MINUTES OF CORNFORTH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: FEBRUARY 2018

Minutes of the Meeting of Cornforth Parish Council held at 7.00pm, in the Community Centre, Cornforth, on Monday 12th February 2018.

Present: Councillor Mr. A. Hodgson and

Councillors: Mr. C. Baker, Mrs. P. Crathorne, Mrs. H. P. Drew, Dr. S. C. Drew, Mrs. J. Grafton, Mr. J. Grafton, Mrs. M. Poole, Mr. R. Poole, Mr. M. Simpson and Mrs. M. Walker.

Apologies: Councillors: Mr. C. Hodgson, Mrs. S. Traynor and Mr. R. Vaughan.

1. INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

The above apologies were received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made with regard to any items on the agenda.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th and 22nd January 2018, which had been circulated with the agenda, were considered. The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2018 were approved and signed by the Chairman. The Minutes of the 22nd January 2018 needed to be amended to include reference to the resignation of Councillor Ann Wilson.

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

With reference to the above Minutes, Councillor Mrs. Walker advised Members that the Parish Council web site should be closed down, as it had no privacy policy and that she felt that the temporary fencing erected at the Memorial Park did not represent value for money. Mrs Walker's comments were noted.

5. POLICE LIAISON

The Vice Chairman reported there had been no PACT meeting held in February and that he would be unable to attend the March meeting.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

7. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

The Clerk reported the receipt of a letter from Mr. R. Walton, who had long supported the replacement of the Tursdale War Memorial statue, congratulating and thanking the Parish Council for its successful completion of this scheme.

8. AAP ISSUES

The Chairman reported that the new Task and Finish Groups would start work soon.

9. COUNTY COUNCIL ISSUES

Our County Council representative, Mrs. P. Crathorne, reported she had met with County Council staff and representatives of nearby Town and Parish Councils to discuss the needs of their communities. She has raised the need in Cornforth for more housing, to support our infrastructure and facilities, the need for better transport and action on vacant High Street properties. The budget to address some of these problems was limited to 3 million pounds.

10. 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 5th February 2018, the following application had been received by Durham County Council which was of interest to Cornforth Parish Council:

i) DM/18/00094/FPA – Mr. P. Mayhew – 42 The Green – Resubmission of previous application to increase the height of a garage roof by 450mm.

Members resolved not to comment on the application.

No decisions been made affecting development within the Parish boundaries.

11. TRAINING ON OFFER IN COUNTY DURHAM.

The Clerk reported that three training events were being offered for Parish Clerks and others in the next few months:

i) 28th March 2018 in County Hall – Mazars LLP – Accounting and Transparency – a free course to which Parish Clerks are specifically invited, but from which others are not excluded.
ii) 11th April 2018 in Shotton Hall – Allotments law and practice – a free course open to all.
iii) 2nd May 2018 in Shotton hall – Bullying and Harassment – a free course for Parish Clerks only.

The Clerk received Members' approval to attend the courses and will prepare a report on each for information and guidance. Councillors Mrs. P. Crathorne and Mrs. M. Walker asked to attend the Mazar event and Councillors Mrs. J. Grafton and Mrs. M. Walker asked to attend the allotment training. The requests were agreed.

12. REQUEST FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL.

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting Members had received a written request from Councillors Mrs. M. Walker and Mrs A. Wilson for an extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council to discuss Finance and Transparency in Local Government. Members had agreed to consider the request at this meeting.

12. REQUEST FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL. (CONT'D).

Since the request was made Mrs. Wilson had resigned from the Parish Council. Nevertheless, Members considered the request. Members felt that as the Clerk had circulated The Good Councillors Guide on Finance and Transparency with the agenda and will be attending training (see above), there was no need for an extraordinary meeting. The matter was put to a vote and the request for a meeting was refused, with only Councillor Mrs. M. Walker dissenting.

13. RESIGNATION FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL.

The Clerk reports that the Electoral Services Division of the County Council had been advised of Mrs. Wilson's resignation. The required notice had been posted on the Parish Council web site and notice board, with a deadline of 26th February 2018. Should no election be requested by ten electors of Cornforth Parish by that date, the vacancy could be filled by co-option. The Clerk confirmed that he had an up-to-date copy of the Electoral Role available to residents to aid any request. The situation was noted.

