

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

Minutes of the meeting of Cornforth Parish Council held at 7.00pm, in the Community Centre, Cornforth, on Monday 8th February 2016.

Present: Councillor Mr. A. Hodgson and

Councillors: Mr. C. Baker, Mr. C. Hodgson, Mr. P. Metcalfe, Mrs. S. Neville, Mrs. S. Traynor, Mr. R. Vaughan, Mrs. M. Walker and Mr. A. Wilson.

Apologies: Councillors: Mr. T. Cutmore, Dr. S. C. Drew, Mrs. H. P. Drew, Mrs. M. Poole, Mr. R. Poole 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 to be transacted.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 11th and 25th January 2016, copies 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. The Chairman and Members extended their congratulations to Councillor Vaughan on the birth of his first born child.

5. POLICE LIAISON

The Vice Chairman advised Members that the next meeting of group would be held on 3rd March 2016.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

7. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

The Clerk advised Members that he had received the following correspondence:

- i) A letter from Chilton Town Council inviting members to attend the Mayor's Annual Civic Dinner on 18th March 2016. Tickets are available at £22.00 per person. Any Members interested in attending need to advise the Clerk.

- ii) A letter from Durham County Council consulting on its intention to remove street lighting from a section of the near Tursdale. Members resolved to object to this proposal as the road had been the scene of a fatal accident and that the proposal represented a retrograde step, particularly in view of the current planning application for a major development west of this road.
- iii) A letter from the Public Sector Audit Authority set up to appoint external auditors for Parish and Town Councils. Cornforth Parish Council is legally obliged to prepare an audit and submit it to an external auditor. After 2017 the external auditor can either be appointed by PSAA or by a panel set up by the Parish Council. The Council needs to advise the PSAA if it intends to opt-out of the PSAA appointing the external auditor by 31st March 2016. Members resolved to opt-in and have the PSAA appoint its external auditor.

8. AAP ISSUES

The Chairman as an elected member of the AAP Board reported that the Task and Finish Groups would commence work on 1st March 2016 on two themes, Children and Young People and the Elderly. Employment issues would be considered on 3rd March 2016.

9. COUNTY COUNCIL ISSUES

Our County Councillor representative was not available to report on any Durham County Council issues that had arisen since the last meeting.

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

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

11. SCHEDULE OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS TO 31ST DECEMBER 2015.

Receipts		£	Cheque No.
Payments			
H.M.R. & Customs	Tax and N.I.C.	955.57	716
Cornforth Partnership	Awards for All	3,490.40	717
W. Cornforth & D. C. Assoc.	Affiliation fee	20.00	720
Premier Traffic Management	Road Closures	408.00	721
Altogether Greener	Ground maintenance (Dec)	2,533.33	722
R. A. Sunman	Allowances	77.82	723
R. A. Sunman	Salary	666.10	S/O
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	8,151.22	
	NET EXPENDITURE	8,151.22	

The schedule was approved.

12. QUEEN'S 90TH BIRTHDAY BEACONS.

The Clerk had been unable to take this issue forward and will report to the next meeting.

13. ALLOTMENT ISSUES.

The Clerk and the Chairman of the Allotments Committee gave a report on meeting held with tenants on 3rd January 2016. Tenants were advised to be vigilant in keeping the access locked, but felt that the Water Authority Road, over which they had no control, left them vulnerable. The problem with rats seemed to have decreased following regular visits by Durham County Council. The main problem remained the high usage of water. Options discussed included its permanent disconnection, lockable taps and the use of individual meters. Members of the Council received an update on consumption and resolved in the light of falling usage to monitor the situation for a further month and consider the matter again.

Following further discussion on the content and enforcement of tenancy agreements, Members asked for a working group to meet the tenants and update the agreement.

14. PLANNING MATTERS AND APPLICATIONS FROM JANUARY'S WEEKLY LISTS.

Members were advised that at the time of the despatch of this agenda, which included applications up to and including 2nd February 2016, the following application had been received which was of interest to this Council:

- i) DM/15/03912/OUT – Citrus Durham Ltd. – Land south of Bowburn and west of the A688 – Outline application for the maximum of the following:

270 dwellings, a 70 bedroom hotel, a 60 bed residential care home, a 3.96ha solar farm, change of use of 710m² of agricultural land to residential garden space, 170,859m² of general industrial, storage and distribution, 1,858 m² of restricted goods retail, 409m² restaurant/café/takeaway, 613m² public house, 450m² children's nursery, 400m² GP surgery and 1,860m² car showroom.

Members resolved to object to this application on the grounds that it was already difficult to turn right out of the services area and that the road, which forms a major east/west link was incapable of taking this level of development.

15. REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

Members were reminded that at the last meeting they indicated likely agreement to making a donation to support the efforts of a local family campaigning for checks at birth on Krabbe Leukodystrophy. The Clerk was asked to see if a charity existed to which a donation could be given. The parents are attempting to establish a charity called "A Promise for Zach", but as yet none exists. Members resolved to make a donation once the charity was established.

16. ROAD SAFETY.

The Clerk reported that the road safety issues at the school and the road signs on Garmondsway Road had been reported to the County Council, but no action had been taken. Members asked that Councillor Simpson be asked to assist us and that the help of the HSE and our Member of Parliament be sought.

17. TREES ON THE ROADSIDE.

Members' concerns about trees on Bridge Road and near the Banks Depot were discussed with our ground maintenance contractor, along with the condition of overgrown hedges on Parish Council land on Middleham Road. The Clerk reported that the trees on Bridge Road had been cut back by Durham County Council and that the trees on Banks' land had to be dealt with by the company.

The hedge on Middleham Road could be cut back by our contractor and he had quoted £146 for the work. In addition, he had drawn our attention to three other problem areas:

- i) The Church Hall, owned by the Parochial Church Council, but not the Church of England, was suffering from self-sown trees growing in the drains and over grown fire escapes. This needed attention if problems were to be avoided. The quote was for £125.
- ii) The Public Right of Way behind the Slake Terrace Public House was difficult to use as it was getting overgrown. The quote for cutting back was £267
- iii) Recent work by volunteers and others on trees in and around the Churchyard had resulted in branches and twigs being left on site. They would cause difficulties for grass cutting if not removed and given the mild winter an early cut was recommended. The quote for removal was £294.

Members resolved to instruct the contractor to cut the hedge on Middleham Road and carry out the work in the grounds of the Church Hall at Parish Council expense. The latter work was to be a single commitment. Work on the Public right of Way was to be the subject of a grant under the Parish Paths Scheme. Work in the Churchyard would be discussed with the "Friends of the Churchyard", but the Parish Council was unwilling to meet this cost.

18. BENCH NEAR THE THREE ARCHES BRIDGE.

The Clerk reported that the bench has been inspected and found to be beyond repair. The County Council had been asked to prepare a quote for its replacement with a bench similar to those used elsewhere in the village. Members advised that the bench be removed as its use was rare, but that the matter of replacement be reconsidered if requested.

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

- i) The placing of a memorial plaque on a bench in the churchyard or on the bench in Cuthbert Road.
- ii) The acquisition of the land at the end of the High Street.
- iii) Awards for All – Mrs. Walker wished to advise Members of the rules associated with this grant.
- iv) The result of the meeting with tenants on the lease terms and approval of any amendments.

Signed: Date:

Ray Sunman/Clerk: 23rd February 2016.