



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

Recruitment of Town Clerk

Job Description

Person Specification

Application Form

December 2025

Twinned with Preetz, Germany



**Town Clerk's Office
Church Lane, Blandford Forum
Dorset DT11 7AD**



Twinned with Mortain, France



**Tel: 01258 454500
Email: admin@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk
www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk**

Blandford Forum Town Council is seeking to appoint an experienced, dynamic and motivated Town Clerk to join and lead a small, hard-working and friendly team.

The Town Clerk is the Council's Chief Executive Officer and Proper Officer, with responsibility for the efficient administration, financial management and lawful operation of the Council. The postholder provides impartial, professional advice to councillors, supporting effective governance and informed decision-making.

Blandford Forum is a historic rural market town, renowned for its distinctive Georgian architecture. The Town Council is the parish authority for Blandford Forum, serving an estimated population of 10,400 residents across approximately 4,800 households (2021 Census) and covering an area of 409 hectares. As the third tier of local government, the Council operates within powers granted and regulated by statute, working alongside Parliament and Dorset Council.

For the 2025–2026 financial year, the Town Council manages a budget of £921,873 and is responsible for a wide range of assets and services, including a Grade I listed building, play areas, a skate park, recreation grounds, allotments, sports pavilions, the town cemetery and chapel, and a programme of events throughout the year, including the town's Acts of Remembrance. Councillors and staff work closely with local groups and organisations to support the town and its residents.

Blandford Forum Town Council was the first council in Dorset to achieve Quality Gold Council Status, which is due for renewal in 2026. The Council is committed to maintaining high standards of governance, service delivery and community engagement. It became a signatory to the Civility and Respect Pledge in October 2022, demonstrating its commitment to promoting positive, respectful behaviour across the sector. Strong working relationships between councillors and staff are encouraged through regular engagement activities, joint training sessions and visits to local and national organisations.

The Council is seeking a highly efficient, organised and effective individual with experience of working closely with the public and a strong understanding of local government. The successful candidate will demonstrate excellent attention to detail and the flexibility to manage a varied workload, contributing to the continuous improvement of the Council's services and facilities.

Reporting to the Chairman of Council, the Town Clerk will bring a strong team ethic and a positive, proactive approach. Excellent communication skills are essential, together with competence in IT systems including Microsoft Word, Outlook, Excel, Teams and WordPress, as well as Canva and social media platforms. The role requires strong literacy skills and the ability to produce clear, accurate and concise reports within a regulated framework and timetable.

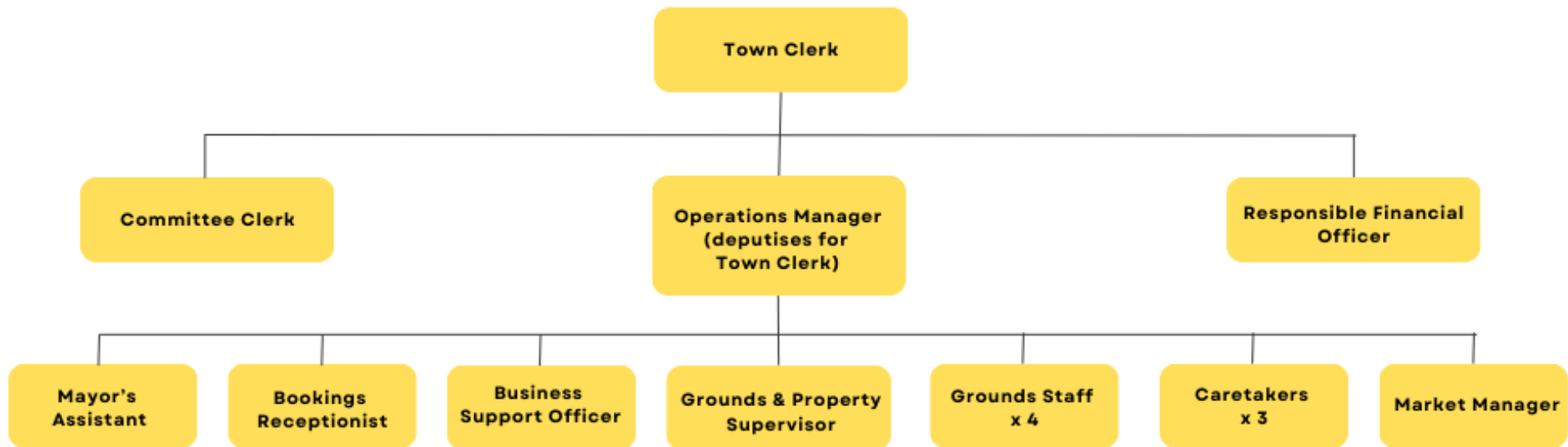
Honesty, integrity and professionalism are essential qualities for this role, along with the ability to work independently, manage competing priorities and adapt to, and implement, change when required.

The Town Clerk is supported by a dedicated and experienced office team comprising the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), Operations Manager, Committee Clerk, Business Support Officer, Bookings Receptionist, Events and Mayor's Assistant, Market Manager, and caretaking and grounds staff.

The organisational structure can be viewed overleaf.



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL



Organisational Structure

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN CLERK

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Town Clerk, as the 'Proper Officer' of the Council, is under a statutory duty to carry out all the functions and to serve or issue all notifications as required by law. The post holder will ensure the Town Council is correctly run according to Local Government regulations and legislation in liaison with the Responsible Financial Officer and Operations Manager to advise the Town Council and individual councillors on financial and legal matters.

The Town Clerk also has responsibility for delivering the vision for the Town Council and managing staff; guiding and monitoring performance, leading and motivating staff.

The Town Clerk will have frequent contact with Town Councillors, staff and members of the public, community organisations and other council service users.

NORMAL PLACE OF WORK:

Blandford Forum Town Council, Town Clerk's Office, Church Lane, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 7AD

RESPONSIBLE TO:

Blandford Forum Town Council

HOURS OF EMPLOYMENT:

37 per week Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm, finishing at 4:30pm on a Friday (including evening work to attend meetings and some weekends for civic events).

Additional hours may be taken as TOIL and managed within the requirements of the Council operations.

SALARY:

The salary is within the range National Joint Council – SCP 42 – 46, starting at SCP 42 (£53,460).

Membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Employment is on National Joint Council 'Green Book' terms and conditions, including an annual holiday entitlement of 23 days rising to 28 days after 5 years' service, paid time off for public holidays including two extra statutory days per year to be taken over the Christmas break.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE:

Relevant local Government or similar experience, preferably as a Town Clerk. Must hold as a minimum, or be prepared to study for, the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA).

Overall Responsibility

- The Clerk to the Council is the Proper Officer of the Council and as such is under a statutory duty to carry out all the functions, and in particular to serve or issue all the notifications required by law of a local authority.
- The Clerk as the Proper Officer will be totally responsible for ensuring that the instructions of the Council in connection with its function as a Town Council are carried out. The Clerk is expected to advise the Council on, and assist in the formation of, overall policies to be followed in respect of the Authority's activities and in particular to produce all the information required for making effective decisions and to implement constructively all decisions.
- The person appointed will be accountable to the Council for the effective management of all its resources (staff, facilities and services) and will report to them as and when required.
- The Clerk will have overall responsibility for the financial control of the Town Council's business with the Responsible Financial Officer being responsible for the proper financial administration on a day-to-day basis.
- To undertake Civic duties as and when required with overall responsibility for the organisation of Civic functions and events, including the Acts of Remembrance for the town.
- To have overall responsibility for the management of health, safety and welfare within the Council.
- To attend training courses, seminars, conferences on the work and role of the Clerk as appropriate.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

Administration & Governance

- Act as the Council's Proper Officer and principal adviser on all matters of law, procedure, and policy.
- Prepare agendas and reports for meetings of the Council and its committees.
- Attend Council and committee meetings and produce accurate minutes and records of decisions.
- Ensure compliance with all statutory requirements, including the Local Government Acts, Freedom of Information Act, Data Protection legislation, and Equality legislation.
- Maintain and update the Council's standing orders, financial regulations, policies, and procedures, ensuring best practice is maintained at all times.
- Manage elections, co-options, and councillor induction and training.
- To undertake project management of capital projects relating to the Council's work and other initiatives which may arise from time to time.

- Managing the Town Council's IT systems. This will include specifying, organising, budgeting and purchasing for hardware, software and maintenance contracts, keeping abreast of developments and ensure the Council optimises its investment in its IT by futureproofing its purchases as much as possible.
- To undertake overall responsibility for press releases in consultation with the Chairman, regarding the activities of, or decisions of, the Council.
- Membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks, with regular attendance at branch and national meetings, along with attendance at relevant events hosted by the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils and the National Association of Local Councils.

Staff Management

- Manage, support, and develop all Council staff with specific line management of the Operations Manager, RFO and Committee Clerk.
- Oversee recruitment, training, appraisals, and performance management.
- Ensure compliance with employment law and health and safety requirements.
- Promote a positive, professional working environment.

Property, Assets & Contracts

- Manage the Council's land, buildings, and other assets.
- Oversee maintenance, leases, and service contracts.
- Ensure appropriate insurance cover is in place.
- Manage tendering processes and contract compliance.

Strategic & Community Leadership

- Support councillors in developing and implementing the Council's strategic objectives.
- To study reports and other data on activities of the Council and on matters bearing on those activities. Where appropriate to discuss such matters with administrators and specialists in particular fields.
- Represent the Council at meetings with external bodies, partner organisations, and the public.
- Act as a link between councillors, staff, and the community.
- Promote good relationships with principal authorities and stakeholders.
- Take overall responsibility for, and manage and co-ordinate, the Blandford Community Fridge and its volunteers.

Communications & Transparency

- Oversee public communications, including the Council website, social media, and publications.
- To create news updates for the public (twice a year printed copies, delivered by Royal Mail – June, chairman's report and October, Remembrance and Christmas events) and monthly half-page submissions to the Around Blandford publication.
- Ensure openness and transparency in decision-making.
- Manage correspondence, complaints, and enquiries.

The post holder may be required to perform duties other than those given in the job description for the post. The duties and responsibilities attached to the post may vary from time to time without changing the general character of duties or the level of responsibility entailed.

At present, the main priorities and projects for the Town Council are the following:

- Corn Exchange Usage and Development (including the introduction of civil ceremonies with the building being licensed from 1st April 2026)
- Pedestrianisation of the market area to the west of the Corn Exchange
- Relocation of the Lamperd's Field Allotments
- Elizabeth Road Allotments becoming statutory allotments (after the Community Asset Transfer from Dorset Council)
- Pump track adjacent to the skate park at Stour Meadows
- Community Asset Transfer of the public toilets and Information Centre at West Street
- Adoption of two phases of land at the Persimmon Homes development (Badbury Heights), s106 agreements and installation of play areas
- Neighbourhood Plan (ongoing reviews and improvements)

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN CLERK

PERSON SPECIFICATION

We value equality and welcome applications from anyone who meets our person specification.

Category	Requirement	Essential	Desirable	Demonstrates criteria met (source)
Education, Training and Qualifications	CiLCA qualification (including the General Power of Competence) Degree or equivalent Other relevant recognised professional qualification		X X X	Application Form
Competences (Knowledge, abilities, skills, experience)	Experience of local government administration. Strong knowledge of local government law, finance, and governance. Excellent organisational, communication, and leadership skills. Ability to work independently and advise elected members professionally. Previous experience as a Town or Parish Clerk. Experience as a Responsible Financial Officer. A working knowledge and understanding of local government structure and practices including the powers & duties of a Town Council. Able to provide a continuation of use of the Power of General Competence A sound understanding of employment law. Excellent management of people, assets and resources and developing a team of staff.	X X X X X X X X X	X X X	Application form and Interview

Commercial knowledge and expertise to deliver on income targets in terms of building regeneration projects.		X	
Knowledge of Health and Safety policies and general practice.	X		
Ability to manage projects, delivering results to timescale and within budget	X		
Experience of committee administration and ability to take clear and accurate minutes of meetings.		X	
Ability to manage land, buildings, and other resources.	X		
Ability to research and identify relevant information and act on it in a timely way.	X		
Have a strong working knowledge of financial resource planning and budgetary control.	X		
Cheerfulness, patience and a creative can-do attitude in relation to identifying and dealing professionally and effectively with challenges and problems.	X		
The ability to communicate (both orally and in writing), effectively, confidently and sensitively to Councillors, colleagues, partner organisations, contractors, customers and the public.	X		
The ability to exercise mature and good judgement, behave with discretion and maintain confidentiality appropriately.	X		
Integrity and professionalism in undertaking all duties.	X		
A commitment to implementing the agreed policies of the Council to the best of your ability regardless of your personal opinions.	X		
Experience of local government and an interest in planning would be an advantage.	X		
Demonstrated capability to work proactively, to identify both opportunities and risks and to organise and prioritise work to deliver organisational objectives and projects.	X		
Demonstrated capability to work effectively and flexibly with a wide variety of organisations and personalities within a local community to ensure the Council	X		

	<p>makes excellent service delivery to the community of Blandford Forum its highest priority.</p> <p>Evidence of continued professional development and the acquisition of new skills, with a willingness to undertake continuous relevant training.</p> <p>Can-do approach to using resources to deliver the desired outcomes and impacts for the Council.</p> <p>High standards of integrity and confidentiality.</p> <p>Professional, impartial, and politically neutral.</p> <p>Strong attention to detail.</p> <p>Ability to manage competing priorities and deadlines.</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>		
Community and Partnerships	<p>Experience of community engagement.</p> <p>Can develop and maintain relationships with staff, local authorities, other public and private sector partners.</p> <p>To have a heart for public service within the community.</p> <p>Experience of working with community groups and managing volunteers.</p> <p>To be able to demonstrate leadership in managing change for staff, organisations, resources and engagement with key stakeholders.</p> <p>Demonstrated capability working within a small team to provide ad hoc and if necessary, hands-on support for colleagues to ensure service delivery.</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	X	Application form and Interview
Staffing	<p>Enthusiasm and willingness to contribute to the effective functioning of a small staff team as a supportive and trusted colleague.</p> <p>An ability to both give and receive constructive criticism and contribute positively to improvements in your own work and that of colleagues.</p> <p>Able to provide leadership on behalf of the Council to employees, Members, and the community.</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>		Application form and Interview

Technology and Social Media	Proactive and confident in the use of IT solutions (e.g., file sharing), website management and a range of social media and virtual meetings. Good IT skills and fully conversant with Microsoft Office applications. Experience of keeping websites up to date, or willingness to learn.	X X X		Application form and Interview
Other requirements	Understanding of the requirement to work hours to meet the work of the council which will include evening and occasional weekends. Willingness to undertake training and take responsibility for own professional development. Full driving licence and access to own vehicle.	X X X		Application form and Interview
Sector specific experience	Experience in all or some of the following will be desirable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PR and media - Planning - External funding/grants - Freedom of Information (Act) Requests 			

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN CLERK

Application Form

Application is by covering letter and completion of an application form only please, although this can be accompanied by CVs should you wish to submit one.

Please return by e-mail to: linda@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk

By post to: Linda Scott-Giles, Town Clerk, Blandford Forum Town Council, Town Clerk's Office, Church Lane, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 7AD

Tel. enquiries: 01258 454500 (Monday to Friday 9:30am – 12:30pm)

Closing date: Noon on 28th January 2026

Interview: 4th or 5th February 2026

The interview panel will consist of the Chairman of Council, Vice Chairman of Council and the Chairman of Finance & Staffing Committee. The current Town Clerk will oversee the process. The appointment of the Town Clerk will then be made by resolution of the council on 9th February 2026. All candidates invited to interview will be required to deliver a 15-minute presentation to all Councillors and staff on maximising usage of the Corn Exchange complex and the proposed pedestrianisation of the market area outside the buildings to the west of the Corn Exchange. Information on the background of these projects and minutes of relevant meetings can be found on the Town Council's website: www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk.

Anticipated Start Date: April / May 2026. The current post holder is leaving on 30th April 2026 and a handover will be essential.

Guidance Notes for Job Applicants

Please complete all sections of the application form to the best of your ability. **If you have any additional needs, please tell us about any adjustments we may need to make to assist you with the selection process.**

Information in Support of your Application

We are expecting a high number of applications and this is your opportunity to tell us why we should offer you the position. Please give your reasons for applying for this post and explain how you meet the person specification, in particular the essential criteria, ensuring that you give evidence and examples of how your skills, knowledge and experience meet these short-listing requirements. If further space is needed, please continue on a separate A4 sheet.

As this position requires regular travel, if you do not have a driving licence or access to private means of transport, you will need to demonstrate how you will meet these criteria.

References

A minimum of two references is required, and we would prefer them to be your two most recent employers including your current employer if you are in employment. References will be taken up if you are the successful candidate following the interviews and will be conditional on your appointment to the post.

Private and Confidential

Please complete ALL sections in type or black ink and use only A4 size paper as continuation sheets as required.



BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Position applied for:Town Clerk.....

How did you learn about this vacancy?

PLEASE CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET(S) IF REQUIRED.

Twinned with Preetz, Germany



Town Clerk's Office
Church Lane, Blandford Forum
Dorset DT11 7AD



EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

BRONZE AWARD

Proudly supporting those who serve.

Twinned with Mortain, France



Tel: 01258 454500
Email: admin@blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk
www.blandfordforum-tc.gov.uk

PERSONAL DETAILS

Title:

.....

Surname:

.....

Other Names:

.....

Address:

.....

Postcode:

.....

Telephone:

Mobile:

.....

Email:

.....

Driving licences held
(where relevant to the position applied for)

YES ☐ NO ☐

CURRENT/MOST RECENT EMPLOYMENT

Please give details of your employment, starting with your current/most recent employment and working backwards. If required, please use the Your Application For This Position section to explain any gaps in your employment history.

Name:

.....

Address:

.....

Postcode:

.....

Email:

Telephone:

.....

Position held:

Date started:

.....

Current salary:

Notice period (if applicable):

.....

Please give a brief description of your duties and responsibilities.

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PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT

Name:

.....

Address:

.....

Postcode:

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Email:

Telephone:

.....

Position(s) held:

.....

Dates:

Salary:

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Please give a brief description of your duties and responsibilities.

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Reason for leaving (if applicable):

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Name:

.....

Address:

.....

Postcode:

.....

Email:

Telephone:

.....

Position(s) held:

.....

Dates:

Salary:

.....

Please give a brief description of your duties and responsibilities.

.....

.....

.....

Reason for leaving (if applicable):

.....

EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

Please give details of all qualifications obtained, with dates and grades obtained.
Please be prepared to provide proof of qualifications obtained.

OTHER QUALIFICATIONS AND INTERESTS

Please provide information of professional, or any other, qualifications not listed above.
Please be prepared to provide proof of qualifications obtained.

Please provide any membership details to professional bodies.
Please be prepared to provide proof of membership.

Please give brief details of your interests outside work.

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

[illegible]

REFERENCES

Please give two references, both of whom should be able to comment on your suitability for the post (one should be your present/most recent employer).

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Email: Telephone:

Why is this person your referee?

Can we contact them prior to the interview? YES ☐ NO ☐

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Email: Telephone:

Why is this person your referee?

Can we contact them prior to the interview? YES ☐ NO ☐

DECLARATIONS

INTERVIEW ARRANGEMENTS

If you need any particular arrangements to be made in order for you to be interviewed for this position at our premises, please give details:

.....

DATA PROTECTION

The information provided on this form will be used by us for the purposes of assessing your application and, if your application does not result in your being employed by us, will be retained only for so long as is necessary. If you are employed by us, the information will form part of your personnel file and may be processed for any purpose in connection with your employment

UNDERTAKING

Please read and sign the following undertaking: I confirm that the information I have given on this application form is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true and correct in all respects.

Signed:

Date:

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

TOWN CLERK

GDPR PRIVACY NOTICE FOR ALL JOB APPLICANTS

INTRODUCTION

As part of any recruitment process, Blandford Forum Town Council collects and processes personal data relating to job applicants. The organisation is committed to being transparent about how it collects and uses that data and to meeting its data protection obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The purpose of this privacy notice is to make all job applicants aware of how and why we collect and use your personal information, both during and after a job application process.

WHAT INFORMATION DOES THE ORGANISATION COLLECT?

The organisation collects a range of information about you. This includes:

- your name, address and contact details, including email address and telephone number;
- details of your qualifications, skills, experience and employment history;
- information about your current level of remuneration;
- whether or not you have a disability for which the organisation needs to make reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process;
- information about your entitlement to work in the UK; and
- equal opportunities monitoring information.

The organisation collects this information in a variety of ways. For example, data might be contained in application forms, CVs, obtained from your passport or other identity documents, or collected through interviews or other forms of assessment.

The organisation will also collect personal data about you from third parties, such as references supplied by former employers, information from employment background check providers including information from criminal records checks. The organisation will seek information from third parties only once a provisional job offer to you has been made and will inform you that it is doing so.

Data will be stored in a range of different places, including on your application record, in HR management systems and on other IT systems (including email).

WHY DOES THE ORGANISATION PROCESS PERSONAL DATA?

The organisation needs to process data to take steps at your request prior to entering into a contract with you. It also needs to process your data to enter into a contract with you. In some cases, the organisation needs to process data to ensure that it is complying with its legal obligations. For example, it is required to check a successful applicant's eligibility to work in the UK before employment starts.

The organisation has a legitimate interest in processing personal data during the recruitment process and for keeping records of the process. Processing data from job applicants allows the organisation to manage the recruitment process, assess and confirm a candidate's suitability for employment and decide to whom to offer a job. The organisation may also need to process data from job applicants to respond to and defend against legal claims.

Blandford Forum Town Council relies on legitimate interests as a reason for processing data and has considered whether or not those interests are overridden by the rights and freedoms of employees or workers and has concluded that they are not.

The organisation processes health information if it needs to make reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process for candidates who have a disability. This is to carry out its obligations and exercise specific rights in relation to employment.

For some roles, the organisation is obliged to seek information about criminal convictions and offences. Where the organisation seeks this information, it does so because it is necessary for it to carry out its obligations and exercise specific rights in relation to employment.

The organisation will not use your data for any purpose other than the recruitment exercise for which you have applied.

WHO HAS ACCESS TO DATA?

Your information will be shared internally for the purposes of the recruitment exercise. This includes members of the Council, interviewers involved in the recruitment process, managers in the department with a vacancy and IT contractors if access to the data is necessary for the performance of their roles.

The organisation will not share your data with third parties, unless your application for employment is successful and it makes you an offer of employment.

The organisation will not transfer your data outside the European Economic Area.

HOW DOES THE ORGANISATION PROTECT DATA?

The organisation takes the security of your data seriously. It has internal policies and controls in place to ensure that your data is not lost, accidentally destroyed, misused or disclosed, and is not accessed except by our employees in the proper performance of their duties.

HOW LONG DOES THE ORGANISATION KEEP DATA?

If your application for employment is unsuccessful, the organisation will hold your data on file for six months after the end of the relevant recruitment process. If your application for employment is successful, personal data gathered during the recruitment process will be transferred to your personnel file and retained during your employment.

YOUR RIGHTS

As a data subject, you have a number of rights. You can:

- access and obtain a copy of your data on request;
- require the organisation to change incorrect or incomplete data;

- require the organisation to delete or stop processing your data, for example where the data is no longer necessary for the purposes of processing;
- object to the processing of your data where the organisation is relying on its legitimate interests as the legal ground for processing; and
- ask the organisation to stop processing data for a period if data is inaccurate or there is a dispute about whether or not your interests override the organisation's legitimate grounds for processing data.

WHAT IF YOU DO NOT PROVIDE PERSONAL DATA?

You are under no statutory or contractual obligation to provide data to the organisation during the recruitment process. However, if you do not provide the information, the organisation may not be able to process your application properly or at all.