

Cockermouth Town Council



21 September 2023

Dear Councillor,

You are summoned to a special meeting of Cockermouth Town Council to be held in the Town Hall, Cockermouth on **Thursday 28 September 2023 at 7.00 pm** for the purpose of the under-mentioned business.

Please let me know if you are unable to attend.

All welcome.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Brown

1. Apologies for absence

- 2. Declaration of Interest** – Members to give notice of any disclosable pecuniary interest, other registrable interest or any other interest and the nature of that interest in relation to any item on the agenda in accordance with the code of conduct.

3. Public Participation

- a) To answer any questions from members of the public in accordance with the Summary of Public Rights
- b) To receive a petition from a member of the public in accordance with the Summary of Public Rights

The Chair will move:-

That under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be removed for the following item of business due to staffing issues being discussed.

- 4. Summary of feedback from Pack Recipients**
- 5. Feedback (if any) from SLCC regarding Locum Service**
- 6. Town Clerk – To discuss way forward**

Press and Public Welcome

Town Hall, Market Street
Cockermouth
Cumbria
CA13 9NP

Tel:

01900 821869

Fax:

01900 827166

Website:

www.cockermouth.org

Facebook:

[@cockermouthtowncouncil](https://www.facebook.com/@cockermouthtowncouncil)

Sheila Brown, *Town Clerk*
clerk@cockermouth.org

Kirstie Goodger
admin@cockermouth.org

Amy Pattinson
assistant@cockermouth.org



Joint Winners

Council of Europe Year 2000

Europe Prize

Previous Awards

Plaque of Honour, Flag of Honour

European Diploma

COCKERMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL, CUMBRIA

CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFER

FULL-TIME (37 HOURS PER WEEK)

SALARY WITHIN GRADE LC3

SCP 33-36 - £39,298 - £42,503 p.a (pay rise pending)

Cockermouth Town Council is looking for a well organised and committed successor to our highly effective Town Clerk who is retiring after 14 years in post.

Our town is a lively, attractive and dynamic place between the fells of the Lake District and the Solway Coast. The successful applicant will lead the day-to-day management of the Town Council's services, events, staff, facilities and finances. Our new Clerk will be community-minded, flexible and supportive with a sound understanding of local authority work and enthusiasm for building on the Council's achievements.

Ideally you will have the CiLCA qualification or be willing to work to gain it. We offer excellent nationally-based terms and conditions of employment. Some evening and weekend work is required.

Please email assistant@cockermouth.org for a recruitment pack with full details of the vacancy and how to apply.

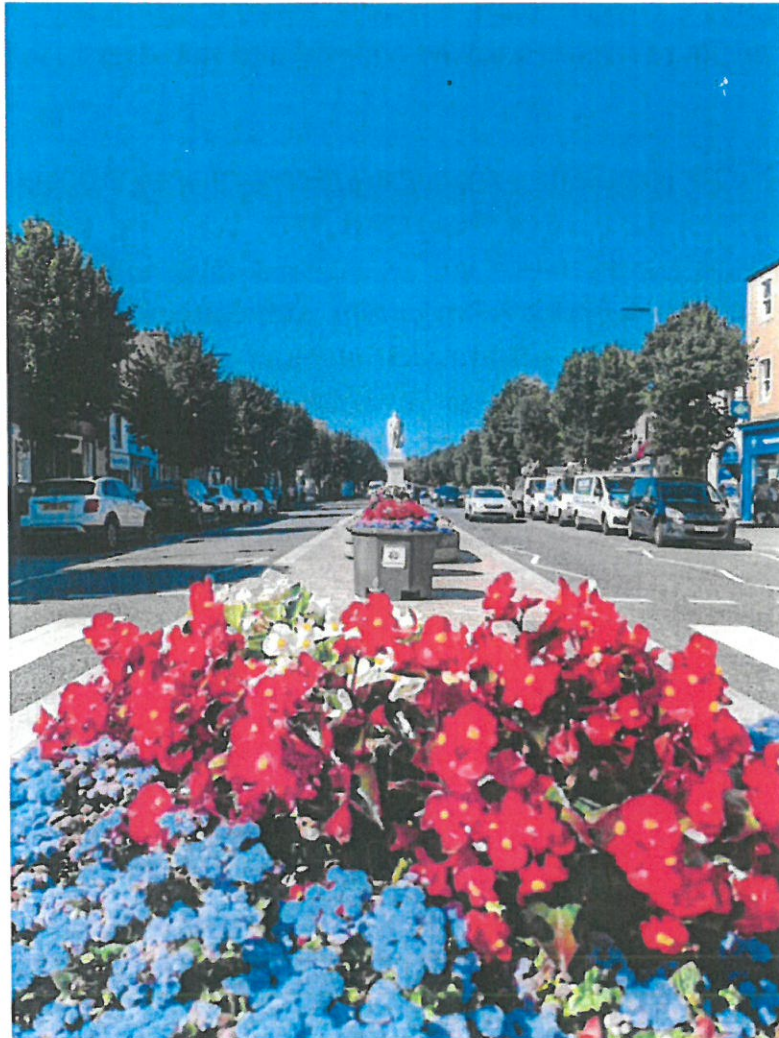
Closing date for applications: 23.59pm on Friday 28th July 2023.

We are an Equal Opportunity Employer and welcome applications from all sections of the community. We aim to conduct interviews with shortlisted candidates at Cockermouth Town Hall on Thursday August 24th 2023.

www.cockermouth.org

Cockermouth Town Council
Application Pack
July 2023

Town Clerk and RFO



Cockermouth Town Council
Town Hall, Market Street,
Cockermouth, Cumbria, CA13 9NP
01900 821869
clerk@cockermouth.org



Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer

Salary within Grade LC3 SCP 33-36 - £39,298 – £42,503 (pay rise pending)

Introduction

This is an exciting opportunity to become part of an established Town Council in the historic market town of Cockermouth, Cumbria, which is just outside the Lake District National Park. The Council seeks a skilled and resilient manager to lead the Council into the future.

The Town Council wish to recruit a Town Clerk/RFO following the retirement at the end of October 2023 of the current Town Clerk/RFO. We are seeking someone who can bring drive, vision, commitment, and strong leadership to the role and who will continue to build positive working relationships with Councillors, staff and partner organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors. You will ideally already be a Clerk or Deputy Clerk to a Parish or Town Council with accrued knowledge and experience or have significant experience in a local authority environment.

The successful applicant must be prepared to respond to the opportunities and challenges that face the Town Council and ensure that the Council is kept fully briefed on the newly created Cumberland Unitary Authority and the opportunities that this may bring to the town.

Cockermouth is an attractive historic market town based just outside the Lake District boundary. Its unique position also makes it within easy reach of the Solway Coast and Scotland. It has a castle and two rivers – The Cocker (from which the town derives its name) and the Derwent.

Cockermouth can boast many famous sons and daughters, including William and Dorothy Wordsworth who were born in Cockermouth in a fine Georgian house which stands on the tree-lined Main Street. The house is now owned by the National Trust.

Cockermouth has been twinned with Marvejols in the Lozère Department of France since 1983. To acknowledge our work in promoting European friendship, the Council of Europe has awarded us many honours including the highest accolade, the Europe

Prize. We are celebrating the 40th anniversary of the twinning this year.

We are also twinned with Hebron, New Hampshire, USA.

We run many services including the Library (in partnership with Cumberland Council), a tourist information centre, public toilets and over 70 allotments.

We own and maintain several buildings and land across Cockermouth. These include the Town Hall, Victoria Hall, the Library, 4 sets of toilets, the Memorial Gardens, Tarn Close Sports Ground, 4 play areas, various statues and a town clock.

