

Drinkstone Parish Council

Extraordinary meeting Monday 8th March to discuss and agree on the Vacancy for the position of Clerk to the Council

Regrettably, Hilary our current Clerk has advised us of her resignation and will leave the employment of Drinkstone Parish Council at the end of May 2021. The meeting has been called to agree the formal process by which a new Clerk will be appointed and takes into account various informal discussions held between councillors in terms of the ideal candidate we are seeking. Based on the consensus of all current members of the council the following draft advert should be agreed at the meeting.

Clerk Advert

Drinkstone Parish Council would like to invite applications for the upcoming position of Clerk to the Council. Ideally the applicant will be a resident of the village and must be able to demonstrate a good understanding of financial reporting. A working knowledge of current Data Protection Legislation, along with Freedom of Information, Equality policies and an understanding of local council regulations and legislation would be a benefit, however full training will be given. You should be an effective communicator with strong interpersonal skills, demonstrate flexibility, able to work to tight deadlines and willingness as part of a team. As head of the administration the clerk must also keep abreast of developments in the use of IT as a tool for good management.

Together with the chairman, the Clerk is the face of the council in the community and together they have an important public relations role in informing the residents about and promoting the council and its activities.

This is a salaried position requiring 20 hours a month with a degree of flexibility around meeting dates. Remuneration will be based on experience. In line with the Councils diversity policy, we are looking for potential candidates who can be developed and retained for the future, and make best use of their talents.

Applications should be made in the first instance to The Chairman by close of business 19th March. Interviews will take place w/c 22nd March.

The process

We have two options – one is to consider setting up a staffing committee – this would be formally established but may only need to meet once a year for annual appraisal of the Clerk or any grievance or disciplinary meetings; or as per advice from SALC, set up an interview panel for this instance, for us to shortlist and interview and make an offer subject to references. The full council would then formally appoint and confirm starting salary.

Proposal

I would like to propose that in this instance we adopt the latter and that the Chairman and Vice Chair should conduct the initial interviews and recommend the appointment to the parish council.

Timings

As the role is critical to the smooth running of the council and including the fact that we will shortly have 2 new councillors on board I recommend that we deal with the matter with the utmost urgency and set it as a Key priority in March.

Proposal

I propose the council agrees the following:

Advert posted on the web site, notice board and Jungle drums initially on 9th March, closing date 19th March; shortlist and interviews w/c 22nd March, this would give two weeks to follow up on any references, and the clerk could then be formally appointed at the April meeting or an extra-ordinary meeting before if required and agree a specified starting date.

Handover

An appointment no later than the April meeting will allow the out-going Clerk reasonable time to arrange a structured handover to the incoming Clerk, including preparation for the Annual meeting, and the Village meeting in May and preparation for any audit. There will be potential cost implications in terms of potential additional salaries for the handover period unless an agreement can be reached in advance.

The parish council agreed at its March meeting to vire unspent budget from the clerk salary costs and overtime contingency to a new earmarked reserve, clerk salary contingency (£414.14).

Proposal

To ensure a smooth handover the council is prepared to incur potential additional Clerk salary costs for the months of April and May up to £500.

Prepared by

Councillor Edmondson