

Person Specification – Parish Clerk (Proper Officer) & Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

Core purpose: ensure the council is lawful, compliant and effective; manage finances from cashbook to AGAR; publish transparency information; and enable high-quality decision-making and public engagement.

Assessment key: A = application, I = interview, R = references.

Qualifications / Training

- Good general education with strong literacy and numeracy. (A)
- Evidence of recent CPD relevant to governance/finance. (A)
- Desirable: CiLCA (or commitment within 12–18 months). (A)
- Desirable: Recent SLCC/NALC training (governance/finance/planning). (A)

Experience

- End-to-end accounting: budget setting/monitoring, cashbook and bank reconciliation, payments & receipts, VAT returns, year-end close, AGAR preparation, and supporting internal/external audit. (A/I)
- Servicing meetings lawfully: agendas/summons, accurate minutes, action tracking. (A/R)
- Publishing statutory information (Transparency Code) and maintaining the website pages required. (A)
- Confident liaison with residents, councillors, district/county officers, utilities/contractors; handles enquiries and signposting (incl. FOI/EIR). (A/I)
- Desirable: Managing small contracts/procurement and grants; maintaining asset and risk registers. (A)
- Desirable: Supporting local planning responses/consultations. (A/I)

Knowledge

- Proper Officer duties; Nolan principles; standing orders; financial regulations; code of conduct; publication scheme/data protection basics; complaints handling. (I)
- Governance and Accountability (Practitioners' Guide): 'proper practices', internal controls and AGAR. (I)
- Transparency Code requirements for smaller authorities and awareness of thresholds. (I)
- Local planning basics: material considerations, consultation windows, parish input. (I)

Skills & Abilities

- Financial competence: balanced budget, cashflow profiling, monthly reconciliation, VAT return, draft AGAR with working papers. (A/I)
- Governance advice: interpret standing orders/regs, brief members on lawful options and risks; impartial by default. (I)
- Policy authoring and review: concise, lawful policies; maintain a review schedule and register. (A/I)
- Communication: clear minutes/reports; plain-English notices; courteous frontline service. (A/I)
- Digital: confident with spreadsheets, documents, email, website publishing, records management. (A/I)

Values & Circumstances

- Impartiality, political sensitivity, confidentiality, and professional resilience. (I/R)
- Organised, deadline-reliable, accurate record-keeper. (R)
- Able to attend evening meetings and local site visits; local travel as required. (A)

Note: This person specification is used alongside the job description; it focuses on current capability and compliance-critical behaviours.