We conduct around 100 weddings and Civil Partnerships a year in the Town Hall.

The Council organises many town events including our Easter Competition, Civic Service, Family Fun Day, Remembrance Sunday, Fireworks, Christmas Lights, Mayor's Coffee Morning and Carols Round the Tree.

We sponsor Cockermouth Live! (a music and arts festival), and Taste Cumbria and Taste Christmas food festivals.

If you would like an informal discussion about the role, please contact the Town Clerk Sheila Brown on 01900 821869. Cockermouth Town Council is an equal opportunities employer.

How to apply

- Please write, using no more than two A4 sides, explaining how you meet the requirements of the job description and the person specification and what you can bring to the role, providing specific examples.
- You must also attach your CV and complete and return the Declarations and Equal Opportunities monitoring forms.
- Shortlisted candidates will be asked to prepare a 15-minute presentation to discuss the potential opportunities and challenges facing the Council.
- **Deadline for completed applications is by 23.59pm on Sunday 10 September 2023, either by post or by email. Please post to Cockermouth Town Council, Town Hall, Market Place, Cockermouth, Cumbria. CA13 9NP marked private and confidential for the attention of Sheila Brown or alternatively email to assistant@cockermouth.org**
- **Interviews will be held on 27 September 2023.**



COCKERMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer
Responsible to:	Full Council
Responsible for:	All Council staff, property and resources
Employment Status:	Full-time (37 hours per week) including some evening and weekend work possibilities for flexible working
Salary scale:	Grade LC3 SCP33-36 - £39,493 - £42,503 (pay rise pending

Job Purpose

1. To ensure that the Council's civic and administrative functions and services are performed and delivered 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, ensuring that the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are correctly observed and implemented.
3. To manage the Council's employees effectively and to be responsible for all aspects of Health and Safety, to manage the Council services, buildings, land and resources and to promote the Council.
4. To be responsible for ensuring that the instructions of the Council in connection with its function as a Local Council are carried out, to be the Council's principal adviser on policy matters, and to produce all the information required for making effective decisions.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. To keep up to date with changes in legislation and forthcoming changes, ensuring 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 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.
4. 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 Councillor's attendance records.
5. To action 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.
6. To sign, seal and deliver any agreements, contracts, conveyances, licences, consents, approvals etc on behalf of the Council. To ensure the Council's planning obligations are met.
7. To provide general advice to the Council on the budget preparation process and ensure that all Management Reports are presented to the Council and the statutory External Audit requirements are completed each year.
8. To ensure that Council's budget is prepared and balanced and accounts raised and invoices paid and prepare records for audit purposes and VAT.
9. To prepare and publish the Council's Annual Report.

- 10.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.
- 11.To head the Council's paid service and manage all other members of staff in keeping with the policies of the Council and employment law and to ensure they perform to expected standards.
- 12.To arrange and/or undertake staff annual performance appraisals or reviews and deal with any employment issues in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.
- 13.To apply the principles of equality and equal opportunities as embodied in the Council's policies and practices in order to promote equality of opportunity and treatment and the appropriate attitude and behaviour for all employees.
- 14.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.
- 15.To act as the official representative of the Council at meetings of other relevant organisations as required.
- 16.To issue notices and prepare agendas and minutes for the Annual Parish Meeting, attend the Annual Parish Meeting and to implement the decisions made by the Council.
- 17.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.
- 18.To take appropriate public relations action, including through the Council's website and social media, 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.

