



DEPUTY TOWN CLERK JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE	Deputy Town Clerk
ACCOUNTABLE TO	Ashington Town Council
RESPONSIBLE TO	Executive Officer / Responsible Financial Officer (EO/RFO)
CONTRACT	Permanent, Full Time (37 hours per week)
SALARY	LC3 (SCP 33-36) £44,075 to £47,181 per annum
LOCATION	Ashington Town Council Offices

JOB PURPOSE

The Deputy Town Clerk will deputise for the Executive Officer/Responsible Financial Officer, who is the Proper Officer of the Council. In the absence of the EO/RFO, the Deputy Clerk will be required to carry out all the functions of a local authority's Proper Officer, and to serve or issue all notifications required by law.

The Deputy Clerk will assist the EO/RFO in ensuring that the Council meets its strategic objectives by providing high-quality administrative support and professional advice. The role has a particular focus on strategic leadership for the Council's community services portfolio, including climate action, events commissioning, community engagement, grant funding, and civic support.

The Deputy Clerk will also serve as Deputy Responsible Financial Officer, providing backup for financial sign-off and statutory compliance, and will contribute to policy development and governance support across all Council activities.

SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Strategic Leadership - Community Services Portfolio

Climate Action: To lead on the development and implementation of the Council's climate action strategy, including project delivery, monitoring of climate budget expenditure, and reporting on environmental initiatives.

Community Engagement and Communications Strategy: To develop, implement and continuously improve a comprehensive community engagement strategy that builds on the existing communications strategy, ensuring the Council connects effectively with all residents and stakeholders through diverse channels and formats.

Publicity and Communications Development: Working in close collaboration with the Administration and Communications Officer, to develop and enhance the Council's engagement across all platforms including online (website, social media, digital newsletters), written communications (printed newsletters, noticeboards, leaflets), and face-to-face methods (community meetings, consultations, events).



Content Strategy and Quality: To establish and maintain high standards for all Council communications and engagement materials, ensuring content is accessible, engaging, relevant, and reaches all sections of the community including those digitally excluded.

Consultation and Feedback: To design and deliver effective consultation processes using appropriate methods (online surveys, public meetings, focus groups, written responses), ensuring residents have meaningful opportunities to influence Council decisions.

Communications Support and Coordination: To provide strategic direction to the Administration and Communications Officer in implementing the communications strategy, coordinating content creation, managing publication schedules, and monitoring engagement metrics to continuously improve reach and effectiveness.

Events Programme: To develop and deliver the Council's events portfolio, making strategic decisions on delivery models including in-house delivery, partnership working with community organisations, or outsourcing to external providers. To commission and manage events programmes, including procurement of external providers, contractor liaison, contract management, licensing, regulatory compliance, risk assessment, stakeholder coordination, and post-event evaluation. To ensure the events programme reflects community needs and priorities while delivering value for money and managing risk appropriately.

Civic Leadership: To provide civic support to the Civic Head and Members, supporting the Council's civic and community leadership functions

Partnership Development: To develop and maintain strategic partnerships with community organisations, voluntary sector bodies, and other stakeholders to advance Council objectives and strengthen community networks

2. Statutory Responsibilities

- To deputise for the EO/RFO in all aspects of their role, acting as Proper Officer in their absence and carrying out all statutory functions required by law
- To act as Deputy Responsible Financial Officer, providing backup for financial sign-off, statutory compliance, and financial administration
- To assist in ensuring that statutory and other provisions governing or affecting the running of the Council are observed, and that the Council meets its legal obligations
- To provide professional legal and procedural advice to Councillors and committees on complex matters relating to local government law, governance, and best practice
- To assist in the development, review, and monitoring of Council policies, ensuring they remain effective, lawful, and fit for purpose
- To monitor changes in legislation and guidance affecting town and parish councils, advising the EO/RFO and Members of implications and required actions
- To ensure that the Council's standing orders, financial regulations, and delegated schemes are regularly reviewed and updated in line with changes in law and best practice



3. Committee and Administrative Responsibilities

- To prepare agendas, reports, and associated documents for meetings of the Council and its committees as delegated by the EO/RFO
- To prepare high-quality reports for committees and Council, presenting complex information clearly and with appropriate recommendations
- To attend meetings of the Council and committees as required, taking accurate minutes and providing professional advice to Members during meetings
- To implement Council resolutions and decisions, taking appropriate follow-up actions and ensuring effective delivery
- To work with the Administration and Communications Officer to ensure that meeting outcomes, decisions, and Council activities are effectively communicated to residents through appropriate channels (website updates, social media posts, newsletter articles, press releases)
- To respond to correspondence and enquiries on behalf of the Council where delegated authority has been given or in accordance with established policy

