

**BISHOP'S ITCHINGTON PARISH
COUNCIL**

**APPOINTMENT
OF
CLERK TO THE COUNCIL AND
RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

RECRUITMENT HANDOUT

Date: 31 March 2025

CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any questions on the Recruitment Information Pack or the recruitment and selection process, require any further information on the Council or the post or you would like an informal discussion on the role, please email or call:

Councillor Norman Thomas (Vice Chairman) cllrnthomas@bishopsitchington-pc.gov.uk on 07484673331

Or

Karen Stevens (Clerk/RFO) clerk@bishopsitchington-pc.gov.uk on 07450360453

If, because of a disability or impairment, you would like us to make any special arrangements concerning the completion of your application or attending for interview, please let us know.

Contact: Karen Stevens

**Council Name and address: Bishop's Itchington Parish Council
The Old Sorting Office
Chapel Street
Bishop's Itchington
Southam
Warwickshire
CV47 2RB**

Tel: 07450360453

Email: clerk@bishopsitchington-pc.gov.uk

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for responding to the Council's recent advertisement for this post.

We hope that you find this Recruitment Handout together with the job description and person specification enclosed of assistance in deciding to apply.

The information is arranged as follows:-

- role of a Clerk to the Council
- a history and profile of the Council
 - Council area and environment
 - Council history and background details
 - Council structure
 - staffing information
 - key challenges
- the job advertisement
- key terms and conditions of employment
- the application and selection process.

Also enclosed within the Recruitment Handout Information Pack is an application form (CVs alone will not be acceptable). Please email to request an electron version.

This Recruitment Handout will not form part of any subsequent contract of employment.

ROLE OF THE CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

Why become a Clerk?

Becoming a Clerk to a Parish, Town or Community Council is one of the most rewarding jobs in a local community - a competent Clerk underpins a good Council.

The role of Clerk is to ensure that the Council as a whole conducts its business properly and to provide independent, objective and professional advice and support and being a Clerk puts you in the centre of things.

Parish, Town and Community Councils are part of Local Government in your county together with your County Council and District/ Borough Councils or Unitary Authority.

The County Council/Unitary Authority is responsible for strategic services such as highways, education, libraries, social services, strategic planning and refuse disposal.

District/Borough Councils are responsible for local services including housing, local planning and refuse collection.

The Parish, Town Community Councils in the County are often viewed as the part of government closest to the people.

They are the only local government tier that represents residents at Parish and Town level.

Importantly Parish, Town and Community Councils can precept – raising their own council tax each year to improve facilities and services for local people.

Their powers and duties cover many things that we take for granted in making for comfort and well-being where we live and can include the provision and maintenance of allotments, burial grounds and public monuments, public clocks, halls, some street lighting, litter bins, car parks, public toilets, rights of way, roadside verges, bus shelters, swimming pools and village greens.

Parish Councils are consulted on and can comment on planning applications and be represented at public inquiries, planning appeals and examinations in public. Similarly, they advise the Unitary/County/District/Borough Councils on the views of residents, and especially on priorities for local investment.

Most Council meetings are open to the public and are led by the Council's Chairperson and advised by the Clerk to the Council who is there to see that business is conducted within the law.

What does the Clerk to the Council do?

The enclosed job description lists the duties in detail, but the main duties of the job can be summarised as to:

- ensure that the Council conducts its business lawfully
- administer all the Council's paperwork
- ensure that meeting papers are properly prepared, and the public is aware of meeting times

- Responsible for the financial affairs of the council
- communicate the Council's decisions
- organise and manage the provision of the Council services
- organise and oversee the implementation of projects
- manage and lead the staff
- communicate and market the Council services and facilities
- keep property register and other legal documents
- keep up to date by training/qualification/experience-based learning.

The key duties and responsibilities to be undertaken are detailed in the job description included in the pack

Skills and attributes needed

Clerks usually pride themselves in having a good deal of common sense, confidence to handle the administrative work, being a good organiser, IT literate and able to get on with most people.

The key attributes required are detailed in the person specification included in the Recruitment Information Pack but underwriting these qualities is a sense of public duty - of wanting to help others in the community.

HISTORY AND PROFILE OF THE COUNCIL

Council Area and Environment:

- Bishop's Itchington lies 11 kms southeast of Leamington Spa and 19 kms east of Stratford upon-Avon
- The parish includes the village itself, outlying farms and isolated dwellings, and new housing developments, the last being Bishops Hill which is a short distance from the main built-up area
- Bishop's Itchington is within the local authority area of Stratford on-Avon District Council and is represented by two District Councillors. It is also part of the Feldon Division of Warwickshire County Council and is represented by a County Councillor
- The parish covers 1,233 hectares.

Bishop's Itchington has a long, rural past and is noted in the Domesday Book of 1086, when it was home to around 200 people in 43 households. At this time, the village was owned by the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry and consisted of two separate settlements sharing one field system. The primary settlement, Nether Itchington, was located about a mile south of the current village where Old Town Farm now stands, whilst Upper Itchington was the location of today's village. The name Bishop's Itchington appears to be a collective term for the two separate Itchingtons' owned by the Bishop of Coventry. During the late 16th century, Nether Itchington declined through depopulation and Upper Itchington became firmly established.

