

**UNIT 4**

**Recruitment Manual – step by step guide**

**PREPARING THE JOB DESCRIPTION**

* 1. Why does the Council need to prepare a job description?

No job can be filled successfully unless it has been accurately defined and such clarity is just as important for candidates as for the Council - not only as part of the recruitment process but to help monitor performance after appointment.

Whilst it is not a legal requirement, an accurate, precise and up-to-date job description is therefore essential for sound recruitment. It is the starting point in defining the scope of the work and enables a person specification, the advert, a short-listing matrix and selection assessment criteria, all of which are discussed in this Manual, to be drawn up and the remainder of a successful selection process to be undertaken. This also reduces the possibility of a dispute arising later on during the employment about what is expected of the postholder.

In addition, it will be key as part of the implementation of the Council’s performance management or appraisal arrangements with the Clerk to the Council once they are in post.

The job description for the Clerk to the Council should therefore include in a structured manner the scope and purpose of the job, the main duties and responsibilities and give the potential candidate a clear indication of how the job fits into the Council and the relationships attached to it.

* 1. What should be included in the job description?

When revising or drawing up a new job description the Council should remember that it is not a description of the person performing the role but an outline summary of the job and a list of the main duties and responsibilities.

This is a key document in the recruitment process and will form part of any subsequent contract of employment and subsequently as part of the performance management process.

The creation of a new job needs a proper job description to be prepared and when a job becomes vacant it offers a good opportunity to look at the duties and responsibilities and see whether the existing job description needs to be updated to reflect changes in the role.

The following operational and legal considerations should be taken into account when preparing a job description:-

* do not draft it to recruit an identical replacement to the person leaving or with a certain person in mind
* remember that it is not intended to be an exhaustive list of tasks but needs to be sufficiently comprehensive to describe the key job duties and responsibilities
* ensure the wording is accurate and the duties reasonable in relation to the intended status, rate of pay etc
* do not restrict the wording too much and use broader language
* do not use jargon, abbreviations or technical data unless necessary and above all make it understandable and achievable
* build in flexibility with a “such other duties etc” clause
* ensure that the job description does not discriminate directly or indirectly against any potential applicant or unnecessarily restrict suitable candidates applying, unless there is a justifiable reason for this.

Job descriptions of existing staff should be reviewed:-

* periodically with the post holder and updated in agreement with them particularly as part of a performance management or appraisal scheme
* when a change occurs to responsibilities
* when a vacancy occurs and prior to commencing recruitment

Job descriptions, once agreed, become part of the offer of employment and then can be included as an Appendix to the Statement of Main Terms and Conditions of Employment or at least referred to it within that document.

The following guidance is offered when preparing a new job description for the key headings and information required are as follows:-

* **Job Title**
* **Location –** outline whether home-working or office-based or a flexible mix
* Responsible to – reporting structure
* **Responsible for** - list the staff, premises and resources for which the job is responsible including where required for the level of budget involved
* **Job Purpose -** what is the purpose of the job and how is this purpose meant to be achieved? State the objectives of the job in concise, clear and unambiguous terms.
* Duties and Responsibilities - list the key duties and responsibilities of the job
* **Special Terms of Employment –** for example evening meeting attendance
* **The number of hours per week –** Councils must be careful to ensure that sufficient hours are contracted to fully cover all the requirements and responsibilities of the role, taking into consideration the findings of the report “Clerk’s working hours”, **Appendix 5**. Please note, the recommendations on hours were based on a 2012 survey; councils should consider adding at least 15% to the previously recommended hours.
* **Date** - the date from which the job description is effective
  1. **Specimen Job Descriptions**

Alternative specimen job descriptions for the post of Clerk to the Council and

Responsible Financial Officer follow at **Appendix 4 (a)** and **Appendix 4 (b)** which may be customised and adapted to suit your Council’s circumstances. A specimen job description is attached at **Appendix 4 (c)**.