4. Financial Administration

- To act as Deputy Responsible Financial Officer with authority to administer payments and undertake financial transactions in accordance with Financial Regulations and delegated authority
- To assist the EO/RFO in the preparation of the Council's annual budget, monitoring budget performance, and providing financial reports to committees
- To support the maintenance of financial records and systems, ensuring accuracy, compliance with regulations, and readiness for internal and external audit
- To assist in the preparation of year-end accounts and supporting statements for audit purposes
- To assist the EO/RFO in completing the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for external audit
- To research, identify, and prepare applications for external grants and funding opportunities to support Council priorities

5. Project Management

- To lead on the planning, development, and delivery of complex projects on behalf of the Council, including climate action initiatives, and town wide events
- To manage competing priorities, ensuring effective delivery to deadlines and within budget
- To conduct research, options appraisal, and consultation to support strategic decision-making
- To prepare high-quality reports for committees and Council, presenting complex information clearly and with appropriate recommendations
- To monitor progress on Council priorities and initiatives, identifying risks and taking corrective action as required
- To assist with identifying and supporting funding opportunities



6. Other responsibilities

- To provide day-to-day direction and coordination to the Administration and Communications Officer in respect of communications and engagement activities, and to act as line manager for all staff in the absence of the EO/RFO
- To represent the Council at external meetings and events as required, building and maintaining effective relationships with partner organisations
- To liaise with local councillors at all levels (town and county) Northumberland County Council officers, and other local authorities as necessary
- To develop and maintain constructive working relationships with community groups, voluntary organisations, and other stakeholders
- To maintain effective public relations and communication at all times, promoting a positive image of the Council
- To handle enquiries and issues from members of the public professionally and efficiently, escalating to the EO/RFO where appropriate
- To undertake such other responsibilities and functions as may reasonably be required from time to time by the Council or the EO/RFO, commensurate with the duties and responsibilities of the post

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- To maintain professional competence through continuing professional development, attending training courses and conferences as required by the Council
- To work towards achieving the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) if not already held, within 18 months of appointment
- To keep abreast of developments in local government, sector best practice, and legislative changes affecting town and parish councils
- To contribute to the development of an effective organisational culture, supporting colleagues and promoting collaborative working

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS AND CONDITIONS

- Flexibility to attend evening meetings of the Council and committees as required (typically once or twice per month)
- Occasional weekend work may be required for events and civic functions
- The postholder must maintain complete confidentiality in all matters relating to the work of the Council
- A current driving license is required, and access to a vehicle for work purposes is desirable
- The postholder must be prepared to work at any Council site or location as reasonably required



TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Employment Status: The post is permanent and full-time, subject to satisfactory completion of a six-month probationary period.

Hours of Work: The standard working week is 37 hours. Office hours are flexible from 7:30am until 18:45pm, with flexibility as required to meet the needs of the service. Evening and occasional weekend work will be required.

Salary: The post is graded at LC3 (SCP 33-36), currently £44,075 to £47,181 per annum, paid monthly by credit transfer. The Council participates in the national pay award.

Pension: Eligibility to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The Council will provide information about the scheme with any formal offer of appointment.

Annual Leave: The annual leave entitlement is 28 days per annum (pro rata for part-time), plus public and bank holidays, with 3 days taken between Christmas and New Year. The leave year runs from 1 April to 31 March.

Policy Framework: The conditions of service are those determined by Ashington Town Council, having regard to the National Joint Council for Local Government Services framework. Employment is subject to the Council's policies and procedures, including those relating to equality and diversity, health and safety, data protection, and conduct.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This job description outlines the main responsibilities and duties of the role. It is not a comprehensive or exhaustive list, and duties may be varied from time to time to meet the changing needs of the Council without altering the general character of the role or the level of responsibility.

The Council is committed to safeguarding and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful candidate may be required to undertake an enhanced DBS check if appropriate to the role.

The Council is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified persons regardless of their race, sex, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, or age.



DEPUTY CLERK PERSON SPECIFICATION

How to use this document

All candidates will be assessed against the criteria below. Essential criteria (E) must be demonstrated by all applicants; failure to meet any essential criterion will result in the application not progressing to interview. Desirable criteria (D) will be used to distinguish between candidates who meet all essential criteria. The column 'How Assessed' indicates the stage at which each criterion will be evaluated.

