

New Chairman for YLCA

For the next two years the West Yorkshire Association of Local Councils holds the Chairmanship of the Joint Executive Board under the joint constitutional arrangement with the North and South Yorkshire Associations. At the Annual Meeting of the Board held on 15 July, Cllr Roger Greenwood was appointed as the Chairman for 2017/2018.

Cllr Dr John Dunford, who has held the position of Chairman since 2015 was thanked for his commitment to the role which involves more work than presiding over meetings of the Joint Executive Board. John has given a lot of his time to YLCA business over the past two years and without people like him we could not operate effectively and efficiently. John has been appointed to represent the West Yorkshire Association on NALC Council which is the controlling body of the National Association of Local Councils.

The Executive re-appointed Cllr Derek Liddell as the NALC representative for South Yorkshire and Cllr Shirley Fawcett as the North Yorkshire representative. A full list of internal and external appointments can be found in the Joint Executive Board section of the YLCA website.

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YLCA Joint Annual Meeting 2017

President and Vice Presidents

The Annual Meeting on 15 July re-appointed Mr Michael Elsmore as the President of YLCA. Michael has served as President for nine years and is professional and conscientious in his role as the figurehead for the Associations.

Service Award for Mrs Freda Roberts



Former councillor and long standing member of the Joint Executive Board of YLCA, Mrs Freda Roberts, was given a Service Award at the 2017 Joint Annual Meeting held on 15 July. The President, Mr Michael Elsmore spoke of Freda's valued contribution to the Associations over a period of 25 years.

As well as being a Board member representing the Hambleton Branch of YLCA for that time, Freda represented the YLCA at the North Yorkshire Public Rights of Way Forum and served as a YLCA Finance and General Purposes Committee member for some considerable time.

She also represented the Hambleton Branch on the York and North Yorkshire Playing Fields Association from October 1992 to its termination in 2013. The President quite rightly stated that without people such as Freda, YLCA could not operate and he praised all of those who give their time to administer and manage YLCA on its Board, various committees and panels and external representations.

**President M Elsmore
and Mrs Freda Roberts**

YLCA NEWS

Achievements



Congratulations to YLCA Administration Officer, Joy Morgan, in completing 2016 Publisher Training course, achieving a Distinction.

Transparency Fund 2017/2018 – Money running out!

Over the last two years member councils of YLCA with a turnover not exceeding £25,000 have successfully applied for grants from the Transparency Fund set up by the Government to help smaller local councils comply with the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities (eg, to cover the costs of purchasing and maintaining a website and other expenses associated in complying with the Code). YLCA are pleased to report that the Fund has been continued in the current financial year with £1.1m being available countrywide **but we** are informed that there has been a good take up of the fund since May 2017

and that the whole fund may be spent by the end of December 2017. Once the money has gone there will be no more provided by the Government!

Remember that councils that have received grant funding in 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 are still eligible to apply to the fund in 2017/2018 to cover certain costs and we would encourage all eligible councils to make an application.

Further details about the Transparency Fund and the application form for 2017 can be found on the YLCA website at: www.yorkshirelca.gov.uk

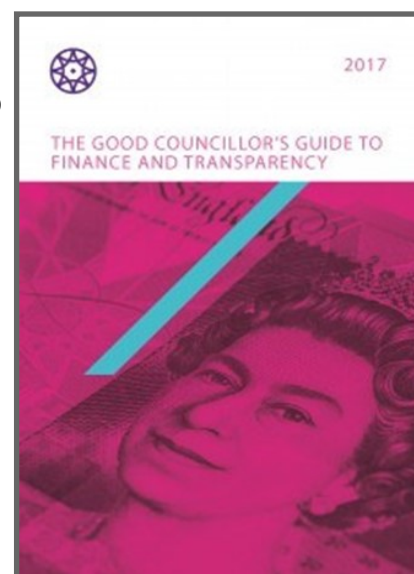
Publications

The Good Councillor's Guide to Finance and Transparency

This new and recently launched booklet is part of the set of Good Councillor Guides and this particular publication is designed specifically to help local councillors support their communities and council in understanding their obligations and commitments for public money, both generally and under the requirements of Transparency Codes, as well as sharing good practice in these areas.

