

Consultant Clerk

Background

Staffing was discussed within Confidential at the 22 June 22 Parish Council meeting. During the meeting Council resolved to:

- ask the Locum Clerk to cover the Responsible Financial Officers (RFO's) maternity leave and continue to work with Clipstone Parish Council until the end of January 2023
- discuss the Locum Clerk's future at Clipstone Parish Council in the January 2023 Parish Meeting

In addition to covering the role of RFO, and following internal audit recommendations, the Consultant Clerk was tasked with undertaking a review of Council policies and updating the website.

The present situation is that while some progress is being made with Council policies and procedures, time constraints brought about by work connected with the proposed Community Hub, the Council's tenant, and cemetery anomalies amongst others work matters have all hindered progress. There remain policies and procedures to review and update, and the website to overhaul.

Considerations

The RFO is due back at work early in 2022.

The Clerk regularly works additional hours beyond those contracted to enable the day-to-day Council activities to continue, and for work on projects and historical issues to progress.

The Clerk and RFO need time to learn their craft. The RFO worked for four months and completed the Financial Introduction to Local Council Administration (FILCA) course before taking a period of leave. The Clerk has attended a day course at Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils and commenced the Introduction to Local Council Administration (ILCA) online learning course. FILCA and ILCA are online sector specific learning tools to support new Clerks and RFO's. For both the RFO and Clerk there remains a considerable amount to learn, and workloads have prevented the Consultant Clerk's ability to invest time in developing the Clerk's knowledge.

Local council elections will take place in May 2023, bringing a workload which must be conducted correctly, and is new to both the Clerk and RFO. As is the internal and external audit process.

The Consultant Clerk has provided much needed knowledge, assistance, guidance, support and personal commitment to Clipstone Parish Council and its employees over the last 12 months. Quite simply, it is difficult to see how Council could have made it through the last year without her expertise. In return for this commitment, it is fair and just for Council to provide the Consultant

Clerk with a reasonable notice period to allow another role to be sought and also to provide a suitable reference for employment.

Recommendations

1. The Personnel Committee should agree the notice period for the Consultant Clerk.
2. It is recommended the Personnel Committee approve a reference to be written for the Consultant Clerk.
3. It is recommended that the Personnel Committee discuss the future of the Consultant Clerk, and if it would be prudent to ask the Consultant Clerk to remain with Clipstone Parish Council beyond the notice period (following the RFO's return) until a specified date.