

MINUTES OF CORNFORTH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: **MARCH 2016.**

Minutes of the meeting of Cornforth Parish Council held at 7.00pm, in the Community Centre, Cornforth, on Monday 14th March 2016.

Present: Councillor Mr. A. Hodgson and

Councillors: Mr. C. Baker, Mr. T. Cutmore, Mrs. H. P. Drew, Dr. S. C. Drew, Mr. P. Metcalfe, Mrs. S. Neville, Mrs. M. Poole, Mr. R. Poole, Mr. M. Simpson, Mrs. S. Traynor, Mr. R. Vaughan, Mrs. M. Walker and Mr. A. Wilson.

Apologies: Councillors: Mr. C. Hodgson.

1. APOLOGIES.

The above apology was noted and accepted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

The following declarations of a personal or prejudicial interest were made with regard to item 15 on the agenda: Councillors Mr. T. Cutmore, Mrs. H. P. Drew, Mr. A. Hodgson, Mrs. S. Neville, Mr. M. Simpson and Mrs. S. Traynor.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14th February 2016, a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman. In doing so, the Clerk thanked Mrs. Wilson for pointing out that he may have misled Members over the issue of external auditors, thus ensuring that the minutes on item 7(iii) reflected the true legal position.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT COVERED ON THE AGENDA

There were no matters arising that were not included on this agenda.

5. POLICE LIAISON

The Vice Chairman advised Members that whilst he had not been able to attend the last meeting, the main concern of the police was the spate of burglaries reported in terraced property across south Durham.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mrs. Wilson attended the meeting but made no request to speak on any item.

7. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

At the time of the despatch of this agenda no correspondence had been received.

8. AAP ISSUES

The Chairman as an elected member of the AAP Board advised members that the Task and Finish Groups were in operation and that the second round of meetings would be held this week.

9. COUNTY COUNCIL ISSUES

Our County Councillor representative reported on Durham County Council issues that have arisen since the last meeting:

- i) A request had been received from residents to relocate the bus stop near the Three Arches Bridge. The result would seem to mean that the rear of any bus would be under the bridge. Whilst the Police and the Highways Department support the proposals as an improvement, Members resolved to object on the grounds that the rear of a standard bus would be under the bridge causing an obstruction and blocking access to a garage.
- ii) There would be a temporary road closure on the Green on 23rd March 2016 to allow the County Council to prune trees.
- iii) The County Council would no longer be cutting grass on private property. This will affect property in the village owned by "livin".

10. BANK RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS – POSITION AT 29th FEBRUARY 2016.

The Clerk circulated the current bank reconciliation statements and a comparison of this year's budget to actual expenditure for this period at the meeting. The report was received.

11. SCHEDULE OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS TO 29th FEBRUARY 2016.

Receipts		£	Cheque No.
Payments			
R. A. Sunman	Allowances	94.79	724
J. W. Smith	Power cleaning	144.00	725
Durham County Council	Playground inspection	984.79	726
Cornforth Partnership	Awards for All (final claim)	718.20	727
Royal British Legion	Wreathes	315.00	728
R. B. Legion Men's Section	Contribution	30.00	729
R. B. Legion Women's Section	Contribution	30.00	730
R.A.O.B. Sphere Lodge	Contribution	30.00	731
Salvation Army	Contribution	30.00	732
West Cornforth & District Community Association	Wreathes	36.00	733
Altogether Greener	Ground maintenance	2,533.33	734
Durham County Council	Planning fee	97.50	735
Chilton Town Council	Civic dinner	44.00	736
Blanchere Illumination	Christmas motif hire	1,574.76	737
R. A. Sunman	Salary	666.10	S/O
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	7,328.47	
	NET EXPENDITURE	7,328.47	

RECOMMENDATION: The schedule was approved.

12. QUEEN'S 90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS.

Members had instructed the Clerk to investigate the cost of purchasing a beacon in order to take part in the above celebrations. He reported that the cost is £299.00 plus VAT plus the cost of a gas cylinder, which will give about 30 minutes life. The beacon would need to be operated by two people, present during the event. The event, which will obviously be outdoors, would require a license from Durham County Council. Thereafter, the beacon would need to be stored safely. Members resolved not to hold an event but to seek an alternative method of marking this significant birthday. The Clerk then advised Members that Cornforth Junior and Infant School is to celebrate the Queen's birthday with a tea party. Both the school and this Council had been asked by the Royal Mint if they wished to mark the event by acquiring commemorative medals to give to children and other residents. The cost of each medal is £1.99, plus VAT and packaging/postage. The school has 195 pupils, giving a total medal cost of around £390.00, plus VAT and packaging/postage. Members agreed that the Parish council would meet the cost of providing commemorative medals to the children.

13. ALLOTMENT ISSUES.

The Clerk advised Members that following the last meeting the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Allotments Committee had met with several of the tenants to discuss changes to the terms and conditions of allotment tenancies. The revised version of the lease was circulated at the meeting for discussion and approved. Tenants will be asked to sign the new lease prior to rental payment in April. It was further agreed that a summary of the rules would be prepared and sent to the tenants.

Councillor Metcalfe submitted a comprehensive report on recent damage to the gate which had occurred on 9th/10th March. Members discussed the options available to the Council and resolved to examine options and costs for repairing the gate in its current position, replacing it in that position and providing a new gate at the other end of the bridge.

14. PLANNING MATTERS AND APPLICATIONS FROM DURHAM COUNTY'S WEEKLY LISTS.

The Clerk reported on the following applications had been received which are of interest to this Council:

- i) DM/16/00586/FPA – Cornforth Parish Council – Tursdale War Memorial – Erection of a metal statue on the existing war memorial.
- ii) DM/16/ 00290 – Mr. M. Robson – 15 the Green, Cornforth – Erection of first floor and single storey extensions and 2No. roof-lights in front roof slope.

In the same period the County Council had made no decisions on applications of interest to this Council.

Members agreed that as the County web-site was not currently available to provide details on (ii) above the Planning Application Committee discuss them and consider its response.

15. REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

Prior to discussion on this item the Councillors who had declared an interest left the meeting and Councillor S. C. Drew took the Chair. The Clerk advised Members that a letter has been received from Cornforth Partnership seeking financial assistance towards the costs of repairs and improvements to the kitchen in No. 66 High Street. The building is owned by the Parish Council and operated as a community resource by the Partnership. The Partnership had raised £5,106.86 in grants and from its own resources and sought the Council's assistance to fund the outstanding amount, £550.00. Members agreed to fund the outstanding amount, but also to discuss with the Partnership the need to address the overall issue of damp penetration.

16. ROAD SAFETY.

The road safety issues at the school and the lack of working road signs on Garmondsway Road have been reported to the County Council. Letters have been sent to our Member of Parliament and the Health and safety Executive. County Councillor Simpson agree to raise these issues with the Highways Department and to seek a meeting. A Member had asked that an item be placed on this agenda to discuss problems caused by parking on footpaths in the village. The problem of parking on footpaths in the Cornfields estate is particularly acute, causing difficulties for wheelchair users. It was agreed that County Councillor Simpson's meeting include this issue and that the police be invited.

17. WORK IN THE HOLY TRINITY CHURCHYARD.

The Clerk reported that he had sought the agreement of the Church to provide a bench and to fell a number of dead trees in the churchyard. The Archdeacon had given permission for the bench, subject to it having arms to assist the elderly and a paved access. Permission had also been given for the tree removal. However, the Church had wished to charge £212.00 for these permissions. Members noted that the issue had been discussed with the incoming vicar and it had been agreed that as a gesture of goodwill the Parish Council will be reimbursed this fee by the Parochial Church Council if it went ahead with the work.

Members were reminded that the bench is to be provided by Cornforth in Bloom and Durham County Council has been asked to provide a revised quote for the work. Members agreed to seek quotes for the tree work from our ground maintenance contractor. On a related matter it was noted that the "Friends of the Churchyard" will be removing material from the grounds to enable early grass cutting, with the kind assistance of Councillor Walker and Mrs. Wilson.

18. BENCH NEAR THE THREE ARCHES BRIDGE.

Durham County Council had been asked to provide a quote to remove the above bench and had carried out the work.

19. MEMORIAL PLAQUE.

A Member had asked that the Parish Council discuss the provision of a memorial plaque on the bench in Cuthbert Road at this meeting. In the meantime, the residents involved had decided to plant a commemorative tree.

20. LAND IN THE HIGH STREET.,

Durham County Council has been advised of this Council's interest in acquiring part of its land holding on Station Road, at its junction with the High Street. The request, to acquire the freehold of a strip of land 10 metres deep, immediately adjoining the back of footpath, as amenity open space was considered too large and a lesser amount, around 10 feet be acquired. The Clerk had been advised that, subject to a

current review, the land appears to be surplus to the County Council's operational requirements.

21. AWARDS FOR ALL.

A Member requested that the application for Awards For All be placed on the agenda. Mrs. Walker advised the meeting that all Councillors should have a copy of the rules governing grant awards of this nature. In the meantime, the Clerk reported that the Big Lottery Fund had advised the Parish Council with regard to its latest completed award and that its end of grant report had been approved. There is nothing further that we are required to do other than to keep the financial records for seven years. The Parish Council is unable to make any similar applications to this body for 12 months, i.e. for the remaining life of this Council.

22. REPAIR OF PAVING ON THE GREEN.

A Member had requested that the Clerk place an item on this agenda with regard to paving on the north end of the Green. The Clerk advised Members that he had been attempting to acquire the County Council's specification used to replace paving with tarmac in this area so that the Parish Council could use it to replace paving on the south end of the Green. The County Council claims to have no specification or plans that would help us. Members' views were sought on the following course of action:

- i) To instruct the County Council and to pay for it to prepare for us a specification and plans to replace the paving in the two areas of the Green that are worst affected, the north end and Village Farm.
- ii) Upon receipt of the documentation, to seek tenders for the work from the same three companies, which included the County Council that tendered for the repair to the stone work by the Square and Compass.

It was agreed to take this course of action and reduce the risk to the Parish Council that the work would later fail or that the tenders when received would not be directly comparable.

A Member pointed out that further expenditure on the Green might be met with discontent by residents elsewhere in the village. Members accepted the point, but felt that this was an open space available to all and that the risk to the Parish Council needed to be addressed. It was agreed that this be included as an item at the Parish Meeting.

NOTE: At the close of the meeting Members were asked if they had any items for inclusion on a future agenda. None were received.

Signed: Date:

Ray Sunman/Clerk: 24th March 2016.