* Managing and deploying other significant non-financial resources (e.g., people, services, property), across a range of projects
* Experience of managing a property portfolio
* Managing a range of activities to deadlines within pre-agreed timescales, within changing priorities
* Managing and developing staff
* Leading a team, inspiring and empowering colleagues
* Experience of working in a successful customer service environment
* Developing solutions to a range of practical and technical problems
* Independent decision making, applying judgement to refer decision making where necessary
* Delivery of agreed corporate objectives
* Acting in an advisory capacity to non-executives
* Demonstrate commercial and regulatory awareness
 | * Experience in a leadership role in complex organisation
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| **Personal Qualities** |
| **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| * Energy, enthusiasm and commitment
* Focused on solutions rather than problems
* Ability to inspire confidence in key stakeholders
* Ability to motivate and inspire staff to drive up standards
* Strong interpersonal, negotiating and mediating skills
* Strong networking and communication skills
* Confident in speaking and presenting in public
* Commitment to current non-party-political stance of the Council
* Prepared to be license holder if required
* Respect for the traditions and heritage of Wallingford (including the wearing of ceremonial dress when required)
* Commitment to Continual Professional Development
* Willingness to work evenings and weekends as required
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**SUMMARY OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

 **Salary**

Salary: SCP 31, £34,728 per annum.

For all other purposes not specified within this document, the post is subject to the terms of the conditions of service determined by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, a copy of which is available on request.

**Starting Date**

It is intended that the successful candidate will start employment as soon as possible.

**Interview Expenses**

Candidates attending for interview will be paid expenses in accordance with the scale laid down by the National Joint Council. Expenses will not be paid until the conclusion of the interview. In the event of a candidate withdrawing their application or refusing the offer of an appointment on grounds which in the opinion of the interviewing panel or Town Clerk are inadequate, no expenses will be paid. The expenses of the candidate appointed to the post will not be paid until the successful applicant takes up their duties with the Council.

**Probation period**

All new employees will be subject to a six-month probationary period which will involve regular discussions on progress.

**Membership Fees for Professional Institutions**

The Council will pay the subscription to relevant Institutes and will encourage attendance at professional development events organised by these bodies.

**Working Week**

The normal working week is 37 hours, working pattern to be agreed. The Estates Officer will be required to attend accessional evening meetings the meetings or weekends as necessary.

**Flexible working**

Full consideration will be given to a reasonable request for flexible working arrangements.

**Other Employment**

The post holder will be fully engaged in the employment of the Town Council and agrees not to undertake any other paid employment without the express written consent of the Council.

**Pension**

Employees of the Council are entitled to join the Local Government Pension Scheme as operated by Oxfordshire County Council.

**Employee Development**

On appointment the successful candidate can expect:

* a monthly meeting during the probationary period to explore the direction of work and personal development.
* after 6 months at the completion of the probationary period, a discussion to agree and refine the responsibilities of the post and to agree performance measures, indicators and milestones, and an agreed Personal Development Plan setting out the tasks and training required to achieve key result areas and to develop personal goals over the next period of 12 months.

**Health and Safety**

Wallingford Town Council recognises its obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to provide appropriate health and safety training and to ensure safe and healthy premises for all employees and visitors.

**Equality Policies**

The Council is committed to a policy of equal treatment of all employees and applicants and requires all employees to abide by this general principle and the requirements of legislation and Codes of Practice. In its employment policies all employees will be given equal opportunities in the application of their conditions of service, training and promotion prospects, regardless of sex, disability, age, marital/family status, sexual orientation, race, colour, religion, belief or political persuasion.

**Other**The appointment will be subject to suitable references.