

Parish Assets Councillor Role Description

At its annual meeting Helmdon Parish Council shall appoint one of its members as the Parish Assets Councillor who shall carry out a [quarterly] visual inspection of the council's public assets, including land, benches, litter bins, streetlights, noticeboards, and other street furniture and public realm features at the direction of the clerk to the council.

This is a layman's inspection, meaning it is conducted by someone without formal technical training or professional qualifications in engineering, maintenance, or safety. The role is intended to provide a common-sense, community-focused perspective on the condition and appearance of parish assets.

The Parish Assets Councillor will complete a simple checklist provided by the council, noting any visible damage, deterioration, or safety concerns. The completed checklist must be signed and returned to the clerk for record-keeping and any necessary follow-up.

Limitations of the Role:

- The Parish Assets Councillor is not expected to carry out repairs or make technical assessments.
- The visual inspection is not a substitute for professional surveys or statutory safety checks.
- Any urgent or hazardous issues identified should be reported immediately to the clerk.

Health and Safety Generally

Under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Helmdon Parish Council has a duty of care to its employees, volunteers, and members of the public who may be affected by their activities. This includes events and meetings that the council organises or hosts.

The clerk is the designated person responsible for health and safety compliance on behalf of the council. This includes:

- Ensuring risk assessments are carried out.
- Keeping health and safety policies up to date.
- Reporting and recording any incidents or near misses.
- Liaising with venue managers and contractors.

There is no legal requirement for the clerk or councillors to hold formal health and safety qualifications. However, they must be competent, which means having:

- A basic understanding of health and safety principles.
- Awareness of relevant risks and how to mitigate them.
- Access to appropriate training and guidance (e.g. from the Health and Safety Executive or organisations like Northants CALC).
- For clerks, training such as CiLCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration).

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