



STEPHEN MARKS
Clerk to the Town Council

THE TOWN COUNCIL
OF
ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA
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Our Ref: SM/SC

Date: 07th October 2022

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **STAFFING COMMITTEE** will be held on **THURSDAY 13th OCTOBER 2022** in Room 5 at Leamington Spa Town Hall, Parade, CV32 4AT, commencing at 5.00 pm.

The business will be as set out below.

Yours faithfully,

S Marks

CLERK TO THE TOWN COUNCIL

To Councillors: Sarah Boad, Will Bryce, Judith Clarke, Jennifer McAllister and Nick Wilkins.

AGENDA

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR OF STAFFING COMMITTEE 2022/23
2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR OF STAFFING COMMITTEE 2022/23
3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Committee to declare any interest they may have in items identified for discussion at the Meeting, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

5. PUBLIC FORUM

To receive representations from members of the public in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders. Notification of participation in the public session

should be submitted in writing to the Town Clerk prior to commencement of the meeting.

6. MINUTES

To consider and approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th January 2021.

7. STAFF APPRAISALS

To consider report No. 7 in relation to staff appraisals.

8. DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTION

To consider report No. 8 and a review of the relevant Job Description.

9. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To consider making the following resolution

“That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted (confidential staffing matters), it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded from the Meeting and they are instructed to withdraw”.

10. CIVIC OFFICER ROLE

To consider report No. 10 in relation to the Civic Officer Role

11. STAFFING MATTER

To consider report No. 11 in relation to a staffing matter.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE HELD ON 27TH JANUARY 2021 AT THE TOWN HALL, PARADE, LEAMINGTON SPA

In attendance: Councillors Sarah Boad (Chair), Judith Clarke, Jennifer McAllister, Susan Rasmussen.

Also in attendance Stephen Marks – Town Clerk

11. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Nick Wilkins.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

13. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Staffing Committee held on 17th July, 2020 were circulated prior to the Meeting.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the meeting of the Staffing Committee held on 17th July, 2020 are confirmed as a correct record.

14. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted (confidential staffing matters), it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded from the Meeting and they are instructed to withdraw”.

15. CONFIDENTIAL STAFFING MATTERS

The primary purpose of the meeting was to consider the probationary period of the new Town Clerk. A sub group of the Staffing Committee had met twice previously with the Town Clerk to monitor progress.

The committee held a discussion with the Town Clerk regarding his first few months in the role. The Town Clerk had produced a written briefing to aid this discussion.

It was agreed that the staffing sub group would meet again with the Town Clerk around early June. A formal appraisal would be arranged in due course, after 12 months in the role.

The Town Clerk then left the meeting to enable the committee to have further discussion.

Having considered the performance of the new Town Clerk in relation to the Job Description and requirements of the role, the staffing committee

RESOLVED that:

- i) It was satisfied that the new Town Clerk had successfully completed the probationary period, as detailed in the contract of employment and that the appointment to the post of Town Clerk be confirmed.
- ii) It be recommended to the Town Council that the successful completion of the probationary period be noted.
- iii) It be recommended to the Town Council that the appointment to the post of Town Clerk be confirmed, and the Town Clerk advised of this formally in writing.

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 13th OCTOBER 2022

STAFF APPRAISALS / REVIEW MEETINGS

1. Purpose of the Report

To consider arrangements for staff appraisals / review meetings, notably for the Town Clerk.

2. Background

2.1 Regular staff appraisals / review meetings are an important part of the routine management of all staff. In addition to routine team meetings and catch ups, as well as regular 1-2-1 meetings with staff, an annual Review / Appraisal meeting will take place for each member of staff.

2.2 The broad purpose / scope of the annual Review / Appraisal meeting is to:

- Consider and review the activity and performance of the member of staff over the previous (approx.) 12 month period
- Identify any notable achievements, challenges, issues or concerns that have arisen and review how they have been dealt with.
- Consider any significant changes that have happened to the work plan / role of the member of staff, either formal or informal.
- Consider any future activities / initiatives that the staff member will be involved in.
- Identify and discuss any developmental / training needs or aspirations for the future.
- Inform future action plans for the staff member, linked to the Town Council's overall service plans.
- Enable the staff member to raise any further issues.

