THETFORD TOWN COUNCIL



TOWN CLERK

 

 

 

**Welcome To Thetford**

Welcome to Thetford, a vibrant town nestled in the heart of Norfolk in the Breckland District, on the A11 road between Norwich and London. The civil parish, covering an area of 29.55 km², in 2021 had a population of 25,492 (census) where opportunities abound and a warm community spirit awaits you. Whether you're considering a move to Thetford for its rich history, natural beauty, or promising career prospects, you'll find a welcoming and dynamic environment that offers something for everyone.

Thetford boasts a wealth of attractions and amenities that make it an ideal place to live, work, and explore. History enthusiasts will delight in the town's fascinating past, from the legacy of Thomas Paine, the renowned political philosopher, to the iconic Dad's Army connections. Explore historic landmarks such as Thetford Priory, a medieval monastery ruin, or take a stroll through Thetford Forest, Britain's largest lowland pine forest, offering endless opportunities for outdoor recreation.

For those seeking career opportunities, Thetford offers a diverse range of industries, including manufacturing, engineering, and agriculture. With major employers such as the automotive industry giant, JCB, and food production companies like British Sugar, there are ample job prospects to suit every skill set. Additionally, the town's strategic location along major transportation routes provide easy access to nearby cities like Norwich and Cambridge, further expanding employment options.

Beyond its historical and economic appeal, Thetford boasts a vibrant community atmosphere, with a host of events, festivals, and cultural activities throughout the year. From the popular 'On The Green' events to the bustling Summer Night Markets, there's always something happening to bring residents together and foster a sense of belonging.

**About Thetford Town Council**

The town of Thetford lies within a county that uses a three-tier system of local government. This means that residents elect councillors to three different councils, each of which has responsibility for the provision of different services.

Thetford Town Council is a parish-level council, which is responsible for various amenities and services within the Civil Parish of Thetford.

In particular, Thetford Town Council looks after various [public toilets](https://thetford.mathmos.net/amenities/toilets/), the [cemetery](https://thetford.mathmos.net/amenities/cemetery/), the [allotments](https://thetford.mathmos.net/amenities/allotments/), [Castle Park](https://thetford.mathmos.net/open-space/castle-park/), three [commons](https://thetford.mathmos.net/open-space/common-land/), [Sir Frederick's Wood](https://thetford.mathmos.net/open-space/sir-fredericks-wood/), and thirteen of the [children's playgrounds](https://thetford.mathmos.net/amenities/play-areas/) throughout the community. It also owns and manages the Guildhall and Carnegie Complex, and is responsible for siting (though not emptying) [litter and dog waste bins](https://thetford.mathmos.net/amenities/litter-bins/). The Council is the sole corporate trustee of the G.W. Staniforth charity – responsible for the management of King’s House and associated gardens.

The council is run by 18 councillors, who are elected every four years by the residents of the 7 parish wards:

* [Thetford Town Council Wards & Councillors](https://thetford.mathmos.net/councils/town/councillors/)

Decisions are made at council meetings. The Full Council meets monthly in the Guildhall and most of each meeting is open to the public. There is also time allocated for public questions prior to the start of each Full Council meeting.

The Council has a number of committees, each dedicated to a different area of the Council's responsibility. These committees have some delegated powers to make decisions, and on other matters make recommendations for the Full Council to approve. The Committees are as follows:

* Allotments Committee
* Amenities Committee (including Cemetery)
* Finance & Personnel Committee
* Heritage & Events Committee
* Planning Committee
* Venues, Markets and Communication Committee

The Council employs a number of staff, led by the Acting Town Clerk Alan Yorke as at April 2024.