This is the first finance booklet to be produced by the National Training Strategy and is recommended reading for all councillors and clerks.

An electronic copy of the booklet is available from the YLCA website (Documents and publications) and from the NALC website in the 'publications' section.



Other publications available in the 'Good Councillor' series

We have recently advertised the 2017 edition of the Good Councillor's Guide (strongly recommended for all councillors) and the Good Councillor's Guide to Neighbourhood Planning. Both of these publications are available in paper or electronic format (YLCA or NALC websites).

Orders to Joy Morgan at: admin@yorkshirelca.gov.uk

YLCA NEWS

YLCA Training

We are pleased to bring you details of YLCA training events to November 2017 . Your feedback from previous training events has led us to provide these events and we expect a good take up so do book early.

We have invited a number of external presenters to deliver topic specific courses. Look out for :-

- All Things Digital: websites, Facebook, Twitter and other Social Media;
- Cemetery Management: legal requirements and management of cemeteries;
- Introduction to Employment Law: Two day course incorporating human resources guidance. Delegates can attend both days or just one.
- Insurance provision and Risk Assessment;
- VAT, contracts and procurement: Councils that are thinking of entering into any form of contract would benefit from this session;
- Accounts and Finance Day: presented by Derek Kemp, financial advisor for the National Association of Local Councils.

YLCA is also providing an additional Chairmanship course on 6 October due to demand and a new Clerks Induction day on 30 September.

A brochure giving details of all of the courses on offer together with a booking form is being sent with this newsletter and is also available from the YLCA website.

Branch Meeting dates and venues, Autumn 2017

Minutes from the previous meetings of all the Branches are on the YLCA website. Branches are an opportunity for councillors and clerks to meet together and discuss issues of mutual interest and concern. Often the Branches will host speakers on topical or concerning matters. The Clerk will automatically receive a copy of the agenda and minutes, as will the chairman and the representatives appointed by the Council if their e-mail addresses have been passed to us.

Branch	Date and Time	Venue
Craven	7 October at 7pm	To be confirmed
Hambleton	25 October at 7pm	Galtres Centre, Easingwold
Harrogate	2 October at 7pm	Jubilee Room, St James Square, Boroughbridge
Leeds	10 October at 7.30pm	Horsforth Parish Hall
Richmondshire	12 October at 7pm	To be confirmed
Ryedale	3 October at 7pm	Ryedale House, Meeting Room 1
Scarborough	5 October at 7pm	Filey Town Council Offices
Selby	11 October at 7pm	Selby Town Hall
South Pennine	8 November at 7.30pm	To be confirmed
South Yorkshire	4 October at 7pm	To be confirmed
Wakefield	26 October at 7pm	To be confirmed
York	5 October at 7pm	Folk Hall, New Earswick, York

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

NALC Annual Conference 2017

NALC has announced that its 2017 annual conference will be held in Milton Keynes at the Double Tree by Hilton on 30/31 October. This year is NALC's 70th birthday and it is also 50 years of Milton Keynes – a wholly parished urban area, progressing with double devolution and with lessons for other cities in the country. As well as a programme of speakers and workshops the conference will see the announcement of NALC's Star Councils 2017 including Council of the Year. Further details are available from the NALC website under the 'Events' tab.

NALC Sustainable Communities Act (SCA) Toolkit

The SCA provides an opportunity for local people, communities, parish and town councils to ask central government via local government to remove legislative or other barriers that prevent them from improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area. The Act gives communities, together with their councils, the right to come up with proposals and to then submit these to central government. These proposals can be for any government action or assistance that would reverse community decline and protect or promote sustainable communities.

Examples of where the SCA is being used as an approach to have legislation abolished/changed is are the removal of business rates being paid by local councils on public toilets and also rates on cemeteries for local councils.

Further information and guidance can be found at the NALC website link: [NALC SCA toolkit](#).

What is Double Devolution?

In a recent bulletin issued by the Chief Executive of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), Dr Jonathan Owen mentioned that NALC continues to press Government to encourage principal authorities to devolve services (with funding) to the parish sector and to allow more decision making at the grass roots level rather than by central government. Not all parishes want to take on services but where they do, and there are many that have resolved to do so, they want the process to be simple and straightforward when they negotiate with the principal authority.