All with the ultimate goal of supporting the staff member to deliver their role to the best effect, achieve job satisfaction and contribute to the overall success of the Town Council.

2.3 It should be noted that the annual review is expected to supplement regular dialogue throughout the year between staff member and line manager, for example through regular team meetings and 1-2-1 conversations. It is therefore not anticipated that new issues of a critical nature are raised at the annual review – they should be raised at the time that they occur.

3. Practical Arrangements

3.1 Town Clerk Appraisal – It seems sensible that the Town Clerk's appraisal is undertaken through the staffing committee. However, 5 people is probably too large a

number to undertake an appraisal effectively, while having just one Councillor undertake the appraisal would risk missing the input / perspectives of other Councillors. It is therefore proposed that a sub group of the staffing committee is identified / agreed to undertake the appraisal / review meeting for the Town Clerk – probably made up of 2 or 3 Councillors.

- 3.2 Timings – it is proposed that the main appraisal / review meeting for the Town Clerk would be annually, but with an interim meeting taking place at approximately 6 months between appraisals. This offers an opportunity for any issues to be raised / considered without waiting a full 12 months.
- 3.3 Other staff – the appraisals of other staff will be undertaken annually by the Town Clerk in their capacity as line manager and senior officer of the Council. An overview of the outcomes of those appraisals will be reported to Town Councillors in the appropriate format and forum.

4. **Process and documentation**

- 4.1 A suitable time will be arranged between the staff member and appraiser/s, giving at least 14 days notice.
- 4.2 An appraisal / review form will be used to provide a framework for the appraisal / review meeting. The staff member will be asked to consider the questions posed on the form and come prepared to identify and discuss the issues. The appraiser will be required to do the same. The discussion will then be based around the issues identified and key points will be recorded on the appraisal / review form. For any key issues raised, it will be identified how they will be addressed, or if necessary how they will be explored further. The Job description and any individual action plans should also be used to inform the meeting.
- 4.3 A record of the appraisal will be made and signed (or electronic alternative) by staff member and appraiser/s and made available to all participants.
- 4.4 In relation to the Town Clerk, it is proposed that the key points from the appraisal / review are shared with the Staffing Committee and a short report is taken to Full Council just to confirm the completion of the annual review / appraisal and to raise any key points if necessary (in private session if appropriate). However the full appraisal / review content and documentation would not be shared beyond those directly involved in the process. Due consideration needs to be given to privacy / confidentiality requirements.

5. **Recommendations**

- i) That the committee considers arrangements for appraisals, especially in relation to the Town Clerk.
- ii) That arrangements are made for the Town Clerk's annual review / appraisal in the near future, based on the approach agreed.
- iii) That the Town Clerk proceeds with review / appraisal meetings with staff.
- iv) That the content of this report forms the basis of a report to the relevant committee / Council to formalize the Town Council's approach to annual review / appraisals.

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 13th OCTOBER 2022

JOB DESCRIPTION REVIEW – DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT OFFICER

1. **Purpose of the Report**

To consider a review and amendments to the Town Council's current Democratic Support Officer Job Description

2. **Background**

- 2.1 It is good practice to keep job descriptions under regular review to ensure that they remain appropriate and reflect the tasks being undertaken. This is particularly the case as the situation has changed since this role was last considered, specifically in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan which is now complete and adopted.

3. **Review of Job Description**

- 3.1 The Democratic Support Officer role / job description was last reviewed in 2017. Much of the role was involved in the development of the Leamington Spa Neighbourhood Plan which was successfully 'made' during 2021.

In practice the Democratic Support Officer is the second most senior post in the Town Council's staffing structure. In the event that the Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer was unavailable for some reason, the Democratic Support Officer would need to fill in, subject to the Town Council agreeing any alternative arrangements depending on the circumstances.

- 3.2 The process: - The job description was reviewed by the Town Clerk in conjunction / dialogue with the current post holder. This is in line with good practice and helped to ensure that the perspectives of both the post holder and the Town Clerk as line manager were identified and considered.

A series of other similar job descriptions from Town / Parish Councils were identified and considered during the process.

