



NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL



Council HR and Governance Support
Excellence in all we do

Chief Executive Officer (Town Clerk)
Candidate Pack

Welcome to Newton Abbot Town Council



Newton Abbot is a town with a strong sense of identity, a proud civic tradition and a community that expects its council to be visible, responsive and forward-looking. As we continue to strengthen our town centre, support community organisations and prepare for wider changes in local government, this is an important moment to welcome a new senior officer into our organisation.

We are looking for someone who brings professional confidence, sound judgement and a collaborative approach - a leader who understands the value of local democracy and who can help us deliver for residents, businesses and community groups. You will join a council that is ambitious for its town, committed to high standards and determined to play its full part within the wider Devon local government landscape.

If you share our belief in strong local leadership and community-centred public service, we look forward to receiving your application.

Councillor Louise Cooke
Mayor of Newton Abbot

About Newton Abbot

Newton Abbot is a historic South Devon market town with a long tradition of trade, enterprise and community activity. Its flat, accessible town centre brings together independent retailers, national brands and regular markets, giving the town a lively and welcoming atmosphere. Its heritage is shaped by the Great Western Railway, the River Teign and a market tradition that continues to draw visitors into the town centre.

The town is home to recognisable landmarks including the Clock Tower, St Leonard's Tower, the historic Market Hall and the riverside spaces that frame the town's identity. A year-round programme of events, including Christmas celebrations and regular street markets, contributes to a vibrant atmosphere and a strong sense of local pride.



Newton Abbot benefits from excellent transport links, including mainline rail services to London, Exeter and Plymouth, and direct access to the A380 and A38. Its location between Dartmoor National Park and the South Devon coast offers easy access to countryside and coastline, making it an attractive place for families, commuters and businesses.

The town's population is growing and increasingly diverse, supported by good schools, leisure facilities, sports clubs, cultural organisations and an active voluntary sector. This blend of heritage, connectivity and community activity gives Newton Abbot a distinctive identity and a strong foundation for future growth.

Newton Abbot Town Council – Who are we



Newton Abbot Town Council is the first tier of local government for the town, representing residents through 18 elected councillors and a dedicated officer team. We deliver a broad range of community-focused services and play a visible role in supporting civic life, local initiatives and the wellbeing of the town. We are located in Newton's Place, a prominent community building that houses the Council's offices, meeting spaces and the town's museum.

Community-focused, we have a clear commitment to openness, partnership and high standards in public service. The Council holds **NALC Quality Silver** status, reflecting strong governance, transparency and a professional approach to serving the town.

We are guided by principles that shape how we work and how we serve the community:

- **Community-centred** — we put residents, local groups and community wellbeing at the heart of our work.
- **Open & transparent** — we act with clarity, accountability and fairness in all decisions.
- **Collaborative** — we work positively with partners, councillors, volunteers and organisations to achieve shared goals.
- **Inclusive & respectful** — we value diverse voices and ensure our services are accessible to all.
- **Forward-looking** — we embrace improvement and opportunities that strengthen the town's future.



[Click here for Our Services](#)

Our Strategic Priorities

Newton Abbot Town Council's Strategic Plan sets out five priorities that guide its work over the coming years. These priorities reflect the town's ambitions, community expectations and the Council's role in supporting a thriving, well-connected and forward-looking place. You can find the full plan here: [Strategic Plan2025-2027](#)

Vibrant Town Centre	Opportunities for Young People	Environmental Responsibility	Culture, Heritage & Identity	Strong Community Life
Supporting a lively, welcoming and well-used town centre through events, partnerships and activity that strengthens footfall, identity and local business	Working with partners to improve facilities, activities and support for children and young people, helping them to thrive and feel part of the town's future.	Promoting sustainability, enhancing local environments and supporting initiatives that protect the town's natural assets and long-term resilience.	Celebrating Newton Abbot's character and history through cultural activity, events, heritage projects and community spaces that bring people together.	Strengthening community connections by supporting local groups, volunteers and organisations, and enabling residents to play an active role in town life.

