**BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL**

PRINCIPAL OFFICER

JOB DESCRIPTION

**Overall Responsibilities**

The Principal Assistant will  assist   the  Proper  Officer  and Responsible Finance Officer of the  Council (Town Clerk),  and Deputy Town Clerk in undertaking their duties and be responsible for carrying out the instructions of the Council.

The Principal Assistant is expected to assist in formulating overall policy as well as research/produce information that will assist members in making informed decisions as well as the operation of the office.

The Principal will oversee the governance and probity arrangements of the accounting function of the Council and assist in the strategic financial management to ensure high standards.

**Specific Responsibilities**

**Strategic Responsibilities**

1. To assist the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk in developing and implementing strategic vision for the Town, and develop appropriate performance management arrangements to monitor their achievement.
2. To help monitor the implemented policies of the Council to ensure their effectiveness and propose modifications as appropriate.
3. To assist the organisational structure to meet the needs of the Town Council including identifying suitable training for staff to meet their responsibilities by playing a supportive and coordinating role to ensure the priorities and objectives of the Council are achieved.

**Statutory Responsibilities**

1. To assist in meeting the legal, statutory and other provisions governing or affecting the running of the Council.
2. To assist Members of the Council to changes in respect of their statutory and other responsibilities.

**Financial Responsibilities**

1. To assist in the preparation and accuracy of the Council’s accounts and preparation of records for audit purposes and VAT.
2. To oversee the financial transactions of the Town Council and to introduce checks to enhance governance arrangements.
3. To assist in developing an improvement programme to ensure financial and other efficiencies are identified, reviewed and amended, ensuring value for money.
4. To assist in carrying out independent financial/other checks which will form part of a continuous audit of the Council’s financial records are carried out to prevent any fraud or abuse of public funds.

**Administrative Responsibilities**

1. To help ensure that the Council’s standing orders, financial regulations and delegated schemes are regularly reviewed and in particular to ensure that any changes required by changes in the law, guidance or best practice are implemented.
2. To contribute to the efficient running of the Town Council offices by reviewing and monitoring systems, processes and procedures and update where appropriate, making best use of information technology.
3. To assist in the general running of the Town Council in relation to correspondence and preparation for meetings.
4. In the absence of the Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk, ensure the Council runs effectively and to maintain effective contact with Members where necessary.
5. Prepare a plan for a continuous review of all processes, and the delivery / improvement within agreed timescales.
6. To assist the Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk on any work issue that they require to be carried out.
7. To attend meetings of the Council and meetings of its Committees.

**Staff Responsibilities**

1. To help supervise and manage any other members of staff in keeping with the policies of the Council and to undertake all necessary activities in connection with performance management.
2. To maintain any delegation and allocation of responsibilities that have been agreed by the Town Clerk for members of staff.
3. To assist in identifying the appropriate training of staff and updating of skills to match their responsibilities and duties, in light of annual appraisals and/or personal development plans that have been carried out by the Town Clerk.

**Other Responsibilities**

1. To act as a representative of the Council as required, in the absence of the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk, including attending meetings with key stakeholders and positively promoting the Council within the local community to ensure its continued presence in local affairs.
2. To process and respond to freedom of information (FOI) requests in a professional manner ensuring Council approval, where appropriate, before information is released.
3. To attend training courses on the work and role of the Clerk/Deputy Clerk, as required by the Council.
4. To undertake specific projects from time to time at the request of the Town Clerk/Council.
5. Develop a communications/ public relations strategy and review, improve, and monitor communications which includes and having more of a day-to-day involvement with our website/social media.
6. Assist in the office where demand/expectations have increased e.g., partnership work, community grant performance visits, neighbourhood planning and other areas.
7. To undertake such other responsibilities and functions as may be required from time to time by the Council, commensurate with the duties and responsibilities of the post.
8. The job description is subject to review and may change over time to meet the needs of the organisation. Any changes will be subject to consultation with the postholder.