

JOB DESCRIPTION

Title:	Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)
Located:	Poole, Dorset
Reporting to:	Poole Town Council
Salary:	LC4 (SP 55-62) - £74,454 - £89,081
Hours:	Full-time (37 hours per weeks)

Overall Purpose

The Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer (referred to as "Town Clerk") is the Council's senior officer, principal advisor and Proper Officer, responsible for providing strategic leadership, ensuring legal compliance, and delivering effective governance and financial management in support of council objectives and community needs.

The Town Clerk is responsible for ensuring the implementation of all instructions of the Council in connection with its function as a Local Authority and is expected to advise the Council on and assist in the formation of, overall policies to be followed in respect of the Authority's activities and to provide the information required for making effective decisions. The Town Clerk will implement and subsequently monitor the effectiveness of all the Council's decisions and policies.

The Town Clerk will play a pivotal role in shaping and delivering the Council's long-term vision and Corporate Aspirations, ensuring all activities are aligned with the best interests of the community and the Council's strategic direction.

Key Responsibilities and Duties

Leadership and Team Management

- Recruit, build, and lead a dedicated team for effective service delivery.
- Motivate all Council employees and provide appropriate supervision.
- Give clear instructions and necessary training.
- Delegate duties and monitor performance.
- Maintain high standards of service for residents, businesses, and visitors.
- Champion a positive, innovative, and supportive organisational culture.
- Focus on staff wellbeing, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

Human Resources and Policy Advisor

- Advise the Council on policy and procedure development and adoption.

- Ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.
- Advise the Council on employment conditions, performance appraisal, job evaluation, and disciplinary procedures.
- Help establish consistent and fair staff management and performance policies.
- Ensure safe working practices and compliance with employment legislation.
- Lead staff recruitment, development, and performance management.

Meetings and Civic Events

- Attend evening Council and Committee meetings, and occasional weekend civic functions.
- Arrange time off in lieu of additional hours worked, in agreement with designated Councillors.
- Ensure timely preparation of agendas, draft minutes, and reports for all meetings.
- Attend meetings or delegate attendance as needed.

Asset Management

- Maintain an up-to-date register of assets.
- Conduct periodic reviews and advise the Council on medium- to long-term actions.
- Collaborate with the Finance Officer to ensure assets are adequately insured.
- Present annual reviews and recommendations for changes to the relevant Committee.

Correspondence and Records

- Receive correspondence and documents on behalf of the Town Council.
- Offer advice and recommend appropriate actions when necessary.
- Maintain and secure all Council information and legal records.
- Act as responsible officer under the Freedom of Information Act and GDPR.

Legislative Compliance and Advice

- Stay informed about changes in legislation, statutory regulations, and codes of practice.
- Advise the Council on potential impacts, consequences, and required actions.
- Ensure compliance with legal and statutory obligations.

Financial Management

- Ensure Council finances are managed in accordance with policy.

- Maintain effective financial controls and systems to prevent fraud, misappropriation, or waste.
- Oversee the Finance Officer's monitoring and balancing of accounts, audit preparation, VAT, and reporting.
- Provide clear financial reporting and risk management advice to Members.
- Support responsible and transparent financial planning.
- Identify and secure external income opportunities through grants, partnerships, and sponsorship.

Project Management

- Manage Council projects as required, ensuring objectives are met efficiently and effectively.
- Lead delivery of key Council projects, including agreed initiatives, heritage priorities, environmental enhancements, and community infrastructure improvements.

Lease and Tenancy Administration

- Maintain a library of leases in which the Town Council is a signatory.
- Liaise with tenants and conduct rent reviews as necessary for proper management of Council property.

Budgeting and Financial Planning

- Provide professional financial advice as Responsible Finance Officer.
- Prepare annual revenue, expenditure, and capital budgets for Council consideration.
- Initiate forward planning, forecasting, and general financial guidance.

Legal, Operational, and Management Frameworks

- Regularly review and update the Council's legal, operational, and management frameworks.
- Ensure lawful, efficient, and cost-effective management, including health and safety practices, risk assessments, codes of practice, and procedures.

Property and Asset Maintenance Planning

- Identify and plan for maintenance, replacement, and improvements to the Council's property portfolio, vehicles, and equipment.
- Conduct regular inspections to identify maintenance needs and areas requiring attention.

Civic Functions Organisation

- Plan and assist in the organisation of civic functions and formal ceremonies.

- Contribute to the Council's public engagement and representation.

Public Relations and Communications

- Act as the Council's public relations officer.
- Advise Members on public relations matters.
- Ensure the Council's website is maintained with current, quality, and relevant information.
- Promote a strong, recognisable identity for the Council.
- Oversee communications and media relations to ensure residents are well-informed and engaged.
- Promote and protect the Council's reputation, public identity, and civic pride.

External Liaison

- Build strong relationships with regional and national bodies, statutory agencies, local organisations, emergency services, and funding partners.
- Act as a high-profile ambassador for the Council.

Confidentiality

- Maintain confidentiality on matters deemed confidential by the Town Council.

Additional Duties

- Undertake any other duties as required, commensurate with the level of the post, supporting the Council's objectives and operations.