



# BANWELL PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT THE YOUTH & COMMUNITY CENTRE AT 7pm ON MONDAY 25<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023

**Present:** Cllrs Paul Blatchford (Chairman), Paul Harding & Maggie McCarthy

**In attendance:** Liz Shayler (Clerk)

**27/23 To receive and accept apologies for absence (agenda item 1).**

No apologies were received.

**28/23 To receive members' declarations of interest on any agenda item (agenda item 2)**

No member's declarations of interest were received.

**29/23 To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Employment Committee held on the 11th of September 2023 (agenda item 3).**

**Resolved** – That the minutes be approved as a correct record of the meeting.

**The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous).**

The minutes of the meeting were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**30/23 To note the resignation of the Communications, Marketing and Grant Funding Officer (agenda item 4).**

The resignation of the Communications, Marketing and Grant Funding Officer was noted.

**31/23 To agree any interim measures before the employment of another Officer (agenda item 5).**

**Resolved** – To agree the following measures.

- Temporary increase to the Clerks hours to cover shortfall.
- Occasional Office Cover undertaken by trained Councillors.
- Combining the planning Committee and PC meeting when there only a few applications.
- Councillors to check monthly Grant Funding list.
- Cllr Harding to keep the Recreation Ground Noticeboard updated.

**The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous).**

**31/23 To discuss the current Communications & Marketing Officer role which includes elements of planning and administration and agree a way forward (agenda item 6).**

The current role was discussed at length both as a combined role and also separating it into two roles - Communications, Marketing & Grant finding and Assistant Clerk.

**Resolved** – To hire a locum Communication, Marketing & Grant funding Officer for four months.

**The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous).**

**Resolved** – To hire a locum Assistant Clerk until January 2023.

**The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous).**

**32/23 To agree an application pack including job description, person specification & application form (agenda item 7).**

Postponed until December when the job role will be reviewed.

**33/23 To agree the timetable for the hiring of a new officer (agenda item 8).**

Postponed until December.

**34/23 To agree the date of the next meeting (agenda item 9)**

7pm either December 4<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> at Banwell Youth & Community Centre

The Chairman closed the meeting at 20:00

.....Chairman

.....Date

# **A comparison report of potential Officer roles for Banwell PC**

## **Communications Officer**

### **Executive Summary:**

This report discusses the role of a Communications Officer. A dedicated Communications Officer fosters transparent, engaging, and effective communication within the council, with residents, and with external stakeholders.

### **Community Engagement and Participation:**

A Communications Officer facilitates meaningful engagement with the community. They design and implement communication strategies that encourage active participation, ensuring that residents are informed about council activities and have opportunities to voice their opinions.

### **Building Public Trust and Confidence:**

Transparent communication is fundamental to building public trust. A Communications Officer ensures that information about council decisions, policies, and initiatives is readily available and easily understandable to residents. By being a reliable source of information, the officer helps dispel rumours or misinformation, fostering a positive relationship between the council and the community.

### **Promoting Council Initiatives and Achievements:**

The officer is responsible for promoting and showcasing the council's achievements, events, and initiatives. This not only raises awareness but also highlights the positive impact the council has on the community. Effective promotion enhances the council's reputation and underscores its commitment to serving the community's best interests.

### **Media Relations and Crisis Management:**

A Communications Officer serves as the liaison between the council and the media, ensuring accurate representation of council activities in the press. In times of crisis or controversy, the officer plays a crucial role in managing communication, providing accurate information, and mitigating potential reputational damage to the council.

### **Social Media and Online Presence:**

In the digital age, a strong online presence is essential. The Communications Officer manages the council's social media accounts, website, and other digital platforms to disseminate information, engage with residents, and keep the community updated on council activities.

### **Currently**

First Comms Officer started on 8hrs this was increased to 10hrs as they undertook new policies, set up environmental strategies, and undertook grant applications. The comms role was combined with an admin role which was unsuccessful given the disparity of the roles. Currently, a locum undertakes the role and fills 10 hours a week just on Comms. Churchill PC has a Comms Officer for 5hrs a week.

