

The role of Clerk is to ensure that the Council as a whole conducts its business properly and to provide independent, objective and professional advice and support.

The Clerk is an employee of the Parish Council. Currently it is unpaid.

Parish Councils are part of local government in Hampshire.

The County Council is responsible for strategic services such as highways, education, libraries social services, strategic planning and refuse disposal.

District councils are responsible for local services including housing, local planning and refuse collection.

The Parish and Town councils in the county are often viewed as the part of government closest to the people. They are the only local government tier that represents residents at parish level.

Importantly Parish Councils can "precept" - raising a council tax each year to improve facilities and services for local people.

Their powers and duties cover many things that we take for granted in making for comfort and wellbeing where we live. These include the provision and maintenance of (in Hartley Wespall), litter bins, rights of ways, bus shelters, and the village green.

Parish Councils also comment on planning applications and can be represented at public inquiries.

All Parish Council meetings are open to the public. They are led by the Council's Chairman and advised by a Clerk who is there to see that business is conducted within the law.

A job description will always list the duties in detail but here's a useful summary:

- ensures that the council conducts its business lawfully
- administers all the council's paperwork
- Responsible for setting dates for meetings, preparing Agendas, taking Minutes and publishing these on the village website.
- Maintains the website and publishes events and advice on the web where needed.
- Oversees implication of decisions made at council meetings

- Controls bank and finance, reporting regularly to the PC. Paying bills, providing Financial Statements, Annual Accounts and VAT returns.
- Provides annual budget and submits Precept to Hampshire CC.
- Provides annual reports to internal and external auditors
- Maintains Asset Register
- Provides and keeps Risk Assessments
- Keeps registers and other legal documents including Electoral Role
- Oversees elections and appointment of new councillors
- Keeps up to date by training /qualification

Most council meetings are held 'out of hours' so being a part time clerk is not just a daytime activity.

What about training?

Soon after taking up post you will be expected to attend an Induction Course. You have the opportunity to then go on to complete the nationally recognised Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) if you wish.

Skills and attributes needed

Clerks usually pride themselves in having a good deal of common sense, confidence to handle the administrative work, being a good organiser, IT literate and able to get on with most people..

Go along to parish council meetings to see how things are done, talk to clerks and councillors about the role.