* [Thetford Town Council](https://thetfordtowncouncil.gov.uk/) Official Website

As of the 2022/23 Financial Year, the Town Council's annual budget is around £1.2M. Most of its income (around £1M) comes from its share of the Council Tax precept. The majority of the Council's expenditure (around £0.8M) is on personnel related costs. Other significant expenses include looking after land and property assets for the benefit of the town. Since the Town Council's annual income exceeds £200k, the [Local Government Transparency Code 2015](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-government-transparency-code-2015) requires the Council to publish quarterly details of all items of expenditure over £500 and all contracts over £5000. The Council's budget and details of its expenditure can be found online.

**Looking For A New Opportunity**

**Town Clerk**

**Salary:** £55,325 - £68,356

**Hours:** Full-time role, with flexibility for evening and weekend work

**Place of Work:** Thetford

**Basis:** Permanent

Are you a visionary leader with a keen eye for driving organisational change? We are looking for a dynamic Town Clerk to lead our organisation in delivering our adopted corporate plan with a strong emphasis on exceptional service delivery and commercial viability.

You will:

* Strategically integrate service priorities with the council's corporate plan, performance management systems, and budget.
* Lead internal change initiatives and lead transformation programmes in collaboration with external stakeholders to ensure sustainable growth.
* Provide visionary leadership and effective management to senior managers and teams within corporate services, fostering a culture of collaboration and innovation
* Cultivate strategic partnerships and promote a shared vision for integrated service delivery, placing residents at the centre of all activities to maximise community impact.
* Maintain a robust internal focus while proactively monitoring and adapting to the wider economic environment, ensuring the council's activities align with commercial opportunities and community aspirations.

About you:

You are a dynamic leader, with drive, enthusiasm, and commitment to local government. You understand the range of services provided by Town Councils and the opportunities, issues and challenges.

Having experience at senior management level in a large and complex organisation, you can confidently manage large budgets and resources and have a proven track record of delivering services in complex and pressurised environment. You will have a proven track record of developing, implementing, and evaluating strategies to deliver services, with significant experience of managing finite resources with ability to prioritise to meet conflicting business needs.

An inspirational leader who remains calm under pressure and leads with integrity, you have a balanced approach with the ability to provide professional and impartial advice and guidance to key stakeholders including all elected councillors.

You demonstrate clarity of thinking and balanced decision making, can motivate, lead and inspire a senior team, and manage and diffuse conflict.

*Thetford Town Council is an equal opportunities employer committed to diversity and inclusion in the workplace.*

**Job Description – Town Clerk**

**Salary:** SCP 46 to 54

**Place of Work:** Thetford

**JOB PURPOSE**

Lead and contribute to the development and success of the Council, with a particular emphasis on being a key contributor to the corporate plan and service delivery for our residents, ensuring the delivery of a range of services and support functions.

Provide professional and impartial advice and guidance to all elected councillors to facilitate informed decision-making and advance the Council's priorities, with a focus on supporting the corporate plan and service delivery for our residents.

Serve as the Council's Proper Officer, carrying out all associated responsibilities such as issuing necessary notifications, signing legal agreements, obtaining planning consents, and initiating public notices and press releases, all in alignment with the corporate plan and to enhance service delivery for our residents.

**KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

As Town Clerk, your role is integral to ensuring the effective execution of the corporate plan and delivering high-quality services to our residents. You will have full responsibility for implementing the directives of the Council as a Local Authority, ensuring that all actions align with the strategic goals outlined in the corporate plan. Additionally, you will provide guidance to the Council, aiding in the development of overarching policies guiding the Authority's activities. Your expertise will be crucial in furnishing the Council with the necessary information to make informed decisions, and you will be responsible for the constructive implementation of these decisions. Ultimately, you will be held accountable to the Council for the efficient management of all resources and will provide regular reports as required to ensure alignment with the corporate plan and the provision of exemplary service to our residents enhancing commercial opportunities.

