

Cotesbach Parish Council

Recruitment pack for Parish Council Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

May 2019

Cotesbach is a small village approximately 1 ½ miles south of Lutterworth. It has approximately 85 houses and 200 residents.

It has a small range of amenities including St Mary's Grade II* Church, village hall, small playing field, village pond, village notice board, defibrillator, the Stableyard shops and café and the Garden Barn shop.

The Parish Council holds the usual county and district council devolved responsibilities, often acting as the interface between their services and the village. It meets 4-5 times a year on a Monday evening for a couple of hours. Unlike many Parish Councils, it does not have any direct responsibility for the churchyard or village hall and playing field. These are managed and operated by other committees – although the Parish Council is represented on the village hall management committee.

Cotesbach is a relatively active community given its small size. The village hall regularly organises social events and the stableyard also holds events that attract some villagers. A facebook page is used to share village activity varying from the events being organised, to crime concerns to road congestion. A Parish Council email is also used for residents to contact the council directly. The council also have some pages on the village website (cotesbachvillage.uk) for latest news, agendas, minutes and other necessary documents. Paper leaflets regarding council meetings are always distributed, and a quarterly report in the Church Communicator helps ensure those not using facebook or email are kept informed.

Cotesbach residents are interested in the usual village concerns (crime, safety, road condition, planning etc) and a few more unique things related to Cotesbach, in particular the nearby Tarmac quarry, associated Landfill site, safety when crossing the A426, Magna Park and local agricultural operations (smells / flies).

The Parish Council has recently focussed its efforts in four main areas to ensure it's working to provide what residents need:

- 1) **Industrial Neighbours:** Maintaining a good community relationship with Tarmac and Magna Park to minimise disruption to neighbours and ensure consideration during major planning application.
- 2) **Highways and Crime:** Improving the safety and condition of the A426, and Main Street through Cotesbach; raising awareness of crime and its management
- 3) **Amenity management:** Ensuring the council amenities are maintained and where necessary improved
- 4) **Council operations:** Improving the governance and efficiency of the council so it runs compliantly and inclusively with the community

To support the councillors (currently just 3 out of a total of 5 available positions) to do the above it was recently decided to increase the precept significantly (c. 300%) to hire a Parish Clerk. This was broadly very well supported by the residents. The council has never employed a Clerk before, but believe it's now necessary to do so to ensure the council is operating compliantly and efficiently.

The following role description was produced based on a Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils template which might appear sophisticated, but helps to outline expectations of the role.

The council wants to hear from anybody who might be interested in helping Cotesbach Parish Council in its focus areas, and final responsibilities could be agreed for the right candidate. The hourly pay may reflect these final responsibilities and is dependent on experience.

To apply, contact Edmund Hunt via email (cotesbachpc@gmail.com), saying you are interested. Including a basic CV would be very helpful if possible, or phone 07752 931026 to speak to Edmund more about the role.

The closing date for applications is 28th June and we plan to be interviewing on Monday evenings during June.

COTESBACH PARISH COUNCIL

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer
Responsible to:	Full Council
Responsible for:	All Council staff, property and financial resources
Employment	Part-time (max 3 hours per week)
Salary scale:	£10-£13 per hour

Job Purpose

1. To ensure that the Council's civic and administrative functions and services are performed professionally and in accordance with all relevant statutory obligations.
2. To ensure that the Council's Financial Regulations and commitments are correctly observed and implemented.
3. To manage the Council's employees effectively and to be the Council's principal adviser on policy matters, manage the provision of Council services, land, amenities and resources, and to promote the Council.
4. To be responsible for ensuring that all the information is produced that is required for the Council to make effective Council decisions.
5. To support and enable where possible that all Council and Councillor duties and actions are implemented.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

1. To ensure 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 or legislation requirements at District, Council County Council and Central Government levels.
3. To track performance of the Council services and activities against our commitments to the community and stakeholders.
4. 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 – including the required preparation and promotion of the Annual Meeting.
5. To capture minutes during Council meetings and prepare them for approval.
6. To receive and respond to emails and letters to the Council according to the Council's policies, or ensuring the responsible Councillor is informed and responds to the communication.
7. To provide the Council and Councillors the necessary resources to achieve their responsibilities (e.g. planning or policy documents, access to District or County council websites or personnel etc).
8. To provide general advice as appropriate regarding necessary financial commitments as part of the role of Responsible Financial Officer (see below), including the budget preparation process, the presentation of budget estimates and precept proposals to Committees and the Council. In addition ensure that all Management Reports are reported to the Council and the statutory External Audit requirements are completed each year.

9. To ensure compliance of employed Officers (including the clerk themselves) according to employment law.
10. To undertake all necessary activities in connection with the management of salaries, conditions of employment and work of other staff.
11. To act as the official representative of the Council at meetings of other relevant organisations as required.
12. To develop effective liaison and an effective working partnership with other relevant District and County Councils, 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.
13. To work to improve, develop and update the Council's website including the publication of draft and approved Council meeting minutes, agendas and latest news items as advised by the Council if needed.
14. To ensure the Council's website meets the necessary compliance requirements including the Transparency Code and any GDPR requirements.
15. To have an understanding of planning and development issues as they affect the Council area, in particular the District Council Local Plan, the Local Strategic Partnership, County Council strategic plan, and the Emergency Plan and advise Councillors accordingly.
16. To take appropriate action to ensure that all Council elections are arranged and held successfully.
17. 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.
18. To attend training courses or seminars on the work and role of the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, and the Council's activities as required by the Council.

Key Duties and Responsibilities: Responsible Financial Officer

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.

1. 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.
2. Act as the Council's principal adviser on financial matters, and to be responsible for the careful administration of the Council's finances including providing a regular statement of the cashbook.
3. Ensure that the Council's finances are effectively managed and monitored, and to advise the Council on its financial forward plan, strategy and policies.
4. Advise the Council on and prepare the annual budget estimates of income and expenditure for revenue services, the capital budget programme and annual Precept requirements.
5. Arrange the completion of the annual external audit requirements and manage any consequential actions.

6. Issue and report on invoices for goods and services to be paid for by the Council, ensure 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
 - all necessary administration and banking procedures are arranged to ensure that all full- and part-time staff wages and salaries are paid
 - petty cash accounts are operated properly, and all associated records of purchases are maintained
 - 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
7. Ensure that an annual equipment inventory and asset register are in place.
8. Support in the raising of funds by way of grants and sponsorship etc by following the necessary consultations and processes.
9. To ensure that the Bribery Action requirements are complied with.

Experience (desirable, not essential)

1. Previous Parish Council clerk experience
2. An understanding of local council policy and governance requirements for Parish Councils
3. Computer literacy – primarily word processing and spreadsheets
4. Knowledge of WordPress for website management, or the interest to learn
5. Familiarity with Cotesbach
6. Availability on Monday evenings approximately each quarter for Council meetings

Desired behaviours

1. An active interest in local communities
2. A pro-active attitude
3. Self-motivated and able to motivate others
4. A “can-do” approach, with the ability to overcome problems creatively, minimising bureaucracy and cost
5. A willingness to learn and get involved