

ALLBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

Interim Parish Clerk

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14 June 2010

To: All Members of the Council

NOTICE OF MEETING

Meeting: COUNCIL MEETING

Venue: **Conference Room 3 (1st Floor), Civic Offices, Leigh Road, Eastleigh**

Date: Monday 21 June 2010

Time: 7.00 pm

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Confidential business – to consider the exclusion of the press and public for the following item on the grounds that, by reason of the confidential nature of the business, publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest
3. Appointment of Permanent Parish Clerk – to consider report of the Interim Clerk (attached)
4. Next meeting – to agree a date for the next meeting of the Council to discuss Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

MIKE DERRICK

Interim Parish Clerk

ALLBROOK PARISH COUNCIL
21 June 2010

APPOINTMENT OF PERMANENT PARISH CLERK
Report of the Interim Clerk

Introduction

1. Members need to consider a number of issues in relation to the appointment of a permanent Clerk to the Parish Council. These include advertisement of the post, interview arrangements, hours of working and salary scale.
2. Initially at least, it would seem appropriate that the Clerk works from home, bearing in mind the limited number of working hours. This, in fact, is the normal working arrangement for the vast majority of parish council clerks.

Recruitment

3. I have attached as Appendices 1 and 2 a draft advertisement for the post, together with a job description. These can obviously be varied as members wish. A Role Profile and Person Specification could also be prepared but are probably not needed for the initial appointment.
4. Applications can be invited by way of an application form or by CV with a covering letter. I would suggest the latter for this first appointment.
5. The following options could be considered for placing the advertisement:
 - web site www.hampshirejobs.org (the site used by Eastleigh BC and other local authorities for job vacancies)
 - Hampshire Association of Local Councils website
 - Southern Evening Echo
 - local posters
6. The hampshirejobs and HALC websites can be used free of charge but there will be costs associated with the other options.
7. It is feasible that a single candidate could be appointed as Clerk to both Allbrook and Chandler's Ford Parish Councils. This will obviously depend on the experience and background of the applicants, as well as their working capacity. At this stage the assumption is that separate appointments will be made, albeit the position can be reviewed once applications are received. Clearly, there would need to be liaison between the two parishes if a joint appointment is to be contemplated.

Interviews

8. The date(s) for interviews can be set once the timetable for advertisement is agreed. The interviews can be held at a suitable local venue of members' choosing. A panel of members will be needed to conduct the interviews and thought should be given as to whether the panel will have delegated powers for appointment or whether it needs to report back to Council for a decision.

Hours of Working

9. The Steering Committee for Allbrook has suggested that the Clerk's post be set initially at 3 hours/week. This seems a little on the low side even for a council of Allbrook's size. Members may feel this needs some adjustment, perhaps to aid recruitment potential. There is, of course, the opportunity to vary the contract hours after a suitable time to reflect operational experience.

Salary scale

10. The Council's budget for 2010/11 provides for a salary equivalent to Eastleigh BC Grade 10 (full-time salary ranging from £33,511 to £36,298), set at 80% of the grade. For a post of 3 hours/week, this equates to an annual salary of £2,898 (total cost £3670, including pension provision). For this year only, the budget provides for 2.5 hours/week to be charged to the Parish Council (£3060) and 0.5 hours to be charged to Eastleigh Borough Council.
11. I would suggest that, rather than using Eastleigh BC salary grades, the council adopts the National Agreement for Clerks published jointly by the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks. This is the recognised model for setting salary levels for Parish Clerks and will provide a more uniform basis for dealing with general contractual matters. The setting of a salary can be seen as a little subjective but the benefits outweigh any disadvantages.
12. Part 1 of the National Agreement (Appendix 3 enclosed) provides for salary ranges based on evaluated benchmark posts. There are four profiles, covering the smallest to the largest Parish/Town Council. Councils can identify the appropriate salary range for a particular post by reference to the benchmark profile. A wide salary range is given within each profile to cater for posts which are either below or above the benchmark. (Note: It is suggested that members disregard the points allocation shown against each profile as these aren't particularly helpful)
13. I would suggest that the Allbrook Clerk's post falls within profile 1, perhaps with a starting salary at point 18. On the current scale (see Appendix 4) the full-time salary at scp 18 is £17,161 which, at 3 hours/week, equates to £1,391 (£1160 for 2.5 hours). A further issue is whether the appointment is made on a single salary point or allows for incremental advancement, depending on performance and qualifications.