- 19.To develop effective liaison and an effective working partnership with other relevant Parish, Town and Unitary Authorities, 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.
- 20.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, economic strategies and the Emergency and Resilience Plan and advise Councillors accordingly.
- 21.To ensure the casual vacancy process is followed when a Councillor vacancy arises. To explain the requirements of Ordinary Elections to all Councillors and undertake publicity for recruitment.
- 22.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.
- 23.To be the principal adviser to the Council on matters of ceremony, civic protocol, and develop relevant cultural, community and commercial links.
- 24.To make appropriate arrangements for civic functions and occasions and attend the Council on any ceremonial occasions.
- 25.To obtain the Certificate in Local Council Administration (if not already gained) as a minimum requirement for effectiveness in the role within 12 months of appointment.
- 26.To manage the arrangements to comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

Duties and Responsibilities: Responsible Financial Officer

1. As the Council's Responsible Financial Officer to be responsible for all financial procedures and records, and the careful administration of its finances, in compliance with all statutory obligations or other laws, provisions and notices governing or affecting the running of the Council including:

- (a) being responsible as, and 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;
- (b) acting as the Council's principal adviser on financial matters, 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;
- (c) ensuring that the Council's finances are effectively managed and monitored, and advising the Council on its financial forward plan, strategy and policies;
- (d) 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;
- (e) monitoring and managing the Council's budget expenditure and income, and providing the Council and Committees with a regular statement of income and expenditure under each heading in the approved annual revenue and capital budgets;
- (f) 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;
- (g) issuing and reporting on invoices for goods and services to be paid for by the Council, and ensuring such accounts are met and that: -
 - all necessary activities in connection with the management and payment of salaries and expenses are administered accurately and legally
 - all payments made to the Council are recorded, any necessary receipts issued, all cash and cheques received banked, 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;

- (h) monitoring and ensuring that the Council's accounts are controlled, and the Council is informed of the ongoing financial situation;
- (i) ensuring all necessary records are prepared for audit and VAT purposes;
- (j) ensuring that the Council's obligations for financial risk management, including risk assessments, are properly met and where necessary risks are properly insured;
- (k) ensuring 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;
- (l) ensuring that an annual equipment inventory and asset register are in place;
- (m) advising the Council on and assisting in the raising of funds by way of grants and sponsorship etc by following the necessary consultations and processes.
- (n) ensuring that all surplus Council funds are invested securely and income maximized;

General Duties

1. To continue to acquire the necessary professional knowledge required for the efficient management of the affairs of the Council and to attend training courses, conferences or seminars on the work and role of the Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer and the Council's activities as required by the Council.
2. To undertake such other duties commensurate with the level of the post and job purpose as required by the Council from time to time.



COCKERMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL PERSON SPECIFICATION

Factor	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant organisational and administrative experience in a structured environment. • Demonstrable experience of formal Committee work, agenda preparation and minute taking. • Experience of budget setting, monitoring processes, controls and financial management reports. • If not already in possession, be prepared to work towards obtaining Certificate in Local Council Administration within 1 year of commencement. • High literacy and numeracy skills • Evidence of policy and strategy advice and development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to degree or HND level. • Previous experience of working for local authority or similar body. • Experience of dealing with the public and working on own initiative. • Hold the Certificate in Local Council Administration Project management experience. • Leadership and staff management experience • Successful implementation of equality and performance management systems
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of local government responsibilities, system and procedures. • Knowledge of the governance, operational and legal framework in which the Council operates including local authority planning procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of local area. • Knowledge and understanding of importance of good public relations and how to raise the Council's profile in the community.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of employment and health and safety law and data protection. • Knowledge of relevant accounting procedures. 	
Qualities and Attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-reliant and self-motivated . • Flexible, pro-active and hands on approach to tasks. • Supportive - demonstrating loyalty and commitment to the organisation and staff in past employment. • Trustworthy with confidential information. • Ability to demonstrate tact, diplomacy and impartiality • Community focused. • Commitment to the delivery of quality service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability and enthusiasm to adapt to change. • Enthusiastic with innovative qualities. • Business perspective and acumen. • Ability to interpret political drivers.
Skills and Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to communicate effectively with others at all levels both internally and externally. • Excellent written and oral communication and presentational skills. • Ability to develop and maintain good working relationships with staff, councillors, external bodies, contractors and the public • Formal agenda preparation and minute taking skills. • Ability to produce understandable and concise written reports on complex topics. • Ability to develop, implement and monitor effective systems and procedures. • Ability to organise and prioritise own and others work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate speaker in public.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to manage the performance of others to achieve effective working of the team • IT literate with sound working knowledge of MS Office, Excel and Windows packages. 	
Special Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to work and/or attend Committees and other meetings and functions in evenings. • Prepared to work varied hours to meet the needs of the post. • Willingness to undergo training to acquire relevant new skills or knowledge relevant to the job. 	

