



SOMERSET ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

COMPANY NUMBER 11942896 REGISTERED IN ENGLAND AND WALES

SALC guidance: Recruitment

Leading HR experts recognise that good recruitment is vital for every organisation, it is especially important when labour markets are tight either locally or nationally.

Finding and recruiting the right person for the right role at the right time ensures that the workforce has the relevant skills and abilities for the council's current and future needs. Effective recruitment is not just about filling an immediate vacancy, it's about having a positive impact on the long-term success of the council.

There are lots of methods for undertaking recruitment. This guidance offers advice on a commonly used, straightforward recruitment process. It includes templates relating to recruitment of a clerk, but it also looks at the stages involved in wider recruitment and outlines the relevant law affecting the recruitment process.

This guide is not designed to be exhaustive. If a council requires more detail on any process or information contained, please contact the SALC office.

Table of Contents

EMPLOYMENT LAW OVERVIEW (RECRUITMENT & SELECTION)	2
DEFINING THE ROLE	2
AGREEING THE GRADE AND SALARY	3
AGREEING ANY DELEGATED AUTHORITY	3
JOB DESCRIPTION (JD)	3
FLEXIBILITY STATEMENT	4
PERSON SPECIFICATION (SPEC)	4
ADVERTISEMENT (INTERNAL & EXTERNAL RECRUITMENT)	5
APPLICATION PROCESS & DATA HANDLING	6
CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS	7
SHORTLISTING	8
THE INTERVIEW & SCORING	8
PRE-EMPLOYMENT CHECKS	9
RIGHT-TO-WORK CHECKS	9
MEDICAL CHECKS	10
VETTING BY SOCIAL MEDIA	11
THE JOB OFFER & THE CONTRACT	12
WRITTEN STATEMENT OF PARTICULARS	12
BASIC CHECK LIST OF TASKS	13



Employment law overview (recruitment & selection)

There is no single piece of legislation governing recruitment and selection, but there are laws dealing with the employment relationship that have an impact on pre-employment issues.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a framework for the recruitment and employment process, stating 9 protected characteristics on which it is unlawful for employers to discriminate against job applicants (and existing workers) because of one of the protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy, and maternity.

Other key statutes relevant to the recruitment process include (not an exhaustive list):

- Employment Rights Act 1996 - statement of terms and conditions
- Working Time Regulations 1998 - statutory rights such as hours, rest breaks, holidays
- National Minimum Wages Act 1998 - minimum pay for workers and employers (rates are reviewed annually by government)
- Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (as amended) – deals with issues such as continuous employment where new businesses take over an existing workforce (for example, transfer of principal council staff to the town or parish council)
- Data Protection Act 1998 - governs the lawful processing of applicants' data
- Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 - governs checks on right to work in the UK.
- The Pensions Act 2008 - requires every council employer with at least one member of staff to ensure that those staff who meet certain criteria are put into a pension scheme and the employer (and employee) must make contributions into that scheme, unless the employee opts out.
- EIM67300 - Tax treatment of Parish and Community Council Clerks in England and Wales: assessment of payments to clerks - A clerk can never be considered self-employed for tax or NIC purposes



Defining the role

The first step when recruiting to any role is to take the time to define its purpose. Whilst the definition of the parish or town clerk role is well-established, the council should still consider what elements of the job will be individual to that council, its projects, services, community, and future.

For recruitment to any post, take the time to establish:

- The job's purpose and what duties are involved
- How and where it will be carried out
- What outputs would be expected of the jobholder
- What new skills are needed
- How the job fits into the council's staff structure

Agreeing the grade and salary

It is strongly advised that the starting salary of a clerk should, as a minimum, be paid in accordance with the ranges set out in the agreement on salary scales reached between NALC and SLCC in 2004. The agreement is available for download from the SALC website.

The ranges were derived from an independent bench marking exercise carried out on behalf of NALC and SLCC across a sample set of clerks' positions. The job profiles for the benchmarks are included at the end of the document.

In respect of vacancies other than for the clerk, the council can choose to apply a salary it considers appropriate to the role. Councils might wish to ascertain the market rate by comparing the role to similar roles being advertised at that time.

SALC can offer advice should a council require assistance in applying the agreement to a vacancy.

Agreeing any delegated authority

The council's terms of reference should identify whether a committee, sub-committee or officer has delegated authority to undertake all or specified stages of a recruitment process: writing the advert and associated paperwork, incurring expenditure, shortlisting, interviewing, making an offer of employment.

If these matters are not covered in a terms of reference, a meeting of the council should resolve to authorise a committee (which might appoint a sub-committee) to carry out all necessary procedures and to incur expenditure up to a stated limit (advertising, room hire, etc).

It should be agreed whether the delegated authority includes the authority to make a job offer/ appointment, or whether it requires a recommendation to a meeting of the council. If an offer requires authority from a council meeting, there is always a risk that the delay might cause the loss of the preferred candidate, especially in a tight skills and labour market.

Everyone involved in recruitment must have the appropriate knowledge and skills to make effective and fair recruitment decisions.

Job Description (JD)

The JD explains to potential applicants the detailed job requirements and expectations, typically including the core duties, main accountabilities, and the purpose of the role. A clear JD helps the recruitment process by providing an overview of the role for applicants and for those involved on the process.

A well thought through JD will prove helpful when considering applications in line with the person spec, and it will provide clarity later when the council undertakes an employee appraisal or otherwise considers performance and training plans.

When writing a JD, try to be as succinct as possible whilst providing all the key information. Long lists of all possible job responsibilities are more likely to put off applicants than attract them.

A standard clerk/RFO JD written by NALC and SLCC is provided at **appendix A** of this guidance. If a council chooses to use the NALC/SLCC JD, it should first ensure any modifications are made to reflect the actual role on offer. The council might want to consider:

- Is the clerk also the RFO, should the JD include all RFO functions?
- Is the clerk required to line manage staff?
- Does the JD include the necessary references to the services and functions of the council? i.e., cemeteries, play areas, theatre, etc.
- Does the council wish to make a statement about its environmental approach?
- Does the council wish to include an equalities statement?

SALC can advise on locally required adaptations to the JD.

Flexibility statement

It is not usually possible to capture every detail of a role within a JD. It can be tricky to predict the way a job might develop, especially if the council is embarking on a new direction. It is therefore common practice for a JD to end with a flexibility clause; a 'catch all' statement along the lines of, *'You will be expected to carry out any other duties that might reasonably be required in line with your main duties'*. Such clauses are frequently put in employment contracts.

Inclusion of a flexibility clause is useful in allowing the JD to be changed slightly from time to time as the council's needs change. The clause makes it easier for an employer to request that a new task is undertaken when that work is not expressly stated in the JD.

Refusal by the employee to carry out the change might amount to a failure to follow a reasonable management instruction and can result in disciplinary action. However, the clause does not permit a council to require a staff member to do absolutely anything asked of them. The request must be reasonable, which is ascertained in relation to the wider context of the job role, the skills required, and any other material consideration.

If in any doubt as to whether a request under a flexibility clause is likely to be reasonable, SALC recommends the council seeks specialist HR or employment law advice.

Person Specification (spec)

A person spec is a profile of the personal skills, qualifications, abilities, and experiences the council will look for during the recruitment and selection process.

The spec states the essential criteria against which all candidates will be **judged objectively**. The criteria must be **clear, necessary, and demonstrable**, and be the minimum necessary to carry out the role effectively.

Essential criteria are those that are critical for the effective performance of the job. It is expected that applicants will meet all the essential criteria to be considered eligible for appointment.

Desirable criteria are those that enhance a candidate's capacity to do the job. They are not listed as essential because it is expected that they can be acquired on the job. For example, whilst specific knowledge of the council and its local area would be of benefit, it can be learnt in post. Meeting the desirable criteria will make that applicant a stronger candidate for the job. To support the sift for the shortlisting process, agree relevant weighting of each criteria.

A spec has several uses:

- It tells the candidates about the level and complexity of the job so they can decide whether to apply
- It sets desirable criteria, which can be used to identify the most suitable candidate
- It provides a template against which the selection panel can undertake a transparent shortlisting process.

Things to avoid:

- Don't overstate the level of knowledge, continuous experience and qualifications required to carry out the job as this can write off good, capable candidates and might constitute age or sex discrimination. Consider using, 'equivalent qualifications' and 'experience equivalent to...'
- If a criterion cannot be justified objectively, it should not be included. Sticking only to the criteria genuinely required will help attract the right applicants, shorten the spec, and make the shortlisting process easier.
- Avoid potential discriminatory or gender biased language – "young & dynamic", "experienced & mature".
- Don't change or amend a spec mid-way through the recruitment process as this may unfairly disadvantage some candidates and could lead to claims of foul play or discrimination.

Competence and competency frameworks are sometimes substituted for a person specification. On request, SALC can provide separate guidance on developing a competency framework.

SALC can review and assist with the production of a person spec relevant to your council, contact the office for details.

Advertisement (internal & external recruitment)

A council is not legally required to advertise a job, but it's good practice to do so. An advert can be either ringfenced for internal applicants or published externally. A job advert aids transparency, it aids the avoidance of unlawful discrimination, and can attract a wider range of applicants from which to select the best candidate.

The external job advert is the council's chance to promote itself to the labour market. An advert can make a role stand out, increasing the likelihood of attracting good applicants. It should give clear, accurate information about the council and the role, reflecting the contents of the JD and spec.

Advertising internally within the council provides opportunities for team development and career progression. Recognising skills and investing in existing staff can help retention, support succession planning, and fill the vacancy more quickly and inexpensively.

An advert should include and give access to:

- Job description and person specification
- Job location
- Type of employment offered – i.e., permanent or fixed-term role, full-time or part-time
- The council's activities and values
- Reward and benefits package, including salary (parking, homeworking allowance, enhanced pension contributions, training opportunities, good work environs, etc)
- Flexible working practices, where available
- Details of how to apply, including the details of who should receive the application
- The closing date/ time for applications
- Interview dates, if known

Advertising routes include the council's website, its social media accounts (usually signposting to the website), commercial job boards, recruitment agencies, sector bodies (SALC, NALC, SLCC) and professional networking sites such as LinkedIn. Contacts in the principal authorities might be willing to share an advert via networking groups.

Many job advertisement sites restrict the wordcount, requiring the author to keep to the salient points. If the council has additional information that it believes can make its vacancy stand out, it could include a link to a dedicated page on the council's website where the council and the community can be illustrated with useful, interesting information and pictures - *don't underestimate the value of attractive pictures when promoting a vacancy.*

FREE - SALC allows member councils to advertise through its channels for free.

Application process & data handling

Councils tend to request applications on a standard application form, or as a CV with covering letter.

Application forms allow information to be presented in a consistent way, making it easier to systematically collect detail to aid the objective assessment under the shortlisting process and to identify a suitable candidate.

If a council intends to use its own application form, it's worth getting it checked to ensure the formatting allows for electronic completion and that it complies with discrimination law. It might also be necessary to offer application forms in different formats.

A prompt and simple acknowledgment of an application is good practice and presents a positive image of the council. The council should also ask applicants to state if they need any reasonable adjustments for any stage of the recruitment process.

All applications should be treated confidentially and shared only with those people involved in the relevant part of the recruitment process. Some personal data might constitute sensitive or special category data and the council must be sure to comply with ico guidance on data protection. Consider removing personal detail prior to sifting for the shortlisting process.

Employers don't have to track how many job applications are received from different groups of people, or the characteristics of employees. However, some larger councils might choose to undertake equality and diversity monitoring.

An applicant's racial or ethnic origin, physical or mental health, religion or similar beliefs and sexual life is a special category of data & must be protected. The council must be explicit about its reasons for monitoring equalities data & be clear on its use. Councils must not discriminate against a candidate based on their personal information. Anyone involved in interviewing or making an appointment decision, must not have access to the information.

SALC can provide a template application form for the council's adaption and use, please contact the office for details.

Criminal convictions

All employers are entitled to ask applicants to voluntarily disclose details of any convictions that are not spent under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, as amended.

Although personal data about criminal allegations, proceedings or convictions is not special category data under data protection law, the council must be familiar with the particular rules and safeguards for processing this type of data so it can deal with the risks associated with it.

