

### **What is a Parish Council?**

A Parish Council is the first tier of local government. It is an elected body, with limited responsibilities for its area, or civil parish. This is an administrative parish, not an ecclesiastical parish and should not be confused with the Parochial Church Council.

**Barnham Parish Council** is composed of seven councillors and a clerk. The councillors all act in a voluntary capacity and decide issues by majority consensus. Councillors are required to stand for re-election every four years if they wish to remain councillors. Persons wishing to stand for election as parish councillors must be nominated by two parishioners at the next election which normally take place at the same time as elections for the unitary authority. When unexpected vacancies occur between elections, candidates can be co-opted on to the parish council. The Chairman is elected by councillors.

**The Clerk** is the only member who receives a salary and remains independent from any decisions reached by the council. The clerk's role is to guide the council on law and procedures; research and prepare reports; prepare and service of meetings; execute decisions of the council and functions delegated by the council; deal with correspondence and plan council activity. The clerk is also the Responsible Financial officer.