*Main Duties*

* To provide professional advice and guidance to all councillors of the Town Council as required to inform decision making and enable the Corporate Plan to be progressed and delivered, with political neutrality at all times.
* To act as Proper Officer to the Council and the Council's representative as needed.
* Prepare meeting agendas for the Council and its committees, attendmeetings, and ensure accurate minutes are recorded for approval.
* Oversee the performance, welfare, conduct, and management practices of Council employees, including providing supervision, support, and performance appraisals.
* Ensure compliance with statutory and other regulations relevant to the Council's operations.
* Uphold principles of openness, respect, accountability, and democracy in the Council's operations.
* Serve as the Council's primary advisor on general policy matters, coordinating advice, conducting reviews of services and activities, and proposing improvements in quality and efficiency. Produce reports for circulation and discussion by the Full Council, engaging with administrators and specialists as needed.
* Assume overall responsibility for Town Council business, monitoring policy implementation and suggesting adjustments as necessary. Ensure compliance with Risk Assessments, including fraud and corruption risks, and plan for business continuity.
* Ensure adherence to all relevant legislation and the Council’s policies and procedures, regularly monitoring, reviewing, and revising them as needed.
* Oversee the preparation and approval of the annual budget and precept, regularly review income and expenditure budgets, and ensure proper financial management, including banking, insurance, and treasury arrangements.
* Act as Data Protection Manager, ensuring compliance with the Freedom of Information Act
* Engage and communicate with Council members, the public, and various community interest groups in the ongoing development of Thetford

**Specific Duties**

*Leadership and Management*

* Lead the organisation effectively, collaborating to develop Council strategy, provide policy and legal advice, and ensure efficient project delivery.
* Collaborate with Council members and staff to deliver the corporate plan for our residents.
* Gather and analyse relevant information and stakeholder opinions regarding proposed actions.
* Provide strong leadership to staff, fostering a positive organisational culture aligned with Council values, promoting teamwork and effective communication, and facilitating personal development.
* Line manage designated staff according to Council performance management procedures, ensuring that staff are properly trained and updated in order to carry out their duties effectively.
* Partner with community representatives to promote town development.
* Support, advise, and assist elected Members in their public duties, enhancing the Council's and town's reputation.

*Service Delivery:*

* Lead the delivery of the corporate plan, ensuring the focus at all times is on the service provided to residents
* Ensure Council activities align with best practices, strategy, and regulations, meeting resident needs and promoting them effectively.
* Manage all Council assets and services, with a commercial focus, delegating responsibilities to appropriate managers and teams.
* Monitor feedback from residents, visitors, and external bodies to improve service delivery.
* Foster a customer-focused, accountable culture among Council employees.

*Financial:*

* As the Responsible Financial Officer, ensure the preparation and approval of the annual budget and precept. Regularly monitor and review all income and expenditure budgets, including VAT claims and operational procedures across all Council activities.
* Establish and maintain appropriate banking, insurance, and treasury management arrangements, ensuring that the Council's accounts are prepared, audited, and published in adherence to legal obligations.
* Collaborate with staff and stakeholders to secure project funding and delegate project responsibilities according to contractual arrangements.

*Continuous Professional Development:*

* Stay informed about relevant national, regional, and local policies and acquire necessary professional knowledge through training or seminars.
* Participate in appraisals and personal development activities, seeking feedback for improvement.

All employees are required to ensure compliance to all policies, procedures, standard operating practices, with recommendations for action and continuous improvement, and commitment to Thetford Town Council’s policies and values, treating colleagues and customers with dignity and respect.

*This document describes in general terms the duties and responsibilities of the post at the time it was drafted, and is not intended to be a detailed list of all duties and tasks. This is not to be taken as exhaustive nor exclusive, and duties may be varied at any time, in consultation with the postholder, to meet the needs of the service.*