In simple terms, central government can devolve functions and decision making to the principal authorities, ie county, district, borough, unitary and metropolitan councils and they can devolve to parishes – this is what is known as 'double devolution'.

In 2016 NALC launched its own White Paper containing aspirations for double devolution to the parish sector; this is titled 'Devo Local'. It is NALC's policy to encourage the Government to take forward as part of its approach to decentralisation, putting communities in control through stronger local democracy and with fairer funding and more powers and helping to improve the social and economic vitality of their areas. NALC remains committed to the priorities that are detailed in the White Paper and we would encourage all councils, particularly those that do wish to play a very active part in delivering community services to have (another) look at this publication. It can be found in the NALC section of the YLCA website and also on the NALC website at www.nalc.gov.uk

LAW AND GOVERNANCE

Publication of the financial Annual Return

A reminder that a council must publish the annual return following external audit

In accordance with Regulation 13 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, after the conclusion of the period for the exercise of public rights, but no later than 30 September, the authority must publish (including on its website or other data platform that it is using) the annual governance statement, statement of accounts and the external auditor's certificate and report – Sections 1, 2, and 3 of the annual return. Authorities must keep copies of these documents for purchase by any person at a reasonable cost.

The Accounts and Audit Regulations do not specify how long the completed Annual Return should be displayed for. YLCA advises that a council should be reasonable in its approach and perhaps a period of one month would be appropriate in a notice board but records can be kept much longer on a website or other electronic platform. Every council should create a document retention policy which states how long the more common documents will be retained for within files and on websites.

Where is the Transparency Code for us?

A question frequently asked of YLCA by councils with turnover over £25,000 per annum but under £200,000.

The answer is that there is no Transparency Code for councils who fall between the two thresholds with their turnover. The Code for smaller councils was introduced in 2015 as part of the new audit regime for these small authorities which will come into force in its entirety in 2018. Having a website with various mandatory information displayed is to enable public scrutiny of accounts and other information as there will be no external audit for these bodies from next year.

Councils whose turnover falls between the thresholds are continuing to have external audit for the foreseeable future in exactly the same way as they have since 1996 when new regulations were introduced. However, councils who are in the between threshold bracket are urged to consider the good practice of adhering to the requirements of the Transparency Code for smaller authorities and to display on their websites, the information that is mandatory under that Code. Full details of what this entails can be found on the YLCA website.

Remember that all councils, no matter what their size, must continue to have a robust internal audit. It is YLCA's view that from next year there will be need for the internal audit of councils with turnover below £25,000 to be extremely robust and as we get into the new calendar year, we will be circulating information regarding best practice in internal audit.

Advertising on the Contracts Finder Website

We are aware that finding the way to put contracts on this site is a bit complicated but a clerk has sent the following information. Remember that under the Contracts Regulations 2015 if the council has a contract with value exceeding £25,000 (excluding VAT), it is likely that it will need advertising via the Contracts Finder Website (or a similar framework).

1. Apply for a DUNS number from Dun & Bradstreet – ring them on [0800 001 234](tel:0800001234) and they will give you the link to a form to complete.
2. Completion of the online form should generate an email reply providing your DUNS number. When you have it (or if you need to chase it up), email contractsfinder@crownccommercial.gov.uk and ask them to register you on the system.
3. You should then get an email from support@ngc.com called Account Registration.
4. Activate your account by clicking on the link provided in the email, and then go to www.contractsfinder.service.co.uk and sign in.
5. If your Dashboard shows you as a buyer, it has been wrongly configured and you need to ring 0845 299 2994 and get them to change it so you appear as a supplier.
6. Then create the notice.

LAW AND GOVERNANCE

Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) to review local government standards

Councils in our area that have campaigned for the ethical framework to have greater impact on those that are found to have breached their authority's code of conduct will find this review a welcome move. The Committee has said that it is to undertake a review of local government standards during 2017/2018 and that the review would be based around a consultation that will be launched in early 2018. Based on the submissions to this review and meetings with key stakeholders, the Committee intends to publish its findings and recommendations next year.

