



# Office Secretary for the Bishop of Chester

## BACKGROUND PAPER

<b>Office Secretary</b>
<b><i>Current position</i></b>
<p>The role of Office Secretary for the Bishop of Chester is offered as a 0.6fte permanent position. It is based in Bishop's House Chester, with a requirement for daily attendance at the office.</p> <p>The Office of the Bishop of Chester primarily enables the ministry of the Bishop of Chester, but this ministry is shared with the Bishops of Stockport and Birkenhead who are also supported from this office.</p>
<b><i>Overview of the role</i></b>
<p>This is a responsible post on the Bishop's personal staff demanding a high degree of confidentiality, sensitivity, and reliability. The postholder's role is to enable the ministry of the Bishop and support the Bishop's Chaplain in doing so. The work is detailed, administrative, and serves to communicate and promote the Bishop's values and priorities.</p> <p>In a nutshell this postholder will be a 'black-belt at the routine', taking delight in processing letters, e-mails, minutes, and the various administrative paraphernalia that mark any modern office context. They will work in a warm and supportive team which provides mutual cover in a shared task, and need to be willing to champion the distinctively Christian ethos of the Diocese of Chester. The work is office-based with significant time spent at the computer and on the telephone.</p> <p>This is a multifaceted post, working at the direction of the Bishop's chaplain to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• share and promote the Bishops' vision for the diocese</li><li>• offer timely, collated, and appropriate responses to routine communications with the Bishop</li><li>• collate and provide material (for example liturgical orders) in accessible and appropriate format and a timely matter</li><li>• support the Chaplain in servicing key committees which the Bishop chairs</li><li>• contribute generously and appropriately to shared work of the Bishop's Office.</li><li>• ensure that everything that is needed to facilitate the ministry of the Bishop is at hand</li></ul>
<b><i>Key relationships</i></b>
<p>The post-holder will demonstrate good working relationships with the following key groups and people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Bishop</li><li>• The Bishop's Chaplain</li><li>• The Bishops' Personal Staff (office teams, gardener, cleaners, and temporary staff)</li><li>• The Bishops of Birkenhead and Stockport</li><li>• The Archdeacons of Macclesfield and Chester</li><li>• The Bishop's Staff Meeting members (Directors, Core, People and Places)</li><li>• The Diocesan staff of Church House Daresbury</li><li>• National Church partners (Archbishops' Council, Ministry Council, General Synod)</li></ul> <p>Bishop's House is also the residence of the Bishop and his family. It will be important to relate to the Bishop's family in a friendly and helpful way.</p> <p>The Bishop of Chester in his corporate capacity will act as employer.</p>

<b><i>Terms of appointment</i></b>
<p>The Office Secretary is located within the Bishop's Personal Staff, and sharing the flexibility and mutual cover of that team. There is inevitable overlap of work and responsibilities within the team.</p>
<b><i>Salary</i></b>
<p>£13,154 per year (for 21 hours per week)</p>
<b><i>Pension Contributions</i></b>

Non-clergy staff will be automatically enrolled into the in the Pension Builder 2014 Pension Plan (PB2014) in line with legislation unless they choose to opt out.
<b><i>Hours of work</i></b>
The Office Secretary will be expected to work in the office during office hours, normatively with a presence in the office each day of the working week. There will be opportunity, from time to time, to be involved with events that fall outside office hours but this is not a core requirement of the role.
<b><i>Annual Leave</i></b>
The holiday entitlement is 25 days plus 8 bank holidays. This entitlement will be pro-rated as the post is part-time.
<b><i>Contract</i></b>
The post is subject to a six-month probationary period.
<b><i>Notice</i></b>
<p>If the Office Secretary wants to leave this employment (s)he must give the Bishop one months' notice in writing.</p> <p>During the probationary period the Bishop may terminate the Secretary's employment by giving one week's written notice or pay in lieu of notice.</p> <p>Following the successful completion of the probationary period, the Bishop must give one month's notice, or pay in lieu of notice, to terminate this employment.</p> <p>Dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct may involve terminating the employment without notice.</p>
<b><i>Professional Development</i></b>
The Bishop is keen to nurture the growth, development and vocation of his staff. He aims to ensure that all staff can develop their own interests, and that roles are partly shaped by the personality and gifts of those appointed to them.
<b><i>Expenses</i></b>
It is not envisaged that any expenses will be accrued as a part of this role, but agreed expenses would be met in full if they arose.
<b><i>Appraisal</i></b>
There will be an annual appraisal by the Bishop's Chaplain.
<b><i>General conditions for the Bishop's Personal Staff</i></b>
<b><i>Standards of Behaviour and Conduct</i></b>
Staff are expected to act at all times with due consideration for others and in a manner befitting their position as employees of the Church and as professionals, whatever their job.
<b><i>Safeguarding Responsibilities</i></b>
Staff are expected to comply with safeguarding requirements of the Church of England at all times. The staff of Bishop's House do this willingly, cheerfully, and supportively, fostering an environment in which all are respected, valued, and protected.
<b><i>Health and Safety Responsibilities</i></b>
<p>All staff are required to ensure that they understand and accept the legal duties placed on them by the Health and Safety at Work Act not to endanger themselves or others, and by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations to co-operate with colleagues and management in the control of health and safety at work. And therefore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to read and understand and abide by the health and safety policy;</li> <li>• to make themselves familiar with accident and emergency procedures on their site;</li> <li>• to make themselves familiar with the findings of any risk assessments which might affect them;</li> <li>• to inform their manager immediately of any health or safety deficiencies or dangerous situations or near misses;</li> <li>• to set a good personal example in respect of health and safety.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Confidentiality</i></b>
Staff must not pass on to unauthorised persons any information obtained in the course of their duties without the permission of their manager.
<b><i>January 2024</i></b>

