

Parish Workers Salary

Background

The Parish Council currently employs four parish workers on a part-time basis. All of whom carry out different but important roles. Two of our parish workers are essentially grounds staff based at the cemetery. Both of whom are long-serving members of staff who are flexible and have strong sense of Clipstone and the Parish Council. The 3rd parish worker is a more recent employee whose role is the village hall caretaker and our 4th member of staff is a youth who closes the cemetery gates 5 days per week (Wednesday through to Sunday). This fits around their studies. The team is managed by the senior parish worker who is one of the grounds staff. In turn, the senior parish worker is line managed by the most senior member of the Parish Council's staff, the Clerk.

Their hours are:

Senior parish worker: 30 hours per week

Grounds staff parish worker: 16 hours per week

Caretaker parish worker: 16 hours per week

Cemetery gate parish worker: 2.5 hour per week

A Good Employer

The Parish Council has recently stated its intent to work toward becoming a good employer. It should be said this was not because previously it was trying to be a poor employer but that the terms of conditions of its staff were not subject to review, the turn-over of staff was low and everyone's focus was on delivering on behalf of Clipstone. In the interim, staff's terms and conditions got left behind. This was evidenced by the Parish Council's struggle to employ a new Clerk when its long-standing Clerk resigned to take up a new position as a Town Clerk. During the intervening time there was recognition by the Parish Council that it needed to focus on staff. The Parish Council positively received and acted upon advice and so the journey toward being a better employer commenced.

The new Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer and Administrative Assistant have current job descriptions, are employed across a salary banding to reflect their progression and value to the Parish Council as they grow and qualify into their respective roles. They are paid using the NJC salary banding which is a local government standard and widely used within the town and parish sector. Although,

it is not obligatory. It is now time to attend to our parish workers so that all staff are subject to an identical set of standards.

Parish workers are often of a similar character, they quietly go about their work and unfortunately their true value is frequently only realised when it's too late. There is an exercise underway to update job descriptions to fully reflect the tasks they undertake and the cover they provide for one another across any absences. There is a single salary banding for parish workers. No account of tenure, experience and skills and hourly rates are recognized, nor are hourly rates aligned to NJC pay scales. Our senior parish worker is paid more to recognise his seniority and that he manages the team, and our young parish worker is paid less because of his age.

From experience it can be difficult to benchmark parish workers with other Parish and Town Councils because the tasks undertaken vary so much. For example, Clipstone Parish Council is responsible for a cemetery but not for a play park. However, that did not daunt the Parish Council when it updated the terms for the Clerk and the Responsible Financial Officer so it should not hamper considerations for our parish workers.

Contact was made with Newark and Sherwood District Council to gain an understanding of how its ground staff are remunerated. Whilst it is called something different they do follow NJC pay scales. Officers have been mindful of the conversation with Newark and Sherwood District Council noting the similarities and differences in making the subsequent recommendations.

The Clerk intends to carry out reviews in the new year, finalise job descriptions and lay the path to introducing pay bandings to the parish workers which will continue to feed the desire to build a strong, resilient team around Council.

Recommendation

That the Personnel Committee support parish workers transferring onto NJC pay scales and that the following salary bands are recommended to Council.

Senior parish worker: NJC SCP 9 to 17

Grounds staff parish worker: NJC SCP 5 to 7

Caretaker parish worker: NJC SCP 4 to 6

Cemetery gate parish worker: NJC 2 to 4 (pay rate for adult)