



**LEIGHTON - LINSLADE  
TOWN COUNCIL**

# **HEAD OF GROUNDS & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS**





# LEIGHTON - LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

## Welcome from the Town Clerk

Town Clerk  
Leighton-Linslade Town Council  
The White House  
Hockliffe Street  
Leighton Buzzard  
Bedfordshire  
LU7 1HD

January 2024

Dear Colleague

### Welcome to Leighton-Linslade Town Council | A community to be proud of

Thank you for your interest in becoming our new Head of Grounds & Environmental Services. I am thrilled to have the opportunity to share with you our plans for our community and tell you a little more about how you can make a difference.

We are less than an hour from London, bordering the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. We have a thriving town centre and a 1000 year-old market as well as many independent shops, cafés, bars and restaurants. Our proximity to the Grand Union Canal and the River Ouzel gives us a waterside feel that enhances the environment. Our population is around 45,000 and growing, and along with it our role as a Town Council.

We are at the heart of our community and are one of the largest Town Councils in the country, recognised as a "Super Council" by government and our national association, NALC. Our reach and contribution in the town extends far beyond the work undertaken by many councils. Working in partnership with Central Bedfordshire Council, we seek to find ways where we can improve our town and contribute to the lives of our residents and communities. As a Head of Service, you can take the lead in many of these initiatives, from creating exciting play areas to developing our sports facilities, to initiatives to improve our award-winning parks and open spaces.

Like many parish councils, we provide allotment gardens and we also provide a cemetery service. Our parks and open spaces are numerous, ranging from small "pocket parks" to our premier destination park in the heart of the town centre. Our three sports pavilions provide a quality venue for a diverse range of community activities, as well as venues which can be used by residents for their own celebrations and events. The ongoing maintenance and development of these facilities is a key focus



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of this role, as well as continuing to innovate and provide our residents with new and exciting facilities.

In addition, the Council is keen to work towards a carbon reduction programme and to work with our local community towards increased sustainability and environmental awareness. The Head of Grounds will be instrumental in taking this agenda forward alongside councillors, partners, stakeholders and the wider community.

Although a large operation in parish council terms, we remain a relatively small team and flexibility is key in our day to day operations. We find that no two days are alike and that working with and for our community presents a great variety of challenges and opportunities. As the tier of local government which is closest to its residents, we can make a real difference and see projects realised within comparatively short timescales. This ability to continually invest, innovate and improve the services used daily by residents of Leighton-Linslade brings an enormous amount of job satisfaction.

I hope this introduction has sparked your enthusiasm to apply for this important, challenging, and fun role in our closely knit team. Fit is really important to us, so we look forward to spending time with you, getting to know you better and giving you the chance to see how we can work together for Leighton-Linslade.

Kind regards



Mark Saccoccio

**Town Clerk**

**Leighton-Linslade Town Council**



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## About Us

### Overview of Leighton Buzzard and Linslade

Leighton-Linslade is the largest town in the administrative area of Central Bedfordshire Council. Historically, Leighton Buzzard has always been within Bedfordshire, with the area of Linslade transferring from Buckinghamshire in 1965.

The parish has a growing population of around, but this continues to grow as further housing development takes place to the south and east of the town. The unemployment rate in Leighton-Linslade is on a par with the rate in Central Bedfordshire and lower than the England average.

Ideally placed within an hour of London, the town is an ideal location for commuters and a significant proportion of those living in the parish work outside it. The parish contains a number of ancient buildings including All Saints Church and the Market Cross monument.



Surrounded by quarries, the town is famous for its high quality sand. The Narrow Gauge Railway and the Grand Union Canal remain reminders of the industrial links of the past and the key strategic location of the town. Leighton Buzzard has held a market for many hundreds of years and this continues to be held today, every Tuesday and Saturday now under the management of the Town Council.







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## Overview of Leighton-Linslade Town Council

Leighton-Linslade Town Council came into existence on 1 April 1974 with the powers of a parish council and is responsible for the following areas:

- Parks, play areas, pavilions and open spaces
- Markets
- Allotments at Weston Avenue and Alwins Field
- Cemeteries at Vandyke Road and Old Linslade Road
- Community events and Christmas illuminations
- Teenage Advice and Information Centre (TACTIC)
- Public conveniences (West Street car park)
- Publications e.g. About Town bi-monthly newsletter, annual What's On leaflet
- Providing grants to local charitable and voluntary groups

The Council comprises 21 elected Councillors who each serve a four-year term of office. There are nine electoral wards in the Parish:

- Barnabas (3 Councillors)
- Brooklands (2 Councillors)
- Grovebury (4 Councillors)
- Leston (1 Councillor)
- Planets (3 Councillors)
- Bassett (1 Councillor)
- Plantation (2 Councillors)
- Southcott (3 Councillors)
- St Georges (2 Councillors)

Town Councillors are not paid any expenses or allowances, apart from the Town Mayor, who receives a relatively small allowance, and who attends many events throughout the region to represent the town. The Town Mayor also organises a number of events throughout the year to raise funds for charity.

The Town Council has four Standing Committees: Cultural and Economic Services, Grounds and Environmental Services, Planning and Transport and Policy and Finance. In addition, there is a joint committee with Central Bedfordshire Council: the Leighton-Linslade Partnership Committee. Council, Committees and Sub-Committee meetings are open to the public, unless there is a special reason for exclusion. Up to a total of fifteen minutes is allowed for representations from members of the public, who may ask questions or make statements relating to items on the meeting agenda.

The Town Council currently employs a team of approximately 40 staff led by the Town Clerk, Mark Saccoccio. The Council is entirely funded by the residents of Leighton-Linslade through what is known as a precept on the council tax charge, and by generating income through services delivered.



## Job Advertisement

We are one of the country's largest Town Councils, with a proud tradition of contribution and excellence. We serve the vibrant, historic and welcoming communities of Leighton Buzzard and Linslade in the heart of Bedfordshire. Working together with our Councillors and partners, we are determined to realise our vision, "A Community to be Proud Of." That means achieving high quality services promoting well-being for everyone. The role of Head of Grounds & Environmental Services is your opportunity to help us deliver our vision.

### How you will make a difference

Working as part of the Town Council's management team, and leading a group of highly dedicated staff and volunteers, you will:

- Manage the day to day operation and the ongoing emergency and planned maintenance of our parks, play areas, open spaces, sports facilities and community pavilions
- Lead the Town Council's cemetery and allotments functions
- Develop, promote and manage activities designed to reduce carbon emissions and increase sustainability within the council and the wider community
- Work with key partners to ensure our countryside and biodiversity sites are well managed and maintained
- Develop and deliver innovative and high quality improvements to our facilities and services

### What we will need from you

We are a small, cohesive team and we are looking for someone who shares our passion to maximise the potential for Leighton-Linslade. This is your opportunity to use your excellent contract management, people management and communication skills, bringing forward new ideas as well as taking forward existing initiatives. We are looking for someone who can fit in well in our friendly, committed and flexible group. Always willing to contribute and add value, you will bring a level of confidence that allows you to hold important meetings to advance critical Town Council issues. We would be interested in speaking to officers from other town councils or local authorities, as well as candidates from aligned parts of the wider public and private sectors. Either way you will bring experience of leading teams, projects and services in partnership settings that deliver great outcomes for people, be they customers, businesses or residents.



## Role Profile

### JOB DESCRIPTION

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<b>JOB TITLE</b>	Head of Grounds and Environmental Services
<b>RESPONSIBLE TO</b>	Town Clerk
<b>RESPONSIBLE FOR</b>	Operational oversight and strategic direction in respect of managing the staffing, resources, budget and contracts relating to the Town Council's green spaces, allotments, sports pavilions, cemeteries, building assets and town handyman function.
<b>GRADE</b>	37-41
<b>SALARY</b>	£45,441 - £49,498
<b>HOURS</b>	37 hours per week
<b>LOCATION</b>	The White House, Hockliffe Street, Leighton Buzzard LU7 1HD

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#### Job Purpose

To lead and drive forward the long term strategic and corporate approach for the provision and management of the parks, allotments, cemeteries and open space service. To act as a key professional advisor to the service area, council and members whilst working in partnership across the council and externally to develop a customer focused service that meets the highest standards of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

To manage resources, people and budgets and be responsible for continuous improvements and performance outcomes within the service. To secure external sources of funding as appropriate.

Responsible for managing the Town Council's nature conservation and biodiversity functions, arboriculture service, park engagement and operational service delivery. To lead and develop effective partnerships with community groups and other key greenspace stakeholders. To actively manage 3 sports pavilions and public toilet contract. To actively work with friends of park and allotment groups and be responsible for the design and delivery of capital improvement programmes in our parks and open spaces.

To manage the Town Council's compliance with health and safety and fire regulations and approve risk assessments.

#### Duties and Responsibilities

Management



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1. To be part of the Town Council Management Team and contribute to the overall effective management of the Council.
2. To provide professional advice and be strategically and operationally responsible for all services/functions of the Grounds and Environmental Services Department.
3. To develop and drive performance improvement within the Department.
4. To develop, maintain and implement an annual service plan and work programmes for the Department.
5. To lead, motivate, manage and develop all staff in the Grounds and Environmental Services Team.
6. Undertake any other duties of a similar level and responsibility as may be required from time-to-time.

### Specific

7. To be responsible for all issues relating to the management and development of the Town Council's cemeteries and all legal obligations the Council has as a burial authority.
8. To be responsible for the management and development of the Town Council owned parks and open spaces ensuring that the Council delivers excellent service provision that aspires to achieving national quality standards such as Green Flag Awards.
9. To be responsible for all issues relating to the management and development of the town's sports pavilions, sports pitches & facilities.
10. To be responsible for all issues relating to the management and maintenance of council owned toilets and the multi-storey public toilet contract.
11. To be responsible for the management and development of all Council owned allotment sites.
12. To deliver new play sites where appropriate as well as existing play equipment upgrades through the tender process and thereafter project manage their successful delivery.
13. To manage the town council's handyman service that seeks to undertake ad-hoc improvements to third party assets as well as the public realm.
14. To lead on the Council's action plans in respect of biodiversity, carbon reduction and climate change initiatives.
15. To be lead on Ouzel Valley Park, Green Wheel and parks and open space projects associated and agreed town council objectives and any other council initiatives such as the Anglia in Bloom initiative.





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16. Contribute to the formulation of policy with respect to matters concerning the management of open space and wider green infrastructure.
17. To engage with the planning process regarding the delivery of new parks and open spaces to ensure existing facilities are protected and enhanced.
18. To attract external funding and submit funding bids to support and develop parks and open spaces.
19. To prepare reports for and attend Council Committees, Sub-Committees and working groups as and when required.
20. To represent the Council on all external bodies and forums related to the scope of this post.
21. Act as the Council's Responsible Health and Safety Officer to ensure the Council's compliance with health and safety and fire regulations, including ensuring risk assessments for all Council's activities and functions are conducted and communicated effectively.
22. Approve Risk Assessments produced by members of staff and check Risk Assessments/Method Statements produced by contractors.
23. Instruct and advise Heads of Service/Managers in health and safety matters and ensure all town council employees have undertaken at least the minimum required levels of appropriate health and safety training for their roles.
24. Manage the contract/s for external Health and Safety support.

### **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

<b><i>Attributes</i></b>	<b><i>Essential</i></b>	<b><i>Desirable</i></b>
Qualifications /Knowledge	<p>Qualified to degree level in an appropriate field or demonstrate substantial relevant experience.</p> <p>Substantial relevant experience, ideally in a management position, in a field directly relevant to the scope of the role i.e. grounds maintenance, parks/open spaces, sports provision, allotments/cemetery management, biodiversity or horticulture/arboriculture.</p> <p>Working knowledge of contract management and procurement/tendering processes.</p> <p>Willingness to undertake any required training (e.g. health and safety, cemetery legal compliance) within first 12 months.</p>	<p>Certificate in Local Council Administration (or similar qualification).</p> <p>Health and Safety Qualification.</p> <p>Current First Aid Certificate.</p> <p>Management or supervisory qualification.</p> <p>Risk management experience.</p>



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Skills and Behaviour	<p>Strategic thinker who is able to drive development and use initiative.</p> <p>Ability to work under pressure and meet agreed deadlines by organising workloads effectively.</p> <p>Ability to write professional reports, letters and present in public.</p> <p>Ability to ensure risks are minimised and clear records kept to protect against potential legal/insurance claims.</p> <p>Senior management skills within an extended departmental team.</p> <p>Ability to work in partnership with communities including the private, voluntary and statutory sectors.</p> <p>High standard of ICT skills including the use of MS Office applications (Word, Excel, Outlook).</p>	
Experience	<p>Substantial experience of working a field directly relevant to the scope of the role i.e. grounds maintenance, parks/open spaces, sports provision, allotments/cemetery management, biodiversity or horticulture/arboriculture.</p> <p>Proven experience of developing and implementing performance management processes in relation to people and services.</p> <p>Strong experience in strategic development, project managing service development and improvements in services.</p> <p>Experience in contract monitoring and management.</p> <p>Excellent track record of financial management including preparing and managing revenue and capital budgets.</p>	<p>Local council experience.</p> <p>Project management experience.</p>

### Background Information

Annual leave 24 days

Annual leave after 5 years completed service 28 days



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Annual Leave after 10 years completed service 30 days

Bank Holidays, plus 3 extra statutory days (in addition to annual leave entitlement).

Working Hours – hours will vary in accordance with the demands of the post. The Council operates a flexi-time scheme which requires working of core hours i.e. 1000 – 1200 and 1400 – 160 hours. Office opening hours are Monday – Friday 0830 – 1630 hours.

Additional hours (e.g. evening meeting attendance) will be recompensed by Time off in Lieu or Overtime (where expressly agreed in advance by the Town Clerk).

Period of Notice – 3 months.

Casual user travelling expenses will be paid.

Leighton-Linslade Town Council is an equal opportunities employer and has a flexible working policy.

Leighton-Linslade Town Council is a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

This is a description of the job as it is presently constituted. It is the practice of this Council to periodically examine employees' job descriptions and to update them to ensure that they relate to the job as then being performed, or to incorporate whatever changes are being proposed. Management, in consultation with the employee, conducts this procedure. It is the Council's aim to reach agreement to reasonable changes, but if agreement is not possible the Council reserves the right to insist on changes to your job description after consultation with you.

Name of Postholder

Signature of Postholder

Signature of Town Clerk

Date



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## Further Information

You may find the following links helpful in preparing your application:

Town Council website: <https://www.leightonlinslade-tc.gov.uk/>

Town Council 5 year plan: <https://www.leightonlinslade-tc.gov.uk/town-council-objectives/>

Committee Meetings and Minutes: <https://www.leightonlinslade-tc.gov.uk/meetings/>

About Town Newsletters: <https://www.leightonlinslade-tc.gov.uk/about-town-newsletters/>

Visitor information: <https://www.experiencebedfordshire.co.uk/explore/leighton-buzzard>

Central Bedfordshire Council's role in developing the Town: [https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/67/developments/25/leighton\\_buzzard\\_and\\_linslade](https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/67/developments/25/leighton_buzzard_and_linslade)





# LEIGHTON - LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

## How to Apply

Please complete and submit an application form to:

Mark Saccoccio, Town Clerk  
Leighton-Linslade Town Council  
The White House  
Hockliffe Street  
Leighton Buzzard  
Beds LU7 1HD

Email: [mark.saccoccio@leightonlinslade-tc.gov.uk](mailto:mark.saccoccio@leightonlinslade-tc.gov.uk)

You may provide an accompanying CV and additional information to support your application if you wish, but shortlisting will be based on the application form.

Closing date: 13 February 2024

Interviews are anticipated to be held between 26 February – 1 March 2024.