**Cockermouth Town Council, Town Hall, Market Street, Cockermouth,
Cumbria, CA13 9NP**

clerk@cockermouth.org

01900 821869

www.cockermouth.org

KEY TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

General	The terms and conditions of employment are generally in accordance with the National Joint Council Scheme of Conditions of Service and the provisions of the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks Conditions of Service for Clerks of Local Councils or as amended by the Council.
Salary	Salary is negotiable within Salary Range LC3 (SCP 33 – 36 £39,493 to £42,503)
Working Week	The normal full-time working week is 37 hours per week
Days and Hours of Work	Days of work are Monday to Friday and the office hours are Monday – Thursday 9.00am – 5pm, Friday 9.00am to 4.30pm (half an hour for lunch) but the hours of work will be flexible by agreement to include attendance at evening or weekend meetings and functions for which time off in lieu is granted.
Annual Leave	29 days paid annual leave per annum. This includes bank holidays.
Sick Leave	You are entitled to statutory sick-pay however this is dependent upon your length of service
Pension	You could be eligible to become a member of the contributory Local Government Pension Scheme. The rate of employee contribution for the LGPS is based on full time pensionable pay.
Probation	Three month probationary period.
Pay Method	Salary is paid on or around the 25th of the month, directly by credit transfer to a bank or building society.
Salary Review	The salary is subject to any revisions agreed nationally between NALC and SLCC as a result of pay negotiations which are usually effective from 1 April.
Work Location	Town Hall, Market Street, Cockermouth, Cumbria, CA13 9NP but attendance at other locations is required when necessary.
Expenses	Reasonable subsistence for conference attendance in accordance with the Council's policy. Car mileage allowance payable in accordance with the casual user provisions in the Council's policy.
Notice Period	After completion of the probationary period, 3 months on either side in writing to terminate the employment. Unless your employment is terminated on grounds of gross misconduct when summary dismissal will

apply, the minimum period of notice of termination of your employment which you are entitled to receive from the Council in writing, after completion of any probationary service, period is three months.

Other Terms

All staff are required to operate within the Council's adopted policies and procedures.

A no smoking policy is in operation in the Council's buildings

COCKERMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

EQUALITIES MONITORING INFORMATION

Application Form Stage

Post Applied For: Town Clerk/RFO

The Council aims to be an equal opportunity employer and we want to treat everyone equally.

The information requested below will enable us to determine whether or not we are achieving this aim. All information will be regarded as strictly confidential, will be kept separately and will in no way affect the outcome of your application for employment.

By completing and returning this form you are consenting to the sensitive personal data contained within to be used purely for statistical purposes and to be produced as evidence in any legal proceedings for discrimination against the Council. Please read the Council's Privacy Statement and DPA Statement on the website for details of your rights with regard to data protection.

Please tick the box you consider best describes your situation in each category.

1. Gender

Are you?

Male ☐ Female ☐ I prefer not to tell you ☐
Transgender ☐

What is your age?

16-29 ☐ 30-44 ☐ 45-59 ☐ 60-74 ☐ 75+ ☐
I prefer not to tell you ☐

2. Ethnicity

What is your ethnic group?

White British		Bangladeshi	
White Irish		Pakistani	
Any Other White Background		Indian	
White and Black Caribbean		Tamil	
White and Black African		Korean	
White and Asian		Any Other Asian Background	
Any Other Mixed Background		Caribbean	
Chinese		African	
Any other ethnic background		Any Other Black Background	
		I prefer not to tell you	

3. Disability and Health

Do you have a long-term physical, mental health and health condition or disability?