1. Education and Qualifications

Criterion	E	D	How Assessed
Educated to degree level or equivalent demonstrated through professional experience	✓		<i>Application</i>
CiLCA qualification		✓	<i>Application</i>
Commitment to work towards CiLCA within 18 months if not already held	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>
Membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)		✓	<i>Application</i>
Project management qualification (e.g. PRINCE2 or equivalent)		✓	<i>Application</i>
Full current driving licence	✓		<i>Application</i>

2. Knowledge

Criterion	E	D	How Assessed
Sound working knowledge of local government law as it applies to town and parish councils, including the statutory functions of the Proper Officer under the Local Government Act 1972	✓		<i>Application / Interview / Exercise</i>
Understanding of local authority governance frameworks including standing orders, committee procedures, and delegated authority	✓		<i>Application / Interview / Exercise</i>
Knowledge of local authority financial management principles including Financial Regulations, budget monitoring, and audit requirements	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>
Understanding of employment legislation as it applies in a local government context	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>



Knowledge of GDPR obligations as applied in a public authority context	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>
Familiarity with NALC model documents and guidance		✓	<i>Application / Interview</i>
Knowledge of licensing and regulatory requirements for public events	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>
Understanding of community engagement principles and practice	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>
Knowledge of climate action frameworks and environmental reporting at local level		✓	<i>Application / Interview</i>

3. Experience

Criterion	E	D	How Assessed
Experience working in a local authority or town/parish council environment in a senior administrative or officer role	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>
Proven experience of preparing and presenting committee reports, agendas, and minutes to a high standard	✓		<i>Application / Exercise</i>
Experience of advising elected members on procedural, governance, or legal matters	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>
Experience of financial administration including budget monitoring and payment authorisation	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>
Experience of planning and delivering a public events programme, including commissioning, procurement, contractor management, risk assessment, and regulatory compliance	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>
Experience of developing or implementing a community engagement or communications strategy	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>
Experience of working in a politically sensitive environment while maintaining professional independence	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>



Experience of managing or significantly contributing to complex projects from inception through to delivery	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>
Experience deputising for a Clerk or senior officer and acting with delegated authority		✓	<i>Application / Interview</i>
Experience of line managing or directing the work of staff		✓	<i>Application / Interview</i>
Experience of grant application and monitoring		✓	<i>Application / Interview</i>
Experience of working with voluntary and community sector organisations		✓	<i>Application / Interview</i>

4. Skills and Abilities

Criterion	E	D	How Assessed
Excellent written communication skills: able to produce clear, accurate, and well-reasoned reports, minutes, and correspondence	✓		<i>Application / Exercise</i>
Strong analytical ability: able to interpret complex legal or procedural information and translate it into practical advice	✓		<i>Interview / Exercise</i>
Highly developed organisational skills: demonstrable ability to manage competing priorities, work to deadlines, and maintain accuracy under pressure	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>
Confident IT skills including Microsoft Office and ability to quickly learn new systems	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>
Ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of audiences including elected Members, partner organisations, and the public	✓		<i>Interview</i>
Ability to develop and deliver engaging content across multiple communications channels including digital and print	✓		<i>Application / Interview</i>
Ability to exercise sound and independent professional judgement, maintaining confidentiality and discretion	✓		<i>Interview / References</i>
Experience of council management or administration software (e.g. Scribe)		✓	<i>Application</i>



Experience of digital communications tools, content management systems, or social media management platforms		✓	<i>Application</i>
Experience of procurement processes and contract management		✓	<i>Application / Interview</i>
Access to a vehicle for work purposes		✓	<i>Application</i>

5. Personal Attributes

Criterion	E	D	How Assessed
Committed to public service values and the Nolan Principles of public life	✓		<i>Interview / References</i>
Resilient and adaptable: able to operate effectively in a complex and politically sensitive environment	✓		<i>Interview / References</i>
A collaborative team player who can also work with confidence and independence when required	✓		<i>Interview / References</i>
Willingness to work flexibly including regular evening meetings and occasional weekend commitments	✓		<i>Application</i>
Honest, reliable, and committed to the highest standards of professional conduct	✓		<i>Interview / References</i>
An interest in and commitment to community development and civic life		✓	<i>Application / Interview</i>
Enthusiasm for environmental sustainability and climate action		✓	<i>Application / Interview</i>

Important Notice

This person specification outlines the criteria against which candidates will be assessed. It will be reviewed prior to each use to ensure it remains relevant and proportionate to the needs of the Council. Ashington Town Council is committed to equality of opportunity and will assess all candidates fairly and consistently against the stated criteria.