Before recruiting for any post, the council should assess whether it is justified in seeking criminal records information for that particular post and, if so:

- whether it is appropriate to limit the information sought to offences that have a direct bearing on suitability for the job in question; and
- whether the information should be verified with the DBS.

The council will be justified in obtaining criminal records information for a particular post if it is necessary:

- for the performance of the employment contract for that post;
- in order for the council to comply with a legal obligation to which it is subject;
- in order to protect the vital interests of the council and its partners; and/or
- for the purposes of the council's legitimate interests.

For some roles, it is reasonable to make a conditional offer of employment on the basis of a satisfactory DBS check, i.e., working with children or vulnerable adults.

A council is required to have a policy in place that explains how its processing of criminal record data will be carried out in line with data protection legislation, specifically outlining the internal policies on retention and erasure of data. A privacy notice for job applicants should be provided early in the recruitment process to share the council's compliance systems when carrying out these checks, explaining how data will be used.

If the council is in any doubt as to how to handle criminal records checks, SALC advises that it seeks employment law advice.

Shortlisting

Once the council has advertised the vacancy and the closing date has passed, it will be time to consider the applications received.

If the advertisement has attracted lots of applicants, the council must decide how many it wants to interview. This is usually based on how much time it has allocated to the process. The agreed number will dictate the length of the shortlist & provides a target when sifting the applications against the JD and spec.

A fair shortlisting process means rejecting candidates considered unsuitable for the job based purely and objectively on the job requirements. Reduce the risk of personal bias by using more than one person to undertake the shortlisting process.

The simplest method is to:

1. Reject all the applications that are missing essential criteria.
2. If those remaining are still too many, score each applicant based on how many of the desirable criteria they meet & reject the lowest scores
3. Ultimately, make a direct comparison of the remaining applicants, adding the best ones to the shortlist – being sure not to strike out any applicant for a reason that could be discriminatory.

Once the shortlist is complete, it's good practice to notify the unsuccessful applicants, thanking them for their interest. The notification should identify the reason why the application was unsuccessful, but without being too specific.

Reasons for not interviewing an applicant must relate to the requirements listed in the person spec and be entirely relevant to the job. Retain with the original application form the objective written records of decisions and the reasons for those decisions, in line with the council's recruitment privacy policy.

The shortlisted applicants can be invited for interview.

SALC is able to offer a shortlisting service, contact the office for details.

The interview & scoring

When arranging the interviews, consideration should be given to all potential disability and health and safety issues.

All interviews must be conducted in a fair and consistent manner. The panel should agree the questions before the interviews and:

- Give all applicants the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities
- Not apply different standards to different applicants, subject to occasions when reasonable adjustments are being made for disabled applicants
- Assess each applicant in accordance with the selection criteria
- Record the scores and assessments

The panel must be able to demonstrate how their scores and assessments are objectively based on the evidence before them.

If there is a reserve list of successful applicants, it should normally be kept open for no longer than the period specified in the council's document retention policy and be reflected in a recruitment privacy notice provided to the applicant.

Data protection law does not expressly set out any specific minimum or maximum retention periods for recruitment records, but data must not be kept any longer than is necessary for a legitimate purpose and it must not be excessive. The emphasis is on the council (the data controller) to have systems in place to determine how long the recruitment data should be retained and when records should be destroyed. Defamation claims may be relevant to references or interview notes and the UK Limitation Act 1980 contains a limit for defamation proceedings of one year (this has been extended in some cases).

A template scoresheet is provided at **Appendix B** of this guidance.

Pre-employment checks

Once the interview panel has reached agreement on the preferred candidate, it should undertake pre-employment checks before any final offer is made. Pre-employment checks must be carried out in accordance with the six data protection principles, as set out within the Data Protection Act 2018.

Recruitment decisions should be based on all available information received during the recruitment process. However, any negative information relied on when making a decision should be supported by factual evidence, not based on subjective impressions or simple opinions.

Right-to-work checks

Before making an offer of employment, employers have a legal duty to prevent illegal working by carrying out right-to-work checks to ensure prospective employees can legally work in the UK. All right to work checks must avoid unlawful discrimination while preventing illegal working.

