



Great Maplestead Parish Council

CLERK/RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER to the COUNCIL

JOB DESCRIPTION, ROLE and RESPONSIBILITIES

(Effective 1st April 2020)

1. Overall Responsibilities

The Clerk to the Council:

- 1.1 will be the **Proper Officer** of the Council and as such will be 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 **Proper Officer**.
- 1.2 will be totally responsible for ensuring that the instructions of the Council in connection with its function as a Local Authority are carried out.
- 1.3 is expected to advise the Council on, and assist in the formation of, overall policies to be followed in respect of its activities and in particular to produce all the information required for making effective decisions and to implement all decisions constructively.
- 1.4 will be accountable to the Council for the effective management of all its resources and will report to them as and when required.
- 1.5 will be the **Responsible Financial Officer**, accountable for all financial records of the Council and the careful administration of its finances.
- 1.6 will be responsible for their own workload and must be capable of making decisions as to when and how duties are to be carried out.

2. Specific Responsibilities

- 2.1 To ensure that all statutory and other provisions governing or affecting the running of the Council are observed.
- 2.2 To have direct responsibility for the Council's financial resources; preparing precept proposals; monitoring budgets against actual expenditure; monitoring and balancing the Council's accounts; ensuring payments are made and recorded; taking responsibility for completion of statutory annual audit pro-forma submissions (including appointing an internal auditor) and the appropriate publication of information as per statutory requirements; submitting VAT claims as per HMRC guidelines.
 - Managing Council bank accounts and ensuring appropriate signing mandates are in place and up to date
 - Arranging bank transactions, ensuring funds are available and are benefitting from the best available savings interest
 - Maintaining regular financial reconciliations between bank accounts and the Council's records
 - Retaining securely all financial records, invoices paid/raised, cheque books/stubs and bank statements
 - Operating the Council's payroll and PAYE systems

- 2.3 To ensure that the Council's obligations for Risk Assessment are properly met and its Asset Register maintained and updated.
- Keeping Council noticeboards organised and in good order, ensuring maintenance is carried out as required
 - Regularly checking the parish defibrillator at the Village Hall to ensure it is in working order and the supporting medical supplies are available and up to date
 - Keeping the East of England ambulance service advised of any changes to the location/provision of the defibrillator
- 2.4 To prepare, in consultation with the Chairman/Vice-Chairman, agendas for a minimum of 6 meetings per annum of the Council and/or its Committees; to organise and book the meeting dates and set up the venue for these meetings; to issue meeting notices and agendas in accordance with statutory guidelines; to attend all meetings of the Council and/or its committees and sub-committee meetings and prepare minutes for approval.
- 2.5 To be the principal point of public contact for the Council, receive correspondence/documents on its behalf and deal with 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.
- Setting up and having control of a dedicated e-mail address for the Council's electronic communications
 - Monitoring and responding to electronic, postal and telephone communications with and for the Council
 - Maintaining a separate ledger for parish planning applications
- 2.6 To draw up terms of reference and contracts for suppliers, receive and report on invoices for goods and services to be paid for by the Council and ensure such accounts are met; to issue invoices on behalf of the Council for goods and services and to ensure payment is received.
- 2.7 To study reports, newsletters, circulars and other data received and interpret any information on matters relevant to the Council; where appropriate, to discuss such matters with specialists in particular fields and produce reports for circulation and discussion by the Council.
- 2.8 To draw up, both on the Clerk's 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.
- 2.9 To monitor the implemented policies of the Council to ensure they are achieving the desired result and, where appropriate, suggest changes.
- 2.10 To ensure the Council's compliance with the **Data Protection Act** (1998) and subsequent **GDPR** (2018) with regard to the use and handling of personal data and the handling of **Freedom of Information** enquiries
- Managing the annual renewal of the Council's data protection registration with the Information Commissioner
 - Storing sensitive electronic records in a secure and orderly fashion on the Council's laptop computer
 - Storing the Council's computer and printer/scanner securely at the Clerk's home
 - Ensuring passwords to access records/e-mails are stored securely, with contingency copies held by the Chairman/Vice Chairman
 - Storing manual records and correspondence in a secure and orderly fashion at the Clerk's home
 - Complying with the Council's Document Retention/Destruction Policy at all times
 - Regularly reviewing and updating the Council's website domain hosting, electronic security arrangements and software packages

- 2.11 To act as the representative of the Council as required.
- 2.12 To issue notices and prepare agendas and minutes for the **Parish Assembly**; to organise and set up the venue for this meeting; to invite attendees and speakers and provide refreshments; to attend, collate reports, take minutes and implement decisions made at the **Assembly** as agreed by the Council.
- 2.13 To review and update the Council's insurance cover and costs on an annual basis.
- 2.14 To prepare, in consultation with the Chairman/Vice Chairman, press releases about the activities of, or decisions of, the Council.
- 2.15 To ensure Councillors receive notification of training, information seminars and specific briefing papers to enable them to undertake their roles effectively.
- 2.16 To issue Members' Register of Interest and Declarations of Office for all new Councillors and a Chairman's Declaration of Office upon annual appointment.
- 2.17 To attend training courses or seminars on the work and role of the Clerk as required by the Council.
- 2.18 To work towards achieving **Qualified Clerk** status as a minimum requirement for effectiveness in the position.
- 2.19 To continue to acquire the necessary professional knowledge required for the efficient management of Council affairs: suggested is membership of the professional body The Society of Local Council Clerks.
- 2.20 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.
- 2.21 To take responsibility for maintaining and/or improving the Council's **Quality** status – currently **Foundation Level**: review and apply for reassessment every four years.