



APPLICATION PACK – Community Development Officer

Salary LC2: SP19 to SP23: £25,481 to £27,741 pro rata (2021 pay award pending) for 30 hours per week plus Local Government Pension Scheme.

The Town Council is looking for an enthusiastic and committed individual to help us support people to bring about social change, working with individuals and community groups in Stroud. Our aim is to improve the quality of life for people who live in Stroud and to inspire and empower them to shape their own futures.

This post reports to the Town Clerk.

The role is largely community based, with a base at the Council's office in Stroud town centre.

Applications should be returned by email to the Town Clerk clerk@stroudtown.gov.uk by noon on **Friday 15th October 2021**

Brief history of Stroud

The first parish of Stroud, a settlement based on the production of woollen cloth, was recognised in 1304. Currently, it has a population of around 13,500 and an electorate of just over 10,000. Stroud is seen as a very friendly, tolerant community, accepting a wide range of views. We have a history of non-conformism, dissent and direct action. The environment and sustainability are priorities for many residents.

The parish, approximately 2.5 miles long and 0.75 miles wide, includes the town centre trading and market area, established residential communities amongst the surrounding hills and valleys, and mostly new-build settlements along the canal, which is currently undergoing restoration. The parish's division into six wards reflects, to a reasonably accurate degree, these differing settings. There is a rail station with good connections to London, Swindon, Cheltenham and Gloucester and a reasonable range of bus services. A fine network of footpaths also permeates the parish, but density of motor traffic can hinder movement around town by vehicle and there are limited safe cycle routes.

There is a strong creative element in the town and surrounding area, which provides a base for several arts festivals, some of which have achieved national acclaim. The town centre supports a long established twice-weekly market in the medieval Shambles and an award-winning weekly Farmers' Market, which draw in visitors from some distance.

In 2018 Stroud Town Council was one of the first local councils in the UK to declare a climate emergency and set a target of being carbon neutral by 2030.

Stroud Town Council

The council was formed in 1990. We have 18 councillors representing 6 wards. There are normally elections every four years, the last full elections were in May 2021.

We have offices close to the town centre with a double fronted window used for displays and notices. The main committees are Consultations and Highways (planning), Finance and Policy, Community, Environment, Regeneration and Personnel.

The Council staff work in two teams headed by the Town Clerk. The office team includes a Deputy Clerk, a Project Officer, a Community Development Officer, a Nature Recovery and Climate Action Officer, three part-time administration staff (Assistant Clerk, Administration Officer, Senior Finance Administrator and Finance Assistant) and a cleaner. The Green Spaces team includes three full-time Rangers and a part-time Assistant led by the Green Spaces Manager.

The Green Spaces team are responsible for the day-to-day management of the green and open spaces around the town. These include two town centre gardens, two cemeteries (one active and one closed), five play areas, two closed churchyards and a number of amenity spaces.

The Council owns five allotment sites providing just under 200 plots. Each site is managed on our behalf by a plot-holder association.

Amongst the Council's recent projects are revamping a significant but dilapidated Victorian building for community use and developing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the town. We have recently agreed to transfer ownership of a range of assets from Stroud District Council, including in 2019 the Stroud Subscription Rooms.

Stroud Town Council is a larger town council that is committed to improving the quality of life of all members of its community. The council provides core support to a range of partner organisations involved in regeneration and meeting key social needs of its residents, as well as supporting arts development in the town.

We have shown long-term commitment to improving the environment, for example, by taking on the management of parks and green spaces in the town, increasing the number of open spaces with public access and improving the quality of children's play areas. We have an established reputation for taking a leading role in community development. We sustain four community grants programmes and a number of service level agreements with voluntary and community sector organisations.

We are a Quality council and have adopted the General Power of Competence. We have an annual expenditure budget of about £1.3m of which the precept makes up around 50%. The balance largely comes from grants, cemetery income and rent.

Application Process

You must include in your application information which:

- Sets out how you meet the person specification
- Gives clear examples of your previous achievements which link directly to the areas of responsibility in this post
- Demonstrates the qualities you would bring to the role

A CV is **not** required and any submitted will be disregarded.

Canvassing of any Member or Officer involved in the selection process will disqualify you from being appointed.

Selection Process

The appointment will be made by a panel, which will consist of the Town Clerk and a member of the Personnel Committee. Interviews will take place during the week commencing **17th October 2021**.

Shortlisted candidates will be required to attend an interview at a time to be allocated individually. This will be preceded by a desk exercise intended to assess candidates' approach to a range of typical tasks undertaken by this role. Candidates should allow up to two and a half hours for the exercise and interview.

References

Formal references will be taken up following an offer of employment. Any offer of employment will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.

Candidates with a disability

Any candidate with a disability should please contact the Clerk in confidence so that reasonable adjustments can be made to the recruitment process.

Terms and Conditions

Pay

The salary range is within spinal column points SP19 to SP23: £25,481 to £27,741, depending on qualifications and experience. Salary rates increase in line with the annual increase negotiated annually by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.

Contract

The appointment is subject to the National Agreement on Salaries and Conditions of service of Local Council Clerks in England and Wales 2004. There will be a six-month probationary period with three-monthly reviews.

