



# The Role of a Parish Clerk

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## Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

### Overall duties

The Clerk to the Council is the Proper Officer of the Council and as such is under a statutory duty to carry out all the functions of a council's Proper Officer, and in particular to serve or issue all the notifications required by law.

The Clerk is responsible for ensuring that the instructions of the Council in connection with its function as a parish council are carried out.

The Clerk is expected to advise the Council on, and assist in the formation of, overall policies to be followed in respect of the council's activities, and in particular, to produce all the information required for making effective decisions and to implement constructively all decisions.

The Clerk is the Responsible Financial Officer and accountable for all financial records of the Council and the proper administration of its finances.

The Clerk is accountable to the Council for the effective management of all its resources and will report to them as and when required.

The Clerk will understand the issues facing Parish Councils and the environment within which our Council operates, and will commit themselves and the Council to an ethos of public service.

### Ensuring compliance with legal duties

- Ensure that all statutory and other provisions governing or affecting the running of the Council are observed.
- Monitor the implemented policies of the Council to ensure they are achieving the desired result and, where appropriate, suggest modifications. Managing Parish Council, Committee, and Parish meetings.
- Prepare informative agendas for meetings of the Council, in consultation with appropriate Councillors.
- Attend all meetings of the Full Council, take a formal Minute of the meeting and create an Action Log. Ensure that these actions are taken in advance of the following meeting.
- Prepare, and agree with the Chairs, the agendas for committee meetings, but attend and minute only key meetings where the Clerk's presence is required.
- Issue notices and agendas for the Parish Council's annual meeting and the Parish Meeting. Attend and minute these meetings and implement the decisions made that are agreed by the Council.

### **Delivering Council's strategic Purpose**

Draw up, both on their own initiative and as a result of suggestions by Councillors, proposals for consideration by the Council, and advise on the practicability and likely effects of specific courses of action.

- Update Council's annual plan and monitor progress of schemes.
- Bring forward draft policies and scheme proposals to reflect community needs.
- Receive correspondence and documents on behalf of the Council and, following known policy of the Council and in liaison with appropriate Councillors, respond on behalf of the Council.
- Prepare a monthly summary of all significant incoming and outgoing correspondence for Council meetings.
- Draft responses to third party consultation exercises.
- Study reports and other data on Council's activities and on matters bearing on those activities. Where appropriate, discuss such matters with administrators and specialists in particular fields and produce reports for circulation and discussion by the Council.

### **Carrying out the business of the Council**

In partnership with appropriate Councillors:

## Parish Administration

- Establish and maintain effective paper and electronic filing systems to record the business of the Parish Council in a recoverable format.
- Maintain effective booking and fault-reporting systems to enable the public to access the services of partner organisations e.g. Police, Wokingham Borough Council.
- Place and manage orders for the purchase and supply of goods and services.
- Market the Parish Hall as venues for hire.
- Ensure the letting and effective management of Parish allotments.
- Work collaboratively with the Chairs of all relevant committees in the oversight of those elements of the Council's business.

## Health and Safety

- Ensure that the Council's statutory obligations for the proper management of all Health and Safety matters are met; including the review of Council's Health and Safety Policy and the preparation (and oversight) of Risk Assessments, where necessary, for the safe management of Council business and activities.

## Financial management

- Manage the annual budget for Council and its committees, and prepare financial statements as required.
- Monitor and balance the Council's accounts and prepare records for audit and VAT purposes.
- Ensure that correct financial records are kept and that internal checking regimes are established.
- Receive and report on invoices for goods and services to be paid for by the Council and ensure that such accounts are settled within due timescales.
- Issue invoices on behalf of the Council for goods and services and ensure payment is received.
- Research and bring forward opportunities to apply for grants to support programme aspirations.

## Staff Management

- Manage their own work and that of all the council's employees (currently 11) and service contracts, by agreeing job descriptions and annual work plans, and

contributing positively to reviews of performance

- Continue to acquire and maintain the necessary professional knowledge required for the efficient management of the affairs of the Council, and join appropriate professional bodies e.g. The Society of Local Council Clerks.
- Attend training courses or seminars on the work and role of the Clerk.
- Work towards the achievement of a Certificate in Local Authority Administration (CiLCA) as a minimum requirement for effectiveness in the position of Clerk to the Council (if the CiLCA Certificate is not already held).
- Maintain records of staff hours, leave etc.
- Supervise any other members of staff as their Line Manager, in keeping with the policies of the Council and undertake all necessary activities in connection with the management of salaries, conditions of employment and work of other staff.

### Communications

- Manage the Parish Council's website and ensure it is accurate and up to date.
- Identify items to post on the website and in Parish Newsletters.
- Devise new ways to communicate with our community in order to find out their priorities and requirements.
- Attend, as a representative of the Council, the conferences of the National Association of Local Councils, Society of Local Council Clerks, and other relevant bodies.
- Work cooperatively with the media to promote the role and a positive public perception of the Council.
- Work with Councillors in the preparation of Press releases and other media engagement. Issue, and monitor outcomes from, all Press Releases and ensure that the Council's legal responsibilities have been adhered to, the reputation of the Council is protected, and that there is consistency of style including branding.
- Act as the representative or spokesperson of the Council as required.

### Other

- Attend monthly evening meetings of the Council and occasional committees and other events as necessary.
- Carry out such other responsibilities and functions as shall from time to time be required by the Council.

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