

Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of the Strategy & Resources Committee held at the Oakwood Centre on Thursday 27 July 2023 at 7:00 pm

Present: *Councillors K. Baker (Chairman); J. Anderson; G. Bello; A. Chadwick; R. Horskins; M. Kennedy; A. Swaddle;*

Officers present: *K. Murray, Deputy Town Clerk; M. Filmore, Committee Officer;*

Also present: *0 members of the public*

16. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gilder, Nagra and Rowland.

17. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

18. **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED:

- ◆ That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted in relation to personnel matters, it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press were temporarily excluded and asked to withdraw for the following agenda items.

Voting: For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0 No Vote Recorded: 0

20. **PERSONNEL SUB COMMITTEE**

20.1 **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the report of the Personnel Sub Committee which took place on 13 July 2023.

20.2 **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To create the post of Finance Manager (RFO), in line with the job description set out at **Appendix A**, and to set the salary scale at NJC 33-41.
- ◆ To delete the post of Finance Officer.
- ◆ To appoint the current Finance Officer to the position of Finance Manager (RFO), with the pay grade set and back dated to the date specified in Report No. SR 16/23.
- ◆ To amend the Town Clerk's job description to reflect the removal of the RFO role from their responsibilities.

Voting: For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0 No Vote Recorded: 0

Members recorded their thanks to the Finance Officer for the work he has done in the absence of the Town Clerk since December 2022, especially the presentation of accounts which Members noted were excellent.

20.3 **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To delegate responsibility for carrying out the Town Clerk recruitment process to the Personnel Sub Committee, which includes the following tasks:
 - Agree the recruitment timeline
 - Agree the recruitment advertisement and placement
 - Agree the interview process
 - Prepare interview questions
 - Receive applications
 - Assess and shortlist applications for interview
 - Conduct the interviews
 - Make a recommendation to Full Council on the preferred candidate
- ◆ To approve the Town Clerk job description, set out at **Appendix B**, and to set the salary scale at NJC 50-54.

Voting: For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0 No Vote Recorded: 0

20.4 **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To approve recruitment to the post of Maintenance Officer in line with the existing job description and salary range for the post, as set out at **Appendix C**.

Voting: For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0 No Vote Recorded: 0

20.5 **RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To approve the remuneration of the Acting Town Clerk, as set out in Report No. SR 16/23.

Voting: For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: ? No Vote Recorded: ?

Members recorded their thanks to both the Deputy Town Clerk and the Committee Officer for the work they have done in the absence of the Town Clerk.

Following a query, the Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the changes approved would have no negative impact to the Council's expenditure during the current financial year.

The Chairman requested that updates be made to the Town Clerk section of the Standing Orders to reflect the resolutions made at the meeting.

Meeting closed at 7:16 pm

	<h2>JOB DESCRIPTION</h2>
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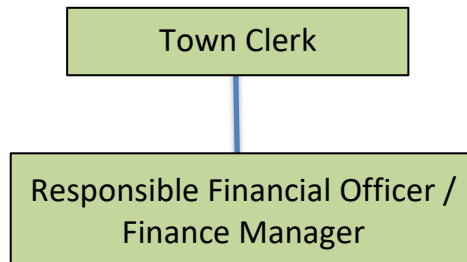
Job title	Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) / Finance Manager
Location	The Oakwood Centre Headley Road Woodley RG5 4JZ / Plus home working
Reports to	Town Clerk
Grade	NJC SPC 33-41 (increments subject to satisfactory performance established through annual appraisal)
Type of position	Permanent, Full Time
Hours of work	37 per week

This job description details the general nature and level of work performed by the employee in this post. It is not an inventory of all duties, responsibilities and outputs required of employees assigned to the role.

COUNCIL PURPOSE
<p>Woodley Town Council is an active, professional, competent, and progressive town council. Staff are provided with job security and fulfilment, as well as the opportunity to develop and grow within their role.</p> <p>As the town has grown so have the services provided by the Town Council. The Town Council is responsible for a number of parks and open spaces, play areas, allotments, community halls, street lighting and bus shelters, planning consultation, The Oakwood Centre and Woodford Park Leisure Centre. The Council also gives grants to local community organisations and individuals and represents residents on wider issues.</p> <p>25 Town Councillors represent the 9 parish wards within Woodley. Latest figures put Woodley's population at around 28,000 plus, with an estimated 11,000 households.</p>

JOB SCOPE	
This role involves	
Financial Responsibility	
Staffing Responsibility	N/A

DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE CHART



MAIN DUTIES

Main Purpose

Ensuring the effective financial control and management of the Town Council precept and budgets, in line with the Council's Financial Regulations

Effective execution of Administration Functions

Managing all changes to financial procedures or requirements across all areas of the Council's finances, including changes in legislation and good practice.

To manage all financial aspects and requirements of the Council's income and expenditure, including the Oakwood Centre, venues and Woodford Park Leisure Centre business activities.

Human Resources and Payroll

1. Ensure timesheets are received and correctly authorised
2. Collate timesheet information
3. Liaise with external payroll provider to ensure payroll is completed.
4. Keep records of TOIL, holidays, sick days and ensure correct authorisation for each
5. Analyse payroll across cost centres and post to Omega accounts software
6. Keep payroll records for audit purposes, with reconciliations of payments made to staff and HMRC
7. Set up monthly payments to HMRC for PAYE & NI
8. Set up monthly Pension payments
9. Annual Pension return
10. Ensure proper documentation for starters and leavers including contracts of employment issued before the start date.
11. Keep staff and Councillor mileage & expense records
12. Resolve any pay issues and queries
13. Ensure payroll documentation is prepared and provided to the Clerk/Deputy for authorisation

Governance / Risk Management
1. Ensure effective Governance and Risk Management at all times.
VAT
1. Process quarterly VAT online for all areas of the organisation
Petty Cash
1. Ensure accurate Petty Cash records are maintained 2. Ensure Cash is checked and reconciled regularly 3. Ensure petty cash records are entered correctly onto Omega 4. Raise cheques to top up Petty Cash & all other floats as required
Bank Accounts
1. To ensure cash and cheques are banked weekly. 2. Ensure all bank accounts are reconciled frequently. 3. To manage cashflow between accounts.
Investments
1. Manage cash flow. 2. Ensure effective investment at all times.
Council / Committee Meetings
1. Attend Council / Committee meetings as requested by the Town Clerk 2. Provide financial information for agendas – to include Budgetary Control, Direct Debit, investments and bank account information.
Accounts Month End
1. Ensure all sales invoices are raised 2. Check Bank Reconciliation 3. Check VAT records for month 4. Check spending against budget, to ensure correct cost centres have been charged 5. Check Debtors and Creditors 6. Check Catering Commission and raise monthly invoices 7. Check all tenant invoices for rental and utilities have been raised 8. Spot check Creditor statements 9. Credit control 10. Prepare month end ensuring all accounts/sales ledger/purchase ledger are reconciled 11. Print off all cash books from the Omega system 12. Ensure reconciliation reports are signed off by the Leader of the Council in accordance with audit requirements
Accounts Year End
1. Ensure all Accruals/Prepayments are recorded 2. Check annual expenditure against budget 3. Produce spreadsheets regarding payroll, petty cash 4. Liaise with internal auditor for interim and year end audit 5. Liaise with external auditor regarding annual audit and time frames 6. Create audit file, containing information for Auditors 7. Prepare Year End accounts for presentation to Council, ensuring all data is accurate and entered onto Omega.

8. Preparation of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return AGAR for the external audit inspection 9. Prepare reports as required for submission to Council to meet specified audit deadlines.
Budgeting
1. Assist with budget setting process 2. Send Precept Request to Wokingham Borough Council once agreed
Third Parties
1. Maintain relationships with the Council's bank, auditors and other relevant third parties

PERSON SPECIFICATION		
Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
Educated to at least A level or equivalent including professional qualifications where appropriate.	Yes	
Commitment to further professional development where required.		
Accountancy qualifications AAT ACCA		Yes
Skills	Essential	Desirable
Excellent verbal and written communication skills.	Yes	
Excellent written English.	Yes	
Able to work independently and collaboratively.	Yes	
Advanced IT skills.	Yes	
Ability to work accurately and to deadlines.	Yes	
Ability to present information verbally and in writing, in a clear & concise manner with excellent attention to detail.	Yes	
Knowledge & Experience	Essential	Desirable
Experience of working in a financial environment, including production of financial reports, budget management and report writing.	Yes	
Ability to interpret financial reports.	Yes	
Experience of working in an administrative environment.	Yes	
An ability to work under pressure with changing priorities and timescales.	Yes	
Previous experience in local government.		Yes

