

DETAILS

Job Title: Town Clerk
Organisation: Hexham Town Council
Salary: NJC SCP30-36 (£34,373 - £40,578)
Application Deadline: Noon on Friday 1 July 2022
County: Northumberland
Email Address: clerk@hexhamtowncouncil.gov.uk
Phone number: 01434 609575

SUMMARY

Hexham Town Council is seeking to appoint an innovative and enthusiastic Town Clerk/ Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) to support the 14 elected Councillors in achieving the aims and aspirations of the Council. This is a full-time position of 37 hours per week and not just about the formal responsibilities of the Council, but to provide guidance and proactive work in the strategic development and achievement of the Council's plans.

The Council hopes the new Town Clerk will be able to start in mid-late September to allow a handover from the current Town Clerk.

Currently the happiest place to live in Great Britain (Rightmove's 2021 Happy at Home Index), Hexham is at the heart of the Tyne Valley, with a medieval Abbey, independent shops, galleries, an Art Deco cinema, theatre and arts centre, walks, fishing, golf and many other activities all within walking distance. The town is also ideally located to explore Hadrian's Wall (a UNESCO World Heritage site), Northumberland National Park, the North Pennines Area of Outstanding National Beauty, Kielder Water and Forest Park, the Sill Landscape Discovery Centre and the International Dark Skies Park.

The town has a population of approximately 13,000 and the Council's 2022/23 revenue budget is £600,355, with a precept of £439,000. The Council operates an award-winning Cemetery, 8 Play areas, a skatepark and allotments, delivers a number of events, supports a wide range of local organisations with Grant Aid and other funding, and takes an active role in partnership working. The person appointed will manage the Council services, five staff, and take on a pivotal role in ensuring the Council continues to move forward.

Applications are invited from proactive experienced professionals with proven and demonstrable leadership and organisational skills. Applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have a track record of service achievement, commitment to public service, possess sound managerial and communication skills, and are community-focussed. Excellent verbal and written skills are essential to work successfully with staff, Councillors, contractors, external organisations, stakeholders and the community.

The Council has adopted the General Power of Competence so a Certificate in Local Government Administration (CiLCA) qualification is required, or a willingness to achieve this soon after appointment. The Town Clerk has to attend regular evening meetings and occasional weekend events, for which time off in lieu is granted. Remuneration will be based on experience, within the National Joint Council pay scales SCP 30-36. An essential car users' allowance will be paid and the Local Government Pension Scheme is also available to the successful candidate.

For an informal discussion and to apply (CVs will **not** be accepted), please contact or send a completed application form to clerk@hexhamtowncouncil.gov.uk. The closing date for applications is noon on Friday 1 July 2022. Interviews will be held on Friday 15 July 2022.

Job Description – Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer

Overall Responsibilities

The Town Clerk is 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 all the notifications required by law of a local authority's Proper Officer.

The Town Clerk is the designated Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) and as such is under a statutory duty to carry out all the functions required by law of the Council's Responsible Financial Officer under S151 of the Local Government Act 1972 for all financial matters and records of the Council.

The Town 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 Town 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 constructively implement all decisions. The Town Clerk will be accountable to the Council for the effective management of all its resources and will report to the Council as and when required.

Specific Statutory Responsibilities

1. To ensure that statutory and other provisions governing or effecting the running of the Council are observed.
2. To prepare, in consultation with appropriate Members, agendas for meetings of the Council and its Committees, Sub-Committees and working parties. To attend such meetings and prepare minutes for approval.
3. To ensure all Council services are delivered in an efficient and effective manner, and in accordance with Council policy, and to oversee asset management, including land. *Council services are listed under functions.*
4. To monitor the implemented policies of the Council to ensure they are achieving the desired result and, where appropriate, suggest modifications.
5. To study reports and other data on activities of the Council and on matters relating to 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.
6. To draw up, both on his/her own initiative and as a result of suggestions from Members, proposals for consideration by the Council, and to advise on the practicability and the likely effects of specific courses of action.
7. To ensure that the Council's obligations for risk assessment are properly met.

8. To prepare, in consultation with the appropriate Chair as necessary, press releases about activities and decisions of the Council.
9. To receive correspondence and documents on behalf of the Council and to deal with these or bring them to the attention of the Council. To issue correspondence as a result of the instructions of, or the known policy of, the Council.
10. To manage and supervise any other members of staff in keeping with the policies and procedures of the Council and to undertake all necessary activities in connection with the management of the salaries, conditions of employment and work of staff, including identifying and meeting training needs.
11. To act as a representative of the Council as required.