What this means for the Chief Executive Officer

The CEO plays a central role in turning these priorities into meaningful outcomes for the town — shaping strategy, ensuring strong governance, leading staff, managing assets and enabling councillors to make informed, confident decisions. The role is pivotal in ensuring the Council's values and ambitions are reflected in the services and partnerships that support Newton Abbot every day.

Key Opportunities & Challenges

Newton Abbot is entering a period of meaningful change, creating significant opportunities for the Council to shape the town's future.

In the immediate term, Newton Abbot's momentum — regeneration, events and a strong sense of identity creates a positive backdrop for the new Town Clerk to support newly elected councillors in 2027, guide staff through change and engage residents and partners to understand community needs. The transfer of assets from the District Council creates an opportunity to strengthen services, while the Local Government Review in Devon will require the Town Clerk to prepare the organisation for structural change and represent the town's interests as the new landscape takes place.

Looking ahead, the focus will be on developing resilient service models for newly transferred assets, embedding organisational capacity and preparing the Council for further devolution. As councillors gain experience, the Town Clerk will continue to support their development, helping them navigate governance, decision-making and community engagement. During this period, the Council will focus on strengthening its partnerships with principal authorities and local organisations, ensuring an active role in shaping wider agendas.



Key Opportunities & Challenges

Over the longer term, the creation of a new Unitary Council presents both challenge and opportunity. The Town Clerk will be instrumental in establishing a strong and influential relationship with the new authority, ensuring Newton Abbot's voice is heard and its priorities understood. This includes championing the town's identity, securing community benefits and ensuring that local services and assets continue to reflect the needs and aspirations of residents.

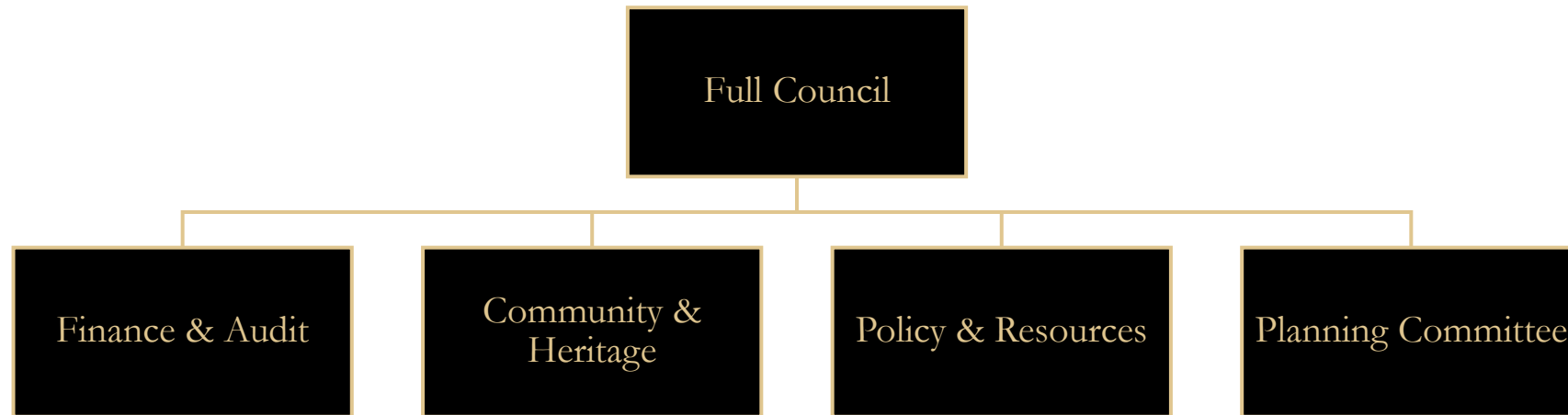
Across all timeframes, the Council will need to navigate wider pressures such as maintaining a vibrant town centre, managing growth and rising community expectations, and working across a complex partnership landscape that includes principal authorities, strategic partners and a highly active voluntary sector. The town's cultural and heritage assets offer significant opportunity but also require sustained investment and stewardship.

These factors, alongside financial constraints and the need for sustainable asset management, create a demanding leadership environment that calls for strategic clarity, operational grip and strong partnership skills.