The key legislation covering illegal working and right-to-work checks is the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 (the 2006 Act). Civil and criminal penalties can be imposed on organisations for employing illegal workers, defined by the 2006 Act.

The council must comply with the government's [Right-to-Work Checklist](#); ensuring it obtains original documents, checks that the documents are genuine and that the person presenting them is the prospective employee and not prohibited from carrying out the particular employment, make a clear copy of each document in a format which cannot manually be altered and retain the copy securely in such a way as to record the date of the check. The Home Office recommended practice on document retention is for 2 years after the employment ends.

Councils risk falling foul of race discrimination laws if they treat individuals differently based on their race, or perceived race, when carrying out right-to-work checks. All applicants must be treated fairly and consistently during recruitment, with the same document requirements and checking process applied to all. Do not make assumptions about an applicant's right to work, work only with evidence.

Reference checks

Councils are not under any legal obligation to obtain an employment reference, and there is no automatic right to receive a reference from a previous or current employer. However, it is worth checking whether the council's insurance provider requires a reference check as part of the recruitment due diligence.

It is usual for councils to make any offer of employment subject to reference and to request at least one reference. Employers are under a duty of care to provide references that are accurate and not misleading, and all parties must carefully handle the provision and receiving of references. It is good practice for councils to request and obtain references after a conditional offer of employment has been made to the individual rather than before.

Data protection legislation states organisations should ask prospective employees for their specific consent to obtain employment references from their prospective employees. It is best practice to use a specific consent form for the prospective employee to sign and date, which also informs them of their right to withdraw their consent at any time (an application form might contain this section). To meet the limitation period for defamation claims, it's recommended that references are retained for at least one year after the reference is given.

Medical checks

The Equality Act 2010 S. 60(1) imposes a general rule that organisations cannot ask candidates health questions before an offer of employment is made.

This rule applies to the entire recruitment processes, whether internal or external, at pre-offer stage or before a candidate is included on a reserve list. The general prohibition covers any type of health questions whether asked on an application form or in recruitment paperwork, at interview, or to a third party such as a previous employer.

The prohibition is aimed at preventing organisations from making recruitment decisions based on the physical and mental health or disability of candidates, rather than on their suitability for the job role itself.

There is an exception to the general rule under the Act where health-related questions can be asked before an offer of employment is made. S. 60(6) of the Equality Act allows organisations to ask health and medical related questions to:

- establish if the individual requires reasonable adjustments during an assessment process (i.e., interview) to remove any disadvantages they face.
- determine if the candidate can carry out a function that is intrinsic to the role
- carry out diversity monitoring of applicants applying for the role
- take positive action in relation to disabled people
- assess whether the individual meets an occupational requirement to have a particular disability
- meet an occupational requirement imposed by the organisation

Candidates can make a claim to an employment tribunal for unlawful disability discrimination where they were not offered a job and this failure can be linked to the council asking a prohibited health question, or the applicant's answer to such a question.

If an applicant voluntarily discloses information about their health or disability during an interview, the panel should avoid asking any questions in response, unless the questions fall within the permitted exceptions. The panel should not attempt to discuss reasonable adjustments to do the job and any such questions should be deferred until a job offer has been made when the employer can then ask appropriate health-related questions.

Vetting by social media

A 2017 poll by YouGov showed that one in five organisations have decided not to employ a candidate because of the content contained on social media profiles. Councils might wish to review the social media profile of senior public-facing staff, such as the clerk, to ensure the content on the profiles does not create a reputational risk for the council.

Using a search engine or social media in this way is not necessarily unlawful. However, vetting candidates using their social media accounts must not be discriminatory and must comply with data protection laws. Inform applicants at an early stage if online searches might be conducted by the council. The recruitment privacy notice can be used to inform applicants of the purpose of processing this data and identify the legal basis for this processing.

There will be a balance to be struck between the argument for the council's legitimate interest-v- the applicant's right to privacy. Any vetting must be proportionate, necessary, and relevant and be used to review a candidate's suitability for the role – do not use it as a fishing or trawling exercise.

Keep in mind that information discovered online might not give context, might not be accurate or up to date. Care must be taken to ensure the information relates to the right person.