Amendments were made to ensure the job description reflected the tasks that were being undertaken. In practice the changes to the original job description are fairly minor

One key aspect of the review is the proposed change of the Job title from Democratic Support Officer to Deputy Town Clerk. This is proposed for a number of reasons:

Democratic Support Officer does not seem to be that easily understood and is often mis used / mis quoted.

Deputy Town Clerk seems more easily understood. It also makes clear that the postholder is expected to support the Town Clerk and potentially to stand in for the Town Clerk on the odd occasion that the Clerk is unavailable. *(Note: this in no way suggests that the post holder would be expected to undertake Clerk / RFO responsibilities for any substantial period of time. If the Clerk / RFO was unavailable for a significant time period (e.g. long term illness), more formal arrangements would need to be considered and put in place.*

The current postholder has indicated that they are happy with the proposed changes.

The proposed revised version of the Democratic Support Officer JD is attached as appendix A.

The previous / current version of the Democratic Support Officer Job Description is attached as appendix B

- 3.3 HR advice. In order to ensure that the process being followed was appropriate, the Town Clerk sought professional HR advice. This was available through an arrangement with WALC which provides a small number of hours of free HR advice from a recognized HR advice service provided by BossHR Ltd.

The HR advice received noted:

- That the approach taken (ie involving the postholder in the discussion) reflects good HR practice.
- That the proposed amendments to the job description do not constitute significant amendments to the nature of the role or the level of responsibility, decision making or problem solving. Rather, the changes make minor amendments including formalising some of the requirements of the original job description – e.g. to deputise for the Town Clerk.
- When the postholder deputises for the Town Clerk this is a delegation of tasks and the Town Clerk retains the responsibility as the Proper Officer/ Finance Officer. The responsibilities of the Clerk cannot be delegated to the deputy when deputising for the Clerk and the Clerk therefore is still retains the responsibility as responsible officer for delegated tasks to the Deputy

- 3.4 The HR advice also noted changes to the national terms and conditions in relation to annual leave, which has changed.

These will be incorporated into the job description.

4. **Summary**

In accordance with good practice the Democratic Support Officer job description has been reviewed and some minor amendments are proposed. It is proposed that the job title is changed to Deputy Town Clerk as it is felt that this better reflects the role and is more easily understood.

As the amendments are minor, HR advice confirms that there are no implications in relation to salary.

5. **Recommendations**

That staffing committee considers the report and the proposed amendments to the Democratic Support Officer Job Description.

That it is recommended to the Town Council that the Democratic Support Officer job description is amended as proposed in appendix A, including the renaming of the role as Deputy Town Clerk.

Appendix A – Draft revised Job Description

Post	Deputy Town Clerk
Post No	A.4
Salary	SCP 20-24
No of Hours	37 hours per week (including evening and weekend meetings where required)
Location	Town Hall
Reports To	Clerk to the Town Council

Key objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To provide support to the Council’s democratic processes including attendance at meetings of the Council / committees / working groups etc 2. To lead on agreed areas of work / activity 3. To assist in developing strong working relationships with partner agencies and organisations in Leamington and Warwick District. 4. To liaise with the Town Clerk to ensure the efficient working of the Town Council in all the functions undertaken and to deputise for the Town Clerk as required
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Main Duties and Responsibilities	
1	<p>Community Liaison & Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan, organise and deliver appropriate events – including Town Council consultations, and community cohesion events. • Ensure the collation of consultation responses, analysis and reporting of consultation outcomes to inform policy and other documents • Plan and deliver workshops/drop-ins/meetings around Leamington as appropriate to ensure inclusive consultation and information sharing • Establish and maintain positive links with key community groups, community centres, children’s centres, youth centres, care homes and places of worship • Establish and develop continuing links with local schools
2	<p>Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the ongoing monitoring and review of the Leamington Spa Neighbourhood plan, engaging with stakeholders as required. • Provide officer support to the Town Council’s planning committee, including convening meetings, producing reports, advising members and submitting Town Council responses. • Liaise with Warwick District Council Planning teams to inform Town Council input into planning matters. • Support the effective use of the Town Council’s Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds.
3	<p>Democratic Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as Committee administrator for such Committees/Sub-Committees and member/officer Working Groups as may be required, including