As the same principles apply to any job and so a specimen blank pro forma job description is enclosed at **Appendix 4 (d)**.

* 1. **Further Help**

If you require training, help or any other assistance with your recruitment and selection processes or have any questions on anything in the Recruitment Manual please email your county association.

#### Updated September 2022

**Appendix 4 (a) - Specimen job description for the post of Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer**

**XXXXXXXXXXXXXX COUNCIL**

# JOB DESCRIPTION

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Job Title:** | | **Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer** | |
| **Responsible to:** | | Full Council | |
| **Responsible for:** | | All Council staff, property and financialresources | |
| **Employment Status:** | | Full-time (37 hours per week) including some evening work | |
| **Salary scale:** | | Enter salary range | |

**Job Purpose**

1. To ensure that the Council’s civic and administrative functions and services are performed professionally and in accordance with all relevant statutory obligations.
2. To carry out all the functions required by law of a local authority’s Proper Officer in a timely manner and to issue all statutory notifications.
3. To ensure that the Council’s Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are correctly observed and implemented.
4. To manage the Council’s employees effectively and to be the Council’s principal adviser on policy matters, to be responsible for all aspects of Health and Safety, manage the provision of Council services, buildings, land and resources and to promote the Council.

1. To be responsible for ensuring that the instructions of the Council in connection with its function as a Local Council are carried out and to produce all the information required for making effective decisions and to implement constructively all decisions.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

* 1. To ensure that statutory and other provisions and notices governing or affecting the running of the Council are observed and to advise the Councillors on all meeting procedures and regulations.
  2. To be the Council’s principal adviser on all policy issues, to keep services and activities under continuous review and to identify, plan and implement improvements in quality, efficiency and effectiveness.
  3. To keep up to date with changes in legislation and forthcoming changes and advise the Council accordingly ensuring that all Council policies and procedures meet statutory requirements.
  4. To prepare and publish, in consultation with appropriate Members of the Council, agendas for meetings of the Council and Committees in accordance with all statutory requirements and prepare minutes for approval, other than where such duties have been delegated to another Officer.
  5. To ensure that all meetings of the Council and all meetings of its Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Parties are clerked, attending personally other than where such duties have been delegated to another Officer, and to maintain Councillor’s attendance records.
  6. To action all necessary and appropriate correspondence and documents on behalf of the Council as a result of the instructions, or the known policy of, the Council or, when appropriate, bring relevant items to the attention of the Council.
  7. To sign, seal and deliver any agreements, contracts, conveyances, licences, consents, approvals etc on behalf of the Council. To ensure the Council’s planning obligations are met.
  8. To provide general advice to the Council on the budget preparation process and ensure that all Management Reports are presented to the Council and the statutory External Audit requirements are completed each year.
  9. To ensure that Council’s budget is prepared and balanced and accounts raised and invoices paid and prepare records for audit purposes and VAT.
  10. To prepare and publish the Council’s Annual Report.
  11. To study reports and other data on activities of the Council and on matters bearing on those activities and where appropriate, to discuss such matters with consultants and specialists in particular fields and to produce reports for circulation and discussion by the Council.
  12. To head the Council’s paid service and manage all other members of staff in keeping with the policies of the Council and employment law and to ensure they perform to expected standards.
  13. To arrange and/or undertake staff annual performance appraisals or reviews and deal with any redundancy, disciplinary, capability or grievance issues in accordance with the Council’s policies and procedures.
  14. To undertake all necessary activities in connection with the management of salaries, conditions of employment and work of other staff.
  15. To apply the principles of equality and equal opportunities as embodied in the Council’s policies and practices in order to promote equality of opportunity and treatment and the appropriate attitude and behaviour for all employees.
  16. To monitor the implemented policies of the Council to ensure they are achieving the desired result and where appropriate suggest modifications.
  17. To be responsible for the management, maintenance and use of all the Council’s

properties and facilities, whether through direct management or through contracts, agreements or partnerships with other parties or providers.

