**CORNFORTH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING: DECEMBER 2020**

Notice is hereby given that a REMOTE MEETING of Cornforth Parish Council will be held at 7pm. on Monday 14th December 2020 when your attendance is requested. The details for joining the meeting have been given in a separate email from Councillor Paul Metcalfe, who will host the meeting. The agenda for the meeting is attached.

**PLEASE NOTE**

**UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE OPENNESS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS 2014 MEMBERS ATTENDING THE MEETING NEED TO BE AWARE THAT THE PROCEEDINGS MAY BE THE SUBJECT OF RECORDING BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC OR PRESS.**

**AGENDA**

1. INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To consider declarations of a personal or prejudicial interest with regard to any item to be transacted.

3. MINUTES

To confirm as a true record the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th July 2020. (Copy herewith)

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

To discuss any items arising from the previous minutes that are not included on this agenda.

5. POLICE LIAISON

To receive a report on any PACT meetings held in the interim from the Vice Chairman.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman will adjourn the meeting to facilitate public participation on any item on the agenda and resume it following public participation.

7. CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

At the time of the despatch of this agenda there were no items to report.

8. AAP ISSUES

The Chairman will give a report of any matters which have arisen.

9. COUNTY COUNCIL ISSUES

Our County Council representative will report on any Durham County Council issues that have arisen.

10. PLANNING MATTERS AND APPLICATIONS FROM DURHAM COUNTY’S WEEKLYLISTS.

Members had previously received reports on the planning applications received. At the time of the despatch of this agenda, which includes applications lodged in November 2020, up to and including 30th November 2020, no applications had been received by Durham County Council, which were of interest to the Parish Council, nor had any decisions been made.

11. ANNUAL RETURN AND EXTERNAL AUDITORS’ REPORT.

The Annual Return was made to Mazars following the July meeting. The underlying documents were made available for inspection by the public. The external audit report, when returned, was unqualified and a copy of it is attached with the agenda alongside a letter noting that the Council is to consider reducing its reserves by making a larger contribution to the refurbishment of the Memorial Park works.

The report has been published on the Council web site and on the notice board. Members need to consider the extent to which they would be prepared to use the Council’s reserves, following discussion on the next item.

12. REFURBISHMENT OF THE MEMORIAL PARK.

As instructed, The Clerk has made applications for grant to Tarmac, The Neighbourhood Fund and Banks. An application to Durham County Council to use the village S106 monies was also made. These applications were granted at a likely total of £38,750. The County Durham Foundation refused to grant aid the project, whilst Amazon’s grant aid system proved unsuitable. The total quote for the scheme, by Kompan, is £149,792, including VAT. The Council has already approved a contribution of £50,000, and can reclaim the total cost of the VAT (£24,965). Members’ views are sought on contributing a further £.56,077

In addition, it was a condition of the Bank’s offer that a third party contribution of £550 (10%) be paid. A similar condition will apply to the Tarmac contribution when confirmed; Tarmac will not approve its contribution until all other funding is secured.

Approval of this level of funding will be timely, in that Kompan require an eight week lead-in period, before the contract starts and the work will take a further two months. This will meet the Council’s aspirations to complete the scheme by May 2021.

13. WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY AND MONITORING.

The Parish Council has already taken action to ensure that its website is accessible to everyone under the terms of Website Accessibility Regulations 2018. The Government’s Digital Services staff, part of the Cabinet Office, has assessed our website and, as it does not fully comply at present, asked for improvements within twelve weeks. The list of issues have been passed to our web designer with a request for urgent action.

14. ALLOTMENT ACCESS ROAD: NEED FOR RESURFACING

The access road into the allotments is in need of repair. Members’ views are sought on either seeking a price from our ground maintenance contractor and instructing him to do it, or agreeing to Councillor Metcalfe’s offer to carry out the work, with the Council buying the dolomite. In addition, fly-tipping is increasing and some Members feel that a barrier is needed.