**Person Specification – Town Clerk**

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| **KEY CRITERIA** | **ESSENTIAL** | **DESIRABLE** |
| Qualifications | High levels of literacy and numeracy GCSE English and MathematicsLevel 3 qualification or degree standard.Evidence of commitment to continuing professional development | A recognised qualification in local government administration (CiLCA), or commitment to undertake qualification.Management, administration, or professional qualification (e.g. ILM/CMI level 5 or above) Accountancy qualification |
| Team management and leadership | Senior Leadership within a large complex organisation Ability to motivate, lead and inspire the team to provide clear direction and vision.Evidence of ability to prioritise work, set targets, achieve positive outcomes and delegate effectively, as well as the ability to organise and manage resources effectively. | Previous experience as a Town Clerk or Deputy Clerk or in a senior position in a principal local authority or in business, with a clear focus on community service, partnerships, and outcomes.Demonstrates consistent support for colleagues and staff with their personal and professional development through effective leadership |
| Policy and strategic management | Ability to analyse business needs and risks, and formulate policies and strategies to achieve those needs | Experience in providing policy advice and strategic recommendations on complex and contentious matters |
| Service delivery | Experience of applying the key principles of effective service provision, customer care and service planning | Significant previous experience of service delivery across different functions |
| Financial and budget management | Experience in the management of complex budgets, budget control, and financial analysis and processes | Experience of Local Government / Town Council management accounting systems. Experience of fund raising and grant finding |
| Collaboration | Experience of collaborating with diverse partners and stakeholder groups, negotiating, and agreeing joint actions  | Evidence of negotiating and agreeing contracts with suppliers or providers |
| Project management | Understanding and experience of project management tools and techniques and experience of delivering projects successfully | Evidence of formal training or qualifications in project management. |
| Use of ICT | Fully competent in using the full range of Microsoft Office applications, and experience in using other database management tools | Experience of contributing to the development of ICT use to meet business needs and improve effectiveness  |
| Communication Skills | Ability to communicate clearly and confidently, adapting communication style to suit different audiences; must possesses and be able to demonstrate professional and constructive communication skills with Councillors, members of the public, contractors, and other public and private sector organisations. Excellent presentational skills. Experience of dealing with members of the public in a helpful and appropriate manner.  | Evidence of negotiating and persuading others to adopt a course of action when the subject is complex and/or contentious |
| Problem-Solving | Capacity to gather and analyse pertinent information, generating innovative solutions to challenges. | Evidence of developing and implementing effective solutions to problems. |
| Personal Responsibility | Ability to work effectively and efficiently under pressure and unsupervised.Trustworthy with confidential information.Self-motivated with a flexible attitude to working.A track record of going above and beyond the basic job requirements to ensure that the Council is able to operate efficiently, effectively and trouble free.Takes accountability for personal and professional development, acknowledging weaknesses and mistakes, and taking steps to address. | Evidence of embracing significant personal or professional changes. |
| Resilience | Capable of effectively prioritising tasks, balancing business requirements with personal well-being and that of colleagues. | Evidence of effectively managing particularly challenging situations. |
| Customer Focus | Embraces a customer-centric approach, ensuring active engagement of service users and stakeholders. | Demonstrated leadership in developing and implementing customer-focused practices in a professional setting. |
| Administrative and organisational skills | Experience of producing concise and accurate minutes of meetings.Experience of producing reports. | Experience of using accounts/payroll systems.Experience of producing or interpreting financial reports. |

**Other requirements**

* This is a politically restricted post in accordance with Local Government regulations
* This role may require the jobholder to travel to meet the requirements of the role
* Willingness to work out of hours attending evening/weekend meetings as required

**Apply**

Please complete the application form including a personal statement to recruitment@breckland.gov.uk

If you would like an informal chat regarding this role, please contact Natalie King by emailing Natalie.king@breckland.gov.uk

Closing date: Tuesday 7th May

Interview date: Week commencing 13th May.

**Equal Opportunities**

We are committed to being an Equal Opportunities employer, recognising the benefits of sustaining a workforce which reflects the diversity of the community we serve. We welcome applications from anyone who feels they meet the requirements of our vacancies - these are listed as essential requirements on the person specification (within the Recruitment Pack).