



## **CERTIFYING DOCUMENTS POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

In response to an increasing trend for foreign nationals and others requesting town, parish and community council clerks to certify their identity or other legal documents for them, Goring-on-Thames Parish Council has agreed that members and officers of the Parish Council can certifying legal documents if the requirement is specified on the document and it is eligible in law, but only if it is clear the person signing is doing so in a personal capacity and that is written clearly on the document.

### **2. Charge**

The Parish Council has agreed to levy a charge of £15 for the service regardless of how many documents were presented by an individual at one time. This is a nominal charge to recoup costs as we are providing a service to a person otherwise than for commercial purpose.  
[Localism Act 2011, s 3(1)(a)]

### **3. Advise from Society of Local Council Clerks**

- You should only sign to confirm another person's identity, if you actually do know the person and can personally vouch for his or her identity. A minimum period may apply to the length of time you must have known that person.
- If a town or parish clerk is doing this, then he or she should be signing in an individual capacity, although it is perfectly acceptable to add 'Clerk to X Parish Council' etc as this is their job title.
- The parish council cannot vouch for an individual's identity, but the parish council may give its consent to the clerk, acting in a personal capacity, signing to vouch for the identity of individuals within office hours etc, and may be happy for the clerk to apply any parish council stamp to documents, provided it is clear that the clerk is signing in his/her individual capacity and not on behalf of the parish council.
- The clerk may be asked to certify that a document is a true copy of an original produced before him/her or to witness a signature. The clerk should only do this in a personal capacity and should take care to check what it is that they are being asked to confirm. Is the Clerk confident that the documents are genuine?
- Depending on the nature of the documents concerned or the jurisdiction for which they are being completed, the clerk may or may not be a suitable person to sign, but that is an issue for the individual making the request rather than for the clerk.



#### **4. Review**

This document was approved for use at the meeting of the Parish Council on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021, it shall be reviewed periodically, at least once per council term or if legislation dictates.

Signed:

Dated: 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021

K Bulmer, Chairman