15. ADOPTION OF THE COUNTY DURHAM LOCAL PLAN.

On 21st October 2020, Durham County Council adopted The Durham County Local Plan setting out the policies which it will use to determine planning applications. It replaces all other planning policies, including The Sedgefield Local Plan, excepting parts of The Mineral and Waste Plans. The Plan can be challenged in the High Court, but only on the grounds that the wrong powers were used or that a procedural requirement was not complied with. All documents can be viewed on the County Durham Plan webpage.

16. GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER ON PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE.

The Government has sought the views of local authorities, including Town and Parish Councils, on measures to radically streamline the planning system. It has sought responses on a long series of questions, which are complex and inter-related and which to some extent conflicts with the preparation of Durham County’s Local Plan. Responding to the issues during lock-down with limited Member participation would have been difficult. I therefore attach the responses from CDALC, so that Members can more accurately gauge the impact of the proposals and I will pass on the Council’s views.

17. CONSULTATION ON A NEW CUSTODY SUITE: DURHAM COUNTY POLICE.

A new centralised custody suite is proposed at Durham Gate, Spennymoor to comply with Home Office requirements. Details are provided and Members are asked for their views.

18. RESIGNATION OF MRS. M. WALKER FROM THE COUNCIL.

Mrs. Walker has resigned from Cornforth Parish Council. The County Council has been advised and the appropriate notice displayed and published. As elections are planned for May 2021, the vacancy cannot be filled except by co-option, at this time.

18. ISSUES FOR THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

1. BANK RECONCILIATION STATEMENT – POSITION AT 30th NOVEMBER 2020.

The bank reconciliation statement for the above period is attached.

1. RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR NOVEMBER 2020.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Receipts** |  | **£** | **Cheque****No.** |
| NIL |  |  |  |
| **Payments** |  |  |  |
| Blachere Illumination | Replacement cheque | 2,100.49 | 2080 |
| Anglian Water | Allotment water | 66.72 | 2081 |
| Lumalite | Christmas tree | 783.29 | 2082 |
| SE Landscaping | Ground maintenance | 4,120.00 | 2083 |
| Blachere Illumination | Install lights | 980.10 | 2084 |
| The Banks Group | Third Party Contribution | 550.00 | 2085 |
| R. A. Sunman | Allowances | 90.54 | 2086 |
| H.M.R. & C. | Tax and N.I.C. | 249.42 | 2087 |
|  | **Total Expenditure** | **8,940.56** |  |
|  |  |  |  |

Recommendation: That the schedule be approved.

1. REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT.
2. A letter has been received from Cornforth Partnership seeking financial assistance towards core costs for its work in the community. The letter is attached for Members’ information alongside an extract from the current Annual Accounts, showing the Partnership’s financial position. The Parish Council has included a sum of £6,000 in its budget to support the Partnership.
3. A letter has been received from North East Air Ambulance seeking financial assistance towards its work. Last financial year the Parish Council supported this organisation with a donation of £500.
4. Derbyshire Environmental has advised us that Tarmac has received an application for grant towards the costs of improving Cornforth House. The Parish Council has been asked to act as the Third Party Contributor, for the sum of £3,618.40, against a total contribution from Tarmac of £35,160.03. No action is required at this time.
5. BUDGET FOR 2021/22 AND THE LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SHEME.

The current Covid situation is causing considerable difficulties in forecasting Local Government income and expenditure. The County Council is unsure about the level of income from residents in relation to Council Tax, in the support it will receive from Government, its own needs and the budget of the Police for 2021/22. Nevertheless, it has made forecasts based upon the best information available and has calculated that Cornforth Parish Council will suffer a small drop (0.1) in the number of Band D properties. The Council will receive £539.49 less in LCTSS, a total of £20,778. These figures will be confirmed in January 2021 and a meeting of the Council will be called to set the budget.

**NOTE: At the close of the meeting Members will be asked if they have any items**

**for inclusion on a future agenda.**

To all Members of the Parish Council.

Yours Sincerely, Ray Sunman, Parish Clerk: 4th December 2020.