Yes ☐

No ☐

I prefer not to tell you * ☐

What is the nature of your disability, mental health or other health issue?

Physical/Mobility ☐ Sensory ☐ Mental health ☐ Learning ☐

Other ☐ I prefer not to tell you * ☐

*** = It is important that we know of any special needs you may require should you be selected for interview and if subsequently appointed how this may impact on the job role and what, if any, adjustments will need to be explored with you.**

4. What is Your Religion or Belief?

Christian ☐ Buddhist ☐ Hindu ☐ Sikh ☐

Jewish ☐ Muslim ☐ Atheist ☐ Agnostic ☐

Other ☐ I prefer not to tell you ☐

5. What is Your Sexual Orientation?

Heterosexual ☐ Lesbian ☐ Bisexual ☐ Gay ☐

Other ☐ I prefer not to tell you ☐

Thank you for taking time to complete this form

Date: _____

DECLARATIONS

PREVENTION OF ILLEGAL WORKING

Are you eligible to work in the UK? Yes No

Do you require a work permit to take up employment in the UK? Yes No

The Council has legal obligations to ensure that you can work legally in the UK. Prior to taking up any employment you will be required to provide evidence of a passport and/or other relevant documents on the approved list to satisfy the Council that you comply with this requirement.

Are there any restrictions on your residing in the UK? Yes No

DRIVING LICENCE

Do you hold a current driving licence? Yes No If "yes" please
state type of licence you hold:

Are you a car owner or do you have a car at your disposal? Yes No

Do you have any current endorsements? Yes No If "Yes", please
specify:

REFERENCES

Please give details of two persons who we could contact and would be willing to supply a reference for you. We would prefer your referees to be your most recent employers including your current employer, if applicable.

Name: Position:	Name: Position:
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Address:	Address:
Post Code:	Post Code:
E-mail address:	E-mail address:
Tel. No.:	Tel. No.:
Capacity known to you:	Capacity known to you:

Have you any objection to the references being obtained prior to interview. Yes
No

References will be obtained and their authenticity checked if you are offered the appointment.

RELATIONSHIPS

Are you, to your knowledge, related to or have any relationship with an Elected or Co-opted Member or employee of the Council? Yes No

If "yes", please give details.

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DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT 1995

Do you have a disability you wish us to know about at this stage? Yes No

If yes, to assist us in making the interview arrangements please note below if you believe there are any reasonable adjustments we should be making.

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DECLARATION AND DATA PROTECTION ACT CONSENT

I declare that all the foregoing details given in this application are true to the best of my knowledge and understand that verification checks may be made. I also understand that if the information I have given is found to be untrue or misleading this will be sufficient grounds for disqualification from appointment or dismissal from any employment gained.

Signed _____

Date _____

DATA PROTECTION CONSENT

I understand that the information given in this form will be processed only by the Council for the purpose of considering my application for employment and if I am successful in my application this form and the information in it will be retained in my personnel file for such time as I am an employee and for up to six years after the end of my employment. Otherwise this form will only be retained by the Council for so long as it is required in connection with the application.

Under the Data Protection Act and GDPR you have specific rights including giving consent for the collection and processing of your personal data. Please see Council's Data Privacy Statement and Policy on our website for further information. Please indicate below whether you give consent for us to collect, record and process the personal data you have provided for the purposes of recruitment, selection and appointment.

- ☐ I give my consent.
- ☐ I wish to find out more information or to check what personal data is being collected and processed before giving my consent.

Signed _____ Date _____

NOTIFICATION OF VACANCY

How did you find out about this vacancy? Advertisement Word of mouth
Council website Council Notice Board Other

If 'advertisement' in which publication or if 'other' please explain below.