	<p>attendance at evening meetings. To deputise for the Town Clerk at meetings of the Council / committees etc, as required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of Agenda, Reports and Minutes arising from such meetings • Provision of advice at meetings with regard to the proper application of the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct • Action of all matters requiring implementation from meetings attended
4	<p>Cultural and Community Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the Town Council's grants programme, supporting the relevant committee. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support the local arts and culture community through networking opportunities, cultural participation activity and information exchange. ○ Establish and maintain relationships with a broad range of stakeholders including artists, cultural organisations, voluntary groups and other local authorities to ensure successful delivery of projects and programmes.
5	<p>Administrative Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with a range of civic duties in support of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in the absence of the Civic Officer and where additional support is required • Deputise for the Town Clerk at meetings, when necessary • Support the Town Council's communications activities.

General Statement

The above duties and responsibilities do not include or define all tasks that may be required of the Post holder. The duties and responsibilities may vary without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed. These factors are reflected in the grading of the Post.

The Council holds many of its meetings during the evening. Attendance at meetings is a principal requirement of this Post, the grading and salary of which reflects this requirement.

Health and Safety at Work

The Health and Safety at Work Act requires all employees to observe rules governing health and safety in the work place and such safety equipment as provided must be used. The Council operates a no-smoking policy at its Offices.

Equal Opportunities

All employees of the Town Council of Royal Leamington Spa will be expected to comply with such policies in relation to Equal Opportunities as are adopted.

Mobility

Where travelling to external locations is required, the Post holder will be reimbursed at the prevailing casual user rate of mileage, or the cost of public transport.

Pension Scheme

This post is eligible for membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme. On commencement of employment, you will automatically become a Member of the Scheme, unless you choose to opt out.

Annual Leave entitlement

In accordance with national conditions, the basic annual leave entitlement for this Post is 22 days. A further X days of annual leave entitlement after 5 years continuous service in local government.

Employees shall have an entitlement to an additional 2 days holiday in accordance with national agreements, in lieu of previous two extra statutory days

Additionally, the Town Council recognises all public and bank holidays. These are full time equivalent and are pro rata if working part time hours.

Probationary Period

A probationary period of six months applies to new entrants to local government.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Knowledge and Skills	Essential	Desirable	How Verified
Familiarity with IT and communication skills	X		Interview/Assessment
Knowledge of data software and ability to produce and analyse output	X		Interview/Assessment
High standard of written and spoken English and ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing	X		Interview/Application Form
Ability to work to deadlines and plan and organise one's own work-load	X		Interview/Application Form
Ability to work with others and establish good working relationships with Officers and Members of the Council	X		Interview/Application Form
Knowledge and awareness of the principles of customer care	X		Interview

Ability to attend meetings outside standard working hours	X		Interview
Ability to maintain confidentiality	X		Interview
Evidence of Continuing professional development and willingness to acquire appropriate training	x		
Experience	Essential	Desirable	How Verified
Experience of managing / delivering projects and initiatives.	X		Application Form/Interview
Successfully working in partnership with other agencies / groups / communities.	X		Application Form/Interview
Experience of working within Local Government or the public sector, with particular reference to the Local Council Sector		X	Application Form
Evidence of producing Minutes and recording proceedings at formal meetings		X	Application Form/Interview
Qualifications			
GCSE at Grade C or above (English Language) or equivalent	X		Certificates
2 "A" levels or equivalent	X		Certificates
Evidence of competence in use of information systems	X		Certificates

Appendix B – previous / current job description

Post	Democratic Support Officer
Post No	A.4
Salary	(LC1/LC2 SCP 20-24)
No of Hours	37 hours per week (plus evening and weekend meetings)
Location	Town Hall
Reports To	Clerk to the Town Council

