

# MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

Doc. No. 3.04

Version 1

Review Date: Jan. 2018

Name: RICHENDA BUXTON

Experience and skills : Parish Councillors	Level of experience / skill (rate on scale of 1 (none) to 5 (extensive))				
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Understanding and/or experience of:</b>					
Parish Council			✓		
Local government			✓		
Civil service			✓		
<b>Professional skills:</b>					
Experience of chairing board / committee meetings				✓	
Experience of professional leadership				✓	
Financial planning / management				✓	
Mediation			✓	✓	
IT				✓	
Strategic planning				✓	
Training Received (please give brief details of specific area of training)	SOME AREAS OF MY LEGAL TRAINING INCLUDE SOME OF THE ABOVE				
<b>Skills that may be useful on particular council committees:</b>					
Financial planning / management			✓		
Procurement / tenders	✓				
Health and Safety			✓		
Insurance	✓				
Pensions	✓				
HR	✓				
Legal (please give brief details of specific area of expertise)					✓
	I AM A RETIRED SOLICITOR. AREA OF EXPERTISE: IMMIGRATION				
Premises and facilities management	✓				
<b>Please give brief details of particular local issues / knowledge:</b>					
Planning					
Youth work					
Conservation			✓		
	I BELONG TO A NUMBER OF ORGANISATIONS CONCERNED WITH CONSERVATION, E.G: CPRE, NATIONAL TRUST, WOODLAND TRUST, F.O.E. & RAMBLERS				
Volunteering			✓		
	IN THE RECENT PAST I HAVE VOLUNTEERED FOR THE CAMBRIDGE REFUGEE SUPPORT GROUP, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND THE LUTON LAW CENTRE.				

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Please give details of any particular areas of the Parish Council where you feel you could benefit from additional support or training.					
PLANNING LAW & LOCAL FINANCE					
There are seven Nolan principles that apply to the conduct of people in public life. Please give details that demonstrate when you have applied these principles in your work or other relevant examples.					
Selflessness : you should act in the public interest SEE COVERING LETTER: MY LEGAL TRAINING AND WORK AS A SOLICITOR HAVE REQUIRED ADHERENCE TO MANY OF THESE PRINCIPLES.					
Integrity : you should not put yourself under any obligations to others, allow them improperly to influence you or seek benefit for yourself, family, friends or close associates					
Objectivity : you should act impartially, fairly and on merit					
Accountability : you should be prepared to submit to public scrutiny necessary to ensure accountability					
Openness : you should be open and transparent in your actions and decisions unless there are clear and lawful reasons for non-disclosure					
Honesty : you should always be truthful					
Leadership : as a councillor, you should promote, support and exhibit high standards of conduct and be willing to challenge poor behaviour					

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LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEING A PARISH COUNCILLOR	
(For eligibility you must be able to answer 'Yes' to both of the questions below to serve as a councillor)	
Are you a British citizen, a Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of a European Union country?	Yes / No
Are you 18 or over?	Yes / No
ELIGIBILITY	
(For eligibility you must be able to answer 'Yes' to at least one of the questions below to serve as a councillor)	
Are you on the electoral register for Melbourn? <u>NOT YET BUT WILL BE SHORTLY</u>	Yes / No
Have you lived either in the Parish of Melbourn, or within three miles of its boundary, for at least a year? <u>LIVED IN HEYDON FOR 29 YEARS</u>	Yes / No
Have you been the owner or tenant of land in the Parish of Melbourn for at least a year?	Yes / No
Have you had your only or main place of work in the Parish of Melbourn for at least a year?	Yes / No

DISQUALIFICATIONS	
(For eligibility you must be able to answer 'No' to all of the questions below to serve as a councillor)	
Are you the subject of a Bankruptcy Restrictions Order or Interim Order?	Yes / No
Have you, within the last five years, been convicted of an offence in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man which resulted in a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of three months or more without the option of a fine?	Yes / No
Are you disqualified by Order of a Court from being a member of a local authority?	Yes / No

Melbourn Parish Council

The Long House  
2 Meadow Way  
Melbourn  
Royston  
SG8 6EA

Melbourn Parish Council  
F.A.O. The Parish Clerk  
Melbourn Community Hub  
30 High Street  
Melbourn  
Royston  
SG8 6DZ

**By Email to: [parishclerk@melbournpc.co.uk](mailto:parishclerk@melbournpc.co.uk)**

19 July 2017

Dear Sirs

**Application for Position of Parish Councillor, Melbourn Parish Council**

I am writing to apply for the position of Parish Councillor on Melbourn Parish Council.

I enclose the completed application form.

Although I only moved to Melbourn in April 2017, I have lived close by, in Heydon, for the last 29 years, and before that in Cambridge.

Should the opportunity arise, I would like to join Melbourn Parish Council, as I have an interest in local community matters. I am interested in all issues affecting the life and wellbeing of the village, and I would like to be involved in decision-making about the future of Melbourn.

I believe that my education and experience would enable me to carry out the duties and responsibilities of a Parish Councillor. I am a qualified solicitor and have worked in that capacity for the last 20 years. My particular area of expertise is immigration, which gives me a broad perspective on a wide range of community issues. I believe that my training as a solicitor has provided me with a sense of fairness and a willingness to listen to and help people.

Regarding the Nolan Principles, I believe that my legal training and experience as a solicitor has required me to put into practice many of these principles. For example:

1. Selflessness: Although I have not held public office before, this concept is not new to me. For example, as a Legal Aid solicitor, I am used to considering whether the public interest can justify the spending of public money. Furthermore, for the last 11 years I have worked as a solicitor in the “not-for-

- profit” sector. My duties included giving weekly advice sessions on a *pro bono* basis at the drop-in service run by the organisation I worked for.
2. Integrity: The Law Society has strict rules regarding integrity. Solicitors’ training emphasises the obligation on lawyers not to be influenced by considerations of financial gain in the advice given to clients. In particular, in my work as a Legal Aid lawyer I have had considerable experience of making claims on the Legal Aid Fund and, in doing so, ensuring that such claims are “reasonable”.
  3. Objectivity: My legal training has taught me the importance of objectivity in giving advice to clients. For example, when dealing with a client seeking asylum in the UK, as I did regularly in my work, it was vital to give him/her an objective view of his/her chances of gaining asylum in the UK, even though this might mean refusing him/her Legal Aid.
  4. Accountability: Reporting to clients is an important aspect of the service a solicitor provides to his/her clients. At every stage of a case information has to be provided to the client as to the possible course(s) of action to be taken and their respective consequences. Solicitors are required to have a complaints procedure and this has to be explained to clients at an early stage.
  5. Openness: Transparency is required in the solicitor/client relationship and I have a good deal of experience of this. A detailed explanation must be given for recommending a certain course of action. For privately-paying clients a detailed breakdown of costs must be given so that the client is aware at all stages of the amount of future costs and the reasons for incurring such costs. Clear advice on all issues at the outset saves argument and resentment at the close of a case.
  6. Honesty: It goes without saying that honesty must form the basis of the solicitor/client relationship. For example, it is important, when advising a client on the prospects of winning his/her appeal against a negative Home Office decision to be truthful about the possible consequences of losing the appeal. If false hope is given, this may have disastrous consequences for solicitor and client alike.
  7. I agree with the principle that holders of public office should apply these principles in their own behaviour, as I have tried to do in my work as a solicitor.

Regarding experience of financial planning, as a solicitor working within the strictures of a Legal Aid contract, financial planning was something I acquired considerable experience of. I also worked for many years as part of a team and acquired a good deal of experience of strategic planning.

Before qualifying as a solicitor I worked for 8 years in publishing. I ran the Rights Department at the Cambridge University Press for 4 years. This gave me experience of chairing meetings, financial planning, budgeting, leadership and management, all of which were, I believe, good experience for the role of a Parish Councillor.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

Richenda Buxton (Ms)