

# **West Rainton & Leamside Parish Council - 17 Sept 2015**

## **Agenda item 13:**

### **Staffing and resource issues – report of Chairman**

The Parish Clerk has indicated his intention to step down from the role.

The contractual notice period required is one month, but the Parish Clerk is clear that if Parish Council so wishes he will continue in post up to 30 November, allowing time for a successor to be appointed and for a transitional period to enable a smooth hand over.

In his tenure to date, the Parish Clerk has identified two distinct aspects of the role:

Day to day administration and servicing of Parish Council business and meetings including financial management.

Developmental aspects - including a review of cemetery management and records to comply with legal requirements; updating of policies and procedures; compilation of records relating to the ownership of land and other assets; updating and sorting of parish council records and establishment of a filing system; back dated VAT claims; development of a risk register; commitment to achieving Foundation Level of the Local Council Award Scheme; learning and development for elected members.

These aspects combined with a significant level of correspondence relating to Freedom of Information requests and other correspondence have seen the need for Parish Council to agree to increase the Parish Clerk's contractual hours from 10 to 15 / week (until 31 March 2016).

The appointment of the current Parish Clerk in September 2014 was at a time of particular instability for the Parish Council.

During his tenure, the Clerk has gained significant knowledge of the Parish Council's recent history and identified and reported upon a range of issues requiring attention to further improve the effective running and development of the Parish Council.

There is a probability that a new Parish Clerk would, upon taking up appointment be unable to maintain full continuity and a significant period of learning and development would be required before further progress could reasonably be expected.

To ensure momentum is maintained, it may be necessary to engage additional staff resources for a time limited period in the form of a part time project officer role, specifically to progress the developmental aspects described above.

Parish Council should note that budget provision has previously been agreed for 2015-16 of payments for staffing of up to 25.00hrs / week.

Parish Council is asked to agree to:

- 1) Recruit a new Parish Clerk as soon as possible in line with the attached job description and provisional timetable below:

Vacancy notification published - Friday 18 September 2015

Closing date – Wednesday 30 September 2015

Shortlisting – week ending Friday 2 October 2015

Interviews - week commencing 12 October 2015

Start date – 2 November 2015 or as soon as possible thereafter.

- 2) Consider the appointment of a post of part-time project officer, on a fixed term basis, with a remit to progress developmental and aspirational aspects of Parish Council business. A proposed job description/person specification is attached with an expected start date of 1 December or soon as possible thereafter.

- 3) The formation of an appointments panel with full delegated responsibility to recruit and appoint a Parish Clerk, the outcome of which to be reported to the meeting of the Parish Council on 15 October 2015.

- 4) That if the parish council approve the appointment of the post of project officer that this be offered to our existing parish clerk, as our only existing and eligible employee, before the post is advertised externally.