

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

Minutes of the Meeting of Cornforth Parish Council held at 7.00pm, in the Community Centre, Cornforth, on Monday 13th June 2016.

Present: Councillor Mr. A. Hodgson and

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

Apologies: Councillors: Mrs. S. Neville, Mrs. S. Traynor and Mr. M. Simpson.

1. APOLOGIES.

The above apologies were noted and accepted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of a personal or prejudicial interest made with regard to any item on the agenda.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 9th May 2016, copies of which had been circulated with the agenda were amended as follows:

1. At the Annual General Meeting.

- i) On membership of Cornforth Community Association, Councillor T. Cutmore was added.
- ii) On the membership of the Village Show Committee, Councillor Metcalfe was added in place of Councillor Wilson.
- iii) On the Tarmac Liaison Committee, membership was corrected from Councillor S. Hodgson to Councillor A. Hodgson.
- iv) On Cornforth in Bloom, Councillor Wilson stood down and his replacement was left vacant for a decision at a later meeting.

2. At the meeting held on the arising of the Annual General Meeting.

- i) On item 6, Public Participation, following representations, the Minute was amended to read "A resident attended the meeting and asked to speak on items 18 and 19. The comments were noted."

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

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

5. POLICE LIAISON

The Vice Chairman advised Members that he will be unable to attend the next meeting scheduled for 5pm on the first Thursday in July 2016.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

Residents attended the meeting and asked to speak on the issue of water supply at the allotments. The Chairman agreed as this was related to item 14 on the agenda. The concerns of the residents were noted and addressed under that item.

7. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

The Clerk reported that he had received correspondence from the Parish Council's insurers that the case had been closed on the claim made by Mrs. G. Cain in July 2013. The claim had been repudiated.

8. AAP ISSUES

The Chairman as an elected member of the AAP Board reported that grants has been awarded to the Community Centre and Cornforth Partnership.

9. COUNTY COUNCIL ISSUES

Our County Councillor representative did not attend the meeting and could not report on Durham County Council issues that had arisen since the last meeting.

10. BANK RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS – POSITION AT 31ST MAY 2016.

The Clerk had 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 31ST MAY 2016.

Receipts		£	Cheque No.
Payments			
J. W. Smith	Bus shelter cleaning	216.00	747
R. A. Sunman	Allowances	82.73	748
R. A. Sunman	Salary	666.10	S/O
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	964.83	
	NET EXPENDITURE	964.83	

The schedule was approved.

It was also agreed that the details of invoices relating to the ground maintenance contract be split between the monthly basic payment and any extras when reported under this item.

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

At the time of the despatch of this agenda, which included applications up to and including 30th May 2016, the following applications had been received or determined:

- i) 32 Howard Close – two storey extension and decking to the rear-approved.
- ii) Former Hare and Hounds – retention of gates, peacock house and wild-life pond. – approved.
- iii) 33 Linden Road – prior notification of replacement conservatory.

The decisions were noted.

13. REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council had received the following request for financial assistance:

- i) Cornforth Partnership – A letter seeking a contribution towards core costs of £6,000. The letter was accompanied by Financial Statements up to 31st March 2015.

A Member expressed the view that as the work of the Partnership was widespread, other Town and Parish Councils should contribute to core costs. Others felt that a decision should be deferred until more up to date accounts were available. The matter was deferred.

14. ALLOTMENT GATES

Following expressions of concern that the water supply had been turned off, the Clerk reported that if the Parish Council would pay the outstanding bill (around £314) the supply could be reinstated. He would then monitor the meter and submit actual usage as the basis for future bills. Members approved the payment and the solution offered. To help prevent water loss, Members also agreed to install push control taps with guards. This still left the problem of water being stolen as security for the allotments was difficult. Councillor Metcalfe reported that he had repaired and installed the existing gate with the recovered lock, but was still awaiting quotes to manufacture and install new gates. In addition, he sought and was granted permission, without further commitment, to price for new fencing to the whole allotment area.

15. PARISH MEETING 13TH MAY 2016.

The Clerk reported that the Parish Meeting held in the Community Centre on Friday 13th May 2016, had been well attended and received. A note of the meeting will be circulated for information. The reports of the Chairman and Clerk had been posted on the Parish Council's web-site. Members asked that Mr. Cook be thanked for his presentation and that the meeting should be advertised more widely next year.

16. GROUND MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

A request had been received from Altogether Greener to increase payments relating to this contract in line with inflation at 2.5%. The Clerk had discussed this issue with our internal auditor and had been advised that whilst such an increase was permissible in principle under the terms of the contract, the exact figure should be the subject of a negotiation. As the Parish Council was also needed to consider an extension of the contract until March 2018, ahead of the May 2017 elections, it was agreed that a meeting be held with the contractor and the outcome reported to a future meeting.

17. DEALING WITH REPORTS OF RAT INFESTATION

The Clerk reported that Durham County Council had the powers and responsibility for dealing with problems of rats. The Parish Council can and does report complaints, but can take no direct action. Experience has shown that where rats are reported on or in private property, the County's first response, after a site visit, is to contact the owner and ask them to remedy the problem. The County Council has a direct agreement with the Land Charges Service and can quickly ascertain ownership. Reports of rats in the highway or on County Council land will result in their direct action. Anyone reporting a problem to the County Council needs to be sure they obtain an incident number. The position was noted and the Clerk asked to include this report in the next issue of the Partner.

18. FLY-TIPPING AT THE VACANT BALACLAVA PUBLIC HOUSE AND ON VACANT LAND ADJOINING.

Councillor Baker had asked for this item to be placed on the agenda at the last meeting. As the land and premises immediately adjoin the nursery playground of the school and the problem could lead to rat infestation, the issue was reported to the County Council in advance of the meeting. The owners of the Balaclava have been instructed to remove the tipping and secure the premises by the date of this meeting. County Council officials are concerned about likely "harbourage" on the other area of land and promised action. Members were advised that the owners had been approached and had closed the access, but not removed the material.

NOTE: At the close of the meeting Members were asked if they had any items for inclusion on a future agenda. The following items were requested:

- i) The failure of "livin" to cut the grass on land it owns and problems of garden grass cutting for elderly people.
- ii) Progress on the Tursdale Memorial statue.

Signed: Date:

Ray Sunman: Parish Clerk: 19th June 2016.