Remuneration

	Spinal Column Point	Annual Gross
Finance Manager (RFO) Scale Range	33	£39,493
	34	£40,478
	35	£41,496
	36	£42,503
	37	£43,516
	38	£44,539
	39	£45,495
	40	£46,549
	41	£47,537

	<h2>JOB DESCRIPTION</h2>
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Job title	Town Clerk
Location	The Oakwood Centre Headley Road Woodley RG5 4JZ / Plus home working
Reports to	Chairman (Mayor) and Leader of the Council
Grade	NJC SPC 50 – 54 (LC4) (increments subject to satisfactory performance established through annual appraisal)
Type of position	Permanent, Full Time
Hours of work	The town council has a 37-hour week but because of the seniority of this role, the postholder will be expected to work additional hours as needed, remunerated as TOIL. This will include some evening and weekend attendance or response to emergencies, as required by Council.

This job description details the general nature and level of work performed by the employee in this post. It is not an inventory of all duties, responsibilities and outputs required of employees assigned to the role.

COUNCIL PURPOSE

Woodley Town Council is an active, professional, competent, and progressive town council. Staff are provided with job security and fulfilment, as well as the opportunity to develop and grow within their role.

As the town has grown so have the services provided by the Town Council. The Town Council is responsible for a number of parks and open spaces, play areas, allotments, community halls, street lighting and bus shelters, planning consultation, The Oakwood Centre and Woodford Park Leisure Centre. The Council also gives grants to local community organisations and individuals and represents residents on wider issues.

FINANCIAL/ORGANISATION

- Precept 2023: £1,195,649
- Budgeted Net Expenditure 2023/34: £1,311,317
- Town Councillors: 25
- Wards: 9
- Staff: 55 total (28 Full Time Equivalents)
- Population est: 28,000

DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE CHART

Organisation chart attached

MAIN DUTIES

Key Contacts

Internal:

- Elected Councillors
- Town Council staff

External:

- Service providers
- External bodies
- Contractors
- Community groups/organisations
- Voluntary sector organisations
- Local Government and other public bodies (police, fire etc)
- Members of public
- VIP, Civic dignitaries

Main Purpose

As head of the organisation;

To be proactive in all areas of responsibility of the post, showing strong leadership and strategic thinking to ensure the professional delivery of high quality, value for money services to the public.

To develop systems, strategies and processes as required and maintain a forward looking, strategic approach to the Councils services and activities.

To have overall responsibility for all aspects of the Council's democratic and business responsibilities, ensuring the Council's delivery is both legal and in the best interests of its residents.

As the Council's senior manager to uphold the highest standards of public service, in line with the Nolan Principles of Public Life.

As this is a politically constituted Council, to effectively interact with elected Councillors and to manage the complexities of a political landscape.

With a thorough knowledge of local government law, to act as the Council's principal legal adviser.

To manage the Council's services, resources and staff in a proactive way, showing leadership and innovation. To advise upon and administer all aspects of the Council's work and to promote the role of the Town Council in securing good and effective governance for the town.

The role of Town Clerk is defined in law as the Proper Officer of the Council and, as such, is under a statutory duty to carry out all the functions required by law of a local council's Proper Officer. The role is entirely apolitical.

The Town Clerk will be responsible for ensuring that the instructions of the democratically elected Council are carried out.

The post holder is expected to advise the Council on, and assist in the formation of, overall policies to be followed in respect of the Council's activities and, in particular, to produce all the information required for making effective decisions and to implement constructively those decisions.

The post holder will be accountable to the Council for the effective management of all its resources and will report to it as and when required.

