



Christchurch Town Council

Recruitment of

TOWN CLERK

APPLICATION PACK

AUGUST 2022

Recruitment of Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Salary Scale LC3 (SCP 42-45) £46,662 - £50,074 per annum depending on experience and qualifications





Our current Town Clerk is leaving after establishing the foundations of the new Town Council following Local Government Re-Organisation in Dorset in April 2019. He has helped shape and facilitate the Town Council as a strong voice in the BCP Council jurisdiction and we now look forward to the next chapter in the development of the Council.

I am proud of the Town and what the Council has achieved in its first three and a half years of existence.

With elections due for the BCP Council area and the Town Council in May 2023, now is a good time to join the Town Council. We have seen many projects come to fruition such as the oversight and management of a growing asset portfolio which includes 3 allotment sites, Christchurch Quay and Druitt Gardens, as well as playparks and open spaces. We continue to have a strong voice in Planning related matters and the Council's Neighbourhood Plan will have a huge say in how Christchurch should develop over the forthcoming years. We are also due to consult shortly on the future of Druitt Hall – a well-loved community asset and are in the process currently of negotiating further asset-transfers with BCP Council.

Future projects and initiatives will see the Town Clerk become a crucial character in the shape and continued development of the town. Our outgoing Town Clerk has placed the Council in a sound financial position with reserves set-aside for the enhancement of Mundeford Cricket Pitch, the development of an enhanced playpark offering at a site threatened with closure, as well as developing the Neighbourhood Plan to conclusion. We also look forward to upgrading the Mayor's Parlour and indeed seeing a successful calendar of events at Christchurch Quay, and festivities enhanced and upgraded over Christmas such as the new award of a Christmas Lights contract.

There is plenty of work to do and it is hoped that you will consider the position and find both the Town and this rare opportunity an attractive place to work.

Her Worship – The Mayor of Christchurch, Cllr Mrs Avril Coulton.

The Candidate

The Council is looking for a forward thinking and pro-active Town Clerk who has an eye for detail and who can manage the legal, and administrative affairs of the Council. The Town Clerk is also responsible for the financial affairs and conduct of the Council and is also designated as the statutory Responsible Financial Officer.

The Town Clerk advises the Council on all matters relating to the administration of its duties and powers and helps facilitate Council decision-making and policy direction. The role is accountable to all 19 elected Councillors, including the Office of the Mayor. The Town Clerk helps deliver and shape all aspects of the Council's services and ensures the continuity of service-provision across all the Council's assets and resources.

Aspiring applicants must be able to demonstrate significant managerial and financial experience. They should also have a sound grasp and knowledge of local government law and procedures, hold a relevant professional qualification and show that they have, or are willing and able to obtain, the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) within 12 months of being appointed. A qualified Clerk is crucial to the effective running of the Council as currently Christchurch Town Council is able to exercise legally the 'General Power of Competence' due to the qualified status of its departing Clerk.

Applicants should read this Application Pack, familiarise themselves with the Town Council and its policies and procedures via its website prior to completing an application and clearly explain in the application why they are interested in the position, highlighting any relevant skills and experience they have, with reference to the Job Description and Person Specification.

The application form must be completed in full, and shortlisting will be based on the information provided on the form. CV's will not be accepted alone, and any application made without a completed application form shall be disregarded.

Application packs are available from www.christchurch-tc.gov.uk and should be submitted either by post to:

Ms Vanessa Ricketts
LGRC Associates Ltd.
2430/2440 The Quadrant
Almondsbury,
Bristol,
BS32 4AQ.

or by email to: vanessa.ricketts@lgrc.uk

We ask that you also submit an Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form with your application.

The closing date for receipt of applications is **Friday 30th September 2022 by 5pm.**

Interviews shall be held on **Tuesday 18th October 2022.**

For an informal discussion about the post, please contact **Daniel Lucas/Vanessa Ricketts** by phone on 01202 022 479 or **via email at townclerk@christchurch-tc.gov.uk Or vanessa.ricketts@lgrc.uk**

Christchurch Town Council is committed to equality of opportunity and actively welcomes applications from all suitably qualified candidates.

Christchurch

Christchurch is a town and civil parish in Dorset on the south coast of England. The town covers an area of 19.5 square miles (51 km²) and has a population of 48,368 in 2013. It adjoins Bournemouth to the west, with the New Forest to the east. Christchurch was a borough within the administrative county of Dorset from 1974 until 2019, when it became part of the new Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole unitary authority. Following a Community Governance Review the Town decided to create the parish of Christchurch with a newly elected Town Council.

Founded in the seventh century at the confluence of the rivers Avon and Stour which flow into Christchurch Harbour, the town was originally named Twynham but became known as Christchurch following the construction of the priory in 1094. The town developed into an important trading port, and was fortified in the 9th century. The confluence of the rivers is depicted on the Council's Coat of Arms as are other references to the town's heritage and history.