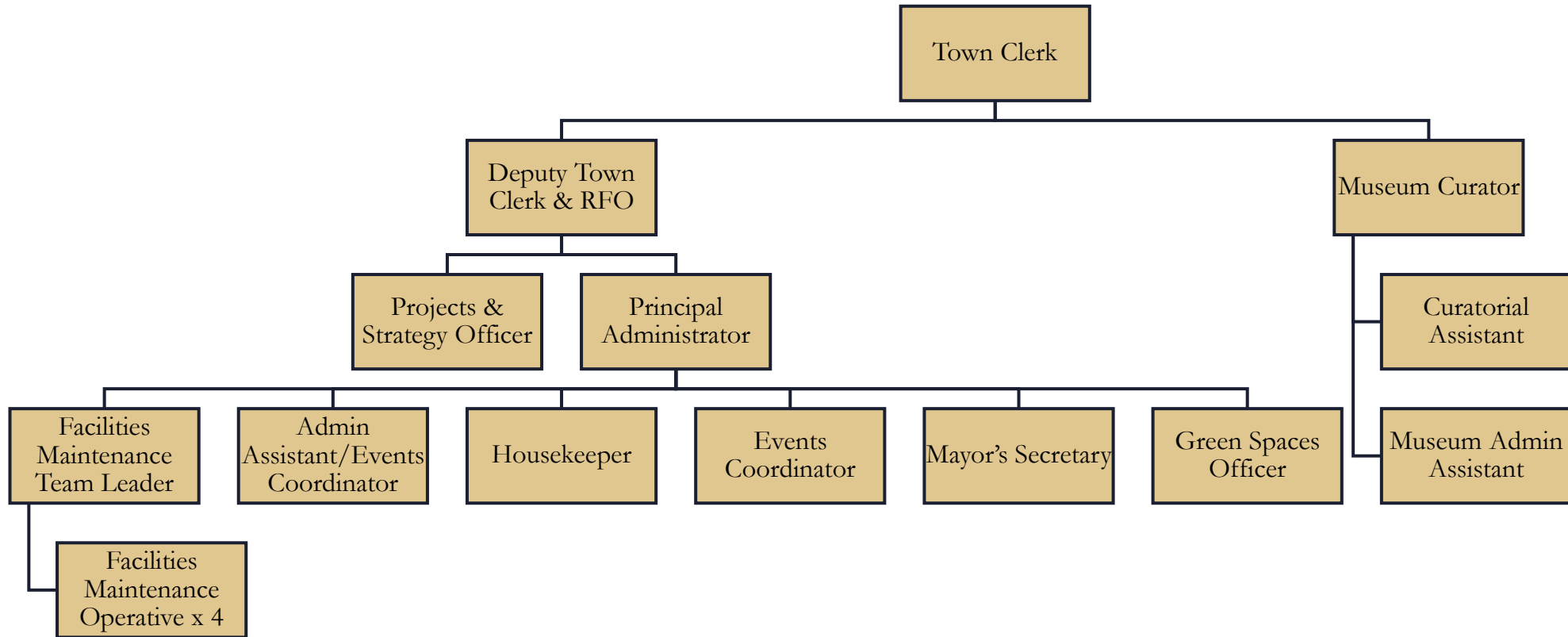
Council Structure

Newton Abbot Town Council operates through a committee structure that enables effective decision-making, oversight and delivery across its services, assets and community priorities. These committees report to the Full Council and help ensure the smooth running of Council business.



The Council is served by a committed group of elected representatives as Town Councillors who focus on the local community, helping shape services and decisions that affect the daily lives of residents. Click [here](#) to find the current representatives for Newton Abbot and their contact information. Elections for the Town Council and the shadow unitary will be held in May 2027.

Council Staff



About the role

Job title:	Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk
Responsible to:	The Council
Location:	Newton's Place, Wolborough Street, Newton Abbot,TQ12 1JQ
Contract type:	Permanent, 37 hours per week.
Salary:	£76,911 - £92,021 per annum (SCP 55 – 62)
Benefits:	Local Government Pension Scheme, 25 days annual leave allowance plus bank and public holidays (rising to 28 days after 5 years), Employee Assistance Programme, support for professional development

Chief Executive Officer – The Role

The Chief Executive Officer is the Council's most senior officer, responsible for providing strategic leadership, ensuring strong governance and enabling councillors to make informed, confident decisions. The role combines organisational leadership with a clear focus on community impact, partnership working and the long-term wellbeing of the town.