1	Main Responsibilities/Accountabilities:
1.1	To head the organisation. Reporting to the Chairman (Mayor) and elected Councillors to act as the Council's principal adviser; to manage the Council's services; resources and staff; to advise upon and administer all aspects of the Council's delivery. To be accountable to residents and show strong leadership in all areas of responsibility of the role.
1.2	Whilst maintaining neutrality; to work effectively within a politically diverse environment, managing sensitive and confidential situations.
1.3	To maintain an up-to-date knowledge of local government law.
1.4	To be visible and accessible to the public. Acting as the Council's representative, to proactively ensure effective and inclusive development and dissemination of regular communications, using up-to-date and inclusive means.
1.5	To oversee the management of the Council's parks, properties and buildings, ensuring that the Council's obligations for risk management are properly discharged and that the Council complies with health and safety legislation.
1.6	To respect, oversee and attend the Council's ceremonial and civic functions
2	Strategic and Business Planning
2.1	To organise and co-ordinate a strategic planning/visioning exercise with members at the start of each term, to produce an outline mission statement with overall objectives for the Council and aspirations for the term.

2.2	To prepare and implement an annual business plan with outline budgets based on a four-year projection, covering each overall strategic objective or priority identified by Council.
2.3	To align staff activity to the delivery of the Council's plans.
3	Democratic Responsibilities
3.1	To keep under continuous review the legal framework within which the council operates, advising members of changes or proposed changes to law or public policy which may affect the Council.
3.2	To advise elected members of the options available on matters raised at meetings, upon which decisions are required. To ensure that all meetings are called within the legally required timescales and in the proper manner and that all agendas are properly presented.
3.3	To advise the Council on points of procedure to ensure that business is conducted in a lawful manner and legally competent decisions are made and recorded.
3.4	To research and present available options to members on any matter before them and verify third-party reports, so far as practical, to facilitate lawful and reasonable decision-making.
3.5	To minute, or arrange for minutes to be taken, of all formal meetings of council or its committees, to ensure that resolutions are accurately recorded, with sufficient detail of discussion to show proper consideration of all relevant matters.
3.6	To delegate, where appropriate, duties to the Deputy Town Clerk in respect of the above.
4	Staff Leadership and Management
4.1	To set, model and maintain professional standards throughout the staff team, acting when necessary to uphold these standards within the Council's equality, diversity and inclusivity policy.
4.2	To manage staff performance through an effective annual appraisal process.
4.3	To monitor and advise on any changes to employment law or national agreements.
4.4	To manage, motivate and develop the Deputy Town Clerk and Management Team, encouraging professional development where appropriate.
5	Financial Responsibilities
5.1	To have overall responsibility and accountability for the Council's budget.

5.2	To manage the Responsible Financial Officer (s151 Local Government Act 1972) to oversee and ensure the transparent use of public funds.
5.3	To oversee the Council's procurement for external contracts ensuring proper procedures for tendering, and assessment of risk and value for money.
6	General Responsibilities
6.1	To act as principal conduit of communication for the Council both internally and externally, including proactive, effective communication and involvement with Wokingham Borough Council, other parish/town Councils, local businesses, voluntary sector organisations and partnerships e.g. Town Centre Partnership, Community Youth partnership.
6.2	To monitor the effectiveness of procedures and policies, to advise Council when reviews or updates are appropriate and to advise of options available.
7	Other Information
	The post holder may be required to work unsocial hours including evenings and weekends and respond to any emergency. Remuneration for non-contracted hours will be by TOIL.
	The post holder must be able to travel throughout the Town Council's estate.
	The post holder will be required to comply with the Council's policies and procedures, and to undertake professional development as appropriate. In particular; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To achieve/maintain the qualification necessary for the council's eligibility for the General Power of Competence (as provided in the Localism Act 2011 ss1-8 and prescribed in Article 2 paragraph 2 of The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 (SI2012/965).
	All employees must be able to commit to Woodley Town Council's inclusivity policy and values, treating colleagues and customers with dignity and respect.
	<i>This document describes in general terms the duties and responsibilities of the post at the time it was drafted. This is not to be taken as exhaustive nor exclusive, and duties may be varied at any time, in consultation with the postholder, to meet the needs of the service. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot, of themselves, justify reconsideration of the grading of the post.</i>