14. The Council can choose whether or not to enter the Clerk in the local government superannuation scheme. At current rates, the employer contribution is 19.1% of salary. An alternative would be to provide a retirement gratuity which involves a contribution of 3.75% of salary. The following table shows the cost of the various options:

<u>Option</u> <u>(based on 3 hrs/wk)</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>NI</u>	<u>Super-ann</u>	<u>Gratuity</u>	<u>Annual cost</u>
Salary only (no pension/gratuity)	1,391	0			1,391
Salary + gratuity	1,391	0		52	1,443
Salary + pension	1,391	0	266		1,657

15. Also shown below are the salary costs for a Clerk's post of 5 hours/week in case members feel more hours are needed:

<u>Option</u> <u>(based on 5 hrs/wk)</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>NI</u>	<u>Super-ann</u>	<u>Gratuity</u>	<u>Annual cost</u>
Salary only (no pension/gratuity)	2,319	0			2,319
Salary + gratuity	2,319	0		87	2,406
Salary + pension	2,319	0	443		2,762

Office Allowance and Equipment

16. Where parish clerks work from home, it is common practice for the Council to pay an office allowance. This helps to defray the cost of heating/lighting etc. It is suggested that an annual sum of £125 might be appropriate in Allbrook's case.
17. In addition, the Council could install a separate telephone line in the Clerk's home to provide a dedicated line for Council business. However, this may not be necessary in Allbrook's case and, alternatively, the Council could perhaps pay a percentage of the Clerk's home telephone line rental and a proportion of calls.
18. Arrangements have been made for the IT Section at Eastleigh Borough Council to supply a computer, complete with office software. It would also be appropriate to pay for a broadband service to aid efficiency.

Working Conditions

19. The National Agreement also contains a Model Contract of Employment (Appendix 5) and a Guide to Good Employment Practice (Appendix 6) which are recommended for adoption.

SUMMARY

20. The above paragraphs deal with the main issues relating to the appointment of a permanent Parish Clerk. An expeditious timetable will be needed to progress the appointment as quickly as possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

21. Members are asked to consider, in relation to the proposed Clerk's post:

- (a) the draft advertisement (Appendix 1)
- (b) the draft job description (Appendix 2)
- (c) the application process (application form or CV/letter)
- (d) arrangements for advertisement of the post and associated timetable
- (e) appointment of an interview panel, with or without delegated powers
- (f) adoption or otherwise of Part 1 of the National Agreement (salary profiles)
- (g) the hours and salary grade (single-point or incremental)
- (h) the provision or otherwise of a pension/gratuity
- (i) the payment or otherwise of an office allowance
- (j) the provision or otherwise of a dedicated telephone line
- (k) the provision or otherwise of a broadband service
- (l) adoption or otherwise of Parts 2 and 3 of the National Agreement (Model Contract of Employment (Appendix 5) and Guide to Good Employment Practice (Appendix 6))

MIKE DERRICK

Interim Parish Clerk

xx June 2010

ALLBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR CLERK TO THE PARISH COUNCIL

Overall responsibilities

The Clerk to the Council will be the Proper Officer of the Council and as such is under a statutory duty to carry out all the functions, and in particular to serve or issue all the notifications required by law of a local authority's Proper Officer. The Clerk will be totally responsible for ensuring that the instructions of the Council in connection with its function as a local authority 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 Authority's activities and in particular to produce all the information required for making effective decisions and to implement constructively all decisions.

The Clerk will be the Responsible Financial Officer and will be accountable to the Council for the effective management of all its resources. The Clerk is responsible for all financial records of the Council and the careful administration of its finances and will report to the Council as and when required.