## Person Specification

Office Secretary
<b>Essential skills and attributes:</b>
Ability to write with clarity, sensitivity, and care.
Demonstrably highly computer literate and familiar with Microsoft Office and similar programmes (for example able to use mail-merge to produce complex mailings or manipulate spreadsheets). Have proven administrative and drafting skills.
Evident sympathy with, and willingness to support, the ethos and values of the Church of England.
Show maturity in outlook, being at ease and secure with themselves.
Work to the Bishop's agenda and priorities, and act accordingly in a timely manner using sound judgement and appropriate initiative.
Be able to communicate effectively with a wide range of people within the church and those belonging to institutions, organisations and other groups beyond the Church of England.
Work with accurate attention to detail, sometimes under deadline pressure; showing good judgement and ability to spot problems or issues.
Be adaptable and flexible, able to enjoy working under pressure, to prioritise tasks, work to deadlines, and meet a broad set of demands.
Provide and oversee a non-anxious presence in the office: in person, on the telephone and in digital communication.
Welcome, serve and care for those who interact with the Bishops and maintain a working environment conducive to a Bishop's House.
Demonstrate the skills in human relations necessary for effective personal work; be able to handle difficult and sensitive matters with tact and diplomacy; be able to maintain strict confidentiality.
Maintain total confidentiality in all matters, comfortably dealing with safeguarding and other highly sensitive areas.
<b>Desirable skills and attributes:</b>
<i>Date: January 2024</i>

# Job Description

Office Secretary
<b>Job Title</b>
Office Secretary
<b>Reports to</b>
The Executive Chaplain to the Bishop of Chester
<b>Stipend / Salary</b>
£21,924 (pro-rata)
<b>Hours of work</b>
0.6fte over 5 days
<b>Normal place of work</b>
Bishop's House, Chester
<b>Overall Purpose of the Post</b>
<p>This is a responsible post on the Bishop's personal staff demanding a high degree of confidentiality, sensitivity, and reliability. The postholder's role is to enable the ministry of the Bishop and support the Bishop's Chaplain in doing so. The work is detailed, administrative, and serves to communicate and promote the Bishop's values and priorities.</p> <p>In a nutshell this postholder will be a 'black-belt at the routine', taking delight in processing letters, e-mails, minutes, and the various administrative paraphernalia that mark any modern office context. They will work in a warm and supportive team which provides mutual cover in a shared task, and need to be willing to champion the distinctively Christian ethos of the Diocese of Chester. The work is office-based with significant time spent at the computer and on the telephone.</p> <p>This is a multifaceted post, working at the direction of the Bishop's chaplain to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• share and promote the Bishops' vision for the diocese</li> <li>• offer timely, collated, and appropriate responses to routine communications with the Bishop</li> <li>• collate and provide material (for example liturgical orders) in accessible and appropriate format and a timely matter</li> <li>• support the Chaplain in servicing key committees which the Bishop chairs</li> <li>• contribute generously and appropriately to shared work of the Bishop's Office.</li> </ul> <p>ensure that everything that is needed to facilitate the ministry of the Bishop is at hand</p> <p>Bishop's House is also the residence of the Bishop and his family. It will be important to relate to the Bishop's family in a friendly and helpful way.</p>
<b>Duties</b>
For convenience and clarity these are grouped under headings, but there is considerable overlap.
<b>The Big Picture</b>
<p>Enable the smooth running of the Bishop's office by dealing with paperwork efficiently and effectively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda collation for Bishop's Staff Meetings</li> <li>• Enabling process of communication with other offices</li> <li>• Active clergy file administration and liaison</li> <li>• Receiving, responding to, and dealing efficiently with emails</li> <li>• Opening incoming post when addressed to the Bishop and dealing with letters where appropriate</li> <li>• Handling a wide range of telephone enquiries with confidence, diplomacy and tact – answering queries directly or passing them on to the Bishop, his Chaplain or to other places</li> <li>• Writing letters, documents and reports, as required</li> </ul> <p>To provide and oversee a non-anxious presence in person, on the telephone, and in digital communications, to welcome, serve and care for those interact with the Bishop and maintain a working environment conducive to a Bishop's house.</p>
<b>The Context</b>
To take an active part as a member the Bishop's office team, sharing the flexibility and mutual cover.
<b>Pastoral</b>

All staff working for and with the Bishops of the Diocese of Chester will give proper care and attention to matters of safeguarding, including attending training, careful handling of confidential information, and proper reporting of disclosures.
<b><i>Managerial / Administrative</i></b>
Work in accordance with the GDPR requirements.
Oversee the agenda and minutes for BSM, Rural Deans, and Bishop's Advisers meetings, all of which the Bishop chairs. Proactively ensure that meetings discuss appropriate material and action points are taken forward. Ensure that the Bishop's action points are taken forward.
Act as clerk to the Chester Clergy Family Charitable Trust (CCFCT)
Ensure that key documents in the Bishops' Office(s) are up to date and secure, such as the Bishop's Guidelines.
Administrative support in keeping clergy files up to date.
<b><i>Liturgical and other Material</i></b>
Production and layout of material as directed
<b><i>And, of course ...</i></b>
Undertake whatever other tasks the Bishop may reasonably require
To undertake an annual appraisal and training as required
<b><i>January 2024</i></b>
Note – this job description does not form part of your Contract of Employment.