Interestingly, the Committee has said that in its 2013 report *Standards Matter*, it outlined its concerns at the time about the issues that may arise in local government standards following the Localism Act of 2011 and said 'The new, slimmed down arrangements have yet to prove themselves sufficient for their purpose. We have considerable doubt that they will succeed in doing so and intend to monitor the situation closely'.

Further information on the work of the CSPL and details of its forward plan can be found at the following link: [Annual Report and Forward Plan 2017/18](#)

Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017

Two of the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 reforms came into force recently through commencement regulations. Firstly, Section 1 of the Act amends section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to require a local planning authority or other planning decision-taker to have regard to a post-examination neighbourhood plan when determining a planning application, so far as that plan is material to the application. Secondly, Section 3 amends section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to provide for a neighbourhood plan for an area to become part of the development plan for that area after it is approved in each applicable referendum (a residential referendum and, where the area is a business area, a business referendum). We will keep you updated on other measures when they happen.

General Data Protection Regulations

Reform of data protection legislation and introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations.

The Data Protection Act 1998 is the main piece of legislation which governs the protection of personal data today. The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) provides guidance about the application of the Act to member councils by way of Legal Topic Note 38 which is available from the YLCA website - www.yorkshirelca.gov.uk (NALC section) and the NALC website – www.nalc.gov.uk

However, data protection law will significantly change in May 2018 when the 2016 EU Directive known as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) takes effect. NALC produced an initial briefing (LO3-17) and a recently a further briefing (LO4-17) (both circulated to all member councils) that recommend that all councils do some preparatory work by reading various publications.

NALC is clear that the local councils will be subject to the GDPR as they are public authorities but it is the extent to which they will be affected which is not clear. The GDPR makes provision for public authorities to appoint a Data Protection Officer but that NALC needs to liaise with the Government and the Information Commissioner's Office for clarification of whether local councils will need to adhere to this duty.

As further briefings are issued by NALC we will circulate them and YLCA will also be looking at the provision of training for councils in the GDPR when we know a little more about the duties that it will bring for parishes. In the meantime, happy reading!

Further information on preparing for the General Data Protection Regulations can be found at: <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1624219/preparing-for-the-gdpr-12-steps.pdf>

NEWS AND ISSUES OF GENERAL INTEREST

The new Government

Ministerial appointments of interest include Sajid Javid MP and Marcus Jones MP re-appointed Secretary of State and Local Government Minister respectively at the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). Salok Jarma MP is the new Housing and Planning Minister and the new Northern Powerhouse Minister is James Berry MP who takes on the role from Andrew Percy MP. Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth continues as DCLG's Minister in the House of Lords.

Labour MP Andrew Gwynne has been appointed Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and John Healey MP continues as Shadow Secretary of State for Housing.

The water market opens up for local councils

Local (parish and town) councils are no longer restricted to buying water services from the regional monopoly. The largest competitive water retail market in the world has opened for business, bringing the biggest change in the water sector since privatisation.

What does it mean for local councils?

- Local councils can shop around to find the right deal for them.
- Being able to switch supplier and negotiate a better deal leading to saving money or getting a better service.
- New innovations are being developed with companies offering water efficiency advice, introducing technology to help customers manage their water use and offer better customer service.
- Also new entrants coming into the market, bringing with them the prospect of bundling of utilities and new offers.

How do local council take advantage of this?

Finding the best deal is easy. Follow these three simple steps to help find the best retailer for you:

1. Check your bill. Check your latest water bill to find out how much water you use, how much you pay, and your current payment method and the service supply point identification number or numbers (SPID).
2. Shop around. Talk to your current retailer and see if they can offer you a better deal. Contact other retailers to see if they will beat it.
3. Make your choice. Once you've found the best deal for you – dive in! If you choose a new retailer, they will handle the switch process and let you know when it is done.

You can find out more, including a list of retailers, at: www.open-water.org.uk

What protections are in place?

Ofwat, the water regulator, will be closely monitoring and regulating the market to help it work effectively and make sure customers are treated fairly. Ofwat also recognises that the market will take time to bed down and there will inevitably be some things that do not work as expected. Ofwat will be active in identifying and monitoring those issues and, if they need to intervene in the market to protect customers, they won't hesitate to do so.

