



Business Case for the Creation of an Additional Administration Officer and Head of Amenities & Assets Roles

Executive Summary

Minehead Town Council is now operating with greatly expanded responsibilities following devolution from Somerset Council. Current staffing capacity three office-based staff, only two full time, is no longer sufficient to meet operational demand, maintain resilience, or deliver the level of resident support expected of a modern, community-facing council.

This business case proposes the creation of two new permanent posts from 1st April 2026:

1. Administration Officer (full-time, SCP 7–12)

To expand administrative resilience, ensure five-day public office access, improve frontline customer service and reduce routine workload placed on senior officers. The post strengthens service continuity, enhances resident experience, and mitigates risks associated with single points of failure in the current team.

2. Head of Amenities & Assets (full-time, SCP 28–33)

To provide professional leadership across the Council's expanded amenities workforce and growing asset base. The role introduces structured operational oversight, planned maintenance, risk management, workforce supervision and improved cost control, significantly reducing reactive spending and pressure on senior officers.

Funding is already allocated for both posts within the 2026/27 budget and the staffing sub-committee recommends approval. Delegated authority is requested for the Town Clerk, in consultation with the committee, to undertake recruitment so appointments can commence from 1st April 2026.

The proposed roles will strengthen governance, improve resident experience, ensure statutory compliance, and future-proof the Council as further service devolution continues.

1. Purpose of the Business Case

This business case proposes the creation of two permanent posts:

- **Administration Officer**
- **Head of Amenities & Assets**

Devolution is unquestionably a major driver for these staffing proposals; however, current workload pressures, risks to operational continuity and the need to deliver a consistently better resident experience must also be recognised as key factors. The Council's expanding

responsibilities, growing asset base and increasing public expectations now require a staffing structure that is resilient, professional and aligned to the Council's future operating model.

2. Context: Devolution, Current Pressures and Resident Expectation

Devolution has significantly expanded Minehead Town Council's functions, workforce and community-facing responsibilities. As a result, demand for local, face-to-face assistance has increased and there is now a far greater requirement for coordinated asset management, structured workforce leadership, compliance oversight and responsive public communication.

These challenges are currently being met by just three office-based staff, only two of whom are full-time. This capacity is no longer sustainable. Workload routinely exceeds what can reasonably be delivered, placing the organisation at risk of service inconsistency, reduced resilience and staff burnout.

Alongside devolution, these **current pressure points**, combined with the Council's commitment to improving the resident experience, form the basis of this business case.

3. Administration Officer

3.1 Strategic Need

The Administration Officer post will strengthen and stabilise the Council's administrative capacity. The intent is not duplication, but the creation of a cohesive, resilient administrative team that can:

- Share and divide responsibilities clearly
- Provide cover during absence, sickness and peak workload
- Ensure consistent office presence and continuity of service

This structure addresses both the increased workload arising from devolution and the operational pressures currently faced by the existing team.

3.2 Customer-Facing Service as a Core Requirement

A key function of the role is frontline customer service, including:

- Managing telephone enquiries
- Handling email correspondence
- Providing face-to-face support at the Council office
- Resolving routine local issues without default referral to Somerset Council

Improved staffing will enable the office to open to the public five days per week, ensuring residents receive timely, localised support. This directly strengthens the resident experience, one of the core drivers of this proposal.

3.3 Division of Responsibilities and Complementary Working

While both administrative officers will be capable of covering core duties, each will also hold primary areas of responsibility, such as:

- General office administration and coordination
- Meeting preparation and democratic support
- Website, social media and communications
- Community asset bookings and liaison
- Finance system data entry and routine processing

This approach ensures clear accountability, prevents duplication, builds resilience and provides flexibility to adapt to future pressures or service changes.

3.4 Supporting Organisational Resilience and Senior Officer Capacity

Strengthening the administrative function will:

- Reduce dependency on senior officers for routine tasks
- Protect time for statutory, governance and strategic work
- Improve resilience during absence or peak demand
- Reduce risk associated with single-point-of-failure roles

4. Head of Amenities & Assets

4.1 Strategic Need

With an expanded workforce and asset base following devolution, the Council requires a senior post to provide consistent operational leadership, workforce oversight, asset management and risk control. This role will ensure that public spaces, amenities and community assets are managed professionally and efficiently.

4.2 Expected Benefits

Value for Money

Centralised oversight enables structured planning, coordinated working and improved budget control. This reduces reactive spending, avoids duplication and ensures whole-life asset value is managed properly.

Workforce Leadership and Productivity

The role delivers:

- Clear expectations, standards and supervision
- Consistent coaching and performance management
- Faster decision-making and issue resolution

Work Scheduling and Deployment

The post provides systemised scheduling, seasonal planning and risk-based prioritisation, maximising workforce output and improving consistency across the town.

Asset and Estate Management

The role leads on accurate asset records, planned maintenance, risk compliance and lifecycle costing, all of which reduce unplanned expenditure and improve service reliability.

Service Continuity and Resilience

As the operational point of leadership, this post strengthens continuity across the organisation during staff absence, peak workload or emergencies.

Events and Public Realm Standards

Professional oversight of event planning, logistics, risk management and stewarding enhances safety, compliance and public experience.

Reduced Pressure on Senior Officers

By taking ownership of day-to-day operational oversight, this role frees senior officers to focus on governance, strategic planning, financial management and future devolution preparation.

Future-Proofing and Income Opportunities

The structure creates capacity to absorb further devolved services and potentially generate income by supporting neighbouring parish councils.

5. Financial Considerations

Budget Availability

Funding is in place from 1 April 2026 to recruit both posts on a full-time basis at the recommended grades (Administration Officer SCP 7–12; Head of Amenities & Assets SCP 28–33).

Value for Money

Both posts improve efficiency, reduce risk and strengthen internal control. Expanding administrative capacity reduces the need for costly senior officer intervention in routine tasks. Strengthened asset management lowers unplanned maintenance costs and improves budgeting accuracy.

Cost Avoidance

Benefits include:

- Reduced error correction costs

- Better health and safety compliance
- Reduced risk of staff burnout
- Smaller likelihood of reactive, unplanned spending

6. Legal and Governance Considerations

The main legal considerations for the recruitment of additional staff are:

- **Local Government Act 1972 (s.111 & s.112)** – powers to appoint officers required for proper function delivery.
- **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974** – duty of care to employees and the public.
- **Accounts and Audit Regulations** – internal control and proper financial practice.

7. Staffing Sub-Committee

The Staffing Sub-Committee has reviewed this proposal and recommends that Full Council approve the creation of both posts and proceed with the recruitment process.

8. Implementation Timeline & Delegated Authority

Recruitment typically requires 8–12 weeks, including advertising, shortlisting, interviews, pre-employment checks and notice periods.

Delegated authority is requested for the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Staffing Sub-Committee, to:

- Advertise both posts
- Shortlist and interview applicants
- Make conditional offers and complete employment checks
- Confirm appointments with start dates from 1 April 2026

9. Recommendation

That the Council:

1. Approves the creation of the Administration Officer and Head of Amenities & Assets posts as permanent roles.
2. Notes that funding exists from 1st April 2026 for both posts at the recommended SCP grades.
3. Delegates authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Staffing Sub-Committee, to progress recruitment and appointment.