PERSON SPECIFICATION				
	Competence	Essential	Desirable	Demonstrated by
1	Qualifications	Degree level or equivalent alternative qualifications and experience. Certificate in Local Council Administration. (If not held will be contractually required to complete within first 12 months of appointment).		Qualifications
2	Policy and strategic management	Policy analysis skills and the ability to address and resolve complex issues.		Policy and strategic management
3	Political Sensitivity	Able to gain and retain the confidence of Councillors, local Community representatives, and outside organisations.	Experience of working in a political environment.	Political Sensitivity
4	Team management and Leadership	Able to lead, direct and motivate a team, to effectively build teams and encourage collaborative working between team members, councillors and other stakeholders.		Team management and Leadership
5	Legal knowledge and skills	Understanding of legal responsibilities and sufficient general understanding of the law to be able to procure effective legal advice and support.		Legal knowledge and skills
6	Communication skills	A high level of written, reporting, and presentational skills; excellent interpersonal skills. Understanding of marketing and publicity; experience of pro-active communication with local press and other media.		Communication skills

7	Financial Management	Competent in management of a significant budget; understanding of budget control, and of financial analysis and process.		Financial Management
8	Service Delivery	Able to apply key principles of effective service provision, customer care, service planning etc.		Service Delivery
9	Administrative and Organisational skills	Understanding of effective business administration to create organisational effectiveness.		Administrative and Organisational skills
10	Experience and knowledge of Local Government		A good understanding of Local Government's structure, functions, responsibilities and procedures. Demonstrable understanding of the legal requirements affecting local authorities.	Experience and knowledge of Local Government
11	Managing Contractors	Ability to secure effective running and/or maintenance of Council facilities by contractors, voluntary groups etc.		Managing Contractors
12	Information & Communications Technology	Non-technical understanding of the use and application of ICT.		Information & Communications Technology
13	Operational	Able to attend evening and weekend events and play a part in ceremonial and related activities.		Operational
14	Personal qualities	Approachable and responsive with staff and members of the public.		Personal qualities

		<p>Able to secure good relationships with Councillors and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Strength and resilience to manage challenging situations.</p> <p>Able to work effectively under pressure.</p> <p>Effective negotiator and influencer.</p> <p>Self-reliant, open, and honest.</p> <p>Practical with common sense approach to problem solving.</p> <p>Trustworthy with confidential information.</p> <p>Capable of anticipating problems and showing initiative to solve them.</p> <p>Receptive to change and new ideas.</p> <p>Methodical and thorough approach.</p>		
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Remuneration

	Spinal Column Point	Annual Gross
Town Clerk Scale Range	50	£58,583
	51	£59,995
	52	£61,932
	53	£63,863
	54	£65,803

	<h2>JOB DESCRIPTION</h2>
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Job title	Maintenance Officer
Location	The Oakwood Centre Headley Road Woodley RG5 4JZ
Reports to	Amenities Manager
Grade	NJC SPC 18-22 (increments subject to satisfactory performance established through annual appraisal)
Type of position	Permanent, Full Time
Hours of work	37 per week

This job description details the general nature and level of work performed by the employee in this post. It is not an inventory of all duties, responsibilities and outputs required of employees assigned to the role.

