

Change of Job Title for SPC Clerk

Briefing Note

NALC guidance, often in conjunction with the [Society of Local Council Clerks \(SLCC\)](#), recognizes the Clerk as the Chief Officer, increasingly adopting a CEO-style role in larger councils. This role demands strategic leadership, management, and professional qualifications to handle increased responsibilities, with salaries for larger councils averaging £78,200.



SLCC | Society of Local Council Clerks +1

Key NALC/Sector Guidance on Senior Officers (Clerks/CEOs):

- **Role Definition:** While officially the Clerk, in larger councils, this role acts as the CEO, managing staff and implementing council strategy.
- **Recruitment and Pay:** NALC advises attracting experienced leaders with competitive salaries equivalent to district council staff for larger councils.
- **Professionalism:** Councils are urged to support Chief Officers through membership with SLCC and [NALC](#) to access training, resources, and legal guidance.
- **Governance:** The officer ensures compliance, acting as the Proper Officer, but does not override decisions made by the council.
- **Staffing Changes:** NALC provides guidance for restructuring when councils take on new services, emphasizing, along with [WorkNest](#), the need for proper HR procedures, especially if changing roles to "CEO".
- **Legal Standing:** The Clerk/CEO acts under the authority of the Council as a body, not as an autonomous manager.



National Association of Local Councils +4

For specific, up-to-date guidance, NALC publishes [advice notes and templates](#) for member councils

NALC Guidance on the "CEO" Role

While the **Local Government Act 1972** formally identifies the position as the "Proper Officer" or "Clerk," NALC and the **Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)** recognise the evolution of this role into a "Chief Officer" or "Chief Executive" capacity for larger authorities.



SLCC | Society of Local Council Clerks +1

- **Professional Leadership:** NALC supports the view that for substantial town councils, the lead officer must bring proven strategic management, communication, and leadership skills comparable to those of district council chief executives.
- **Status and Respect:** NALC guidance, often found in publications like the [Local Councils Explained](#) digital edition, emphasizes that the Clerk/CEO is the council's principal advisor and manager, not merely an administrative assistant.
- **Recruitment and Salary:** For larger councils, NALC and SLCC suggest that "Competitive pay is essential" to attract top talent. Salaries for chief officers in these larger local councils currently average approximately **£78,200**, with some of the largest town councils offering even higher figures.
- **Staffing Structures:** Recent [NALC advice notes](#) highlight that as councils take on more devolved responsibilities, their staffing structures—led by the CEO—must be reviewed to ensure legal compliance and effective service delivery.

From the NALC latest edition of Local Councils explained

“The proper officer is regarded as the most senior member of staff and is commonly known as the clerk to the Council. Some councils apply a different title for the post of the proper officer. These include “executive officer”, “chief executive”, “head of support services”, and “executive manager”. Often a local council will appoint a deputy or assistant proper officer. Many local councils separate the job of the proper officer and the RFO. However, many smaller local councils will combine these two roles and employ one person as the council’s proper officer and RFO”.

Most recent Job Applications (in April) on NALC Website include the following:

Chief Executive Officer – Congleton Town Council

Chief Executive Officer – Almondsbury Parish Council

Deputy Executive Officer – Sandhurst Town Council

Chief Executive Officer – Otley Town Council

Chief Executive Officer – Thornbury Town Council