Further defences were added in the 12th century with the construction of a castle, which was destroyed during the English Civil War by the Parliamentarian Army. During the 18th and 19th centuries smuggling flourished in Christchurch and became one of the town's most lucrative industries.

The town's harbour, beaches, nature reserves and historically important buildings have made Christchurch a popular tourist destination attracting some 1.5 million visitors a year. Bournemouth Airport, an international airport which handles approximately 800,000 passengers a year is located within the former borough boundary at Hurn. The airport's industrial park contains a number of aerospace and engineering businesses and is one of the largest employment sites in Dorset. Christchurch is a popular destination for retirees, and has one of the oldest populations in the country, with 30 per cent of residents aged over 65.

History of the Town Council

Following Local Government Reorganisation in Dorset in April 2019 Christchurch Borough Council was dissolved and the creation of BCP Council took place. At this time the residents of Christchurch voted in favour of the creation of a parish of Christchurch and the Town Council was created. The boundaries of the new parish of Christchurch were altered and the 5 electoral Wards of the parish were created. 19 elected Cllrs now represent the town across the 5 Wards, and the Office of the Mayor is managed by and a crucial part the Town Council; the Mayor being the Chairman of the Town Council.

The Town Council is the tier of local government closest to the people, providing a wide range of services and facilities including the ownership and management of Christchurch Quay, many parks and green spaces, a community centre, a cricket pavilion and pitch, 3 allotment sites and many others are being progressed for transfer to the town from BCP Council.

The Town Council has a clear vision and value-base as well as a strategic plan, all of which can be found on its website:

“The Town Council acknowledges its heritage, and values lessons from the past to help shape and guide a collective future for all. This simple motto stands as a benchmark in delivering accountable public services for all that live, work and visit Christchurch. The Council is committed to the following values

1. We are committed to our community
2. We shall carry out what we say
3. We embrace knowledge to learn and adapt
4. We strive for excellence”.

Christchurch Town Council—Full Council, 20 September 2019 Minute No.93

The Council is proud of its achievements in its first full electoral term since 2019 and looks forward to all-out elections in 2023.

The Council conducts the majority of business through Full Council, three main committees and several sub-committees and Working Groups, meeting on a regular basis throughout the year.

The Role of the Clerk and Proper Officer

The Clerk is employed by the Council (under Section 112 (1) of the Local Government Act, 1972) to provide administration support for Council’s activities. The Clerk’s primary responsibility is to advise the council on whether its decisions are lawful and to recommend ways in which decisions can be implemented. To help with this, the Clerk may be asked to research topics of concern to the Council and provide unbiased information to help the council to make appropriate choices. The Clerk has a wide range of other responsibilities which are set out in the job description.

The Clerk must recognise that the Council is responsible for all decisions, and that they take instructions from the Council as a body. The council must be confident that the Clerk is, at all times, independent, objective and professional.

‘Proper Officer’ is a title used in statute. It refers to the appropriate officer for the relevant function. In town, parish and community Councils, the Proper Officer is normally the Clerk. In financial matters, the Proper Officer is known as the Responsible Financial Officer.

Job Description – Town Clerk

Job Purpose:

- Undertake the duties of the Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer of Christchurch Town Council and act in accordance with the statutory duty to carry out all the functions, and, in particular, to serve or issue all notifications required by law of a local authority's Proper Officer
- Take full responsibility for ensuring that the instructions of the Town Council in connection with its function as a Local Authority are carried out
- Advise the Town Council on Standing Orders and policies to be followed, in respect of the Authority's activities and to produce all the information required for making effective decisions
- Be accountable to Christchurch Town Council, for effective management of all its resources
- To ensure an effective organisational structure is developed and implemented to meet the needs of the town council whilst balancing the need for financial efficiencies
- Overall responsibility for all the financial records of the Council and administration of its finances
- Overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with current Health and Safety regulations
- Overall responsibility for Planning and legal implications arising from Planning applications and the development and review of a Neighbourhood Plan
- Overall responsibility for Asset Management and ensuring the council meets the statutory requirements for the safe custody of all documents, deeds, records and allotment registers

1. General Duties

- Develop proposals for the long-term strategic vision for Christchurch, taking into account developments in local government policy
- Prepare, in consultation with appropriate members, agendas for meetings of the Town Council and its committees, attend such meetings and prepare minutes for approval
- Manage, monitor and control town council facilities, service agreements and any partnerships entered into by them
- Act as Council's lead officer for future major projects
- Liaise and represent the council with the public, other public bodies and organisations including attending key meetings with key stakeholders and positively promoting the council within the local community
- Identify relevant sector-related information and distribute to Councillors
- Receive and deal appropriately with correspondence and documents on behalf of the Council
- Study reports and other data on matters relating to the business of the Council, and discuss matters with specialists where required
- Draw up, both on their own initiative and as a result of suggestions by Councillors, proposals for consideration by the Council and advise on feasibility, practicability and likely impact/effects of specific courses of action
- Prepare, in consultation with the Mayor and Chairmen of appropriate Committees, press releases about the activities of or decisions of the Council
- Attend relevant training courses to maintain continuous professional development