* 1. To act as the official representative of the Council at meetings of other relevant organisations as required.
  2. To issue notices and prepare agendas and minutes for the Annual Parish Meeting, attend the Annual Parish Meeting and to implement the decisions made by the Council.
  3. To maintain effective and positive press and public relations and prepare, in consultation with key Councillors, press releases about the activities of, or decisions of, the Council.
  4. To take appropriate public relations action to enhance the profile and image of the Council and promote and protect the views/interest of the Council with all relevant external organisations or individuals.
  5. To develop effective liaison and an effective working partnership with other relevant City/District/Borough/County Councils/Unitary Authorities, other public authorities, statutory and voluntary bodies and other agencies as the Council’s representative, to ensure that the Council plays a full and effective role in issues affecting the area.
  6. To work to improve, develop and up-date the Council’s website.
  7. To lead the development and publication of the Parish Plan and produce a rolling business plan, as required.
  8. To have an understanding of planning and development issues as they affect the Council area, in particular Neighbourhood Plans, the Local Development Plan, the Local Strategic Partnership, economic startegies and the Emergency and Resilience Plan and advise Councillors accordingly.
  9. To ensure the casual vacancy process is followed when a Councillor vacancy arises. To explain the requirements of Ordinary Elections to all Councillors and undertake publicity for recruitment.
  10. To ensure that the Council's obligations for financial risk assessment and insurance are properly met and that health and safety obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act and other related legislation are met.
  11. To be the principal adviser to the Council on matters of ceremony, civic protocol, and develop relevant cultural, community and commercial links.
  12. To make appropriate arrangements for civic functions and occasions and attend the Council on any ceremonial occasions.
  13. To attend training courses or seminars on the work and role of the Clerk and the Council’s activities as required by the Council.
  14. To obtain the Certificate in Local Council Administration (if not already gained) as a minimum requirement for effectiveness in the role.
  15. To manage the arrangements to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General data Protection Regulations 2018.

**Duties and Responsibilities: Responsible Financial Officer**

1. As the Council’s Responsible Financial Officer to be responsible for all financial procedures and records, and the careful administration of its finances, in compliance with all statutory obligations or other laws, provisions and notices governing or affecting the running of the Council including:
2. being responsible as and carry out all the functions required by law of the Council’s Responsible Financial Officer under S151 of the Local Government Act 1972 for all financial matters and records of the Council;
3. acting as the Council’s principal adviser on financial matters, and to be responsible for the careful administration of the Council’s finances, and the proper application and maintenance of the Council’s Standing Orders and Financial Regulations;
4. ensuring that the Council’s finances are effectively managed and monitored, and to advise the Council on its financial forward plan, strategy and policies;
5. advising the Council and its Committees on and prepare the annual budget estimates of income and expenditure for revenue services, the capital budget programme and annual Precept requirements;
6. monitoring and managing the Council’s budget expenditure and income, and to provide the Council and Committees with a regular statement of income and expenditure under each heading in the approved annual revenue and capital budgets;
7. ensuring that all Management Reports are reported to the Council, and the statutory internal and external audit requirements are undertaken and completed each year, and any consequential action taken;
8. issuing and reporting on invoices for goods and services to be paid for by the Council, and to ensure such accounts are met and that: -

* all necessary activities in connection with the management and payment of salaries and expenses are administered accurately and legally
* all payments made to the Council are recorded, any necessary receipts issued, all cash and cheques received banked, all associated records kept and any queries are investigated
* invoices are prepared and issued on behalf of the Council for goods and services to ensure payment is received
* all necessary records in connection with the above are maintained
* all necessary administration and banking procedures are arranged to ensure that all full- and part-time staff wages and salaries are paid
* petty cash accounts are operated properly, and all associated records of purchases are maintained
* all relevant rents or charges are collected for relevant Council services and facilities
* all necessary Revenue and Customs, VAT, SSP and pension financial returns and/or payments are completed and dispatched on time
* records, returns and public notices for the annual audit are prepared and the necessary public notices displayed
* appropriate financial IT systems are in place and operated securely;

