

SUTTON CHENEY PARISH COUNCIL

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer

Responsible to: Chair of the Council

Responsible for: All Council records, property and financial resources

Job Purpose

1. To ensure that the Council's civic and administrative functions and services are performed professionally and in accordance with all relevant statutory obligations.
2. To carry out all the functions required by law of a local authority's Proper Officer in a timely manner and to issue all statutory notifications.
3. To ensure that the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are correctly observed and implemented.
4. To be the Council's principal adviser on policy matters, be responsible for all aspects of Health and Safety, manage the provision of Council services, buildings, land and resources and to promote the Council.
5. To be responsible for ensuring that the instructions of the Council in connection with its function as a Local Council are carried out and to produce all the information required for making effective decisions and to implement constructively all decisions.
6. To be responsible as the Council's Responsible Financial Officer under S151 of the Local Government Act 1972 for all financial matters and records of the Council.
7. To act as the principal adviser on financial matters and be responsible for the careful administration of the Council's finances.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

1. To ensure that statutory and other provisions and notices governing or affecting the running of the Council are observed and to advise the Councillors on all meeting procedures and regulations.
2. To be the Council's principal adviser on all policy issues, to keep services and activities under continuous review and to identify, plan and implement improvements in quality, efficiency and effectiveness.
3. To keep up to date with changes in legislation and forthcoming changes and advise the Council accordingly ensuring that all Council policies and procedures meet statutory requirements.
4. To prepare and publish, in consultation with appropriate Members of the Council, agendas for meetings of the Council and Committees in accordance with all statutory requirements and prepare minutes for approval, other than where such duties have been delegated to another Officer.

5. To ensure that all meetings of the Council and all meetings of its Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Parties are clerked, attending personally other than where such duties have been delegated to another Officer, and to maintain Councillors' attendance records.
6. To receive and conduct all necessary and appropriate correspondence and documents on behalf of the Council as a result of the instructions, or the known policy of, the Council or, when appropriate, bring relevant items to the attention of the Council.
7. To sign, seal and deliver any agreements, contracts, conveyances, licences, consents, approvals etc on behalf of the Council and to secure planning and other consents on behalf of the Council as authorised.
8. To provide general advice as appropriate and support on the budget preparation process, the presentation of budget estimates and precept proposals to Committees and the Council and ensure that all Management Reports are reported to the Council and the statutory External Audit requirements are completed each year.
9. To ensure that Council's budget is prepared and balanced and accounts raised and invoices paid and prepare records for audit purposes and VAT.
In particular to ensure that:-
 - all payments made to the Council are recorded, any necessary receipts issued, all cash and cheques received banked and all associated records kept and any queries are investigated
 - invoices are prepared and issued on behalf of the Council for goods and services to ensure payment is received
 - all necessary records in connection with the above are maintained
 - petty cash accounts are operated properly and all associated records of purchases are maintained
 - all relevant rents or charges are collected for relevant Council services and facilities
 - all necessary Revenue and Customs, VAT, SSP and pension financial returns and/or payments are completed and dispatched on time
 - records, returns and public notices for the annual audit are prepared and the necessary public notices displayed
 - appropriate financial IT systems are in place and operated securely
 - to monitor and ensure that the Council's accounts are balanced and the Council informed of the ongoing financial situation.
 - to ensure that adequate financial security and internal financial and accounting controls are in place and periodically reviewed and the accounting records of the Council are maintained and kept up to date in accordance with proper practices.
 - to work closely with internal and external audit to ensure financial compliance with Financial Regulations and Standing Orders and recommend any necessary amendments to the relevant Committee.
 - to ensure that appropriate and adequate insurances are maintained and an annual equipment inventory is carried out.
 - to advise the Council on and assist in the raising of funds by way of grants and sponsorship etc.
 - to ensure that all surplus Council funds are invested securely and to maximise income.
10. To prepare and publish the Council's Annual Report.

11. To study reports and other data on activities of the Council and on matters bearing on those activities and where appropriate, to discuss such matters with consultants and specialists in particular fields and to produce reports for circulation and discussion by the Council.
12. To monitor the implemented policies of the Council to ensure they are achieving the desired result and where appropriate suggest modifications.
13. To be responsible for the management, maintenance and use of all the Council's properties and facilities, whether through direct management or through contracts, agreements or partnerships with other parties or providers.
14. To act as the official representative of the Council at meetings of other relevant organisations as required.
15. To issue notices and prepare agendas and minutes for the Annual Meeting, attend the Annual Meeting and to implement the decisions made by the Council.
16. To maintain effective and positive press and public relations and prepare, in consultation with key Councillors, press releases about the activities of, or decisions of, the Council.
17. To take appropriate public relations action to enhance the profile and image of the Council and promote and protect the views/interest of the Council with all relevant external organisations or individuals.
18. To develop effective liaison and an effective working partnership with other relevant District and County Councils, other public authorities, statutory and voluntary bodies and other agencies as the Council's representative, to ensure that the Council plays a full and effective role in issues affecting the area.
19. To work to improve, develop and up-date the Council's website.
20. To lead the development and publication of the Parish Plan and produce a rolling business plan.
21. To have an understanding of planning and development issues as they affect the Council area, in particular the Local Development Plan, the Local Strategic Partnership and the Emergency Plan and advise Councillors accordingly.
22. To take appropriate action to ensure that all Council elections are arranged and held successfully.
23. To ensure that the Council's obligations for financial risk assessment and insurance are properly met and that health and safety obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act and other related legislation are met.
24. To be the principal adviser to the Council on matters of ceremony, civic protocol, and develop relevant cultural, community and commercial links.
25. To make appropriate arrangements for civic functions and occasions and attend the Council on any ceremonial occasions.
26. To attend training courses or seminars on the work and role of the Clerk and the Council's activities as required by the Council.

27. To work towards the achievement of Quality Status of the Council and obtain the Certificate in Local Council Administration (if not already gained) as a minimum requirement for effectiveness in the role.
28. To continue to acquire the necessary professional knowledge required for the efficient management of the affairs of the Council.
29. 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.
30. To undertake such other duties commensurate with the level of the post and job purpose as required by the Council from time to time.