- Attend the Conferences of the Society of Local Council Clerks, and other relevant bodies
- Act as a representative of the Town Council at meetings as required

2. People Management

- Have overall responsibility for the work of CTC staff ensuring that all requirements of employment legislation are adhered to and to be responsible for all aspects of the management and employment of staff
- Undertake direct line management of specified staff members in keeping with the policies of the Town Council
- Undertake all necessary activities in connection with the management of salaries and conditions of employment

3. Financial / Physical Resources

- Act as Responsible Financial Officer for the Council in respect of expenditure, income and fixed assets
- Overall responsibility for the preparation of the annual budget including precept, and the submission of annual accounts in accordance with financial regulations
- Have delegated responsibility for expenditure in emergency situations up to a designated amount
- Take responsibility for annual monitoring and balancing of the Council's accounts and preparation of records for audit purposes and VAT, and ensuring these provide value for money

4. Policy

- Ensure that legal, statutory and other provisions governing or affecting the running of the Council are observed, and ensure that Council members have an up to date understanding of their statutory and other responsibilities
- Responsible for Christchurch's Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) and continuously monitor developer adherence to the Christchurch NDP
- Ensure that the Council's obligations to insure are properly met
- Monitor the implemented policies of the Town Council to ensure they are achieving the desired result and, where appropriate, suggest modifications

Person Specification – Town Clerk

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	HOW IDENTIFIED
EXPERIENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience as Clerk or Deputy Clerk or have significant equivalent experience in a public sector management role • Experience of public or private sector employment in finance, HR or administration departments • Experience of budget planning, keeping accounts and generating financial reports and statutory reports, including year-end and audit • Experience of Health & Safety at Work and risk assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of using a computerised finance package in a local authority context • Experience of HR procedures and record keeping • Experience of event management marshalling • Experience of Allotment Management • Project Management qualification or equivalent experience 	<p>Application form</p> <p>Interview</p>
QUALIFICATIONS / TRAINING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate in Local Council Administration or willingness and ability to achieve the status of Qualified Clerk within 12 months of appointment, or hold relevant professional qualification¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to degree level in relevant discipline 	<p>Application form</p>
SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the Local Government Acts and laws relating to Local Council management • Knowledge of current local government and planning laws, administration and procedures • Understanding of the significance of Neighbourhood Development and Local Plans • IT skills and proficient in the use of Microsoft Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic diary management systems • Minute taking • Record keeping • Knowledge of managing and updating websites 	<p>Application form</p> <p>Interview</p> <p>Test</p>

¹ Certificate of Higher Education in Community Engagement and Governance - Level 1 or equivalent qualification previously awarded by the University of Gloucestershire OR the Certificate of Higher Education in Community Engagement and Governance or equivalent qualification previously awarded by the University of Gloucestershire OR the Diploma in Higher Education in Community Engagement and Governance or equivalent qualification previously awarded by the University of Gloucestershire OR BA (Hons) Degree in Community Engagement and Governance or equivalent qualification previously awarded by the University of Gloucestershire.

	software, internet and social media		
PRACTICAL & INTELLECTUAL SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced negotiation and mediation skills as well as understanding need for tact and discretion when called upon • Advanced communication skills, both written and verbal • Excellent planning and organisational skills, and able to prioritise workload • Ability to lead a team, work autonomously and harmoniously with staff and public 		Application form Interview Test
DISPOSITION/ ATTITUDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to work under pressure • Able to maintain confidentiality • Able to anticipate problems and solve them 		Application form Interview
SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to attend evening meetings and to work at the weekend and bank holidays when required • Full UK Driving Licence 		Application form

Terms & Conditions – Town Clerk

Salary:	LC3 (SCP 42-45) £46,662 - £50,074 dependant on skills, experience and qualifications
Payment of Salary:	Paid monthly on the 20 th of each month or last working day before the 20 th
Probation Period:	The post is subject to a probationary period of 6 calendar months
Conditions of Service:	In accordance with the National Joint Council for Local Government
Pension:	Membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Dorset Pension Fund)
Hours:	37 Hours per week. Council meetings are usually held on Tuesday evenings from 6pm onwards. Regular evening and occasional weekend working will be required, for which time off in lieu will be granted or overtime pay in accordance with the National Joint Council for Local Government Services pay and conditions (Green Book). It may be necessary for the post holder to work more than these hours on occasions to meet deadlines. The Town Council operates a Flexible Working Policy and hybrid working.
Place of Work:	The role is based at The Old Town Hall, 30 High Street Christchurch, but will be required to work out of, and visit, other sites in Christchurch. Hybrid Working (working from home/office) is expected within core business hours and subject to business needs.
Leave Entitlement:	Annual leave starts at 25 working days, increasing to 30 working days after five years continuous service; in addition to Bank and Public holidays the post is entitled to 2 extra statutory days.
Notice Period:	3 calendar months.