It is advised that candidates are allowed to respond to information found online in the same way as they are allowed to respond to any other information identified in the recruitment process.

The job offer & the contract

The normal rules of contract apply to contracts of employment and verbal agreements can be binding (although there are some statutory rules imposed on terms agreed between the employer and employee, i.e., minimum wage, working hours, etc).

This means that an employment contract can be formed verbally at the interview stage if a panel member makes an unconditional offer of employment, which is clearly accepted by the employee. The panel should act with caution and apply only the recruitment process as resolved by the council. Once a contract is made, it can only be terminated by giving contractual notice. Any attempt to withdraw the offer will enable the employee to sue for breach of contract.

If the successful candidate wants to withdraw from the contract after they have accepted an offer, this is technically a breach of contract. However, it is not often financially worthwhile for a council to sue as it would have to show that it has suffered actual losses as a result of the breach. Typical losses might be the cost of locum staff to fill a gap before a new employee is recruited, and perhaps the cost of further recruitment.

A binding job offer can be made on a conditional basis. Councils often make conditional offers subject to:

- provision of satisfactory references
- proof of eligibility of right to work in the UK
- criminal record checks (for appropriate jobs)
- proving certain qualifications

Withdrawal of the offer due to failure by the candidate to meet the conditions, is not a breach of contract.

Written statement of particulars

When they start work, anyone legally classed as an employee or worker has the right to a written document summarising the main terms of their employment (the principal statement).

The principal statement must include at least:

- the employer's name
- the employee's or worker's name, job title or a description of work and start date
- how much and how often an employee or worker will get paid
- hours and days of work and if and how they may vary (also if employees or workers will have to work Sundays, nights, or overtime)
- holiday entitlement (and if that includes public holidays)
- where an employee or worker will be working and whether they might have to relocate

- if an employee or worker works in different places, where these will be and what the employer's address is
- how long a job is expected to last (and what the end date is if it's a fixed-term contract)
- how long any probation period is and what its conditions are
- any other benefits (for example, homeworking allowance)
- obligatory training, whether or not this is paid for by the employer

For employees with continuous service from another council or role, the date that a previous job started must be stated if it counts towards a period of continuous employment.

Within 2 months, a wider written statement must be provided, unless the detail was included with the principal statement:

- Any other paid leave.
- Terms and conditions relating to incapacity for work due to sickness or injury, and details of sick pay provisions (including statutory and any company sickness scheme).
- Details of pensions and pension schemes.
- Details of the period of notice to be given by the employer and the employee.
- The period for which any non-permanent employment is expected to continue or, if it is for a fixed term, the date when it is to end.
- Details of any collective agreements which directly affect the terms and conditions of employment, irrespective of whether the employee is party to these agreements.
- Any other training entitlement.
- Where an employee is required to work outside the UK for more than one month, details of:
 - length of time
 - what currency the salary will be paid in
 - additional remuneration and benefits relating to the posting outside the UK (eg flights home, schooling)
 - terms and conditions for returning to work in the UK.
- Details of any procedure relating to dismissal, or the procedure applicable to the taking of disciplinary decisions.
- Specific details of the person to apply to if seeking redress for any grievance and the manner in which such an application should be made.

In 2011, NALC and SLCC agreed a model contract, which can be downloaded from the SALC website, along with guidance notes on the application of the contract

Basic check list of tasks

Task	Date completed
Council to agree recruitment to fill the vacancy, agree any budget & delegated authority to committee/ officer (refer to terms of reference)	Min ref:
Check existing JD, spec, application form & any other recruitment pack documents and make updates as required	
Prepare written particulars or a single comprehensive contract	

Agree closing date for applications	
Agree the contact(s) for applicants' questions & to securely receive applications	
Agree interview dates (according to how many applicants will be interviewed)	
Place advertisement	
Shortlist applications	
Invite candidates for interview	
Make conditional offer to successful applicant	
Undertake pre-employment checks	
Notify unsuccessful applicants	
Make arrangements for start date, induction & any handover	

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL**Overall Responsibilities**

The Clerk to the Council/Town/Parish Clerk 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 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 person appointed will be accountable to the Council for the effective management of all its resources and will report to them as and when required. *The Clerk will be the Responsible Financial Officer and responsible for all financial records of the Council and the careful administration of its finances.