14. TURSDALE WAR MEMORIAL.

The Clerk reported that the statue was installed on 2nd February 2018 in the presence of a number of the Members of this Council and that he had insured it with immediate effect. He had been advised by the War Memorial Trust that no grant can be given towards the cleaning and minor restoration work as the statue was not a like-for-like replacement. The date for the dedication ceremony has been agreed as 24th March 2018 at 11am. In view of this, the Clerk has made arrangements with Allinson's of Bishop Auckland to carry out the work. The company, which was one of the two tenders returned and submitted for grant purposes, had previously cleaned and restored the High Street memorial. The Reverend Norman has been advised and will lead the rededication service. A draft invitation list has been prepared and arrangements put in train for a buffet after the ceremony. It was agreed that a mini bus be put on to take attendees between the Community Centre to the war memorial.

15. GROUND MAINTENANCE CONTRACT.

The Clerk advised that he had prepared the documents for the above contract. However, the Parish Council is obliged to use the "Contract Finder" process as required by European law. The process is lengthy, invites tenders from a wide area, requires the electronic response of interested contractors to the SSQ, a pre contract questionnaire, and gives a response period and appeal period that cannot be met by the end of the contract period. One contributing factor is the amount of work to be undertaken on the memorial rededication and another is the length of time required to order bedding plants. Our present ground maintenance contractor is willing to negotiate a revised price for an extension of the contract, which can exclude the items agreed in October 2017. After discussion, Members agreed to the extension.

16. PARISH MEETING.

The Clerk asked the Parish Council to set a date for its Annual Parish Meeting. The Parish AGM is scheduled for Monday 14th May 2018. It was therefore agreed that the Parish Meeting takes place on Friday 4th May, so that any urgent matters that may arise can be put on the agenda for the May Parish Council meeting.

17. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.

The Clerk reported that he had received a request for information relating to the company dealing with the treatment of asbestos at the allotments, to which he had replied. Councillor Mrs. M. Walker advised Members that the enquirer had been dissatisfied with the response. This was noted, but no further approach had been made to the Clerk.

18. REPLACEMENT OF STONE WITH TARMAC ON THE GREEN.

The Clerk has received confirmation from the contractor that work will commence on the above on 26th February 2018.

19. FINANCIAL MATTERS.

i) BANK RECONCILIATION STATEMENT – POSITION AT 31st JANUARY 2018.

At the time of the dispatch of this agenda the January bank statement had not been received. The bank reconciliation statement was therefore circulated at the meeting and noted.

ii) SCHEDULE OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS TO 31ST JANUARY 2018.

Receipts		**£**	**Cheque No.**
Allotment rents		480.00	
Payments			
Blachere Illumination	Christmas motifs (install)	3092.88	864
Lumalite	Christmas tree hire	783.29	865
Lumalite	Christmas tree hire	783.29	866
Stage and Production House	Pantomime	660.00	867
Altogether Greener	Period 9	2,648.60	868
C.D.A.L.C.	Subscription	408.02	869
Durham County Council	Inspection of equipment	319.68	870

ii) SCHEDULE OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS TO 31ST JANUARY 2018 (CONT'D).

Payments (cont'd)			
R. A. Sunman	Allowances	93.37	871
Cornforth Partnership	Room hire - £400.00	937.51	872
	Photocopying – £44.50		
	Poop scoop bags – £231.40		
	Web hosting - £74.25		
	Office supplies - £28.56		
	Web site maintenance - £158.40		
W.C.& D.C.Assoc	2018/189 affiliation fee	20.00	873
Blachere Illumination	Christmas motifs (demount)	815.76	874
R.A. Sunman	Salary	666.10	S/O
W.C.& D.C.Assoc	2017/18 room hire and fee	280.00	875
Two Red Rubber Things	Tursdale Statue (install)	6,000.00	877
R. B. L. Poppy Appeal	Wreathes	350.00	878
R. B. L. Men's Section	Contribution	30.00	879
Salvation Army	Contribution	30.00	880
W. C. & D.C. Assoc	Wreath	36.00	881
	Total expenditure	**17,954.50**	
	Net expenditure	**17,474.50**	

Members sought clarification on the two payments made to Lumalite: the first was for installation on the second for the demounting of the Christmas tree. In answer to questions the Clerk confirmed that the payment on the statue was the final instalment and included VAT which can be reclaimed, as could the VAT on Christmas motifs and the tree. The Clerk reported that in line with Members' instructions on the issue of poop-scoop bags, arrangements had been made with Cornforth Partnership to purchase an annual supply and thus save money.

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 put forward:

i) Finalising the arrangements for 24th March 2018 ceremony.
ii) Recording of Council meetings by the Clerk.

To all Members of the Parish Council.

Yours Sincerely,
Ray Sunman, Parish Clerk: 18th February 2018.

Signed: …… Dated: ……