Hours

Whilst the basic working week is 30 hours per week, the postholder may be required to work reasonable additional or irregular hours as necessary to ensure the proper performance of the work of the post without additional payments being made, but time off in lieu is permitted.

Annual Leave

Holiday entitlement on commencement of employment: 22 days (+ 4 statutory/local extra days + 8 Bank Holidays) rising to 25 days after 5 years' service (pro-rata).

Casual Car User Allowance

If the postholder travels by means of their own car on official duties, the NJC for LGS Casual Users Car Allowance rate will be paid.

Pension

The postholder will be automatically enrolled in the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Political Restrictions

The postholder will be expected to maintain political neutrality in relation to the work of the Council.

Code of Conduct

The postholder will be required to observe the requirements of the Council's Code of Conduct for employees and any national provisions in this respect. Any potential conflict of interest which arises during the course of employment should be brought to the attention of the Town Council and entered in the Register of Officers' Interests.

Criminal Convictions

Failure to declare an unspent criminal conviction may lead to an appointment being terminated. The successful candidate must also disclose any subsequent conviction to the Chair of the Council.

Pre – Employment Checks

Any offer of employment will be subject to two satisfactory references being received (one from the present or previous employer).

This position is subject to a Credit Reference Check.

An enhanced DBS check will be required in accordance with the Council's Safeguarding policy.

Community Development Officer – Job Specification

Responsible to	Stroud Town Council via the Town Clerk as line manager
Based at	Thanet House, 58 London Road, Stroud, Glos. GL5 2AD
Hours	Part time (30 hours) worked flexibly – will require some evening and weekend work.
Salary	LC2 SP19 to SP23: £25,481 to £27,741 pro rata (2021 pay award pending)
Type of contract	Permanent

Purpose of job

The Community Development Officer will support people in Stroud to bring about social change, improve the quality of life in their local area and shape their own futures, working with individuals and community groups in Stroud to inspire and empower them to:

- identify their assets, needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities
- plan what they want to achieve and take appropriate action
- develop activities and services to generate aspiration and confidence.

This role is about bringing people together and acting as a link between our community and a range of public and voluntary sector providers. The priorities are:

- addressing inequality, particularly in communities perceived to be culturally, economically or geographically disadvantaged
- stimulating community projects which address social isolation and loneliness
- addressing community safety concerns relating to antisocial behaviour; alcohol and drug misuse; and homelessness
- promoting healthy lifestyles, for example: active travel (walking and cycling to work and school); community gardening; play, sport and exercise.
- raising aspirations for young people.

This work is currently targeted in two specific areas: Top of Town (Slade ward), and Farmhill and Paganhill ward), but may over time be rolled out to other areas in the town.

This role requires the post holder to work some evenings and/or weekends, for which time off in lieu may be taken in accordance with the needs of the Council.

Key Responsibilities of the Post

Engaging with people in Stroud in making sense of the issues which affect their wellbeing and empowering them to become active participants in the community.

Leading small projects focused on a specific geographical community or social group.

Helping the council to ensure that its grant funds are distributed equitably and proportionately, including exploring the development of participatory budgeting programmes.

Using recognised community development techniques to:

- identify community skills and assets
- ensure that local people have their say, particularly hard to reach groups
- build networks and promote partnership working with community groups and statutory agencies
- plan, attend and coordinate meetings and events
- help to raise public awareness on issues relevant to the community

Support the development of new community initiatives and promote the sustainability of existing groups and projects by:

- promoting volunteering
- encouraging participation in activities
- signposting funding opportunities
- liaising with interested groups and individuals to set up new services

Administration

- preparing reports
- overseeing the management of a limited budget
- general administrative duties.

General

- Any other duties the Council may consider appropriate to the post.
- The Community Development Officer will be required to undergo an enhanced DBS check in accordance with the Council's Safeguarding policy.
- Attending training courses associated with the work and role as required by the Council.
- The Town Council may wish from time to time to amend this job description.

Community Development Officer – Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Related experience (including voluntary work)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad and relevant experience of delivering community development and engagement activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a proven track record of working successfully with volunteers
Skills and Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ability to inspire, motivate and sustain community action • able to manage conflicting views in a confident, assertive and diplomatic manner • effectively prioritise your workload • negotiation, networking and social skills • excellent communication, interpersonal and teambuilding skills • good listening skills • a non-judgmental and positive attitude • creative thinking and problem-solving ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fundraising • research and report writing skills and the ability to interpret or present data • project management skills • advocacy skills
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge and understanding of community and social issues • understanding of and a commitment to equal opportunities and inclusion • proficient user of Microsoft Office suite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an understanding of how local councils work • knowledge of health and safety (including risk assessment) requirements • strategic knowledge of the voluntary sector's role and potential in supporting community development
Personal Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • energetic and enthusiastic • compassionate and able to empathise with people's life experiences • person centred, outcome focused approach • patience and perseverance 	

Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 GCSEs at A-C grades including English and maths • A full, valid driving licence or alternative means of transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 3 qualification or higher in Community Development, Social Work or related social sciences • Asset-Based Community Development training
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