Statutory Financial Responsibilities

1. Being responsible for and carrying out all the functions required by law of the Council's Responsible Financial Officer under S151 of the Local Government Act 1972.
2. Acting as the Council's principal advisor on financial matters and being responsible for the careful administration of the Council's finances, and the proper application and maintenance of the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
3. Ensuring that the Council's finances are effectively managed and monitored and advising the Council on its financial forward plan and policies.
4. Advising the Council and its Committees on and preparing the annual budget estimates of income and expenditure for revenue services, the capital budget programme and annual precept requirements.
5. Monitoring and managing the Council's budget and expenditure and income and providing the Council with monthly updates.
6. Ensuring that all management reports are reported to the Council and the statutory internal and external audit requirements are undertaken and completed each year, and any consequential action taken.
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.
8. To issue invoices on behalf of the Council for services and to ensure payment is received.
9. All necessary VAT, HMRC, SSP and pension payments, financial returns and/or payments are completed and dispatched on time.
10. Records, returns and public notices for the annual audit are prepared and the necessary public notices displayed.
11. Appropriate financial IT systems are in place and operated securely.
12. Ensuring that the Council's obligations for financial risk management, including risk assessments, are properly met and where necessary risks are properly insured.
13. Ensuring that an annual equipment inventory and asset register are in place.

14. Advising the Council on, and assisting in, the raising of funds by way of grants.
15. To ensure financial efficiencies are developed, reviewed and amended, ensuring value for money.

Service and Operational Responsibilities

1. To ensure the efficient running of the Town Council office. Reviewing and monitoring systems, processes and procedures, and updating where appropriate, making best use of appropriate IT.
2. To oversee the development and administration of the Council's website and social media presence.
3. To liaise with contractors regarding the procurement and fulfilment of contracts, the provision of services, and the maintenance and repair of Council assets.
4. To help organise and oversee Council vents, *as listed*.
5. To act as a representative of the Council as required, including attending meetings with key stakeholders, positively promoting the Council within the local community and being the Council's public-facing contact.
6. To undertake administration and bereavement services in relation to St Andrew's Cemetery. This includes the maintenance of burial and grave registers, management of exclusive rights of burial, and administering memorial applications.
7. To undertake the administration of the Council's allotments. This includes the maintenance of a waiting list and register, and the administration of annual invoices.

Other Responsibilities

1. To attend training courses or seminars on the work and the role of Town Clerk/RFO as required by the Council.
2. To attend the annual conference of the National Association of Local Councils, Society of Local Council Clerks, and other relevant organisations, as a representative of the Council and as required.
3. To work towards the achievement of the status of Qualified Clerk (if not already achieved).
4. To continue to acquire the necessary professional knowledge required for the efficient management of the affairs of the Council.
5. To carry out any other relevant duties which may be assigned from time to time by the Council.

Functions & Services

- St Andrew's Cemetery
- Play Areas: Bell Terrace, Broadway, Dene Park, Park Well (Junior), Park Well (Toddler), Priestlands Dene, Sele, Tyne Green
- Allotments: Dene Park, Quatre Bras, Wydon Park
- Skatepark
- Christmas lights
- Public seats
- Litter bins
- Floral bedding and planters
- Vehicle activated speed signs

Events

- Bandstand Sessions
- Hexham in Bloom
- Mayor's Annual Reception
- War Graves Remembrance Ceremony
- Remembrance Day Parade and Service
- Christmas lights switch-on
- (2022 only) Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Hexham Market 800th Anniversary

Town Clerk/RFO Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable	Assessed by
Education/ Qualifications	Introduction to Local Council (ILCA) or willingness to obtain within the first 3 months of employment.	Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) or willingness to obtain. Educated to degree or HND level or NVQ level 4 or above.	Application form
Work Experience	Experience of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working in a business or professional setting • using computerised systems including all Microsoft Office applications • managing staff • managing a budget • procurement and managing contracts • managing facilities and assets • compiling risk assessments • in a public-facing role 	Previous experience as a Town or Parish Clerk or Deputy, or in local government. Experience of/in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minuting meetings • bereavement services • managing events • working with community groups • making funding applications 	Application form Interview
Management Skills	Budget management. Ability to organise effective meetings. Ability to meet targets and deadlines. Ability to cope under pressure. Evidence of ability to organise and manage resources effectively.	Evidence of experience in successful partnership working. Evidence of good negotiating skills. Ability to consider long-term financial planning.	Application form Interview Presentation

<p>General Skills/Knowledge and Aptitude</p>	<p>General knowledge of the law as it affects local Councils. Knowledge of local Council legislation. Ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produce relevant Committee reports • solve problems in an inclusive manner • assimilate viewpoints and establish common understanding 	<p>Understanding of a local Council's legal framework and operating environment.</p>	<p>Application form Interview</p>
<p>Communication Skills</p>	<p>Ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate in a clear and confident manner • work well with members of the public, Councillors and outside bodies • provide objective advice to Councillors in a timely and coherent manner, including analytical report writing and analysis • present to wide ranges of audiences 	<p>Understanding of the importance of accessible documents. Ability to produce a press release.</p>	<p>Application form Interview Presentation</p>
<p>Other</p>	<p>Self-reliant and self-motivated. Able to work out of office hours. Able to work with impartiality in a political environment. Possession of a current driving licence, and the ability to travel. Accuracy and attention to detail.</p>		<p>Application form Interview</p>