**THE CLERK’S WORKING HOURS SURVEY**

NEC is recommended to

endorse the recommendations contained in the report of the Working

Group and to thank all its members for their considerable efforts in its

compilation

.

At the

May

meeting of NEC

it was

agreed to establish

a Working Group

:

“To consider in detail

the quantitative and qualitative results of the SLCC’s Mem

be

rs’ Working Hours Survey and to

make re

commendations to the SLCC’s NEC

and subsequently to the National Association of

Local Councils a

nd One Voice Wales on

new national recommendations to all member

councils on

i)

the way in which they should recompense clerks and deputising officers (both full

and part

-

time) who undertake working hours additional to their contracted hours

ii)

recommended min

imum hours for part

-

time clerks in a variety of circumstances and

iii)

any other matters which the Working Group considers to be relevant.”

The Working Party has been deliberating in detail since then by way of teleconferences and

exchange of emails. It a

lso conducted a second brief survey of part

-

time clerks in order to

validate its initial conclusions. The Group’s final report is attached. Its recommendations were

agreed unanimously

and have been forwarded to the C

h

ief E

xecutives of the three principal

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ector bodies with the wish that they can now be adopted formally with a view to a joint circular

being issued to every Council in England and Wales prior to them setting their budgets for

2014/15.

Finally I would like to record my appreciation of the

contr

ibutions of all Group members who

also helped to make it a most productive and enjoyable exercise working together.

**Richard Walden**

**Communications Officer**

**J**

**To the Chief Executives of:**

**National Association of Local Councils**

 **One Voice Wales and**

**Society of Local Council Clerks**

**REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE CLERK’S WORKING HOURS**

1. **Membership**

Lis Moore, SLCC Deputy National Employment Advisor

Sarah Jeffries, SLCC Smaller Councils Clerk

Alison Melnyczuk, SLCC Medium Councils Clerk

Helen Ball, SLCC Larger Councils Clerk

Gwilym Rippon, SLCC Welsh Clerk

Kim Bedford, Gloucestershire Association of Town and Parish Councils

Danny Moody, Northants County Association of Local Councils

Paul Egan, Deputy Chief Executive and Resources Manager, One Voice Wales

Richard Walden, SLCC Communications Officer (convenor of the Group)

1. **Principal Recommendations:**

* 1. **(see paragraph 6) that the minimum hours per month for part-time Clerks to various categories of local councils for undertaking basic duties should be:**

 **Profile of Council Minimum Hours per month**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

 **One meeting every two months – minimal services 17.5**

 **One meeting a month – minimal services 26**

**One meeting a month – limited services (such as**

 **allotments, village green) – no employees 30.5**

**Two or more meetings (council and committees) a**

 **month - limited services 33**

**Two or more meetings (council and committees) a 35 month – several services (such as village hall, recreation**

 **ground)**

* 1. **(see paragraph 8) that the provision of an annual Appraisal and the treatment of additional hours, be included as a matter of urgency in the next review of the NALC/SLCC National Terms and Conditions Agreement**

* 1. **(see paragraph 9) that the sector bodies undertake urgent research into all forms of efficiency measures, both large and small, which have been introduced by member councils in recent years with a view to disseminating best practise throughout the sector.**

1. **Introduction**

Local Councils are being encouraged to take on additional services for the community, both as a result of the devolution of services from Principal Authorities and from new powers available under the Localism Act (in England). In Wales additional duties may be imposed

by the Welsh Government affecting Clerks’ workloads. In most cases these services are managed by the Clerk, which entails additional hours of work that are not always reflected in the employment contract.

All sector bodies have been keen to encourage local councils to embrace the opportunities presented and to undertake more for their local communities, but capacity is clearly an issue that is frequently reflected in increased time pressures. The problem of significantly increased workloads on unchanged resource levels such as the same number of hours or same number of employees is creating real pressure, which ultimately will lead to issues with retention and recruitment levels in the profession.

Aware of the growing concern of its members on this issue, SLCC earlier this year invited its members to complete an on-line survey in order to establish an evidence base which provides quantifiable examples to a case for action.

**4. The Survey results**

The survey was completed by 1,125 members which is one of our highest ever returns experienced by SLCC and nearly twice the number who completed each of its past two biennial members’ surveys, doubtless signifying the importance of the subject to clerks.

The headline results were:

* **96% of part-time respondents work additional hours beyond contractual hours**
* **92% of full-time respondents work extra hours additional hours beyond contractual hours**
* **84% of respondents say their workload has increased in past 5 years**
* **Both full-time and part –time respondents say that, on average, they work 3-5 hours extra per week. This suggests the problem is proportionately greater for part-time clerks**
* **54.4% of those working additional hours have raised the matter with their Council**

A more detailed summary of the survey responses can be found at Appendix A. The survey also sought detailed information from part-time clerks about the number of hours they worked undertaking basic regular tasks and this information has formed the empirical basis for the recommendations concerning part-time hours later in this report.

**5. The Working Party**

The survey results were discussed by the SLCC’s National Executive Council (NEC), in a workshop session at the SLCC Practitioners Conference in February 2013 and informally with officers of the National Association of Local Councils and One Voice Wales. There was a clear willingness across the sector to take action in response to the survey results. SLCC’s NEC accordingly agreed to invite representatives from across the sector to take part in a working group with the following terms of reference.

“To consider in detail the quantitative and qualitative results of the SLCC’s Members’

Working Hours Survey and to make recommendations to the SLCC’s NEC (if possible at its

July 2013 meeting) to the National Association of Local Councils and One Voice Wales on new national recommendations to all member councils on

1. the way in which they should recompense clerks and deputising officers (both full and part-time) who undertake working hours additional to their contracted hours
2. recommended minimum hours for part-time clerks in a variety of circumstances and
3. any other matters which the Working Group considers to be relevant.” The Group has met by way of teleconferences and exchanges of emails.

**6. Part-time working – recommended basic hours**

The working group identified that the role of clerk comprises “basic duties” and “additional duties”. “Basic duties” are those common to most clerkships, e.g. meeting preparation whereas “additional duties” vary from clerkship to clerkship depending on the size of council and the services and functions they provide. An example of “additional duties” would be managing a burial ground. Based upon a detailed analysis of the results of the survey (see Appendix B) the Group **RECOMMENDS** that the minimum number of hours per month for part-time Clerks to various categories of local councils undertaking “basic duties” should be:

 Profile of Council Minimum\* Hours per month

 One meeting every two months – minimal services 17.5

 One meeting a month – minimal services 26

One meeting a month – limited services (such as

|  |
| --- |
|   |

 allotments, village green) – no employees 30.5

Two or more meetings (council and committees) a

 month - limited services 33

Two or more meetings (council and committees) a

month – several services (such as village hall, recreation

 ground) 35

In making the above recommendations we would stress that each Council is unique and therefore the duties undertaken by the Clerk, or paid Officer can vary enormously. There are however some similarities – preparation for meetings, production of minutes, reports, accounts etc. The table above sets out the minimum amount of time that is required to undertake these basic tasks to the required standard. These figures have been compiled following a comprehensive survey of Clerks’ actual working hours across England and Wales. In addition to those duties highlighted in Appendix B there will be a wide range of other duties undertaken by Clerks which will be directly influenced by the policies of Councils as well as internal issues and external engagement factors. These duties could include arranging a litter pick or the communities ‘In Bloom’ entry, compiling a response to the Local (Development) Plan, being actively involved in a Community/ Parish/ Town Plan or Village Design Statement or even running a market or being involved in a local carnival or community event. Internal issues that can significantly increase a Clerk's workload usually relate to HR matters (e.g. recruitment/discipline) and external engagement matters might include responding to freedom of information requests. It is important to recognise that there are many internal and external influences that can and do affect Clerk's workloads and it is extremely important that remuneration levels properly reflect the time contribution of the Clerk.

Note \* “Minimum” hours are very much influenced by the duration time of meetings and can be subject to significant variance

1. **National Minimum Wage**

Our survey of part-time Clerks has revealed that, taking into account the hourly rate of pay and actual hours worked compared to contracted hours, there are a disturbing number of council clerks who are working for less than the minimum wage. We would therefore urge that any council in such a situation gives urgent consideration to our recommendations about part-time hours. HMRC have a duty to enforce the National Minimum Wage Act.

*The Pay and Work Rights Helpline will refer any relevant complaints from workers to HMRC. National minimum wage compliance officers can carry out detailed investigations. If workers are found to be owed money, HMRC will issue a notice of underpayment to the employer. In 2011-12 they served 879 notices to employers detailing how much they owed their workers. The majority of enquiries were settled on receipt of this notice but prosecution is HMRC’s ultimate sanction.*

1. **Determining the actual hours a Clerk should be working**

To assist Councils in better understanding the precise activities which their Clerk will be performing in each of the time categories referred to in the survey at Appendix B we have indicated at Appendix C a fuller description of those broad headings.

