

**LYNEHAM AND BRADENSTOKE PARISH COUNCIL**

**PARISH CLERK'S REPORT - CLERK'S SALARY FOR BUDGET PURPOSES - 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The salary for the Parish Clerk is a large part of the Budget and Precept for the Parish Council. A qualified and experienced Parish Clerk is a necessity to ensure that the administration of the Parish Council is carried out within the law and complies with all other regulations that apply to all Parish Councils, no matter the size. This Parish Council is considered to be a 'small to medium' Parish Council with a Precept, at present below £100,000. Attached to this report are two documents:

- National Agreement of Salaries and Conditions of Service for Local Council Clerks – 2004
- NALC Employment Briefing 2018-19 National Salary Award

Although the first document is dated 2004 it is still used as a standard for calculating what salary scale a Clerk should be paid. There is also a book, "the Green Book", which explains in great detail the terms and conditions of employment for all Local Government employees. I don't have a copy of that book but I have been apprised of the contents in relation to salary scales for Parish Clerks. I would urge Parish Councillors to read both of the above documents in conjunction with this report in order to fully understand what follows.

I would like to point out at this stage that I do not stand to benefit from any decisions made about the Parish Clerk's salary. I am employed on a fixed term, fixed salary contract which expires on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2020. I will not be seeking an extension of this contract so I have no interest to be declared.

**2. SELECTING A SCALE POINT AND SALARY**

2.1 All Local Government employees are paid according to what is called a 'Scale Point'. These scale points are listed in the 2018-19 salary award document referred to above. However, before selecting a Scale Point, it is necessary to decide upon the duties of the role. This is done by reference to the National Agreement above, which gives 4 Profiles based upon those duties. I believe that the Parish Clerk's role for this Parish Council falls under Profile 2 as follows:

*PROFILE 2*

*The job requires predominantly practical and procedural knowledge across a technical or specialist area or an equivalent level of organisational, procedural and policy knowledge e.g. Small or medium parish.*

*The job requires judgmental or creative skills; where there is some need to interpret information or situations and to solve straightforward problems. The job involves either: Exchanging orally or in writing varied information with a range of audiences: or: Exercising advisory, guiding, negotiating or persuasive skills e.g. 6 – 12 meetings per year.*

*The job involves working within recognised procedures, within which the jobholder is required to organise own workload. The work involves making decisions as to when and how duties are to be carried out, and responding independently to unanticipated problems and situations. The jobholder generally has access to guidance on serious problems e.g. 2 devolved functions.*

*The job involves considerable direct impact on the well-being of individual, or groups of, people e.g. many statutory functions.*

*The job involves considerable direct responsibility for the supervision, direction, co-ordination or training/development of other employees. The work involves the allocation of work to a small group or team, checking of work, and the direction of staff, including, where appropriate, on-the-job training. e.g. Small team of up to 10 staff.*

*The job involves considerable direct responsibility for financial resources. The work involves either: Accounting for large sums of money, in the form of cash, cheques, direct debits, invoices, or equivalent, where care, accuracy and security are important or: Being accountable for considerable expenditures from an agreed budget or equivalent income. The responsibility may include contributing to the setting and monitoring of the relevant budget and ensuring effective spend of budgeted sums. e.g. Typical budget £25,000 – £250,000*

*The job involves considerable direct responsibility for physical resources. The work involves either: Cleaning, maintenance and repair of a range of equipment, buildings, external locations or equivalent or: Security of buildings, external locations or equivalent or: Ordering, or stock control of, a range of equipment and supplies*

Using the National Agreement profiles, my view is that a Clerk at LC2 level should be recruited, giving a substantive benchmark range of Scale Point (SCP) 30-34 as in the National Agreement. Please note that the benchmark Scale Points in the National Agreement have been revised and are the 'old' Scale Points at 1 April 2018, which equate to SCP 24-28 on the 'new' Scale Points from 1 April 2019. Additionally, I believe that 15 hours per week will be sufficient to carry out all the duties, but this will have to be monitored when the new Parish Clerk is recruited. So, if you use the new Substantive Benchmark Range of LC2 SCP 24-28 and settle upon a mid-point salary of £29,636 (SCP26) full time equivalent then the budget figure would be calculated as follows:

**Option 1** - Hourly rate £15.40 x 15 x 52 = £12,012 plus on-costs at 20% = £14,415 annual salary.

**Option 2** - one SCP higher to SCP 27 £15.86 per hour x 15 x 52 = £12,370 plus on-costs 20% = £14,845

I believe this to be a realistic salary based on what I know about the work required to date.

There is another view that says that the post should be at LC3 level – Profile 3 in the National Agreement above and 18 hours per week is necessary to fulfil the duties. Again, choosing a mid Scale Point on the 'new' Scale points at SCP 39 which equates to £41,675 full time equivalent, the budget calculation would be as follows:

**Option 3** - Hourly rate £21.66 x 18 x 52 = £20,273.76 plus on-costs at 20% = £24,328 annual salary.

When advertising and recruiting for a new Parish Clerk, prospective applicants should be informed that the hours and salary are negotiable according to qualifications and experience and at the first appraisal after three or six months of employment, a higher scale point may be negotiated, if appropriate, at that stage. If the General Reserves are set at £25,000 in the Budget, then there is room for a suitable increase, subject to agreement by the full Council.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Normally, the Parish Clerk would make a recommendation as to which alternative members should consider. However, in this instance it is not appropriate for me to do so. Figures showing the impact of all three options on the Precept and Council Tax are given on page 7 of the Budget Report. It should be noted that each £1000 added to the budget means an increase of 0.64p added to the Council Tax for Lyneham & Bradenstoke Parish Council.

Report Author - Ann Kingdon – Parish Clerk - 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020