North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) Sensitive Streets Review

Under the Traffic Management Act 2004 and the Streetworks (Registers, Notices, Directions and Designations) (England) Regulations 2007, the County Council can declare roads as "Traffic Sensitive Streets" thereby limiting the times at which roadworks can be carried out in the interest of keeping traffic moving during peak periods. Designations are reviewed periodically in consultation with utility companies, district councils and other interested parties. NYCC has just completed a review of the existing declared roads/streets.

As a result of the review a number of changes have been made to the list of roads/streets declared. A list of these roads and street can be found on the YLCA website in the non restricted front page under the 'consultations' tab. Responses to streetworks@northyorks.gov.uk This consultation will run until 31 August 2017.

NEWS AND ISSUES OF GENERAL INTEREST

£13 million fund to increase England's woodland

A £13 million fund to increase England's woodland has been confirmed by the Forestry Minister. The fund, part of the Countryside Stewardship scheme, will help landowners to plant more trees to protect wildlife, boost the timber sector and reduce flood risk. It will help plant more than 3 million trees, creating 1,900 hectares of new woodland and contributing to the government's ambition to plant 11 million trees, with a further one million in towns and cities.

Farmers, foresters and land managers across the UK will be able to apply for up to £6,800 per hectare to plant, weed and protect more trees when application forms for the next round of the government's Woodland Creation grant are made available in September.

A range of grants are available to support the creation of new woodland and sustainable woodland management, with Forestry Commission online advice available on the application process.

Thérèse Coffey, Forestry Minister, said: "Our forests and woodlands are vital for providing timber, improving the environment and protecting our wildlife."

The Government press release about this new fund can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/13-million-fund-to-increase-englands-woodland>

CPRE's Transport Toolkit

CPRE's Transport Toolkit is designed to improve your local travel options and the streets where you live. It contains information and ideas for town and parish councils, urban neighbourhoods, local community groups and individuals. Whether you want to tackle speeding through your area, cut the clutter of traffic signs, create an evening bus service or make safer cycling routes CPRE says that you'll find help in the toolkit. The toolkit is full of hints and tips, ideas and practical advice. There are lots of benefits that can come even from making small changes to how people and goods get around your area. It's not just about having more choices for how and where you travel to and spending less money on transport. The approach in the toolkit is also about creating stronger communities and a better quality of life.

<http://transporttoolkit.cpre.org.uk/about-the-toolkit.html>

Nominations for The Queens Award for Voluntary Service

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service is the highest award given to local volunteer groups, the equivalent of the MBE and recognises the outstanding work they perform within their communities. The Lord-Lieutenant is keen to increase the number of awards locally. In order to do this, there needs to be more entries for outstanding groups or charities.

The deadline for nominations for 2018 closes at midnight on Sunday 15th September 2017. Information about the Awards and the online nomination process can be found at: www.gov.uk/queens-award-for-voluntary-service/overview

CONSULTATIONS

Electoral review of Richmondshire, Scarborough and Rotherham districts - warding arrangements

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has formally commenced electoral reviews of all of these areas.

For Richmondshire the Commission has announced that it is minded to recommend that the council should have 24 councillors in the future, a reduction of ten. It is now drawing up a new pattern of wards to accommodate 24 councillors and is inviting observations on the proposed new boundaries.

For Scarborough the Commission is asking local people and organisations for their help to draw up new ward boundaries across Scarborough and has announced that it is minded to recommend that the Borough Council should have 45 councillors in the future; a reduction of five.

For Rotherham the Commission is inviting comments on a broad range of proposals for alterations to ward boundaries.

For parishes, the reviews can recommend changes to the electoral arrangements of town and parish councils i.e. the number, names and boundaries of parish wards and the number of parish councillors for each parish ward. However, this is only in circumstances where the parished area is to be divided between wards. The Commission has no power to consider external boundaries of a parish or the creation of new parishes and will not normally recommend a change to the number of councillors to be elected to a local council.