COUNCIL PURPOSE

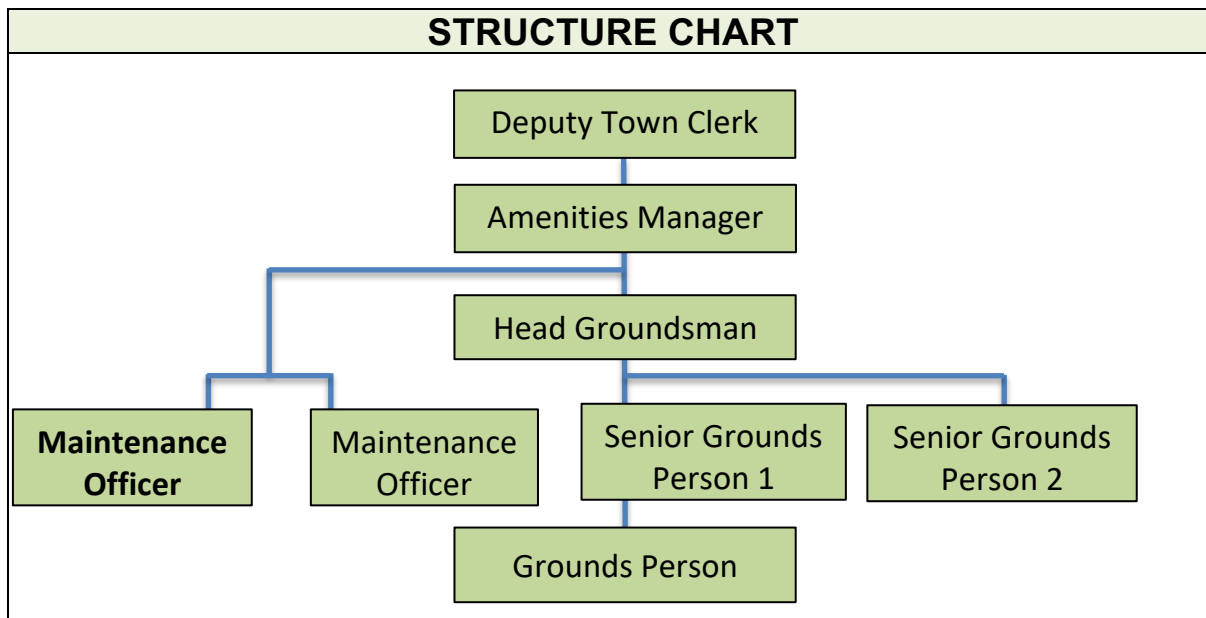
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25 Town Councillors represent the 9 parish wards within Woodley. Latest figures put Woodley's population at around 28,000 plus, with an estimated 11,000 households.

JOB SCOPE

This role involves	
Financial Responsibility	N/A
Staffing Responsibility	N/A



MAIN DUTIES	
1	To maintain and carry out general repairs to Town Council owned buildings and facilities, to include general building and carpentry work, painting and decorating.
2	To order appropriate materials, goods and tools, in liaison with the Amenities Manager.
3	Carry out maintenance and inspection of the Council's play areas, as directed and in accordance with the maintenance schedule.
4	To report any maintenance or repairs required to the Amenities Manager.
5	To prioritise the general maintenance and repair workload, ensuring the Amenities Manager is aware of the work programme.
6	To ensure that inspections of bus shelters, seats, noticeboards and bins are carried out each week, that reports are maintained and filed and that any necessary repairs are carried out.
7	To maintain the paddling pool and associated plant room, carrying out inspections each week and recording findings in the pool book.
8	To carry out any general maintenance and repairs required at the allotment site.
9	To liaise with outside contractors as directed by the Amenities Manager.
10	To liaise with other Council staff on the timetabling of maintenance work to be carried out at the Council's premises.
11	To be contacted in the event of an emergency and, where able, attend to assist. Overtime or time off in lieu will apply in these instances.
12	To undertake other duties and responsibilities of a similar nature and commensurate with the grade of the post.
13	To ensure the health and safety of resources within the post holder's responsibilities and personal health and safety responsibilities, as laid down in the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 and any subsequent relevant legislation.
14	To be available, out of office hours, to advise and/or attend in case of emergency.
15	To carry out all duties having regard to personal health and safety and that of others who may be affected by the post holder's actions.
16	To carry out any other reasonable duties commensurate with the grade of the post.

PERSON SPECIFICATION		
Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
City & Guilds /Equivalent in building maintenance / plumbing / decorating / carpentry		Yes
Skills	Essential	Desirable
General building maintenance	Yes	
Ability to work on own initiative	Yes	
Ability to work as part of a small team	Yes	
Carpentry		Yes
Plumbing		Yes
Decorating		Yes
Good IT skills including office software, such as Microsoft Word and Excel (?)		Yes
Well developed written and verbal communication skills		Yes
Knowledge & Experience	Essential	Desirable
Experience of compliance/inspection/record keeping		Yes

Remuneration

	Spinal Column Point	Annual Gross
Maintenance Officer Scale Range	18	£27,344
	19	£27,852
	20	£28,371
	21	£28,900
	22	£29,439