1. monitoring and ensuring that the Council’s accounts are controlled, and the Council is informed of the ongoing financial situation;
2. ensuring all necessary records are prepared for audit and VAT purposes;
3. ensuring that the Council’s obligations for financial risk management, including risk assessments, are properly met and where necessary risks are properly insured;
4. ensuring that adequate financial security, and internal financial and accounting controls, are in place and periodically reviewed, and the accounting records of the Council are maintained and kept up to date in accordance with proper practices;
5. ensuring that an annual equipment inventory and asset register are in place;
6. advising the Council on and assist in the raising of funds by way of grants and sponsorship etc by following the necessary consultations and processes.
7. ensuring that all surplus Council funds are invested securely and income maximized;
8. to ensure that the Bribery Action requirements are complied with.

**General Duties**

1. To continue to acquire the necessary professional knowledge required for the efficient management of the affairs of the Council and to attend training courses or seminars on the work and role of the Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer and the Council’s activities as required by the Council.
2. To attend the Conference of the National Association of Local Councils, Society of Local Council Clerks, and other relevant bodies, as a representative of the Council as required.
3. To undertake such other duties commensurate with the level of the post and job purpose as required by the Council from time to time.

**Appendix 4 (b) - Specimen alternative job description for the post of Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer**

#### XXXXXXXXXXXXXX COUNCIL

# JOB DESCRIPTION

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Key Terms**  **Job Title:** | | Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer | |
| **Responsible to:** | | Full Council | |
| **Responsible for:** | | All Council staff, property and financialresources | |
| **Employment Status:** | | Full-time (37 hours per week) including some evening work | |
| **Salary scale:** | | Enter salary range | |

**Job Purpose**

As Head of the Paid Service to develop and manage policy, strategy and operations across the Council’s services by working with Councillors, external bodies and staff and to carry out functions required by law as the Council’s Proper Officer whilst providing inspirational leadership to all Council staff and seeking opportunities to develop the Council’s services and facilities to meet the needs of the community.

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**Duties and Responsibilities: Clerk**

In compliance with all statutory obligations or other laws, provisions and notices governing or affecting the running of the Council:-