### **In conclusion**

The appointment of a Communications Officer is important for fostering a transparent, engaged, and well-informed community. Their role extends beyond disseminating information; it is integral to building trust, promoting positive relations, and ensuring effective communication at all levels of governance. The presence of a skilled Communications Officer is an investment in the council's success and its ability to serve the community effectively. Given the success of this post for the last 3years I feel this role should continue.

## **Finance Officer**

### **Executive Summary:**

This report discusses the role of a Finance Officer for Banwell Parish Council. A Finance Officer plays a pivotal role in ensuring the financial health, transparency, and compliance of the council, ultimately contributing to effective governance and the well-being of the community.

### **Financial Management and Accountability:**

A Finance Officer is responsible for managing and maintaining the financial records of the council. This includes budgeting, accounting, and financial reporting. The officer ensures that financial transactions are accurately recorded, reducing the risk of errors or discrepancies in the council's financial statements.

### **Compliance and Legal Requirements:**

A Finance Officer is well-versed in local government financial regulations and ensures that the council complies with all legal requirements. They play a crucial role in preparing and submitting financial reports to regulatory bodies, demonstrating transparency and adherence to legal standards.

### **Budget Planning and Fiscal Responsibility:**

The Finance Officer collaborates with other council members to develop and manage the annual budget, aligning financial resources with the community's needs and priorities. They monitor budgetary performance, identify variances, and recommend adjustments to ensure fiscal responsibility and sustainability.

### **Risk Management:**

Identifying and managing financial risks is a key responsibility of the Finance Officer. This includes assessing potential risks, implementing internal controls, and developing strategies to mitigate financial challenges. By addressing risks promptly, the Finance Officer contributes to the council's financial stability and resilience.

### **Financial Planning for Community Development:**

A Finance Officer assists in long-term financial planning, helping the council make informed decisions about infrastructure development, community projects, and other initiatives. Their expertise supports the council in securing funding and grants for community development, enriching the overall quality of life for Banwell residents.

### **Transparency and Communication:**

The Finance Officer plays a vital role in fostering transparency by providing clear financial information to council members and the community. Regular communication about financial matters helps build trust and confidence among residents, demonstrating responsible stewardship of public funds.

### **Currently**

Being undertaken by the Clerk this role would only save about 8 hours a month unless widened to include YCC booking & cemetery.

### **In conclusion**

Having a Finance Officer is important for maintaining financial stability, ensuring compliance with legal standards, and promoting responsible and transparent governance. Possibly a role to consider for the future when there is a high possibility we will need to go to income and expenditure for the financial year 2025/26.

## **Environment & Biodiversity Officer**

### **Executive Summary:**

This report outlines the role of an Environment & Biodiversity Officer, emphasising the significance of proactive environmental stewardship, conservation efforts, and sustainable practices. Banwell PC recognises the need for environmental consciousness and biodiversity preservation which is why it is identified as one of the four main aims of the PC. A dedicated officer would guide the PC in its commitment to preserving the natural environment, promoting biodiversity, and addressing ecological challenges whilst guiding the PC's policies and initiatives to align with sustainable practices and conservation efforts.

### **Biodiversity Conservation:**

The officer plays a role in preserving and enhancing biodiversity within the parish. This includes the identification and protection of ecologically sensitive areas, promotion of wildlife corridors, and implementation of practices that support a diverse range of plant and animal species. Biodiversity is fundamental to ecological balance and resilience.

### **Sustainable Development and Planning:**

Incorporating sustainability into development plans is important and as they work closely with the planning committee then they could take over the administration of this. Administering the planning committee would help ensure that new developments are considered against environmentally friendly practices, such as green building standards, energy efficiency, and preservation of green spaces.

### **Environmental Education and Awareness:**

The officer plays a role in fostering environmental awareness and education within the community. By potentially organising workshops, events, and educational programs. They would work closely with the Comms Officer to empower residents with the knowledge and skills needed to contribute to environmental conservation efforts.

### **Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation:**

Addressing the challenges posed by climate change is a significant aspect of the officer's role. They work on developing strategies for both mitigating the parish's contribution to climate change and adapting to its impacts. This involves advocating for renewable energy initiatives, sustainable transportation, and resilient infrastructure.

### **Habitat Restoration and Management:**

An Environment & Biodiversity Officer could oversee habitat projects and ensure the proper management of natural areas e.g. The Quarry. This includes community orchards, wildflower meadows and the control of invasive species.

### **Collaboration with Stakeholders:**

The officer collaborates with various stakeholders, including environmental organisations, local businesses & community groups. This collaboration enhances the effectiveness of environmental initiatives, fosters community engagement, and strengthens partnerships in pursuit of common environmental goals.

### **Currently**

This role was undertaken by the Previous Comms Officer who had a particular interest and experience in the Environment. It is one of the Parish Council's 4 aims but due to current officer time constraints has not progressed. This role could take on the administration of the Planning Committee and Environmental Working Party.

**Conclusion:**

In conclusion, the appointment of an Environment & Biodiversity Officer would support the PC's commitment to sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, and environmental responsibility. Their multifaceted role contributes to the long-term well-being of the community by ensuring the preservation of natural resources, fostering environmental awareness, and guiding the council toward a more sustainable and resilient future. As Banwell Parish Council endeavours to balance growth with environmental stewardship, the expertise of an Environment & Biodiversity Officer becomes increasingly indispensable in achieving these vital objectives.

Given the PC priorities in their Strategic Plan and the fact this role could take over the administration of the Planning Committee and Environmental Working Group then this would be time-saving of a minimum of 3hrs a week but would also enable the Parish Council to move forward with its environmental and biodiversity aims in the strategic plan and environmental & biodiversity action plan.

## **Administration Officer**

### **Executive Summary:**

This report discusses the role of an Administration Officer for Banwell Parish Council. The Administration Officer plays a role in ensuring the smooth functioning of council operations, facilitating communication, managing documentation, and supporting various administrative tasks.

### **Administrative Efficiency and Coordination:**

An Administration Officer coordinates the administrative processes, manages schedules, and ensures tasks are completed in a timely and organised manner. Through effective coordination, the officer contributes to a streamlined workflow, reducing delays and enhancing overall efficiency.

### **Meeting Management and Documentation:**

The officer may be responsible for organising council meetings, including scheduling, preparing agendas, and documenting proceedings.

### **Communication and Correspondence:**

An Administration Officer serves as a point of contact for internal and external communication. They may manage correspondence, respond to inquiries, and ensure that information is disseminated effectively.

### **Record Keeping and Data Management:**

The officer may oversee the maintenance of records, including financial documents, personnel records, and council resolutions. This contributes to compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

### **Policy Implementation and Compliance:**

The Administration Officer plays a role in implementing council policies and ensuring that administrative practices align with legal and regulatory requirements. Their understanding of relevant policies helps prevent potential conflicts and ensures that the council operates within established guidelines.

### **Resource Management and Support:**

The officer assists in managing council resources, including office supplies, equipment, and budget administration. This support allows other council members and staff to focus on their core responsibilities, ultimately enhancing overall productivity.

### **Currently**

We tried employing for this role in November 2022 but were unsuccessful. It was then combined with the Comms role which was also unsuccessful given the disparity of the roles. Currently undertaken by the Clerk.

### **In conclusion,**

Having an Administration Officer for Banwell Parish Council helps maintain administrative order, facilitate communication, and support the effective functioning of the council. The presence of a dedicated Administration Officer supports the council's organisational success and its capacity to meet the needs of the community it serves.

## Comparison of the four roles and their relative importance to Banwell PC

The importance of the roles described in the four posts above depends on the specific needs and priorities of the PC. Each role contributes to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the council in different ways.

### **Communications Officer: (min 5hrs a week)**

Importance: The Communications Officer is vital for maintaining positive relations with the community, promoting transparency, and managing the council's public image. Effective communication enhances community engagement, builds trust, and ensures that residents are well-informed about council activities. In the digital age, a strong online presence and media relations are critical for shaping public perception. Currently 10 hours and can be parcelled up into a discrete role.

### **Finance Officer: (min 10hrs a month)**

Importance: The Finance Officer is crucial for ensuring the fiscal health, transparency, and compliance of the council. Financial stability is fundamental for the successful implementation of council initiatives, community development projects, and overall governance. Without sound financial management, the council may face challenges in resource allocation, risk management, and long-term planning. Currently carried out by the Clerk but can be parcelled up into a discrete role.

### **Environment & Biodiversity Officer: (min 4hrs a week)**

Importance: An Environment & Biodiversity Officer contributes to sustainability, conservation, and addressing ecological challenges which according to the new strategic plan is one of the four aims of the Parish Council. An officer who specialises in this plays a crucial role in preserving biodiversity, promoting sustainable development, and mitigating the impact of climate change. As environmental concerns and conservation efforts become increasingly important globally, having a dedicated officer focused on the environment and biodiversity ensures that the council is proactive in addressing ecological issues and promoting sustainable practices. Currently should be carried out by the Clerk but time constraints have meant this aspect of the role is not a priority despite the PC's aim. It could be parcelled up into a discrete role.

### **Administration Officer: (min 4hrs a week)**

Importance: The Administration Officer would be good for the smooth functioning of the council's day-to-day operations. They play a role in coordinating administrative processes, managing documentation, and supporting communication within the council and with external stakeholders. Currently carried out by the Clerk but it would be more challenging to parcelled up into a discrete role and is probably the officer role which is least required.

The importance of each role is interconnected, and the effectiveness of the council often relies on a balanced approach. While administrative efficiency is foundational, financial stability, transparent communication, and environmental stewardship contribute to the overall well-being and positive perception of the council within the community. The relative importance of these roles will depend on the PC's specific challenges, priorities, and goals (see Strategic Plan and associated Action Plan).

### **To consider**

- What roles should be filled in the next 6 months (what needs to be undertaken now)?  
Currently, the budget is set for 20hrs a week for SCP 7-12. E.g. Comms 8hrs, Environmental 8hrs. Grant funding could be with either role (depending on who is hired) or both.
- Hours for the roles chosen. Above are the minimum but the roles can be grown or consideration given to the use of tools (e.g. ChatGPT professional / social media scheduling).
- Whether additional roles are necessary in the next 5 years (what are the Parish Council's priorities for the next 5 years).



## Traffic Management for Community Events

**Duration:**

One day

**Group Size:**

Maximum 12 Delegates

**Who Should Attend?**

Aimed at organisers or individuals that have responsibility for the traffic management of organised community events, working in conjunction with local highway authority staff involved in the organisation or approval of these events and/or event stewards, where duties may include guiding vehicles, maintaining emergency routes, erecting signs and notices, dealing with pedestrian control etc.

**Course Aims:**

Familiarise learners with all Traffic Management requirements related to community events such as carnivals and sporting events, and to give attendees and understanding of how to create a traffic management plan.

Give learners and awareness of issues affecting traffic, pedestrians, and event staff safety.

Event promoters should be aware that their event may require licensing or consent from Planning or Environmental health.

**Course Objectives**

At the end of the course Delegates will: -

- Be aware of current legislation and its requirements,
- Understand the application process and costs involved.
- Be able to devise a traffic management plan.
- Be able to identify typical hazards and appropriate control measures related to the activity.
- Have an understanding of basic traffic management requirements affecting highway users and event staff.
- Demonstrate by examination sufficient knowledge to be accredited as a steward.

**Certification:**

There will be activities throughout the course that you will be required to participate in.

On completion all candidates will undertake two multiple-choice question papers, which carries a 70% pass mark. Lantra Awards will issue a skills registration card for those successful.