The population remained relatively unchanged until the beginning of the 19th century, when a blue lias limestone seam was discovered. This brought quarrying to the village and, later, the cement works. The village became more accessible in the 1850s, with the opening of the turnpike road (now Station Road) which linked the village with the Great Western Railway via a station at Deppers Bridge, 2.5 kms to the north. Whilst active, the quarry and cement works provided employment for people living in the village.

With the decline in quarrying activity and eventual closure of the cement works in 1970, the employment opportunities within the parish reduced and residents sought work away from the village. The legacy of the quarrying activities is several lakes and pools, some of these having been turned into fishing lakes. The cement works has been demolished, and this brownfield site has been developed into housing and a nature reserve.

The nearby conurbations of Warwick, Leamington Spa and Coventry are within easy reach for employment opportunities but, since the building of the M40 motorway in the early 1990s and the opening of Warwick Parkway station, there have been further changes to the nature of the village. Easy access to the motorway and rail networks makes the village attractive to commuters working further afield. Aston Martin Lagonda and Jaguar Land Rover operations at the former RAF Gaydon site have further increased the appeal of Bishop's Itchington as a place to live.

Council History and Background Details:

- Bishop's Itchington Parish Council was established in 1894 because of the Local Government Act of 1894
- In 1949, Bishop's Itchington Parish Council was the first parish council in the UK to elect a female majority when six women and one man were elected.

- The most recently available census data from 2021 shows Bishop's Itchington Parish had a resident population of 3,850 of which 48.9% were female and 51.1% male
- Basic facts about Bishop's Itchington 2015 election ward:
 - Households: Majority of properties are owner occupiers with a small amount of council properties/social landlord properties
 - Age: Most of the ward's population are aged between 30 and 59
 - Ethnicity: 97% of the usual resident are white with the second largest ethnic group being Asian/Asian British at 1.68%
 - Employment: Largest groups in National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SeC) is NS-SeC – 2 Lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations (756 people) followed by NS-SeC 1 Higher management, administrative and professional (428 people) and NS-SeC 3 Intermediate (382 people)
 - Education: 25.35 of residents have achieved Level 4 qualifications and above whilst 13.38% have no qualifications
 - Health: The majority of the residents (85.75) are in very good/good health
- The parish council's precept for 2025/26 is £112,500
- The parish council is a local burial authority
- The parish council owns and/or maintains:
 - Playing field, play area and multi-use sports courts
 - Sports pavilion
 - Cemetery and Chapel
 - The Yellow Land Nature Reserve
 - All village greens and verges
 - Churchyard
 - Bus shelters
 - In addition, the council also holds the lease to the community centre which is managed by a community group

Council Structure:

Bishop's Itchington Parish Council is made up of 10 parish councillors. Currently there is one vacancy. The next scheduled elections are May 2026.

The parish council does not operate a committee system, but each parish councillor has a portfolio role covering a particular area of responsibility. Portfolio roles cover allotments, biodiversity/climate change, church yard and cemetery, finance, HR, planning, police liaison, and social media.

Parish Council meetings are held monthly (except for August) although some extraordinary parish council meetings may be called if necessary. Meetings are normally held on the first Monday of the month at 7.30pm at the local community centre.

Staffing:

The clerk manages two part-time members of staff:

Cemetery Manager

Play Area Inspector

Key Challenges:

Over the last 18 months the parish council has replaced the play area and re-surfaced the hard courts. The next project is a replacement sports pavilion, and the parish council is working in partnership with BISA (Bishop's Itchington Sports Association) to achieve this.

KEY TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

General	The terms and conditions of employment are generally in accordance with the National Joint Council Scheme of Conditions of Service and the provisions of the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks Conditions of Service for Clerks of Local Councils or as amended by the Council.
Salary	Salary is negotiable within Salary Range LC2 (SCP 26-28 £36,124 to £37,938 (pro-rata 21 hours of FTE)) if not in possession of CILCA qualification or LC2 (SCP 29-32 £38,626 to £41,511 (pro-rata 21 hours of FTE)) if CILCA qualified or on obtaining the full qualification.
Working Week	The normal part-time working week is 21 hours per week (20 hours in the office, the additional hour per week is paid to cover evening meetings) plus negotiated study/training time as appropriate.
Days and Hours of Work	Currently, the days of work are Monday to Thursday, and the office hours are 9am to 12noon on each day. Hours outside the core period are flexible.
Annual Leave	22 working days (pro-rata) (29 working days (pro-rata) after 5 year's continuous local government service) plus 2 discretionary days and bank and public holidays.
Sick Leave	You are entitled to statutory sick-pay, and you might be entitled to an additional contractual allowance
Pension	You could be eligible to become a member of the contributory Local Government Pension Scheme. The rate of employee contribution for the LGPS is based on full time pensionable pay.
Probation	6-month probationary period.
Pay Method	Salary is paid on the second Monday of the month, directly by credit transfer to a bank or building society.