The deadline for all three consultations is 4 September 2017. Further information and interactive maps can be found at: <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>

Working Better Together: Options to improve collaboration between fire and police services in North Yorkshire

Legislation recently passed by Parliament includes a new duty for emergency services to collaborate, and a specific opportunity for Police and Crime Commissioners to apply to the Secretary of State to allow them to take on responsibility for the governance of their local Fire and Rescue Service, if it appears that it is in the interests of effectiveness, efficiency, economy or public safety to do so. Given this, the Police and Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire, Julia Mulligan, has taken the view that a review of the governance of the North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and a benefits assessment of the options for change is necessary.

A local business case has been prepared and is now published for public consultation. The consultation is your chance to tell the Commissioner what you think about the benefits of change in North Yorkshire. The consultation runs from 17 July to 22 September 2017.

The local business case, all consultation materials, find further information and respond to the consultation survey at www.telljulia.com. Responses to the online survey must be received by 23:59 on Friday 22 September or 13:00 on that date if your response is online. If you require assistance in completing the survey please call MEL Research on 0121 604 4664 or email northyorksfrsconsultation@melresearch.co.uk.

Response forms and information leaflets will also be available at local libraries, police stations, fire stations and council office and can be downloaded from www.telljulia.com

LATEST VACANCIES

Gilling East with Cawton, Coulton & Grimston Parish Council – Ryedale District

Applications are invited for the post of Parish Clerk and Responsible Finance Office for this small parish which is close to Ampleforth and Helmsley. The post is part-time, 8 hours per month, and is remunerated within the National Joint Council salary scales, dependent upon experience and qualifications.

The Clerk is responsible for arranging the agendas for Parish Council meetings, the preparation of minutes, implementing actions and decisions taken by the Parish Council, dealing with correspondence, the preparation of budgets and finance records, and undertaking discussions with other organisations. The Parish Council meets 7 times per annum plus planning meetings when necessary.

The candidate should ideally be experienced in local government but help with training leading to the Certificate in Local Council Administration, would be given. Good computer skills are essential.

To apply for an application form please e-mail D Farley at: gillingeastpc@gmail.com.

Steeton with Eastburn Parish Council – Bradford District

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Steeton with Eastburn Parish Council is an active Council that seeks a highly motivated, enthusiastic person to take on the post of Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer.

The post is part time, 15 hours per week. Working mainly from home, the hours of work are flexible except for attendance at meetings.

Salary on pay scale NJC 18-22 dependent upon qualifications and experience.

Must be IT literate, computer equipment is supplied. Must be able to store Council equipment and files at home address and be available to attend Council meetings in the evening of the first Wednesday of each month. Duties will include acting as advisor to the council, minute taking, and compilation of correspondence, filing and accounts in addition to being the RFO to the council and management of a community building.

Prior relevant experience an advantage but training in all aspects of local government administration, leading to CiLCA qualification will be provided.

The application form, job specification and personal specification are available from:

The Clerk, Steeton with Eastburn Parish Council,
E-mail: clerk@steeton-with-eastburnparishcouncil.gov.uk

Closing date for submission of completed applications is Tuesday, 29 August 2017.

Interviews: Tuesday, 12 September 2017

LATEST VACANCIES

Strensall with Towthorpe Parish Council – York District

Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer and Burial Clerk

Duties include:

- Producing information required for the Council to make decisions
- Implementing the Council's decisions
- Management of Council resources
- Advising the Council on policies
- Keeping financial records and administration of Council finances
- Completing all administration in relation to Council business, including preparation of agendas, minutes of Council meetings, and correspondence
- Keeping all records of burials and interments and ensuring the maintenance of the cemetery.

Candidates must have a sound background in a responsible administrative position, be computer literate in Word and Excel, be organised and able to manage their own workload. The ability to deal with a wide variety of people is essential as is the ability to draft complex correspondence. Experience in one or more of the following is highly desirable:

- Accounting procedures
- Local Government systems and procedures
- Planning applications
- Legal matters

Full training will be available to the successful candidate.

This is a part time post and hours are flexible, averaging 16 hours per week. The successful candidate will be expected to work from the Village Hall and be available to the residents for three mornings per week as well as attending daytime and evening meetings as required.

Remuneration will be in accordance with qualifications and skills.

Interested candidates should request an application pack from the Clerk at: clerk-strensallpc@btconnect.com

Interviews are planned for October/November 2017. Closing date for applications is: 10 October 2017