Based upon the activities in the previous appendices, we have included at Appendix D a model form of regular time sheet which clerks could use. It is, however, most important that all duties have been approved previously by the Council.

Where a Council or its Clerk believes that additional hours are being worked regularly we would recommend that the Clerk maintains a weekly timesheet over a period of time to establish the precise average number of hours. Some examples of timesheets which have been used for this purpose are attached at Appendix E. At Appendix F we have also included a model business case which has been used successfully to secure additional paid hours.

We have further provided at Appendix G some suggested words which may be inserted in a Clerk’s contract with regard to Appraisals and the treatment of additional hours.

The group, however, believes that the need for a regular review of the Clerk’s working hours and the conduct of annual appraisals\* should be formally recognised and we therefore **RECOMMEND** that these matters be included as a matter of urgency in the next review of the NALC/SLCC National terms and Conditions Agreement.

Note \*Appraisals often identify training requirements of employees and we believe it is important for Councils to appropriately budget for addressing the approved training needs of their employees. It should be noted that Councils introducing new appraisal schemes should consider the benefits of arranging for members and officers to be trained in its use prior to implementation.

**9. Efficiency Savings**

The Group is acutely aware that all principal councils, faced with substantially reduced funding in recent years, have been forced to develop ever greater efficiency measures. Local Councils have largely been spared from these exercises, however in a time of general public service constraints and in the light of clear evidence of Clerks working substantial additional unpaid hours, we believe that our national bodies should be promoting efficiency measures specific to our sector. Because a Council has always operated in a particular manner or conducted its business in a specific way, it does not follow that it should continue to do so in future. We therefore **RECOMMEND** that urgent research is undertaken into all forms of efficiency measures, both large and small, which have been introduced by member councils in recent years with a view to disseminating best practise throughout the sector.

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**Appendix “B”** Detailed Analysis of Responses to the Minimum Number of Hours Worked

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**Appendix “A”**

**Working Hours Survey - Detailed Results for Individual Questions**

**How are you recompensed for your extra hours?**

**following most closely represents why this is the case?**

**What in your opinion are the likely reasons for the additional hours?**

**What is your Council’s attitude to your additional hours?**

  **Part-time Full-time**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **All of my Councillors are aware of my additional hours and ignore them**  |  **10,9%**  | **32.00%**  |
| **All of my Councillors are aware of my additional hours and want to address the issue**  |  **25,8%**  | **10.50%**  |
| **The Chairman or some of my Councillors are aware of my additional hours and ignore them**  |  **15,4%**  | **21.50%**  |
| **The Chairman or some of my Councillors are aware of my additional hours and want to address the issue**  |  **29,9%**  | **26.80%**  |
| **None of my Councillors know about my additional hours**  |  **17,9%**  | **9.20%**  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Appendix “B”** **Detailed analysis of responses to the minimum number of hours worked by part time Clerks**  |  |
| **One meeting every two months – minimal services**  |  |  |  |  |  |   |  |
|  | **less** **than** **1 hour**  | **1-2 hours**  | **2-3 hours**  | **3-4 hours**  | **4-5 hours**  | **6-8 hours**  | **8-10 hours**  | **10-12 hours**  | **12-14 hours**  | **16-18 hours**  | **18-20 hours**  | **20-25 hours**  | **25 -****30 hours**  | **30 -** **40 hours**  | **Over** **40 hours**  |  | **Response**  | **Weighted** |  |
|  | **Count**  | **Average**  |  |
|  | **0.5**  | **1.5**  | **2.5**  | **3.5**  | **4.5**  | **7**  | **9**  | **11**  | **13**  | **17**  | **19**  | **22.5**  | **27.5**  | **35**  | **40**  |  |  |  |   |
| **Servicing Meetings**  | 2  | 14  | **24**  | 16  | 10  | 16  | 9  | 5  | 1  | 0  | 1  | 0  | 1  | 0  | 0  |   | 99  |  | **4.95**  |
| **Financial Management**  | 17  | **43**  | 27  | 12  | 11  | 7  | 1  | 2  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |   | 120  |  | **2.60**  |
| **Administration**  | 9  | 12  | **16**  | 14  | 9  | 10  | 10  | 6  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 2  | 0  | 0  | 2  |   | 105  |  | **7.18**  |
| **Answering public enquiries**  | **52**  | 27  | 13  | 7  | 1  | 2  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 1  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |   | 103  |  | **1.56**  |
| **Managing/ supervising staff**  | **61**  | 2  | 1  | 0  | 2  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |   | 66  |  | **0.68**  |
| **Other**  | 17  | **20**  | 13  | 15  | 6  | 5  | 2  | 3  | 2  | 0  | 1  | 0  | 0  | 0  | 0  |   | 84  |  | **3.35**  |
| **Total per month**  | 1  | 1  | 5  | 5  | 3  | 8  | 6  | 9  | 9  | **14**  | 5  | 13  | 11  | 13  | 2  |   | 105  | **1** | **7.47**  |
|    |   |   |   |   |  |  |
| **One meeting a month – minimal services**  |  |  |  |  |  |   |
|  | **less** **than** **1 hour**  | **1-2 hours**  | **2-3 hours**  | **3-4 hours**  | **4-5 hours**  | **6-8 hours**  | **8-10 hours**  | **10-12 hours**  | **12-14 hours**  | **16-18 hours**  | **18-20 hours**  | **20-25 hours**  | **25 -****30 hours**  | **30-40 hours**  | **Over** **40 hours**  |  | **Response**  | **Weighted** |  |
|  | **Count**  | **Average**  |  |
|  | **0.5**  | **1.5**  | **2.5**  | **3.5**  | **4.5**  | **7**  | **9**  | **11**  | **13**  | **17**  | **19**  | **22.5**  | **27.5**  | **35**  | **40**  |  |  |  |   |
| **Servicing Meetings**  | 2  | 14  | 23  | **27**  | 15  | 19  | 16  | 6  | 6  | 7  | 4  | 4  | 0  | 1  | 0  |   | 144  |  | **6.82**  |
| **Financial Management**  | 13  | **31**  | 28  | 28  | 19  | 10  | 5  | 5  | 4  | 0  | 2  | 2  | 0  | 0  | 0  |   | 147  |  | **4.16**  |
| **Administration**  | 5  | 10  | 10  | 15  | 14  | 14  | **19**  | 11  | 7  | 6  | 11  | 8  | 8  | 4  | 6  |   | 148  | **1** | **1.69**  |
| **Answering public enquiries**  | **46**  | 31  | 15  | 14  | 14  | 9  | 3  | 3  | 1  | 3  | 0  | 2  | 0  | 0  | 0  |   | 141  |  | **3.20**  |
| **Managing/ supervising staff**  | **53**  | 13  | 6  | 7  | 3  | 1  | 0  | 1  | 0  | 0  | 1  | 0  | 1  | 0  | 0  |   | 86  |  | **1.90**  |
| **Other**  | 8  | **19**  | 9  | 16  | 17  | 15  | 7  | 5  | 4  | 1  | 4  | 2  | 2  | 0  | 1  |   | 110  |  | **6.32**  |
| **Total per month**  | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 6  | 3  | 2  | 6  | 3  | 7  | 7  | 10  | 22  | 23  | **33**  |   | 132  | **2** | **5.78**  |
|   |  |  |  |  | Page 9  |  |



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| **2 or more meetings (council and committees) a month – several services (such as village hall, recreation ground)**  |  |  |  |   |  |
|  | **less** **than** **1 hour**  | **1-2 hours**  | **2-3 hours**  | **3-4 hours**  | **4-5 hours**  | **6-8 hours**  | **8-10 hours**  | **10-12 hours**  | **12-14 hours**  | **16-18 hours**  | **18-20 hours**  | **20-25 hours**  | **25 -****30 hours**  | **30 -** **40 hours**  | **Over** **40 hours**  |  | **Response**  | **W** | **eighted**  |
|  | **Count**  | **A** | **verage**  |
|  | **0.5**  | **1.5**  | **2.5**  | **3.5**  | **4.5**  | **7**  | **9**  | **11**  | **13**  | **17**  | **19**  | **22.5**  | **27.5**  | **35**  | **40**  |  |  |  |   |
| **Servicing Meetings**  | 1  | 3  | 2  | 8  | 11  | 17  | **30**  | 24  | 13  | 15  | 12  | 16  | 24  | 8  | 10  |   | 194  |  | **15.94**  |
| **Financial Management**  | 1  | 7  | 10  | 17  | 19  | 21  | **26**  | 25  | 10  | 6  | 14  | 9  | 2  | 2  | 1  |   | 170  |  | **10.01**  |
| **Administration**  | 0  | 1  | 3  | 4  | 7  | 16  | 15  | 10  | 2  | 6  | 18  | 21  | **37**  | 16  | 27  |   | 183  |  | **21.92**  |
| **Answering public enquiries**  | 4  | 16  | 16  | 17  | 24  | 21  | **27**  | 14  | 5  | 7  | 13  | 10  | 3  | 1  | 1  |   | 179  |  | **8.89**  |
| **Managing/ supervising staff**  | 16  | **23**  | 18  | 17  | 21  | 18  | 12  | 8  | 4  | 3  | 4  | 6  | 2  | 1  | 1  |   | 154  |  | **6.54**  |
| **Other**  | 1  | 6  | 6  | 5  | 9  | 14  | **26**  | 17  | 8  | 4  | 15  | 16  | 23  | 13  | 3  |   | 166  |  | **15.82**  |
| **Total per month**  | 0  | 0  | 1  | 0  | 1  | 0  | 1  | 2  | 0  | 3  | 6  | 2  | 19  | 5  | **105**  |   | 145  |  | **35.49**  |
|     |  | Page 11  |  |

**Appendix “C”**

**Description of Specific Duties**

**SERVICING MEETINGS**

Preparation of Council Agendas

Copying of Papers

Despatch Arrangements

Posting of Agendas on Council Noticeboards

Preparation time for meetings

Attendance at Meetings

Preparing Minutes of Council Meetings

Undertaking actions from Council Meetings

Organising Council and Committee Timetables

Filing of Papers from Council Meeting

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

Preparation of Budget

Monthly Bank Reconciliations

Obtaining Cheque Signatures

Checking of Invoices and Processing Cheques

Updating Accounts System

Budget Monitoring

Preparation of Financial Reports for Committee

Annual Statement of Accounts

Processing of Salaries and Wages Payments

HMRC Processes

HMRC Annual Employer Return/Issue of P60s

Start of Year Procedures

Preparing for Submission of End of Year Return

Working with Internal Auditor

Maintaining Financial Records

Invoicing for Hire of Facilities

Negotiation with Suppliers

Tendering/Procurement Arrangements

Banking Arrangements

VAT Returns

**MANAGING STAFF**

Health and Safety - Reviewing Risk Assessments

Regular Engagement with Staff

Annual Appraisal of Self

Training/Induction of Staff

Recruitment and Selection of Staff

Annual Appraisal of Staff

Temporary Cover for Hall Caretakers

Page 12

Dealing with Referred Matters by Staff

Organising Relief Cover

Briefing Discussions with Business Support Officer

Completion of Personal Timesheet

Wages Enquiries

 **ADMINISTRATION**

Dealing with Crisis Issues/Special Issues

Obtaining Legal Advice

Dealing with Enquiries from the Public

Liaison with County Borough Council

Updating of Council Procedures

Liaison with Council Chair

Liaison with Committee Chairs

Dealing with Specific Councillor issues

Weekly General/Non Specific Matters

**OTHER**

Allowance for Leave/Bank Holidays

Sickness - Assumed Absence Rate of 5 days pa

Allowance of 2 full time days training

Keeping up to Date with Developments/Legal Changes

Attendance at SLCC Meetings



**Appendix “E”**

**Example of Time Sheets**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **SCHEDULE OF DUTIES**  |
|  |
| **SERVICING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS**  |
| Preparation of Council Agendas Copying of Papers (five Councillors require hard copies) Despatch Arrangements ( uploading to Website) Posting of Agendas on Council Noticeboards Preparation time for meetings Attendance at Meetings Preparing Minutes of Council Meetings ( Checking Minute Clerk) Undertaking actions from Council Meetings Organising Council and Committee Timetables Filing of Papers from Council Meeting  |
| **SERVICING OF FINANCIAL COMMITTEE**  |
| Preparation of Agenda Copying of Papers Despatch Arrangements Posting of Agendas on Council Noticeboards Preparation time for meetings Attendance at Meetings Checking Minutes of Committee Undertaking actions from Committee Meetings Filing of Papers from Committee Meeting  |
| **EXTERNAL MEETINGS (Area Board Meetings/CATG and Market Towns)**  |
| Reading of Agenda forwarding on Agendas and other paper work Preparation time for meetings CATG etc. Attendance at Meetings as required Report back to Council Meetings  |
| **AMENITIES AND PLANNING COMMITTEE**  |
| Preparation of Agenda Copying of Papers ( for four Councillors) Despatch Arrangements Posting of Agendas on Council Noticeboards Preparation time for meetings Attendance at Meetings Checking Minutes Undertaking actions from Committee Meetings Filing of Papers from Committee Meeting  |
| **FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION**  |
| Preparation of Budget  |

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| --- |
| Preparation of Agenda Copying of Papers ( for five Councillors) Despatch Arrangements Posting of Agendas on Council Noticeboards Preparation time for meetings Attendance at Meetings Checking Minutes Updating Accounts Software Preparation of Reports for Committee Annual Statement of Accounts Processing of Salaries and Wages Payments for 4 staff HMRC Processes Payments P60 etc Start of Year Procedures / updating Account Software etc Preparing for Submission of End of Year Return Working with Internal Auditor Maintaining Financial Records  |
| Invoicing for Hire of Facilities Tennis Court Bowls Club Sports Pavilion reclaiming Water rates form Tennant  |
| Tendering/Procurement Arrangements Utilities etc Banking Arrangements VAT Returns  |
| **PERSONNEL**  |
| Health and Safety - Reviewing Risk Assessments on Clerk Regular Engagement with Staff daily Annual Appraisal of Self Training/Induction of Staff Recruitment and Selection of Staff Annual Appraisal of Staff ( needs to be added as a yearly task) Dealing with Referred Matters by Staff Organising Relief Cover Completion of Personal Timesheet ( needs to be actioned)allocate  |
| **FACILITIES/SERVICES ADMINISTRATION**  |
| Footpaths referrals to WC Officers Festivals - Carnival/ Big Lunch/ Cycling Events Maintenance Issues Football Pitches Grounds Contract/Parks/ Tree Management ROSPA Inspections Liaison with Contractors  |
| **COUNCILLOR LIAISON**  |
| Liaison with Council Chair Liaison with Committee Chairs Dealing with Specific Councillor issues/ Complaints  |
| **GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**  |
| Dealing with Post & Emails Dealing with Crisis Issues/Special Issues  |

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| Obtaining Legal Advice Dealing with Enquiries from the Public/Cemetery Liaison with Principal Council Updating of Council Procedures Weekly General/Non Specific Matters  |
| **ALLOWANCE FOR TRAINING**  |
| Allowance Keeping up to Date with Developments/Legal Changes Attendance at SLCC Meetings  |
| Total Hours Required Yearly excluding holiday allocation  |
| **ANNUAL LEAVE/BANK HOLIDAYS**  |
| Allowance for Leave/Bank Holidays  |
| **ALLOWANCE FOR SICKNESS ABSENCE**  |
| Assumed Absence Rate of 5 days pa  |
| Total Hours Required Yearly excluding holiday allocation  |
| Total Hours Required Yearly  |
| Divided weekly  |

**Appendix “F”**

**Example of a Business Case for Additional Paid Hours**

**BUSINESS CASE FOR THE INCREASE IN CLERKS**

**HOURS**

Name

*another*

Parish

/ Community/ Town

Council ………………………..

-

Clerk

1.

**SUBJECT**

This Business Case seeks approval to extend the clerks hours from the current

 hours to 8 hours per

4

week

.

2.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The recommendation is that the clerk’s hours are increased in line with the doubling of the council’s

work load due to an

increase of meeting times of the Council and the implementation of the

Parish

/Community

Plan.

3.

**JUSTIFICATION**

The Society of Local Council Clerks recommends that, for the basic job of clerk to the council, several

factors should be taken into account

. Clerks to even the smallest or inactive Councils will have

workloads which require a minimum of

four hours per week. With a civic population of between 251

–

, the Society of Local Council Clerks recommends 6.00 hours servicing meetings 4.00 hours fin

500

ancial

management, 4.25 hours administration work and 4.00 hours for other work. This workload calculates

out at 18.25 hours a month.

Another Clerk has kept a time sheet of the time working on administrative and finance duties over an

average month and has been recorded as 28.45 hours. This time does not include opening and reading

post or making telephone calls, it is purely time spent

working at the computer, actioning e

-

mails,

letters, agendas and minutes.

Another Council is far from an inactive Council and therefore the hours worked by the Clerk do not

currently match the hours paid monthly at present.

**Comment [C1]:**

I have used this

business case successfully for two parish

councils and have shared it with other

Clerks all of which have also had success

with it. I think it is clear and to the point.

**Comment [C2]:**

These hours came from

keeping a time sheet for a year which

highlig

hted the issue, it gives the Clerk an

area to make a clear statement on the hours

worked and required.

**Comment [C3]:**

This can be adjusted by

the Clerk to fit with the additional work

they are now actioning or used to highlight

specific areas of increase. One small

Coun

cil I covered had never had planning

meetings so by stopping the passing of an

envelope and correcting working practices

in other areas of the Council administration

it meant there had to be a move to have

monthly meetings instead of Bi monthly

meetings. N

o issues arose from the public

or Councillors when this decision had to be

made using this format.

**Comment [C4]:**

Using the SLCC

suggested hours obviously gave a good

guideline and I have since used the time

sheet previously circulated to action a

bench marking exercise

with a fellow Clerk

which came out exactly the hours the Clerk

believed she should be paid for. I think

using the spread sheet to allocate hours and

this business case to present it to Council

many smaller Council Clerks would feel

confident in taking thi

s action and Small

Council Clerks need help with formatted

paper work to clone.

**Comment [D5]:**

Should be updated to

reflect the new recommendations once

finalised.

4.

5.

6.

**ALTERNATIVES**

To decrease the meeting frequency would mean the council would not cover the work load and would

put the Parish Plan actions on hold completely. This action will decrease the functionality of the council

within the Another Parish.

**COST**

**INFORMATION**

The anticipated annual costs of the extended hours are expected to be in the order of £3,424 compared

to £1,661 at present.

**COUNCILS**

**ENDORSEMENT**

We believe that the increase in the clerk’s hours is imperative to the efficient

running of the

C

ouncil. I also believe that the recommendation made be

implemented from the 1

st

September 2013.

We believe that the clerk should work only four hours a week as the clerk’s

contract of

employment states implemented from 1

st

September 2013

\*\*\* Dele

(

te as necessary)

Signed ………………………… Date…………………..

**Comment [C6]:**

To put it in black and

white that the Council would not cover its

work load helped Councillors realise th

ey

were making a decision to be ineffective if

they did not approve it and no one wants to

make that decision.

**Comment [C7]:**

Cost obviously needed

to be included and I presented the draft

budget sheet for the Precept at the same

time.

**Comment [C8]:**

A clear endorsement

statement to

focus Councillors minds at the

end on their decision.

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**Appendix “G”**

**Proposed wording regarding working hours in the appraisal;**

**-**

The annual appraisal provides an ideal opportunity for both the employer’s representatives (ie

;

councillors who are part of the staffing committee / chairman and vice chairman) and the employee to

have quality time together, outside of the day to day demands.

[

For general guidance on the appraisal see ‘Being a Good Employer’ page 30]

As part of this review, consideration and discussion should establish an understanding of working

practices and the pressure points for the proper officer, balanced with the planned objectives of the

council. From this, it should be possible to assess if a

djustments need to be made. For example,

additional hours to the contract, subject to agreement, or more resources. Thus triggering a review

from council which could mean additional staff.

There may be a need for the proper officer to provide evidence of

the current use of time to the

employer. There is no reason why a more frequent review of this issue cannot take place, should either

party require this. Essential to this process is an open and honest dialogue between the two parties, in

order for a good

understanding to be gained for effective working partnerships.

**Proposed wording regarding additional hours and the contract. Based on Model contract 2011.**

When the contract of employment is drawn up between the council and proper officer, council ne

ed to

make it clear who the proper officer is to contact for guidance on aspects of the employment terms ie;

hours worked.

The contract will indicate the hours per week expected [section 13] The council will have budgeted to

cover employment costs, so ho

urs worked in excess of the contract need to be approved by your

designated council representatives. The model contract [section14] describes how additional hours may be reimbursed, but does not indicate how the proper officer is to ensure recognition and approval of the additional hours.

Additional clauses should include guidance on hours those over contract which the proper officer may assume approval, with the appropriate time sheet as evidence, as opposed to those additional hours which need prior approval before worked. Council need to give clear guidance on how this process is to be actioned.