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. * Or to monitor the work of a designated other officer designated the Responsible Financial Officer.
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 and its committees. To attend such meetings and prepare minutes for approval. *Other than where such duties have been delegated to another officer.
5. *To attend all meetings of the Council and all meetings of its committees and sub-committees. *Other than where such duties have been delegated to another officer.
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 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: to attend the assemblies of the Parish Meeting and to implement the decisions made at the assemblies that are agreed by the Council.
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. To work towards the achievement of the status of Qualified Clerk as a minimum requirement for 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: the Clerks' professional membership body The Society of Local Council Clerks.
18. 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.

The standard "Duties of the Responsible Financial Officer are supplementary to the clerk job description above. The council should add to or modify that standard job description as appropriate. When employing a new clerk the council should consider the job description and the circumstances of the employing council on an individual basis.

A responsible finance officer (RFO) must be appointed by each local council in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 section 151. The following is a comprehensive list of suggested duties which local councils may wish to consider adopting as part of a Job Description.

RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER

1. To prepare financial reports of the council covering budget monitoring, fund balances, receipts and payments to date, payroll summary, payment of accounts and other relevant current matters.
2. To prepare draft estimates which, when approved, will form the annual budget for the year, and to report thereon as necessary.
3. To submit the precept to the district council / unitary authority at the correct date and to provide any figures required for inclusion in the council tax bill information as required by statute.
4. To bank regularly (daily if necessary) all money received by the council.
5. To ensure that all money due to the council is billed and collected promptly.
6. To identify the duties of all officers dealing with financial matters and to ensure, wherever possible, the segregation of duties of officers, thus facilitating as much internal control as possible. If officers are not appropriate for such internal controls, then to involve members in the internal control systems wherever possible.
7. To manage the cash flow and to control investments and bank transfers.
8. To control payments made by cheque.
9. To take overall responsibility for the management of the payroll, ensuring prompt and proper payment of any deductions for income tax, national insurance and pension fund or superannuation fund contributions.
10. To take overall responsibility for the prompt submission of VAT return forms or repayment claims.
11. To verify, analyse for accounts purposes, and to authorise suppliers' invoices for recommendation for payment.
12. To prepare financial statements for each financial year for councillors and the public.
13. To prepare the accounts and the annual return for the Council each year and to submit them to Council for approval and to the external auditor when required.
14. To arrange for appropriate internal audit in accordance with proper practices and the council's Financial Regulations.
15. To monitor compliance with the council's Financial Regulations.
16. To manage the Risks faced by the Council and to recommend such insurance as is required (in particular, fidelity guarantee), or is mandatory (employer's liability).
17. To maintain the council's asset register

INTERVIEW SCORING GRID	
Job title:	
Date of interview	
Candidate	

- Each member of the panel should make notes (on a separate sheet) and score each candidate. Scores should then be added up and used when making a decision.
- The panel should also decide which questions will be asked by each member of the panel.

Scoring – candidates answers should be scored as follows:

0	No answer given or answer completely irrelevant. No examples given.	2	Some points covered not all relevant. Some examples given.	4	Good answer. Relevant information. All or most points covered. Good examples.
1	A few good points but main issues missing. No examples/irrelevant examples given	3	Some points covered. Relevant information given. Some examples given.	5	Perfect answer. All points addressed. All points relevant. Good examples.

Weighting – questions can be weighted **1 (low importance)** or **2 (high importance)** to reflect their overall importance to the position.

The Interview

Introductions

Person specification criteria	Related question(s)	Weight (1-2)	Score (0-5)	Total

Total score (questions)			

Person specification criteria	Assessment test(s)	Weight (1-2)	Score (0-5)	Total
Total score (tests)				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much notice do they have to give? • When can they start? • Holiday?

Now give the candidate an opportunity to ask any questions that they might have and answer them.

Ending the interview:

- Thank the candidate for attending the interview.
- Let them know what happens next i.e. when you will be making your decision and how you will be letting them know the results (candidates who have attended the interview should be made aware of your decision either way).