Salary Review

The salary is subject to any revisions agreed nationally between NALC and SLCC as a result of pay negotiations which are usually effective from 1 April.

Work Location

Bishop's Itchington parish Council Office, the Old Sorting Office, Chapel Street, Bishop's Itchington, Southam, CV47 2RB but attendance at other locations is required when necessary.

Expenses

Reasonable subsistence for conference attendance in accordance with the Council's policy.

Car mileage allowance payable in accordance with the casual user provisions in the Council's policy. Car mileage is paid for official council trips only and does not include commuting to and from the place of work.

Notice Period

During the probationary period. Either party may terminate the contract by giving one week's notice in writing. After completion of the probationary period, 3 months on either side in writing to terminate the employment. Unless your employment is terminated on grounds of gross misconduct when summary dismissal will apply, the minimum period of notice of termination of your employment which you are entitled to receive from the Council in writing, after completion of any probationary service, period is three months.

Other Terms

All staff are required to operate within the Council's adopted policies and procedures.

A no smoking policy is in operation in the Council's buildings.

APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Recruitment Schedule

The proposed recruitment timetable is as follows:

- ❖ Advert insertion - **1 April 2025**
- ❖ Advert closing date - **20 April 2025**
- ❖ Short listing - **23 April 2025**
- ❖ Selection Panel interviews - **afternoon of 28 April 2025 or afternoon 30 April 2025**

You will be advised of any material change to this timetable as appropriate.

Application Procedure

You should complete the enclosed Application Form in full and not disregard any section. CV s are **not** acceptable as an alternative to completing the Application Form but may be attached along with any supplementary information or documents in support of your application.

When submitting your application, you should address the requirements of the Job Description and Person Specification for the post and ensure that your relevant key experiences, knowledge, skills and personal style are clearly described to give you the best opportunity in the short-listing process.

Please note you will be required to show documentary proof of any qualifications you may claim to hold if you are offered an appointment.

When completed, please return the application form by **11.59pm on 20 April 2025**. Applications can be emailed to clerk@bishopsitchington-pc.gov.uk

or posted to:

**Bishop's Itchington Parish Council
The Old Sorting Office
Chapel Street
Bishop's Itchington
Southam
CV47 2RB**

If you would like an acknowledgement of receipt, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope if submitting this application form by post.

Selection Process

It is expected that interviews for short listed candidates will be held by the Council's Selection Panel on either the afternoon 28 April 2025 or afternoon 30 April 2025 at the Parish Council Office.

The interviews will be structured to assess your competence and suitability for the post and may therefore include tests of relevant capabilities which will be explained to you if invited to attend for interview.

Please note the above date and confirm your availability to attend for interview on that date if short listed when completing your application form. It is expected that you will be advised by 5.00pm on 24 April 2025 if selected for interview.

References

If you are shortlisted references will normally be applied for in advance of the interview unless you indicate in the application form that you do not give the Council permission so to do. If appropriate, the authenticity of referees may be checked by direct confidential contact if you are to be offered the appointment.

Proof of Eligibility to Reside and Work in UK

In accordance with their legal obligations the Council will require you to provide proof that you are legally able to reside and work in the UK if you are successful in your application before commencing employment.

DBS Check

The Council does not require a criminal record check processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) as part of its recruitment process.

Canvassing

Canvassing, either directly or indirectly, will disqualify you from appointment. Sending copies of, or extracts from, your completed Application Form, CV or testimonials to any Member or Officer of the Council will be regarded as canvassing.

Equal Opportunities

The Council wholeheartedly supports the principle of equal opportunities in employment opposing all forms of unlawful and/or unfair discrimination whether on grounds of any protected characteristic in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. We aim to appoint therefore purely on merit and suitability for the post on offer. You are invited to complete and return the enclosed Equality Monitoring Information Form and return it with your completed application Form. The completed form will be regarded as strictly confidential, kept separately from and in no way used or affect the outcome of your application for employment.

Equality Positive Action (where applicable)

The new positive action terms mean that it is not unlawful to recruit or promote a candidate who is of equal merit to another candidate if the employer reasonably thinks that:

- the candidate has a protected characteristic that is under-represented in the workforce.
- people with that characteristic suffer a disadvantage connected to that characteristic.

However, positive action does not allow an employer to appoint a less suitable candidate just because that candidate has a protected characteristic that is under-represented or disadvantaged.

Further Information

We hope that the information contained in this Recruitment Information Pack is helpful and sufficiently thorough to enable you to submit your application which we look forward to receiving.

However, if you have any questions on the information in the Recruitment Information Pack or any aspect of the appointment or the recruitment process, please do not hesitate to contact the Council as set out in the Introduction earlier in the Pack.

This Recruitment Handout has been prepared on behalf of and agreed with Bishop's Itchington Parish Council but does not form part of any future contract of employment.