LEADERSHIP

Provide clear, forward-looking leadership that aligns the organisation to the Council's priorities, supports long-term planning and ensures the town's ambitions are translated into meaningful outcomes.



FINANCE & RESOURCES

Work with the RFO to ensure robust financial planning, effective use of public funds, strong internal controls and long-term financial resilience.



PEOPLE & SERVICES

Lead, develop and support staff across all service areas, fostering a positive, inclusive culture and ensuring the organisation has the capacity and capability to deliver.
Ensure services, assets, events and community programmes are well-managed, safe, responsive and aligned to the needs of residents



GOVERNANCE & COMPLIANCE

Safeguard lawful, transparent and accountable decision-making, maintaining strong governance frameworks and ensuring councillors receive impartial, evidence-based advice.



ENGAGE & REPRESENT

Build productive relationships with principal authorities, partners, voluntary groups and local organisations to shape outcomes for the town.

Chief Executive Officer – The Role

Additional Specific Responsibilities

Museum

The Museum is a Town Council service. Strategic oversight sits with the Council, and operational responsibility is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer/Town Clerk. The Curator is line-managed by the CEO and is responsible for day-to-day management, collections, exhibitions and community engagement, ensuring the Museum meets professional standards and remains an accessible cultural resource for residents and visitors.

Newton Abbot Community Trust

The CEO serves as Secretary to the Newton Abbot Community Trust, a registered charity that owns the community space at Golden Lion Square. The role includes administering meetings, maintaining statutory filings with Companies House and the Charity Commission, and supporting the Trust's financial processes alongside the RFO.

Police Advocate

The CEO is recognised by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner as a Police Advocate for Newton Abbot. This involves regular engagement with the area Police Inspector and local Councillor Advocates to support community safety and partnership working.

Please refer to the full job description at the end of this pack

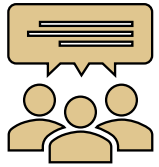
Chief Executive Officer – The Person

EXPERIENCE & KNOWLEDGE



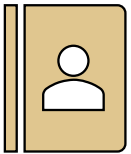
- Senior leadership experience in a complex, public-facing or multi-stakeholder setting.
- Strong understanding of governance and the role of the Proper Officer in local decision-making.
- Strategic planning and delivery with a track record of aligning people, resources and activity to organisational priorities.
- Financial awareness with a strong understanding of budgets, risk and stewardship of public funds.
- Experience of partnership working across public, voluntary and community sectors.
- Relevant professional development — CiLCA or Level 4 Community Governance (or willingness to work towards it) is an advantage.

SKILLS & ATTRIBUTES



- Political awareness and the ability to navigate member–officer roles with clarity and confidence.
- Strong communicator who is clear, calm and credible with councillors, staff, partners and the public.
- Collaborative leadership and able to motivate a small team and build a positive organisational culture.
- Sound judgement to weigh evidence, manage risk and provide balanced advice.
- Problem-solving and adaptability - comfortable working across a broad portfolio.

PERSONAL QUALITIES



- Integrity and professionalism that models the values expected of a public leader.
- Resilient and able to manage competing demands with composure.
- Inclusive and respectful, valuing diverse perspectives and fostering trust.
- Commitment to community impact and motivated by improving outcomes for residents and local groups.

Recruitment Process

Recruitment Process	Date
Closing Date for applications	5pm, 29 th September 2026
Assessments: Stage 1: Interview and Presentation with Panel Stage 2: Leadership Interview and Meet & Greet with team	19 th and 20 th October 2026
Anticipated start date	As soon as possible

1. Read the guidance on the Application form & Equal Opportunities form.
2. Ensure all sections of the Application Form are completed. CVs are not accepted as an alternative to the form.
3. Save both forms using your name to identify them.
4. Submit forms via email to recruitment@chrgs.co.uk before the closing date.

Newton Abbot Town Council thank you for your interest in working for the Council and look forward to receiving your application.

