

# MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

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Name: **Andrew Graham James BIRKS**

Contact details: [REDACTED]

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			X		
Local government		X			
Civil service	X				
<b>Professional skills</b>					
Experience of chairing board / committee meetings					X
Experience of professional leadership					X
Financial planning / management					X
Mediation					X
IT				X	
Strategic planning					X
Training Received (please give brief details of specific area of training)					
Trained in Leadership, Planning, Financial Planning and Budgets in the police when working in the role as Staff Officer.					
Trained in Leadership, Planning and Budgets in roles as a priest. I also serve as Rural Dean for the Deanery of Shingay which is a Leadership role covering 19 churches.					
<b>Skills that may be useful on Parish Council Committees</b>					
Financial planning / management					X
Procurement / tenders					X
Health and Safety					X
Insurance	X				
Pensions	X				
HR				X	
Legal [please give brief details of specific area of expertise]					
Trained in Criminal Law and legal processes in the police. Worked closely with prosecution teams covering large investigations in fraud and kidnap. Also have experience of working in legal jurisdiction in foreign countries – USA, Ireland and Caribbean.					
Have a master's degree in law and currently studying for a PhD in Law with Northumbria University.					
Premises and facilities management	X				

Please give brief details of particular local interest / knowledge				
<p><u>Planning</u></p> <p>As a church lawyer I have a good working knowledge of the planning process within the Consistory Court process. This has included working on projects that need parallel Planning Permission through local authority.</p> <p>As incumbent of the parish churches at Melbourn and Meldreth, I am also acutely aware of the need to protect our listed buildings and working with consultative groups and organisations to support them.</p>				
<p><u>Youth work</u></p> <p>As a priest I have been involved in several projects involving young people. This includes working as a Chaplain with the Royal Air Force Cadets in Brighton and working as a medic for a local football team. I am keen to support projects which help our young people have an interest, but also help them to achieve and develop, and gain skills for the future.</p>				
<p><u>Conservation</u></p> <p>As a priest, I am responsible for the churchyards under my care and have recently enrolled both churches in the 'Eco Churches' program. Our role as a community parish includes leading and supporting local initiatives to protect and conserve our environment for future generations. Recently, we have implemented measures such as introducing bat boxes and hedgehog hotels within the churchyard and creating a protected area for rare wildflowers.</p>				
<p><u>Volunteering</u></p> <p>Most of my role in the community is as a priest, and I therefore can lend my support to many local projects, such as the All Saints' Community Hall. I have also volunteered as a Chaplain, First Aider and volunteer to legal support colleagues facing disciplinary processes.</p>				
Please give details of any particular area/s of the Parish Council where you feel you would benefit from additional support or training				
<p>Planning Processes.</p> <p>Finance/Budgets</p>				

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

All my work as a priest has been with the aim of bringing our parish and the community closer together. I have worked hard to create a church where the community have a central role in managing and using the building. I also seek to work in the public interest and do not seek personal reward for the work I do, especially work carried out in addition to my role as priest.

**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

Integrity has always been a central theme for me, both as a police officer (leaving with 'exemplary conduct'), and similarly in my current role. Integrity for me also includes honesty and truth and my legal and faith background have helped to shape my integrity. Therefore, I fully recognise and support the need to ensure that integrity is not compromised by obligations to others, despite and undue influence they may seek to impose.

**Objectivity** : you should act impartially, fairly and on merit

In my professional and personal life, I have always strived to act impartially, fairly, and on merit. My legal training has equipped me with the skills to remain objective and listen to all arguments, ensuring that I make informed and fair decisions. This approach has been a cornerstone of my conduct in various roles, including my current position.

Objectivity is crucial in my decision-making process. I ensure that I consider all perspectives and evidence before reaching a conclusion. This allows me to make decisions based on merit rather than personal biases or external influences. In situations where quick decisions are required, I take the time to pause, reflect, and reassess the information at hand. This ensures that my decisions are well-founded and fair.

In my previous role as a police officer, I demonstrated integrity and impartiality by adhering to the principles of honesty and truth. My exemplary conduct in this role is a testament to my commitment to these values. Similarly, in my current role, I continue to uphold these principles, ensuring that my actions are not influenced by obligations to others or undue pressure.

Overall, my commitment to acting impartially, fairly, and on merit is evident in my professional conduct and decision-making process. I believe that these principles are essential for maintaining integrity and trust in any role.

**Accountability** : you should be prepared to submit to public scrutiny necessary to ensure accountability

Throughout my working life, I have always recognised that I can be held to account for my actions and the decisions I make. It is imperative that we recognise that when we hold public office, we are there to represent the people that we serve, and when they question the decisions, we have made, we are able to show that we have made those decisions fairly and impartial, whilst maintaining personal and organisational integrity. When I worked on the London Riots enquiry, many issues we faced were 'new' and when challenged on why we had made certain investigatory decisions, my record keeping of that decision making process was scrutinised and helped other to understand the process we/I had made.

Openness : you should be open and transparent in your actions and decisions unless there are clear and lawful reasons for non-disclosure

My legal training, and my training for my role as a priest has helped me to appreciate and recognise the need to be open and transparent, but also recognising when we do not need to share and/or where confidentiality is imperative – both permanently and time limited, for example, the process may be confidential until a decision has been made or an embargo has expired, as was often the case in many court processes I have been involved in.

I am fully aware of the issues of data protection, GDPR and the classification of documents.

Honesty : you should always be truthful

I would hope that both my previous role as a police officer and my current role as a priest would support my honesty and integrity but also would like to offer that I am supportive of policies and processes within organisations that support honesty and openness – because this in turn can strengthen and grow an organisation, learning from honest feedback and reports.

Leadership : as a councillor, you should promote, support and exhibit high standards of conduct and be willing to challenge poor behaviour

I have identified my Leadership roles above, but as a Leader, I also expect high standards of conduct from others who I work with and for. I always seek a working environment where people are encouraged to develop and grow, in an environment which is accepting of all, and where differences are seen as strengths and not weaknesses. In my role as a parish priest, I have had to challenge bad behaviour within the church. Confronting that behaviour is not often an easy process in itself, but often we focus too much time on those whose behaviour is brought into question, rather than those who need our help. I have dealt with bullying and homophobia which has caused some personal pain, but by dealing with the bullies robustly, it has opened paths for others to step forward. I have attended the 'Bridgebuilders' course which is a course the Church of England have run, to deal with challenging behaviour and mediation.

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## LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEING A PARISH COUNCILLOR

(To qualify 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
Are you 18 or over?	Yes

(To qualify 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?	Yes
Have you lived either in the Parish of Melbourn, or within three miles of its boundary, for at least a year?	Yes
Have you been the owner or tenant of land in the Parish of Melbourn for at least a year?	Yes
Have you had your only or main place of work in the Parish of Melbourn for at least a year?	Yes

## DISQUALIFICATIONS

(To qualify 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?	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?	No
Are you disqualified by Order of a Court from being a member of a local authority?	No