

Tanfield Parish Council

MINUTES OF A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

DATE: 30th July 2012
TIME: 19.40 hrs
LOCATION: West Tanfield Memorial Hall
PRESENT: Councillors David Parkinson (Chairman), Jim Beadle, Steve Houston and Peter Hull.
IN ATTENDANCE: Iona Taylor (Clerk)
Dick Lonsdale, John Moxon, Brian Porteus and Bob Trehitt.

1. WELCOME FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Councillor Parkinson welcomed all those present to the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA – none.

3. APOLOGIES – none.

4. GRASSCUTTING

The Parish Council considered further information about the cost of providing training for Brian Porteus. Councillor Houston advised that it would, because of Brian Porteus' experience in this field, be possible to immediately arrange a one-day course to LANTRA standards covering his use of a strimmer, push-along and ride-on mowers at a cost of £275. If it were possible to wait until Spring 2013 then Brian Porteus could join an in-house training session with Councillor Houston's company which would be free of charge to the Parish Council.

The Clerk reported on advice from YLCA which indicates that whether or not this is what has previously been assumed, Mr Porteus is an employee of the Parish Council which raises a number of other issues, such as PAYE, NI and minimum wage.

A number of options were considered:

- a) To continue with the existing arrangements but immediately arrange training for Brian Porteus and regularise the employment issues. This option would have a total cost implication of about £1,000.
- b) To contract the Walled Garden Scheme to carry out the cutting for which they had provided an estimate of £560 per year.
- c) For Brian Porteus to become a self-employed contractor and to rent the Parish Council's equipment. This would have a cost implication as per the current budget of £760.18. This option was discounted by Brian Porteus and Parish Councillors.
- d) To ask the Parish Council's insurers whether, in view of Brian Porteus' good safety record and experience using lawnmowers and other machinery, they will insure the West Tanfield grasscutting activities as per the existing arrangements for the rest of the season on the proviso that appropriate training, safety equipment and risk assessments are put in place for the 2013 season. The Parish Council would also need to regularise the employment issues. This would have a cost implication as per the current budget of £760.18.

It was agreed that the Clerk should work to try and achieve option d, but that if the Parish Council's insurers do not agree to this the Walled Garden Scheme should be asked to take over the cutting for the rest of the 2012 season until Brian Porteus can be trained at a reasonable cost to the Parish Council.

The Parish Council re-considered the issue of the gift of a ride-on mower. As per the previous decision of the Council (ref. meeting on 30th May 2012) it was agreed that the ride-on mower should not be kept by the Parish Council. This is because the additional maintenance requirements would render the current arrangements uneconomical.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS – none.

6. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting (for planning and urgent items) was confirmed as being on 13th August 2012.

7. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE NEXT MEETING – none.

Meeting closed at 21.14 hrs.

These minutes were recorded and prepared by Iona Taylor, Clerk to the Parish Council.

SIGNED: (Chairman)

DATE: