

West Rainton Parish Council – 16 March 2017

Item 12: Update on Project Officer role

Report of Chairman, Cllr Wallage

Background

Members will recall an update on the role of the Project Officer, Mr Graeme Keedy, was considered at the September 2016 meeting.

Following consideration, it was resolved to extend this role until the 31st March 2017

Update on work carried out by the Project Officer

Graeme has provided an update on the Project Officer Task Action Plan and this is attached as an Appendix.

Over the last few months, much of Graeme's time has been spent working in liaison with the new Parish Clerk to induct and provide advice as and when issues arise eg. external audit of accounts, councillor vacancies, dealing with requests for information from members of the public and councillors. Often subject matters have to be researched before an informed response can be provided.

Cemetery development and related contractual issues has also required considerable attention in recent months. The cemetery also gives rise to several inquiries from members of the public on an ongoing basis eg. the identification of graves and their ownership. This is often time consuming due to the historical records held by the council and inconsistencies with information provided by the public or funeral directors. Such queries require thorough and sensitive handling. Further work will be required in relation to the recommendations made by Cemetery Development Services, particularly around implementing a revised burial plan with environmental and landscaping improvements.

The need of continued support from the Project Officer

It is evident, that the current contractual hours of the Parish Clerk of 10 hours is insufficient to deal with all the current issues and the day to day management of the cemetery, let alone any new or development issues arising. The May parish council election and the potential for new members, together with the implementation of the Parish Plan, are also likely to increase the workload.

West Rainton Parish Council - 16 March 2017

Item 12: Update on Project Officer role cont ...

The Parish Clerk has advised that he is not in a position to undertake any additional hours and consequently there is an on going need for an additional staff resource.

Budget position and Proposal

Provision was made in the draft 2017/18 budget approved by Parish Council at its January meeting for a total staff resource of 20 hours per week for the whole year.

It is therefore proposed that:

- The Role of Project Officer is extended until the 30 September at the current hours of 10 hours a week.
- A further update on the work of the Project Officer is considered at the September meeting.

**Cllr Avril Wallage
March 2017**