

Toft Newton Parish Council

Following the resignation of the previous Clerk, who cited insufficient hours and workload as his main reasons for resigning from the post, and informal feedback from other local Clerk's via the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC) Clerk's e-mail group – the number of hours may be an issue.

Therefore, Councillors are being asked to consider formalising an annual hours proposal, as used by lots of local authorities for a range of posts, here in West Lindsey a number of Parish Council Clerk's are employed on an annualised hours system.

Annualised Hours Proposal

Job Role	Parish Council Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer / Proper Officer
Hours of work	3 per week annualised as 156 hours
Annual leave entitlement	17.6 hours per years, rising to 19.1 hours annually after 5 years.
Rate of pay (unqualified)	Hourly rate is set at NJC scp 9-11: £14.13, £14.35 or £14.59
Rate of pay (qualified)	Hourly rate is set at NJC scp 14-17: £15.31, £15.56, £15.82 or £16.08 per hour
Pay award pending	We budgeted for 4.1% increase Government have offered 3.3% No decision as yet.

Proposal

Councillors are asked to consider using an annualised hours system for the Clerk; therefore, the Clerk's post would be advertised as 156 hours annually rather than 3 hours per week.

This would allow for greater flexibility during busy times and allow the Clerk to manage their hours and holidays more effectively.

For example, during the period March to July when the workload is more significant the Clerk would be able to use hours that are currently due to be used in quieter times, such as August, December or February earlier or later in the year.

The Clerk would adjust their hours throughout the year, to meet the needs of the Council and not feel obligated to work extra, unpaid hours.

The Clerk would be required to keep a simple record of the hours worked, via a time sheet, there would not be the need to detail what work has been done, just record their hours.

Additional Hours

The Union for Local Council Staff (ULCS), the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) all state that the minimum number of hours that a Clerk should work is 6 hours per week.

In the draft budget produced for the 3rd of March 2026 Council meeting, I included costings for the Clerk's hours being increased to both 4 hours and 5 hours per week.

While 4 hours is achievable within the current Precept, 5 hours or indeed 6 hours would require a significant increase in the Precept, which would ultimately be added to local residents' Council Tax bills.

In March 2026, the maximum expenditure on the Clerk's wages for the current financial year was predicted to be:

	Hours p/w	4.1% increase	3.3% increase
Unqualified	3 hours	£2,375.88	£2,357.62
	4 hours	£3,167.84	£3,143.50
	5 hours	£3,959.80	£3,929.37
Qualified	3 hours	£2,618.52	£2,598.39
	4 hours	£3,491.35	£3,464.52
	5 hours	£4,364.19	£4,330.65

While increasing the hours would obviously benefit the next Clerk and by extension the Council, we are duty-bound under the Financial Regulations as agreed on the 23rd June 2026, and on the 3rd of March 2026 to not spend money unnecessarily.

Annualised Overtime

If the next Clerk is employed on an annualised hours system this will allow flexibility, but it would also be useful to have a back-up.

Therefore, the Personnel Committee are asked to consider an annualised pot of overtime hours – these could be used when the workload is especially busy, for example around year end and internal audit time, for induction meetings for new Clerks, and if the needs of the Council demand it.

During the recent year-end process, I met with the Internal Auditor twice, that took up 4 hours (the previous Clerk attend one of those meetings), I met with the previous Clerk on three occasions providing an induction, that took up a further 6 plus hours.

Having a pot of hours that the Clerk can call upon would have meant that the previous Clerk would not have used 8 hours out of their usual allocation during this busy three month period.

Therefore, I propose that, the Personnel Committee recommends that the Full Council approves one of the following options, to be implemented ASAP:

Option 1

That a pot of 13 additional hours be approved for use by the Clerk throughout the financial year – permission would need to be sought from the Personnel Committee Chairperson to claim these hours.

	2025-26 rate	4.1% increase	3.3% increase
Unqualified	£189.67	£197.45	£195.93
Qualified	£209.04	£217.62	£215.94

Option 2

That a pot of 26 additional hours be approved for use by the Clerk throughout the financial year – permission would need to be sought from the Personnel Committee Chairperson to claim these hours.

	2025-26 rate	4.1% increase	3.3% increase
Unqualified	£379.34	£394.90	£391.86
Qualified	£418.08	£435.23	£431.88

Option 3

That a pot of 39 additional hours be approved for use by the Clerk throughout the financial year – permission would need to be sought from the Personnel Committee Chairperson to claim these hours.

	2025-26 rate	4.1% increase	3.3% increase
Unqualified	£569.01	£592.34	£587.79
Qualified	£627.12	£652.84	£647.82

If approved, these changes; being the formalisation of an annualised hours system and an additional annualised hours pot of overtime would apply from the appointment of the next Parish Council Clerk.

Resolutions

Resolution 1:

The Personnel Committee resolves to the formalisation of an annualised hours scheme to be implemented upon the appointment of the next Parish Council Clerk.

and

Resolution 2:

The Personnel Committee resolves to recommend that the Full Council accept Option (insert option number) with regards to implementing an annualised pot of overtime hours that can be used during peak periods, and during the induction of a new Clerk.

Conclusion

I believe that making these changes is both proportionate and fair, they will not alter the expenditure significantly and should make it easier for the Council to retain their next Parish Council Clerk.

Michael Lewis

Locum Parish Council Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer and Proper Officer

2nd July 2026