

**Job Description - Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer**

The Role:

The Parish Clerk is the Proper Officer of the Council and as such is under a statutory duty to carry out the instructions of the Council and to serve or issue all the notifications required by law. The Parish Clerk will advise the Council on and assist in the formation of policies to be followed in respect of the Councils activities and in particular to produce all the information required for making effective decisions. The person appointed will be responsible for the management of staff and resources and will take the lead on the Council’s major projects. The Council also delegates its responsibilities to the Clerk for Health and Safety in the workplace.

The Parish Clerk, under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 is also the Council’s designated Responsible Financial Officer. This means they effectively manage and monitor the Council’s finance, advise the Council on a financial strategy that meets its finance and policy objectives and ensure that its accounts and administrative procedures comply with the requirements of Accounts and Audit and other relevant regulations.

Key Tasks and Responsibilities:

Strategic Responsibilities:

1. To monitor the policies of the Council to ensure their effectiveness, reviewing and revising as necessary.
2. To regularly monitor, review and update the Council’s financial processes and procedures as written in the Parish Council Financial Regulations and ensure compliance with the Council’s statutory responsibilities, financial regulations and other Council policy on all financial matters.

Staff Responsibilities:

1. To line manage the Deputy Clerk.
2. To ensure effective delegation and allocation of responsibilities and activities.
3. To ensure the appropriate training of staff and updating of skills to match their responsibilities and duties in light of annual appraisals and regular monitoring.
4. To undertake all the necessary activities in connection with the recruitment of staff, the management of salaries and conditions of employment.

Statutory Responsibilities:

1. To ensure that all statutory and other provisions governing or affecting the running of the Council are observed.
2. To advise the Council in relation to its legal obligations including those as an employer and a service provider and in relation to health & safety.
3. To alert Members of Council to changes in respect of their statutory and other responsibilities as Councillors and act as advisor to members on such matters as required.

Financial Responsibilities:

1. To ensure that all the statutory duties are carried out in accordance with the prescribed timescales.
2. To ensure that the Council’s annual budget is set and managed.
3. To ensure that best practice is followed and suitable systems, procedures and controls are in place to minimise risk and ensure council financial affairs are well managed.
4. To prepare financial reports for Council, Committees, and other project working groups. These reports will cover budget monitoring, fund balances, income and expenditure, assets and liabilities, monitoring of reserves and other relevant current matters.
5. To submit the Council’s precept request to South Hams District Council and supply any breakdown request.
6. To prepare and submit the annual financial return and supporting paperwork for approval by the Parish Council and subsequently internal and external audit. To carry out liaison with auditors.
7. To identify sources of external funding for projects. To carry out the necessary research to write and submit funding bids to grant making organisations, including partners and/or stakeholders as required.
8. To undertake the submission of quarterly VAT returns.
9. To verify and code (i.e. allocate to expenditure heads) suppliers’ invoices prior to certification for payment.
10. To manage and maintain the Council’s risk register and advise Council accordingly.
11. To arrange Council insurance and process claims as necessary. To report annually to the Council on insurance risk covered.
12. To manage and oversee the arrangements for ensuring quotations, tenders and contracts are issued in accordance with financial regulations.

Asset Management Responsibilities:

1. To oversee the management of the Council’s assets which includes the Cemetery, Cemetery Lodge, Jubilee Park, Waterhead Creek. Lime Kiln, Allotments and Moorings.
2. To ensure that the Council has a programme of planned maintenance and inspection and that all statutory duties of a service provider, property owner and landlord are fulfilled.
3. To ensure that the appropriate terms and conditions, policies and agreed working practices for the hire of the moorings and allotments.
4. To ensure that Councils obligations regarding health and safety and premises management are fully met and appropriate systems, records and procedures are in place.

Administrative Responsibilities:

1. To ensure that the Councils standing orders and financial regulations are reviewed regularly and in particular to ensure that any changes required by changes in the law, guidance or best practice are implemented.
2. To ensure the preparation and circulation of agendas and supporting documentation for meetings of the Council and all its committees and subcommittees as necessary and to ensure the preparation and circulation of minutes, notes and reports for approval.
3. To research matters of interest to the Council, taking advice from specialists in particular fields and to prepare reports for circulation and discussion by the Council.
4. To recommend when external specialist advice is needed and to ensure that the information is placed before the Council to assist members in making decisions.
5. To draw up on his/her initiative and as a result of suggestions by Councillors, proposals for consideration and to advise on the practicalities and likely effect of specific courses of action.
6. To receive correspondence and documents on behalf of the Council and to bring all relevant items to the attention of the members. To issue correspondence as a result of instructions of, or the known policy of the Council.
7. To ensure the proper maintenance and safe custody of all Council records, deeds and documents.
8. To be the point of contact for emergency calls relating to Council property and services.

Communications:

1. To act as the Councils representative as required, including attending meetings with key stakeholders and promoting the Council within the local community.
2. To liaise closely with other Town and Parish Councils and public bodies and where appropriate, to participate in joint activities.
3. To represent the Council to members of the public and ensure that enquiries are dealt with sensitively and diplomatically.
4. To ensure management and maintenance of the Parish Council websites and social media.
5. To prepare press releases about the activities of the Council and to respond to ad hoc enquiries from the press, acting as Council spokesperson and making press statements in conjunction with the Chair, as required.
6. To prepare for the Annual Parish Meeting, ensuring that it provides an opportunity for local residents to participate.
7. To ensure that relevant information on the Council and other related matters is made widely available to members of the public via the Council’s noticeboard, website and social media.
8. To oversee the promotion of the Council’s work and services to the local community and to ensure that the community are engaged and consulted on matters of importance to them.

Other Responsibilities:

To undertake such other responsibilities and functions as may be required from time to time by the Council, commensurate with the duties and responsibilities of the post.

This document, whilst outlining the duties which it is anticipated will be undertaken by the post holder, indicates mainly the level of responsibility. It is not a comprehensive and exhaustive list, and the duties may be varied at time to time by the Parish Council.