Work Sponsorship: Unfortunately, the Council is currently unable to offer work sponsorship as it does not hold a Home Office sponsorship license for visas and is therefore unable to process applications that would require a visa to work in the UK.

Appendix

1. Job Description
2. Person Specification

1. Job Description

JOB TITLE:	Town Clerk (Chief Executive Officer)
PLACE OF WORK:	Newton Abbot Town Council, Newton's Place, Wolborough Street, Newton Abbot, TQ12 1JQ
GRADE:	(SCP 55 – 62) £76,911 - £92,021 per annum dependent on experience
HOURS OF WORK:	37 hours per week across Monday to Friday. Some evening and weekend work will be required council for meetings and events
REPORTS TO:	Council
LINE MANAGEMENT:	As on organisation chart

Role Purpose

The Town Clerk is the Council's Proper Officer and senior adviser to elected members. The role provides strategic leadership, ensures strong governance, and oversees the effective delivery of services, assets, partnerships and statutory functions. The Clerk leads the organisation, supports councillors, manages staff, ensures financial resilience and represents Newton Abbot within the wider local government landscape.

Key Responsibilities

- **Governance & Proper Officer:** statutory compliance, democratic support, lawful decision-making.
- **Leadership & Strategy:** organisational direction, Community/Strategic Plan delivery, partnership influence.
- **Finance & Resources:** financial governance, planning, procurement and risk.
- **Services & Assets:** operational oversight of community assets, public spaces, cultural services and events.
- **People & Culture:** workforce leadership, development, wellbeing and organisational culture.
- **Community & Representation:** communication, reputation, civic leadership and external engagement.
- **Specific Newton Abbot Duties:** Museum, Community Trust, Police Advocate.

1. Job Description

Specific Responsibilities

A. Strategic Leadership

- Provide clear, forward-looking leadership aligned to the Council's priorities and Community/Strategic Plan.
- Support councillors in shaping policy, setting direction and representing the community.
- Strengthen partnerships with principal authorities, voluntary groups, housing providers, transport bodies and community organisations.
- Represent the Council confidently at local, regional and sector-level forums.
- Promote Newton Abbot's identity, heritage and cultural life.
- Uphold the Council's NALC Quality Silver standards

B. Governance & Proper Officer Duties

- Act as the Council's Proper Officer, ensuring full compliance with statutory functions, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- Attend meetings of the Council, its Committees, Sub-Committees, and Working Parties as directed, ensuring appropriate advice and support is in place if not in attendance.
- Provide clear, impartial, lawful evidence-based advice to Council and Committees.
- In consultation with the relevant Chair, prepare and issue agendas, minutes and statutory notices for Council, Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Parties including the Annual Town Meeting.
- Draft reports, proposals, and recommendations for Council consideration, outlining potential implications, feasibility, and options for action.
- Ensure lawful, transparent and accountable decision-making.
- Receive and process planning applications, ensuring Committee comments are formally recorded and submitted.
- Manage all correspondence on behalf of the Council and ensure councillors receive timely, accurate information.
- Lead policy development, governance frameworks, risk management, safeguarding and information governance.

1. Job Description

C. Financial Leadership

Working closely with the Deputy Town Clerk (RFO), the Clerk will:

- Ensure robust financial governance, internal controls and audit readiness in line with statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Oversee budgeting, medium-term financial planning and responsible use of reserves.
- Ensure value for money, contract compliance and effective procurement.
- Oversee leases, insurance, VAT compliance and financial reporting.
- Provide strategic financial advice to support long-term resilience.

D. Operational & Service Leadership

- Provide strategic and operational leadership across all Council services, ensuring they are delivered safely, efficiently and in line with the Council's priorities.
- Maintain oversight of community assets, public spaces, environmental services, cultural and heritage activity, events, community programmes and statutory functions.
- Ensure effective systems for health and safety, risk management, contract management and service performance.
- Work with partners, contractors and community organisations to support high-quality service delivery, continuous improvement and strong community outcomes.
- Ensure clear, accessible communication with residents and partners.
- Support digital engagement, public information and community updates.
- Promote the Council's work, identity and achievements.

