

## **MINUTES OF CORNFORTH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING:** **MAY 2016.**

Minutes of the Meeting of Cornforth Parish Council held at 7.00pm, in the Community Centre, Cornforth, on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2016, following the arising of the Annual General Meeting.

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, Mr. M. Simpson, Mrs. S. Traynor, Mr. R. Vaughan, Mrs M. Walker and Mr. A. Wilson.

Apologies: Councillors: Mrs. S. Neville, Mrs. M. A. Poole and Mr. R. Poole.

### **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 meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016, a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### **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 the Priority Area was to be Maughan Close and Bede Close, following the increase in youths aged 10 to 14 meeting and causing minor anti-social behaviour problems in this area. The Partnership, the head-teacher and Livin' would be addressing the issue.

There had been three break-ins to out-buildings adjoining vacant property. There had been a theft from Kier's empty offices and store. The Vice Chairman would not be able to attend the 7<sup>th</sup> July meeting.

### **6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.**

Mrs. Wilson attended the meeting and asked to speak items 18 and 19. She advised Members that following devolution Parish Councils would be obliged to have Finance Committees. Her comments were noted.

## 7. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

The Chairman advised Members of issues discussed at the meeting of the Tarmac Liaison Committee held on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April at 2pm. The quarry east of the A1(M) was to be mothballed and no further action taken to create a tunnel to it. Lhoist had mothballed the kilns until December following the closure of the Redcar blast-furnace.

## 8. AAP ISSUES

The Chairman as an elected member of the AAP Board advised Members that the AAP was now awaiting bids for support.

## 9. COUNTY COUNCIL ISSUES

Our County Council representative could not attend the beginning of the meeting, but was able to report on the access problems at the school before its close. The Clerk, the Chairman and Councillor Baker had met with the head-teacher and officers of the County Council on site. It had been agreed that the "zig-zag" lines would be repositioned to keep the access clear. It had been hoped that the fence could also have been repositioned. The situation will be monitored.

The Clerk reported that the issue of parking on footpaths had been raised, but that this was not a County council matter. Councillor Walker advised Members that such parking was likely to be met with a heavy fine in following recent legislation.

## 10. BANK RECONCILIATION STATEMENTS – POSITION AT 30<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2016.

The Clerk had been unable to circulate the current bank reconciliation statements and a comparison of this year's budget to actual expenditure for this period at the meeting, because of heavy commitments during May.

## 11. SCHEDULE OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS TO 30<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2016.

<b>Receipts</b>		<b>£</b>	<b>Cheque No.</b>
<b>Payments</b>			
Cornforth Partnership	Awards for All	550.00	739
Cornforth Partnership	Room hire and printing	917.27	740
Society of Council Clerks	Annual fee	161.00	741
Zurich Insurance	Management services fee	114.00	742
West Cornforth Comm. Assoc.	Annual room hire costs	284.00	743
Blanchere (Festive lights)	Third instalment	4,320.50	744
Altogether Greener	Ground maintenance	2,533.33	745
R. A. Sunman	Allowances	87.23	746
R. A. Sunman	Salary	666.10	S/O
	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>9,633.43</b>	

	NET EXPENDITURE	9,633.43	
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Recommendation: The schedule was approved

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

The Clerk reported that up to and including 25<sup>th</sup> April 2016, the following applications had been received or determined:

- i) Determined – DM/16/00586/FPA – War memorial statue – Tursdale.
- ii) Determined - DM/16/00290/FPA – 15 the Green – Erection of first floor extension.

## 13. REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

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

- i) An application for support to the Citizens Advice Service. As no service is now offered in the village, the Parish Council has not supported such a request in previous years.

Members were advised that discussions were ongoing about the resumption of this service. The Clerk was instructed to advise the CAB that should the service be reinstated, the Parish Council would review its position.

## 14. LAND ON LABURNUM ROAD.

Livin' had held a meeting with interested parties on 21st April 2016 and the Chairman and the Clerk reported the outcome to the Council. The total scheme cost of an estimated £115K seems high for the much reduced proposals now being considered. Livin' would be providing £50K and looking for support for the remainder, but could not apply itself for such sums.

## 15. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT.

The Clerk reported that Durham County Council had issued a consultation draft on how it will engage with communities in delivering its planning obligations. The document sets out how the County Council will facilitate access to documents and respond to comments through its websites, customer access points, events and meetings and through the AAP's. There are three levels at which the County Council needs to consult on planning issues:

- i) The Local Plan – guiding new employment, housing and retail development across the County,
- ii) Neighbourhood Plans – guiding local development, and
- iii) Planning applications.

The document refreshes the existing practice of the County Council, but adds nothing new to the process at Parish Council level. Members were advised where to

view the draft on the County website but did not wish to submit comments by the deadline of 13<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

#### 16. PARISH MEETING 13<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2016.

The Clerk reminded Members that the Parish Meeting is to be held in the main hall of the Community Centre on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2016, commencing at 6pm. A copy of the agenda was attached for Members' information. It was hoped that as many Members as possible would attend. The Chairman would deliver an Annual Report and the Clerk would give a statement on the Parish Council's accounts.

Members asked that the problem of rats was likely to be raised at the Parish Meeting.

The Chairman advised Members that he would not be available to take the meeting and it was agreed that the Vice Chairman would attend in his place.

#### 17. ALLOTMENT GATE.

Members received a report from Councillor Metcalfe on the repair of the gate to the allotments. In his view the repair done to the existing gate would not adequately address security. He had sought three quotes for two schemes. The first was to replace the existing gate and the second to have a rising gate at the southern end of the tunnel. A further report would be made when quotes were returned.

#### 18. REDUCTIONS IN PARISH COUNCIL EXPENDITURE 2016/17.

Councillor Mrs. Walker had asked for this item to be placed on the agenda and advised Members that in view of national cut-backs in funding she was seeking agreement to reduce expenditure, particularly on grass-cutting. It was explained that the Parish Council was tied to its existing ground maintenance contract and would be until the next Council was elected in 2017. At that time, the whole contract could be reviewed. In addition, the Council still needed reserves against the likely event of the loss of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme.

#### 19. CONSIDERATION OF THE NEED FOR A FINANCE COMMITTEE.

Councillor Mrs. Walker sought to reinforce the internal financial controls of the Parish Council in the interests of accountability. It was agreed that as well as signing the cheques, signatories should sign the accompanying invoices and a signatory sheet detailing all cheques. Whilst the need for a Finance Committee of a different nature may be imposed following devolution, it was felt that the current arrangement, whereby the whole Council acted as the Finance Committee, afforded accountability and transparency.

#### 20. TO CONSIDER CONTINGENCY PLANS TO COVER ANY ABSENCE BY THE PARISH CLERK.

The Clerk reported that both Chilton and Bishop Middleham Town and Parish Councils had suffered disruption to their business through the absence of their Clerk through sickness. Members agreed to seek registration with the locum service operated by CDALC.

**NOTE: At the close of the meeting Members were asked if they had any items for inclusion on the next agenda. The following items were agreed:**

- i) The problem and means of dealing with rats in properties in the village.
- ii) Fly-tipping in the vacant Balaclava Public House.
- iii) Notes from the Parish Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Ray Sunman: Parish Clerk: 19<sup>th</sup> May 2016.