1. To carry out all the functions required by law as the Proper Officer of the Council, and in particular to serve or issue all the statutory notifications required of a Local Authority’s Proper Officer in a timely manner, including:-
2. ensuring that all meetings of the Council and of its Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Parties are clerked and minutes approved, attending personally other than where such duties have been delegated to another Officer, and maintaining Councillors’ attendance records;
3. understanding planning and development issues as they affect the Council, and ensuring the Council’s planning application obligations are met;
4. ensuring the confidentiality of those Council matters which are not in the public domain to comply with all relevant law;
5. preparing and publishing the Council’s Annual Report;
6. taking appropriate action to ensure that all Council elections are arranged and held successfully;
7. ensuring that all health and safety obligations required by the Health and Safety at Work Act and other related legislation are met and all necessary risk assessments are undertaken.
8. To advise the Council on, and assist in the formation of, all necessary procedures and policies to be followed in respect of the Council’s activities, and in particular to produce all the information required for the Council to make effective decisions, including:-
9. being the Council’s principal adviser on all policy issues, including keeping up to date with current and forthcoming changes in legislation, advising the Council accordingly, and ensuring that all Council policies and procedures meet statutory requirements.
10. receiving, issuing and drawing to the attention of the Council all correspondence and documents relevant to the activities, instructions or policies of the Council;
11. evaluating reports and other data relating to the activities of the Council, drawing up proposals and preparing reports for consideration by the Council (where appropriate drawing on external expertise), and advising on both the practicability and likely effects of the proposed courses of action;
12. ensuring that, in consultation with appropriate Councillors, agendas for meetings of the Council and Committees are prepared and published;
13. being the principal adviser to the Council on matters of ceremony and civic protocol, making appropriate arrangements for civic and/or ceremonial functions and occasions, and attending such occasions to support the Chair of Council.
14. To record and ensure the implementation of the instructions of the Council in connection with its function as a Local Council, in accordance with its policies, including:-
15. monitoring the implementation of the policies of the Council to ensure they are achieving the desired result and where appropriate suggesting modifications;
16. undertaking all necessary actions required by the Neighbourhood Plan and similar exercises affecting the Council, including all necessary consultations;
17. organising and managing complex Parish Council projects, including arranging all necessary actions including consultations, communications, and legal and technical requirements to achieve the objectives required by the Council;
18. applying the principles of equality and equal opportunities as embodied in the Council’s policies, in order to promote equality of opportunity and treatment, the appropriate attitude and behaviour of its employees.
19. To be accountable to the Council for the effective management of all its resources and staff, and to ensure that the Council’s civic and administrative functions and services are performed professionally, reporting to the Council as and when required, including:-
20. managing the Council’s business planning process effectively including workforce planning;
21. keeping services and activities under continuous review, and identifying, planning and implementing improvements in quality, efficiency and effectiveness;
22. heading the Council’s paid service, and supervising all staff to ensure they perform to expected standards in keeping with the policies of the Council and within employment law and the Equality Act 2010;
23. Undertaking all necessary activities in connection with the conditions of employment and work of the staff, including undertaking all staff annual performance appraisals to develop them into an effective and cohesive team.
24. being responsible for the management, maintenance, cleanliness, use and security of all the Council’s properties and facilities, whether through direct management or through contracts, agreements or partnerships with other parties or providers;
25. instigate and manage disciplinary, redundancy, capability and grievance policy and procedures reporting to the relevant Committee/Sub-committee as required;
26. ensuring that the Council’s IT systems and hardware is sufficient, up-to-date and secure, and kept under review for operational effectiveness;
27. ensuring that the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Act 2018 are complied with;
28. maintaining such records and systems as are necessary for the effective administration of the affairs of the Council;
29. producing and maintaining all deeds, leases, contracts, conveyances, licences and other legal or confidential documents, and ensuring that they are kept in a safe and secure manner.
30. To represent the Council on and to appropriate external bodies, and to ensure effective and mutually beneficial relations with Parishioners and others, including:-
31. acting as the official representative of the Council at relevant meetings of other relevant organisations as required;
32. attending meetings as required and developing effective working partnerships with other relevant Local Authorities, other public, statutory and voluntary bodies, and other agencies, and ensuring that the Council plays an informed and effective role in local issues;
33. developing relevant cultural, community and commercial links;
34. promoting the Council through its website and ensuring that the information is regularly and accurately updated, and producing and issuing the Council’s periodic newsletter or other communications to the agreed deadlines;
35. issuing notices and preparing agendas and minutes for the Annual Parish Meeting and attending such assemblies;
36. Maintaining effective and positive press and public relations and preparing and issuing press releases and other communications (mindful of potential liability and litigation, and in consultation with the Chair of the Council) about the Council’s activities and/or decisions.

**Duties and Responsibilities: Responsible Financial Officer**

* 1. As the Council’s Responsible Financial Officer to be responsible for all financial procedures and records, and the careful administration of its finances, in compliance with all statutory obligations or other laws, provisions and notices governing or affecting the running of the Council including:

1. being responsible as and carry out all the functions required by law of the Council’s Responsible Financial Officer under S151 of the Local Government Act 1972 for all financial matters and records of the Council;
2. acting as the Council’s principal adviser on financial matters, and to be responsible for the careful administration of the Council’s finances, and the proper application and maintenance of the Council’s Standing Orders and Financial Regulations;
3. ensuring that the Council’s finances are effectively managed and monitored, and to advise the Council on its financial forward plan, strategy and policies;
4. advising the Council and its Committees on and prepare the annual budget estimates of income and expenditure for revenue services, the capital budget programme and annual Precept requirements;
5. monitoring and managing the Council’s budget expenditure and income, and to provide the Council and Committees with a regular statement of income and expenditure under each heading in the approved annual revenue and capital budgets;
6. ensuring that all Management Reports are reported to the Council, and the statutory internal and external audit requirements are undertaken and completed each year, and any consequential action taken;
7. issuing and reporting on invoices for goods and services to be paid for by the Council, and to ensure such accounts are met and that: -
8. all necessary activities in connection with the management and payment of salaries and expenses are administered accurately and legally
9. all payments made to the Council are recorded, any necessary receipts issued, all cash and cheques received banked, all associated records kept and any queries are investigated
10. invoices are prepared and issued on behalf of the Council for goods and services to ensure payment is received
11. all necessary records in connection with the above are maintained
12. all necessary administration and banking procedures are arranged to ensure that all full- and part-time staff wages and salaries are paid
13. petty cash accounts are operated properly, and all associated records of purchases are maintained
14. all relevant rents or charges are collected for relevant Council services and facilities
15. all necessary Revenue and Customs, VAT, SSP and pension financial returns and/or payments are completed and dispatched on time
16. records, returns and public notices for the annual audit are prepared and the necessary public notices displayed
17. appropriate financial IT systems are in place and operated securely;
18. monitoring and ensuring that the Council’s accounts are controlled, and the Council informed of the ongoing financial situation;
19. ensuring all necessary records are prepared for audit and VAT purposes;
20. ensuring that the Council’s obligations for financial risk management, including risk assessments, are properly met and where necessary risks are properly insured;
21. ensuring that adequate financial security, and internal financial and accounting controls, are in place and periodically reviewed, and the accounting records of the Council are maintained and kept up to date in accordance with proper practices;
22. ensuring that an annual equipment inventory and asset register are in place;
23. advising the Council on and assist in the raising of funds by way of grants and sponsorship etc by following the necessary consultations and processes.
24. ensuring that all surplus Council funds are invested securely and income maximized;
25. ensuring that the requirements of the Bribery Act are complied with.

**General Duties**

1. To continue to acquire the necessary professional knowledge required for the efficient management of the affairs of the Council and to attend training courses or seminars on the work and role of the Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer and the Council’s activities as required by the Council.
2. To attend the Conference of the National Association of Local Councils, Society of Local Council Clerks, and other relevant bodies, as a representative of the Council as required.
3. To undertake such other duties commensurate with the level of the post and job purpose as required by the Council from time to time.

**Appendix 4 (c) - Specimen job description for the post of Responsible Financial Officer**

**XXXXXXXXXXXXXX COUNCIL**

# JOB DESCRIPTION

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Job Title:** | | **Responsible Financial Officer** | |
| **Responsible to:** | | Full Council | |
| **Responsible for:** | | No staff report to the post | |
| **Employment Status:** | | Full-time (37 hours per week) including some evening work | |
| **Salary scale:** | | Enter salary range | |

**Purpose of the Post:**

1. To occupy the position of Responsible Financial Officer under S151 of the Local Government Act 1972 and act as the principal adviser on financial matters.
2. To assist the Clerk to the Council in the effective and proper management and control of the Council’s financial affairs including:-

* maintaining an overview of the Council’s budgets
* ensuring the Council’s financial viability
* ensuring that proper financial records and procedures are maintained
* providing all aspects of insurance
* ensuring that the Council complies with all requirements of Internal and External Audit
* financial reporting to the Council and Committees.

**Main Duties and Responsibilities:**

**(a) Administration of Financial Affairs**

1. To carry out all the functions required by law of a local authority’s Responsible Financial Officer and in particular ensure that Financial Regulations are correctly observed, implemented and recommend revisions where necessary.
2. To be the Council’s principal adviser on matters of financial management.
3. To manage and monitor the Council’s budget expenditure and income and provide Council and Committees with regular reports under each heading in the approved annual revenue and capital budgets.
4. To help the Clerk to the Council in advising the Council on its financial forward plan, strategy and policies and producing a rolling business plan.
5. To produce the draft annual budget, annual statement of accounts and trading accounts for approval by the Clerk to the Council.
6. To advise on and prepare the detailed draft annual budget estimates of income and

expenditure for revenue services, the capital budget programme and annual precept proposals.

1. To maintain all relevant financial records of the Council.
2. To ensure that adequate financial security and internal financial and accounting controls are in place and periodically reviewed and the accounting records of the Council are maintained and kept up to date in accordance with proper practices.
3. To ensure that appropriate financial risk assessments are undertaken and relevant internal controls implemented to avoid bribery and corruption whilst ensuring that the Council gets best value for money on new contracts.
4. To ensure that appropriate and adequate insurances are maintained for the Council and claims are processed.
5. To compile and maintain the Council’s asset register, annual equipment inventory and terrier of Council property.
6. To work closely with, supply information and complete returns to internal and external audit and ensure that Management Reports are reported to the Council and the statutory external audit requirements are completed each year.
7. To assist the Clerk to the Council in ensuring financial compliance with Financial Regulations and Standing Orders and recommend any necessary amendments to the Clerk to the Council.
8. To assist the Clerk to the Council and/or prepare for approval the statutory external audit requirements for records, returns and public notices for the annual audit.
9. To make arrangements for the opportunity for inspection of the Council’s financial records in accordance with the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2004.
10. To liaise with and bring to the attention of the Clerk to the Council and Councillors any correspondence or report of the Internal or External Auditors and detail any action to be taken as appropriate.
11. To report any challenge on the accounts to the Clerk to the Council and the relevant Councillors.
12. To advise and assist on the raising of funds by way of grants and sponsorship etc.
13. To ensure that all surplus Council funds are invested securely and to maximise income.
14. To ensure that the Council’s obligations for risk assessment are properly met, to assess the financial risks faced by the Council and assist the Clerk to the Council in compiling and maintaining an accurate risk register.
15. To produce any financial management information and reports required by the Clerk to the Council for the Council or its’ Committees.
16. To maintain records relating to the procurement of goods and services and ensure sufficient internal controls are implemented to avoid bribery and corruption.
17. To ensure that the requirements of the Bribery Act are complied with.

**(b) Accounts**

1. To process all purchase invoices for payment to suppliers including computer recording, preparing cheques for signature and final ratification of invoices.
2. To prepare and issue invoices on behalf of the Council for goods and services and ensure that payment is received.
3. To record all payments made to the Council, issue any necessary receipts, receive and bank all income received and investigate and deal with any queries.
4. To maintain and administer the payroll accurately and legally and monitor all salaries/wages PAYE, NI, expenses and pension payments and records to ensure the payroll and banking procedures are correct and staff wages and salaries are paid on time.
5. To complete all necessary Revenue and Customs, VAT, SSP and pension financial returns and make payments on time.
6. To maintain all necessary records in connection with the above.
7. To carry out bank reconciliations as required.
8. To maintain and balance petty cash and postage accounts and maintain all associated records of purchases.
9. To arrange collection of relevant rents or charges for Council services and facilities.
10. To ensure that appropriate payroll and financial IT systems are in place and operated securely.
11. To prepare reports for submission to the relevant Committee of the Council.

**(c) General**

* + - 1. To deputise for the Clerk to the Council on all aspects of the Council’s business as required by the Council.
      2. To attend, report and make presentations to any necessary meetings of the Council or its Committees, Sub-committees and Working Parties.
      3. To undertake all relevant correspondence in connection with the responsibilities of the post.
      4. To attend conferences, seminars and training courses associated with the work and role of Responsible Financial Officer as required and authorised by the Council.
      5. To undertake such other duties commensurate with the level of the post and job purpose as required by the Clerk to the Council from time to time.

**Appendix 4 (d) – Specimen pro forma job description**

**XXXXXXXXXXXXXX COUNCIL**

# JOB DESCRIPTION

* **Job Title**
* **Location** – outline whether home-working or office-based or flexible
* Responsible to – reporting structure
* **Responsible for** - list the staff, premises and resources for which the job is responsible
* **Job Purpose -** what is the purpose of the job and how is this purpose meant to be achieved? State the objectives of the job in concise, clear and unambiguous terms
* Duties and Responsibilities - list the 5 duties and responsibilities of the job
* General Duties and Responsibilities - to undertake such other duties commensurate with the level of the post and job purpose as required from time to time
* **Special Terms of Employment** – requirement to attend evening meetings etc
* **The number of hours per week –** Councils must be careful to ensure that sufficient hours are contracted to fully cover all the requirements and responsibilities of the role, taking into consideration the findings of the report “Clerk’s working hours”, **Appendix 5.** Please note, the recommendations on hours were based on a 2012 survey; councils should consider adding at least 15% to the previously recommended hours.
* **Date** - the date from which the job description is effective

**Appendix 5 – Clerk’s working hours**



SLCC conducted a survey of its members in England and Wales about

their working hours during 2013. 1,125 responded, which is an unprecedented rate of return and shows how strong the feeling is on this matter.

SLCC set up a working group to consider and analyse these replies. It identified that the role of clerk comprises “basic duties” and “additional duties”. “Basic duties” are those common to most clerks, e.g. meeting preparation whereas “additional duties” vary from one clerk to another, depending on the size of council and the services and functions they provide. An example of “additional duties” would be managing a burial ground.

In addition to these duties there will be a wide range of other duties undertaken by clerks which will be directly influenced by the policies of councils as well as internal issues and external engagement factors. These duties could include arranging a litter pick or the communities ‘In Bloom’ entry, compiling a response to the Local (Development) Plan, being actively involved in a Community/ Parish/ Town Plan or Village Design Statement or even running a market or being involved in a local carnival or community event.

Internal issues that can significantly increase a clerk's workload usually relate to HR matters e.g. recruitment/discipline and external engagement matters might include responding to freedom of information requests.

It is important to recognise that there are many internal and external influences that can and do affect clerk's workloads and it is extremely important that remuneration levels properly reflect the time contribution of the clerk.

The recommendations

Based upon a detailed analysis of the results of the survey the working group **recommended** that the minimum number of hours per month for part-time clerks to various categories of local councils undertaking “basic duties” should be:

Profile of Council

* One meeting every two months – minimal services**. 17.5 hours per month**
* One meeting a month – minimal services. **26 hours per month**
* One meeting a month – limited services (such as allotments, village green) – no employees**. 30.5 hours per month**
* Two or more meetings (council and committees) a month - limited services. **33 hours per month**
* Two or more meetings (council and committees) a month – several services (such as village hall, recreation ground**). 35 hours per month**

In making the above it is stressed that each council is unique and, therefore, the duties undertaken by the clerk, or paid officer can vary enormously. There are, however, some similarities – preparation for meetings, production of minutes, reports, accounts etc. The above sets out the minimum amount of time that is required to undertake these basic tasks to the required standard.

A full copy of this report is available on request to the SLCC National Employment Advisor.

The updated position

It is recognised that eight years is a long time and there have been significant demands on clerks since then. These could be:

* Neighbourhood plans
* Increased usage of social media
* GDPR pressures
* The number of emails from members of the public and councillors has increased.

A survey of SLCC members was conducted in early 2021, attracting 463 replies. One of the sections was about working hours and the results were as follows:

* 29% work 37 – 40 hours per week
* 32% work 21 – 35 hours per week
* 18% work 11 – 20 hours per week
* 21% work 6 – 10 hours per week
* 6% work an additional 11 – 20 hours per week
* 1% work an additional 21 or more hours per week