In many Councils, including Great Totham Parish Council, the roles of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer are combined and undertaken by one person; therefore, an Organisational Chart is not provided.

THE CLERK

Role The Clerk is an independent and objective servant of the council, who takes instructions from the corporate body and must recognise that the council is responsible for all decisions. The Clerk implements policies and decisions determined by the Council. They are usually the Proper Officer of the Council and as such are under a statutory duty to carry out all the functions, and in particular to serve or issue all the notifications required by law of a local authority's Proper Officer.

Responsibilities

- Advises council, and Councillors, on governance, ethical and procedural matters and can make suggestions or put forward objective views to council as part of its decision-making process.
- Ensures that the Council, as a whole, conducts its business in accordance with the law.
- Ensures that the Council's obligations for Health and Safety and Risk Assessment are properly met.
- Prepares agendas for meetings of Council and Committees.
- Implements decisions of the Council and deals with day-to-day management of the local authority.

Duties

- The Clerk to the Council is the Proper Officer of the Council and as such is under a statutory duty to carry out all the functions of a council's Proper Officer, and in particular to serve or issue all the notifications required by law.
- Has a statutory duty to sign the summons of a council's meetings, stating the proposed business to be transacted.

RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER (RFO)

Role

- To ensure that the accounts and records are maintained in accordance with proper practices referred to in statute and are kept up to date.

Responsibilities

- To carry out all the statutory functions, ensuring the implementation of, and compliance with the Council's financial regulations.
- To determine the form and content of the accounts and supporting records, subject to any directions from the council and in compliance with regulations.
- To advise the Council on the adequacy of, and changes to, its Financial Regulations, including all internal controls and procedures to manage financial risk.
- To ensure that all VAT returns and other HMRC deductions are submitted correctly and on time.

Duties

- The Responsible Financial Officer must ensure that the accounts are completed and ready for audit as soon as practicable after 31 March of each year.
- They must prepare an annual governance statement in accordance with proper practices in relation to accounts.
- They must provide proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the law.