Key objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To assist in the creation and delivery of a successful bespoke Neighbourhood Plan for Leamington Spa 2. To provide support to the Council’s democratic processes including attendance at meetings of the Council 3. To assist in developing strong working relationships with partner agencies and organisations in Leamington and Warwick District.
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Main Duties and Responsibilities	
1	<p>Community Liaison & Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan, organise and deliver appropriate events – including Town Council consultations, and community cohesion events. • Ensure the collation of consultation responses, analysis and reporting of consultation outcomes to inform policy and other documents • Plan and deliver workshops/drop-ins/meetings around Leamington as appropriate to ensure inclusive consultation • Establish and maintain positive links with all schools, community centres, children’s centres and places of worship
2	<p>Neighbourhood Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise and minute steering group meetings • Liaise with Warwick District Council planning officers, Neighbourhood Plan officer and the appointed planning consultant in order to ensure relevant and timely information is shared throughout the process • Co-ordinate meetings of the working parties, ensuring members have up to date information, support and attend where necessary • Organise promotional materials and press releases throughout the process • Attend relevant events in Leamington during the life of the process to promote and discuss the Plan with residents • Support and manage volunteers • Assist with compilation and production of the Plan at all stages
3	<p>Democratic Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as Committee administrator for such Committees/Sub-Committees and member/officer Working Groups as may be required, including attendance at evening meetings. To deputise for the Town Clerk at meetings of the Council, as required.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of Agenda, Reports and Minutes arising from such meetings • Provision of advice at meetings with regard to the proper application of the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct • Action of all matters requiring implementation from meetings attended
4	<p>Grants Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the grant application assessment process via the Cultural and Community Committee • Update grants database • Co-ordinate payment of grants to successful applicants • Resolve any issues with applicants should they arise during the grants process • Ensure successful applicants comply with the council's grants terms and conditions • Financial updates and project progress reporting as required
5	<p>Administrative Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with a range of civic duties in support of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in the absence of the Civic Officer and where additional support is required • Deputise for the Town Clerk at meetings, when necessary • Develop social media platforms and website to further promote the work of the Town Council including the Neighbourhood Plan and other projects

General Statement

The above duties and responsibilities do not include or define all tasks that may be required of the Post holder. The duties and responsibilities may vary without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed. These factors are reflected in the grading of the Post.

The Council holds all its meetings during the evening. Attendance at meetings is a principal requirement of this Post, the grading and salary of which reflects this requirement.

Health and Safety at Work

The Health and Safety at Work Act requires all employees to observe rules governing health and safety in the work place and such safety equipment as provided must be used. The Council operates a no-smoking policy at its Offices.

Equal Opportunities

All employees of the Town Council of Royal Leamington Spa will be expected to comply with such policies in relation to Equal Opportunities as are adopted.

Mobility

Where travelling to external locations is required, the Post holder will be reimbursed at the prevailing casual user rate of mileage, or the cost of public transport.

Pension Scheme

This Post is subject to the Local Government Superannuation Scheme. On commencement of employment, you will automatically become a Member of the Scheme, unless you choose to opt out.

Annual Leave entitlement

The annual leave entitlement for this Post is 21 days increasing to 26 days following the completion of 5 years' continuous service in local government. Additionally, the Town Council recognises all public and bank holidays.

Probationary Period

A probationary period of six months applies to new entrants to local government.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Knowledge and Skills	Essential	Desirable	How Verified
Familiarity with Word processing systems and keyboard skills	X		Interview/Assessment
Knowledge of data software and ability to produce and analyse output	X		Interview/Assessment
High standard of written and spoken English and ability to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing	X		Interview/Application Form
Ability to work to deadlines and plan and organise one's own work-load	X		Interview/Application Form
Ability to work with others and establish good working relationships with Officers and Members of the Council	X		Interview/Application Form
Knowledge and awareness of the principles of customer care	X		Interview
Ability to attend meetings outside standard working hours	X		Interview
Ability to maintain confidentiality	X		Interview
Evidence of Continuing professional	x		

development and willingness to acquire appropriate training			
Experience	Essential	Desirable	How Verified
Experience of working within Local Government or the public sector, with particular reference to the Local Council Sector		X	Application Form
Evidence of producing Minutes and recording proceedings at formal meetings		X	Application Form/Interview
Qualifications			
GCSE at Grade C or above (English Language) or equivalent	X		Certificates
2 GCSE "A" levels or equivalent	X		Certificates
Evidence of competence in use of information systems	X		Certificates