1. Job Description

E. Staff Leadership & Organisational Development

- Provide overall leadership for Council staff, including workforce planning, recruitment, induction and development.
- Embed equality, diversity and inclusion across HR practises and policies.
- Ensure robust performance monitoring and the completion of annual appraisals for all staff, supporting professional growth and accountability.
- Ensure staff wellbeing is supported through regular one-to-one meetings, fostering engagement, development and resilience.
- Embed a culture of learning, reflection, and improvement across the organisation.
- Provide advice on current employment legislation and best practice.

F. Civic & Ceremonial Leadership

- Advise and support the Mayor in upholding civic traditions and representing the town.
- Oversee Mayor Making, Civic Service and mayoral fundraising events.
- Undertake ceremonial duties as required, representing the Council at official functions and supporting the Town Mayor.

G. Additional responsibilities

- Museum: Line-manage the Museum Curator and ensure the Museum meets professional standards and remains accessible to residents and visitors.
- Newton Abbot Community Trust: Serve as Secretary, supporting governance, statutory filings and financial processes for Golden Lion Square (a community space).
- Police Advocate: Engage regularly with the Police Inspector and PCC-related partners to support community safety

1. Job Description

C Other information

External and Internal Contacts

Councillors, customers, citizens, contractors, suppliers, members of staff, partner agencies and national bodies.

Working Environment

Mainly office based.

All staff must commit to Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discriminatory Practices.

Health and Safety at Work

Newton Abbot Town Council's Policies, and all relevant Health and Safety at Work Instructions are to be considered as part of this job description.

Data Protection Act 2018

All employees who are involved in the processing or handling of computer data have an obligation to comply with the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Council's Data Protection Policy.

Council Policies

The post-holder is expected to familiarise themselves with and adhere to all relevant Council Policies and Procedures.

The post-holder will be expected to behave in a sustainable and ethical way and to spend public funds wisely.

You should be committed to the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and to ensure equality of opportunity in service delivery.

Performance Management

You will be given an annual appraisal and six-monthly review that will form the basis of your Personal Development Plan and be linked to the Council's objectives.

2. Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications & Training	• Certificate in Local Council Administration – CiLCA (or commitment to obtain within 24 months) • Evidence of ongoing professional development	• Community Governance qualification • Relevant professional qualification in Management, HR, finance, legal or project management
Experience	• Recent senior-level experience of leading teams, setting direction, and delivering organisational priorities in a public-facing or multi-stakeholder setting • Proven track record of recruiting, developing, appraising, and supporting staff to achieve high performance. • Experience of working in a regulated environment. • Servicing formal meetings with agendas, minutes, reports • Strategy and policy development • Partnership working across public, voluntary and community sectors. • Financial oversight including budgeting, risk and audit. • Project delivery from initiation to evaluation.	• Fundraising or income generation • Managing procurement and contracts
Skills, Knowledge & Abilities	• Strong leadership skills: able to inspire, motivate, and delegate effectively. • Confident public speaker who can represent the Council effectively in public forums and meetings. • Strong facilitation skills, able to balance viewpoints and build consensus • Analytical judgement that supports timely decision-making. • Creative thinker, able to generate innovate yet practical solutions • Ability to provide impartial, evidence-based advice • Excellent written and verbal communication	• Awareness of emerging digital technologies • Understanding of local authority finance - precept setting and monitoring. • Knowledge of employment legislation and HR policies. • Awareness of audit and financial regulations in the town/parish councils

2. Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Skills, Knowledge & Abilities	• Ability to prioritise work, manage competing demands and achieve positive outcomes. • Strong IT skills, including Microsoft Office and SharePoint • Understanding of local government legislation (Local Government Act, GDPR, FOI). • Understanding of community development and civic life	
Personal Attributes	• Commitment to public service • Shows resilience and emotional maturity, maintaining perspective and effective leadership in demanding circumstances. • Collaborative: builds strong relationships and fosters a culture of teamwork and shared success. • Solutions and impact focused, able to navigate complexity and deliver outcomes • High standard of personal integrity. • Political awareness and ability to operate with impartiality in a political environment. • Able to gain and retain the confidence of internal and external stakeholders. • Community-minded and visible	
Other Requirements	• Willingness to work evenings and weekends • Willingness to engage with the community and learn the local area	• Driving licence and access to a vehicle