Specific responsibilities

1. To ensure that statutory and other provisions governing or affecting the running of the Council are observed.
2. To monitor and balance the Council's accounts and prepare records for audit purposes and VAT.
3. To ensure that the Council's obligations for risk assessment are properly met.
4. To prepare, in consultation with appropriate members, agendas for meetings of the Council, Committees and Sub-Committees.
5. To attend all meetings of the Council, Committees and Sub-Committees and prepare minutes for approval.
6. To receive correspondence and documents on behalf of the Council and to deal with the correspondence or documents or bring such items to the attention of the Council. To issue correspondence as a result of instructions of, or the known policy of the Council.
7. To receive and report on invoices for goods and services to be paid for by the Council and to ensure such accounts are met. To issue invoices on behalf of the Council for goods and services and to ensure payment is received.

8. To study reports and other data on activities of the Council and on matters bearing on those activities. Where appropriate, to discuss such matters with administrators and specialists in particular fields and to produce reports for circulation and discussion by the Council.
9. To draw up both on his/her own initiative and as a result of suggestions by Councillors proposals for consideration by the Council and to advise on the practicability and likely effects of specific courses of action.
10. To supervise any other members of staff as their line manager in keeping with the policies of the Council and to undertake all necessary activities in connection with the management of salaries, conditions of employment and work of other staff.
11. To monitor the implemented policies of the Council to ensure they are achieving the desired result and where appropriate suggest modifications.
12. To act as the representative of the Council as required.
13. To issue notices and prepare agendas and minutes for the Parish Meeting and to attend the assemblies of the Parish Meeting.
14. To prepare, in consultation with the Chairman, press releases about the activities of, or decisions of, the Council.
15. To attend training courses or seminars on the work and role of the Clerk as required by the Council.
16. If mutually agreed between the Clerk and the Council, to work towards the achievement of the status of Qualified Clerk for additional effectiveness in the position of Clerk to the Council.
17. To continue to acquire the necessary professional knowledge required for the efficient management of the affairs of the Council.

ALLBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

<i>Clerk's responsibilities:</i>	<i>[The Clerk will also be the Responsible Financial Officer for the Council.]</i>
<i>Working arrangements:</i>	Average of 3 [5] hours per week, including attendance at evening Council and Committee meetings and the Annual Parish Meeting. Apart from meeting attendance, the Clerk will work from home with flexible working times. The Clerk is required to have his/her own transport for the purposes of attending meetings and carrying out the functions of the post.
<i>Salary:</i>	Starting salary commensurate with scp 18 of the NJC pay scale (equivalent to an hourly rate of approximately £8.91), depending on experience and qualifications. <i>[The agreed salary will be reviewed annually (up to an agreed maximum) to reflect the performance of the postholder.]</i>
<i>Holiday entitlement:</i>	In accordance with the national scale for Local Council employees, plus pro rata statutory bank holidays.
<i>Councillors:</i>	8, appointed for a 4-year term (expiring initially in May 2014).
<i>Council precept/budget:</i>	2010/11 £30,770

VACANCIES FOR NEW PARISH COUNCIL CLERKS

Following the creation of two new parish councils for Allbrook and Chandler's Ford, applications are invited for the post of Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer to each council.

The posts are both part-time, with salaries in accordance with NJC scales. The successful applicants will have sound administrative and communication skills and ideally have experience in minute-taking, bookkeeping and IT. Keyboard skills will also be an advantage.

Initially, both Clerks will work from home and space will therefore be needed for storage of the Councils' books and records. In the case of Chandler's Ford, consideration may be given at a later date to provision of a Parish Office.

Attendance at evening Council meetings is required but otherwise the work can be done flexibly.

The hours for each post are:

Allbrook	3 [5] hours/week
Chandler's Ford	17 [20] hours/week

Applications (in the form of a CV and covering letter) are invited by xxxxxxxxxxxx

An information pack, including job details and further information about the new Councils, is available from:

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Short-listed candidates will be called for interview xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx