



Northampton Town Council

Appointment of Town Clerk

Application Pack

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Do not forget to include the written exercise with your completed application form



Northampton's magnificent and historic Guildhall will be the Town Council's operational base



Northampton Town Council

TOWN CLERK

(£72,178 to £77,783)

Northampton Town Council is the largest town council in England and Wales serving an estimated population of 130,000 with a very diverse demographic. It has been created in the context of the introduction of unitary councils in Northamptonshire on 1 April 2021. The Town Council will be managing some assets and services currently delivered by Northampton Borough Council and will be based at the prestigious and historic Guildhall. The Town Council will also ensure the continuity of the town's Mayoralty and rich civic tradition, which has served the townsfolk for over 900 years.

This is an exciting and challenging opportunity to help shape the style and direction of the new Town Council, which will require outstanding leadership and communication skills. If you have demonstrable expertise in managing a large Town Council or similar public sector body and feel you would be successful in this exacting position, we would love to hear from you.

An application pack, including how to apply, can be obtained from Northampton Town Council's website at www.northamptontowncouncil.gov.uk or from the Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils (tel: 01327 831482, email info@northantscalc.com).

The closing date for applications is:

5pm Thursday 17 December 2020

A new Town Council for Northampton

Local Government in Northamptonshire is changing next year. All existing boroughs, districts and the county council are being replaced on 1 April 2021 by two new unitary councils: North Northamptonshire Council, and West Northamptonshire Council which will include the current Borough of Northampton.

This would have left a large area of the Borough, not currently covered by a parish council, without direct representation. The Borough Council, following an extensive public consultation in 2019, has created a new Town Council as well as a Kingsthorpe Parish Council and a Far Cotton and Delapré Community Council. With an electorate of 95,000 and an estimated population of 130,000 the Town Council is the largest local council in England and Wales.

What will it do?

The main function of the Town Council will be to give a democratically elected voice to the people of the Northampton on the key issues facing the town. It will also ensure that the town's rich heritage and traditions will be protected and enhanced as well as providing a range of local services. Discussions are continuing on which Borough assets and services will transfer to the Town Council on 1 April 2021.

Who is running the Council?

There will eventually be 25 councillors representing 21 Wards (or electoral areas). A list of Wards can be found [here](#). Elections due to be held in May 2020 were cancelled as part of coronavirus restrictions and the Borough Council has appointed 24 existing Borough Councillors to act as town councillors until the new date for elections on 6 May 2021.

The secretariat to the Town Council is presently being provided by the Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils and the Acting Town Clerk is Richard Walden.

The Town Mayor

At its first meeting on 7 December 2020 the Town Councillors will elect a Chair and Deputy Chair. However, after Northampton Borough Council ceases to exist in April 2021, the Chair and Deputy Chair are expected to be styled the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor, so continuing Northampton's proud tradition of centuries with a Mayor as its first citizen.

NORTHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL

Town Clerk

How to Apply

1. Please read all of the Application Pack prior to completing your application and make clear in your application why you are interested in the position, and what relevant skills and experience they have, with reference to the Job Description and Person Specification.
2. Completed applications MUST include a fully completed application form together with a document in answer to the following:
One of the Town Council's first priorities is likely to be the compilation of a Community Needs Analysis. In no more than 1,000 words and in the form of a report to Council with recommendations, please explain how you would suggest this could be achieved.
3. The application form should be completed in full and shortlisting will be based on the information provided. CVs will not be accepted. Please also complete and submit the Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form with your application.
4. **The closing date for applications is 17.00 on Thursday 17 December 2020.** Applications received after this time may not be considered.
5. It is preferred if you could kindly send your application by email to:
rwalden@northantscalc.com

If, however, you do not have access to email, you can post your application to:

Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils

PO Box 7936

Brackley

NN13 9BY

If you would like to discuss the position informally with the Acting Town Clerk, Richard Walden, please email clerk@northamptontowncouncil.gov.uk indicating the times you would be available to receive a phone call.

6. Applicants who have been shortlisted for assessment/interview will be advised by 24 December 2020.
7. A two day assessment centre with formal interviews will be held on **13 and 14 January 2021**. Full details of the assessment centre will be sent to all shortlisted candidates.

NORTHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL

Town Clerk

Job Description

Responsible to: The Council

Responsible for: All Council employees

Key Responsibilities

1. To provide inspiring leadership as the Head of Paid Service in the strategic management of the Town Council and to advise the Council on all matters, helping to develop policies and strategies and ensuring the legality of all decisions.
2. To deliver high quality, value for money services which meet the needs, aspirations and expectations of Northampton's residents, visitors and workers, in line with the direction given by the elected Members.
3. To actively foster and develop relationships with third party organisations of all types, other tiers of Local Government, neighbouring Councils and the voluntary sector to enhance the image of Northampton, its community and Town Council.
4. Under the direction of the Council, acting as the spokesperson of the Council and ensuring the voice of the community of Northampton is always heard.
5. The Town Clerk will initially act as the Council's Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), the duties of which are set out at pages 8 and 9, but it is expected that the Council will later want to consider the appointment of a separate RFO. Professional accountancy support will be provided to fulfil these duties.

Specific Responsibilities

1. To act in all respects as the Council's Head of Service and Proper Officer as required by law, the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations or administrative best practice including the supervision, either direct or indirect, of all staff employed by the Council and to ensure they receive appropriate training and updating of skills to match their responsibilities.
2. Whilst it is envisaged that the Town Council will wish to appoint a separate Responsible Financial Officer as soon as is reasonably practicable, the Town Clerk will fulfil all the duties and responsibilities of such post before an appointment is made.
3. To ensure that statutory and other provisions governing or affecting the running of the Council are observed.
4. To ensure that the Council's obligations for risk management are properly discharged.
5. To assist the Council to define its high-level objectives and to monitor their achievement through the Council's performance management arrangements.
6. To prepare agendas for meetings of the Council and its various Committees, sub-committees, working groups and panels; to attend or be represented at all such

- meetings, to record attendances at and the decisions of those meetings and to implement such decisions in accordance with the Council's policy.
7. To ensure the maintenance of the Council's rich civic heritage through the satisfactory and efficient organisation of civic and related ceremonial or social functions and personally attending on appropriate occasions. Proactively to support and promote the Mayor in their ambassadorial role in promoting Northampton.
 8. To study reports and other data on the activities of the Council and on matters bearing on those activities. Where appropriate, to discuss such matters with specialists in particular fields and to produce reports for consideration by the Council.
 9. To draw up on own initiative, and as a result of input from Members, proposals for consideration by the Council and advise on the practicability and potential effects of specific courses of action. Undertake research and take advice in order to achieve best possible outcomes.
 10. To provide proactive, inspiring leadership to both the employees and elected Members of the Council, leading at all times by example in promoting a can-do, enthusiastic and professional approach to all the Council's activities
 11. To obtain external specialist advice when appropriate to ensure that the best advice is available to the Council and/or its various Committees, sub-committees, working groups and panels to aid members in the decision-making process.
 12. To ensure that the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Delegation Scheme are regularly reviewed and, in particular, to ensure that any changes required by changes in the law, guidance or best practice are implemented.
 13. To receive correspondence and documents on behalf of the Council and to deal with the correspondence or documents or bring such items to the attention of the Council. To prepare and issue correspondence as a result of the instructions or known policy of the Council.
 14. To monitor the implemented policies of the Council to ensure they are achieving the desired result and where appropriate suggest modifications.
 15. To supervise other members of staff either directly or indirectly in keeping with the policies of the Council and to ensure that all necessary activities in connection with the management of salaries, conditions of employment and work of other staff are carried out.
 16. To manage and oversee the Council's performance management systems and employee appraisal scheme, including enabling employees to develop within their roles via a culture of continuous improvement.
 17. To drive and promote a customer facing, customer focused, open and accountable Council amongst employees.
 18. To ensure that the Council complies with health and safety legislation and to ensure the safety and well-being of those who visit or work in the facilities provided by the Council.
 19. To act as the representative of the Council as required, liaising and building effective relationships with the public, other organisations and the press as appropriate.

20. To issue notices and prepare agendas and minutes for the Town Meeting.
21. To ensure that arrangements are in place for appropriate insurance cover for the Council's assets and public and other liabilities.
22. To be responsible, either directly or indirectly, for the security and maintenance to an agreed standard of all buildings and property owned or managed by the Council.
23. To be responsible for the proper maintenance and safe custody of all civic regalia and plate, muniments and other Council records, deeds, documents, etc.
24. To administer and promote the use of the Guildhall and other accommodation or facilities provided by the Council for the benefit of the local community.
25. To prepare press releases about the activities or decisions of the Council and to be responsible for all routine contacts with representatives of the broadcasting and print media and to produce or ensure the production of such other publicity including the use of social media as the Council may from time to time require.
26. To ensure the maintenance of the Council's website and to implement improvements to it identified as necessary or desirable.
27. To develop the image of the Council and to take advantage of opportunities and initiatives that arise locally, regionally and nationally.
28. To attend conferences, training courses or seminars as required by the Council including the National Conference of the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC).
29. To continue personally to acquire the necessary professional knowledge required for the efficient management of the affairs of the Council through the SLCC's process of continual professional development.
30. To undertake such other responsibilities and functions as may be required from time to time by the Council and by the demands of the office routine and business commensurate with the duties and responsibilities of the post.

Responsible Financial Officer - Duties and responsibilities

1. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), under the Policy direction of the Council, shall be responsible for the proper administration of the Councils Financial affairs in accordance with S151 of the Local Government Act 1972. Allowing that delegation to other members of staff is necessary, the Responsible Financial Officer's duties and responsibilities are as follows:

- 1.1 Prepare Financial Reports for the Council and Committees as required. These reports will cover budget monitoring, fund balances, receipts, payroll, payments of accounts and other relevant financial matters.
- 1.2 Prepare Draft Estimates which, when approved by the Council, will form the Annual Budget for monitoring and control purposes, as well as report on comparisons between actual and budgeted expenditure to appropriate committees and the Council.
- 1.3 Submit the Precept to the billing authority.
- 1.4 Control the banking of all money received and payments expended by the Council, manage cash flow and control investments and bank transfers.

- 1.5 Ensure that all money due to the Council is invoiced, collected and banked promptly.
- 1.6 Identify the duties of all officers responsible for financial transactions and ensure, as far as possible, the division of responsibilities of those officers to avoid potential conflict.
- 1.7 Control and manage all payments by cheque, autopay, BACS, direct bank transfer, cash or Direct Debit.
- 1.8 Undertake the overall management of payroll, including the Local Government Pension Scheme. Ensure the prompt payment of tax and national insurance payments at the correct times and ensure, where appropriate, the prompt payment of sums due to the Pension Authority.
- 1.9 Ensure that VAT returns are submitted promptly and VAT inspections are dealt with in a proper and timely manner.
- 1.10 Ensure that all invoices for payment are allocated to the correct expenditure heads.
- 1.11 Ensure the production of final accounts and financial statements and report to the appropriate committee and Council in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices.
- 1.12 Ensure the production of accounts and records for external audit in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices.
- 1.13 Monitor compliance with the Council's Financial Regulations to ensure correct financial systems are in place and to ensure compliance with accounting requirements and legislation.
- 1.14 Manage insurance and other risks, process claims as necessary and report as appropriate to the Council or appropriate Committee.
- 1.15 Maintain the Council's register of property and assets as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations and proper practices.
- 1.16 Assists the Council to ensure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources.

NORTHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL

PERSON SPECIFICATION – TOWN CLERK

	ESSENTIAL	PREFERRED
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educated to degree or HND level in a relevant subject• CiLCA (or able to obtain within 12 months of appointment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• General Management qualification

EXPERIENCE:

1. Consistent and demonstrable record of achievement as Town Clerk in a larger town council or in a senior leadership role within a customer facing public sector organisation of a similar size and scope.
2. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the challenges involved in creating a new Town Council.
3. A track record of having successfully delivered a range of services and projects of varying values and complexities.
4. Working within an accountable environment, and exposure to a diverse and complex range of issues and challenges.
5. Experience of leading and managing staff, as well as mentoring and coaching to achieve effective and successful outcomes.
6. A good understanding of the principles of good Local Government administrative practice, and a close working knowledge of the Parish Council sector.
7. An understanding of the challenges facing the Parish Council sector locally, regionally and at national levels.
8. Experience of working within a political environment or comparable organisation.
9. A demonstrable and successful record of engaging with and working alongside a range of third-party organisations and bodies of varying types.
10. A consistent record of managing all aspects of a large, diverse budget including the short, medium and long-term aspects of planning.
11. A successful record of planning, overseeing, budgeting and completing capital projects of differing types.

KNOWLEDGE and SKILLS:

12. Able to produce complex reports in a logical, easy to follow format on a range of subjects, including financial information.
13. A thorough and comprehensive knowledge of the legal framework within which a Parish Council operates.
14. A relaxed and clear ability to prepare and undertake presentations to a range of

- audiences and in a range of formats.
15. A thorough and comprehensive knowledge of IT software, in particular Microsoft Office.
 16. A skilled communicator both orally and in writing.
 17. A knowledge of modern marketing and social media trends.
 18. An ability to analyse, interpret and seek logical and creative solutions to often complex and problematic situations, often involving differing competing interests.
 19. An ability to lead a team of staff in organisational and cultural change when required.
 20. An ability to influence and negotiate outcomes during periods of conflict and confrontation.

PERSONAL STYLES and BEHAVIOURS:

21. An approachable, open and welcoming personality, able to maintain good relations with a range of differing groups – Members, staff, business representatives, contractors, voluntary staff etc – and of course the public at large.
22. Innovative, creative self-starter who is resilient in the face of critical approaches from members and the public, and who is capable of finding solutions to problems as they arise.
23. An enthusiastic, energetic, confident and resourceful leader who sets high standards and constantly seeks improvement in the context of what is best for the Parish community.
24. An empathy toward people of all backgrounds and from all walks of life, committed to working with partners to achieve best outcomes.
25. Committed to equality of opportunity for all employees in an open, respectful and fair manner – always promoting the highest standards of behaviour in public and professional life.
26. The very highest standards of personal conduct, probity, honesty and integrity that ensures others have the utmost trust, respect and confidence.
27. A naturally proactive nature, known for achieving results either by working individually, as part of an internal team or as part of a larger, multi-agency external group.
28. A flexible style, open to suggestion and differing approaches. Always open to new ways of working, training and personal development.

OTHER:

29. A full, clean driving licence with own car and willingness to travel away from the area when required.
30. A willingness to work evenings as required and at weekends for Council meetings, events, Civic and Ceremonial occasions etc.

NORTHAMPTON TOWN COUNCIL
Town Clerk
Terms and Conditions of Employment

For all purposes not specified within this document, the post is subject to the terms of the conditions of service determined by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC/ Green Book).

1. Salary

The post is offered at a salary within the NALC/SLCC recommended Salary Scale 4, NJC Spinal Column Points 59 - 62 (£72,178 to £77,783). It is expected that the successful candidate will be appointed at the first point of the scale and, subject to satisfactory performance, to progress annually through the scale. However, for an exceptional candidate a higher starting spinal column point may be offered.

2. Working Week

The normal working week is 37 hours; however as Town Clerk and Head of Paid Service it is expected that you will work flexibly and commit sufficient hours, subject to working time regulations, to meet the needs of the Council including attending meetings and events in the evening and at weekends.

3. Place of Work

The Council is located in the Guildhall, St Giles Square, Northampton but you may be required to work from other locations as the exigencies of the position require.

Should the successful candidate wish to move home to be closer to Northampton, the Council is willing to discuss the possibility of a one-off payment of up to £5,000 for legitimate actual removal and related expenses should he/she so move within 12 months of appointment (such sum to repaid should the Town Clerk vacate the position for whatever reason within 24 months of the employment start date). Payment of these expenses will be subject to HMRC rules in force at the time.

4. Expenses

In addition to the payment mentioned in item 3 of this document, travel, mileage, and subsistence expenses incurred during approved travel on Council business will be reimbursed under the Council's scheme applicable at the time.

5. Other Employment

This is a full-time post. The post holder will be fully engaged in the employment of the Council and agrees not to undertake any other paid employment without the express consent of the Council. The Council reserves the right to require that any other employment does not conflict with the role or standards required to be undertaken or met in the position of Town Clerk.

6. Annual Leave

The post holder is entitled, in addition to the normal bank and public holidays, to 28 working days' leave in each leave year (part years pro rata). The leave year runs from 1 April to 31 March.

In addition to general national holidays, two extra statutory days are given, the timing of these extra-statutory holidays is by mutual arrangement.

7. Period of Notice

The post is subject to a 6 month probationary period and the permanent appointment must be confirmed by the Council.

The post holder must give at least three months written notice to terminate the Employment. The post holder will be entitled to statutory notice during the probationary period and three months written notice after successful completion of the probationary period.

8. Pension

The postholder will be entitled to join the contributory Northamptonshire Local Government Pension Scheme.

9. Employee Development Scheme and Salary Review

This is a key post whose success is vital to the successful development of the new Town Council. The Council therefore will provide the following developmental support.

The postholder will join the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and will be expected to comply with its professional code of conduct. The Town Clerk will be supported to annually maintain sufficient continuous professional development points necessary to maintain a Fellow membership of SLCC.

On appointment the Town Clerk will be entitled to:

- a monthly meeting during the first 6 months with a duly appointed representative of the Council to explore their direction of work and personal development;
- after 3 months a discussion to agree and refine the specific responsibilities of the post and to agree performance measures, indicators and milestones;
- at the end of the first 6 months an agreed Personal Development Plan setting out the tasks and on-going professional development required to achieve key result areas and to develop personal goals over the next period of 12 months.

The Town Clerk will have a formal Performance Review Meeting 18 months after joining the Council, which will measure the post holder's performance against the Personal Development Plan. A Performance Review Meeting will take place annually thereafter.

The role of Town Clerk can be very challenging and the Council will fund an external Executive Coach to help him/her tackle challenges in the role – a confidante, counsellor and above all development coach for important management issues.

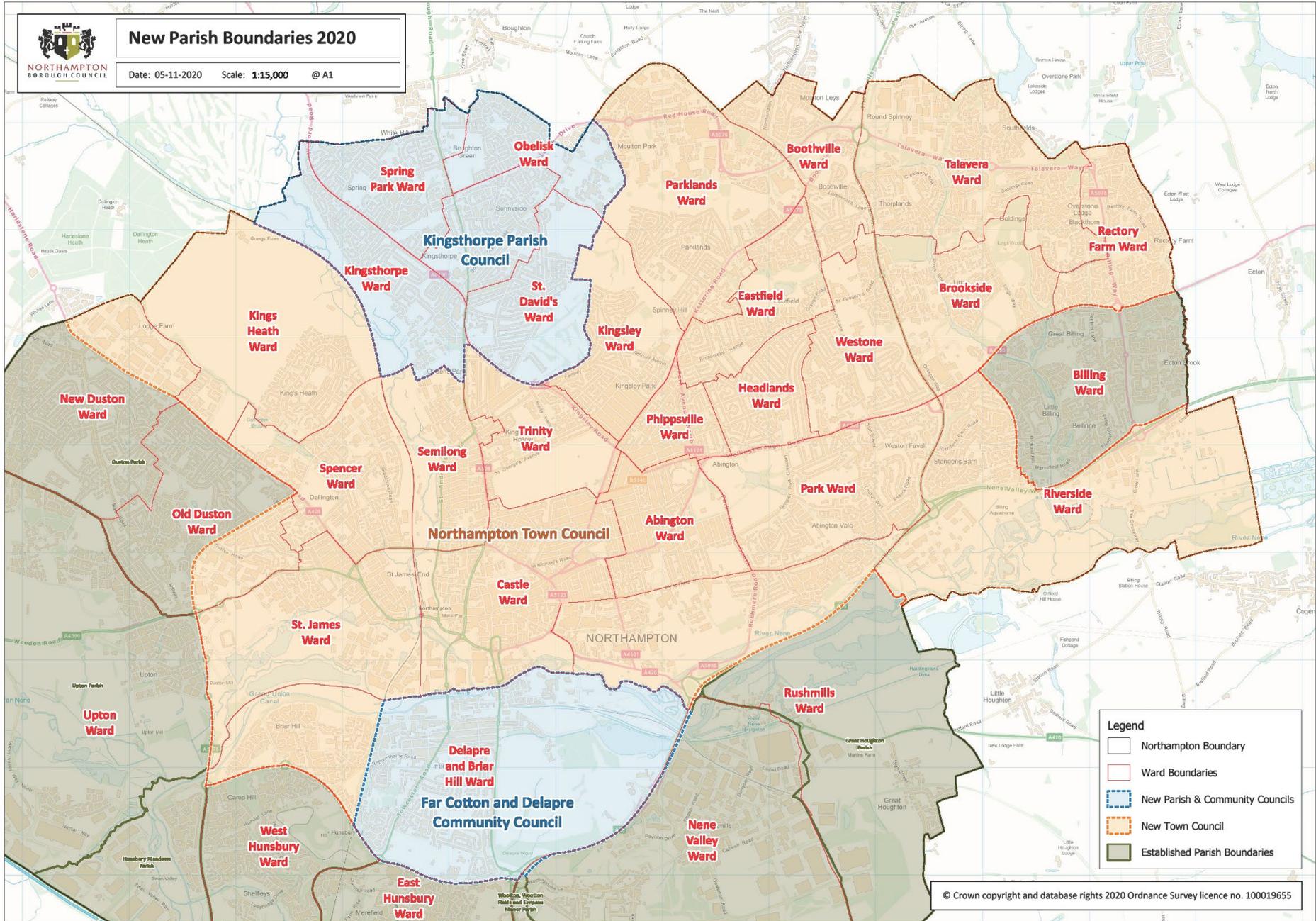
10. Health and Safety Regulations, Other Legislation & Policies

You will be expected to familiarise yourself with all relevant regulations, legislation and policies applying to or made by the Council and ensure that you comply with and ensure others comply with these as required. Detailed policies and procedures are outlined in the Employee Handbook with which you are expected to comply.



New Parish Boundaries 2020

Date: 05-11-2020 Scale: 1:15,000 @ A1



Legend

- Northampton Boundary
- Ward Boundaries
- New Parish & Community Councils
- New Town Council
- Established Parish Boundaries